



Sweetwater® SweetNotes

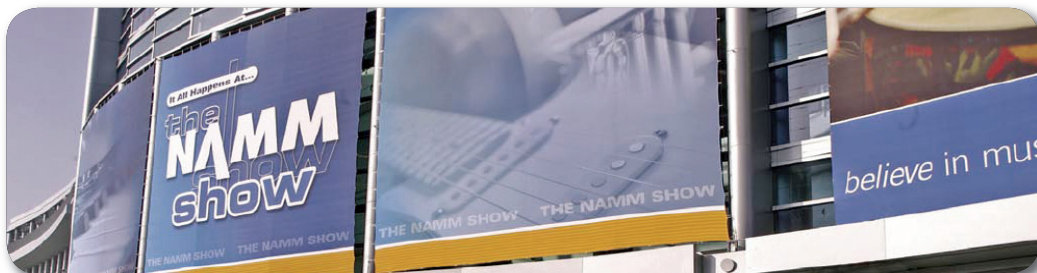
February 2006 Issue | Vol. 67

(800) 222-4700 • www.sweetwater.com

Making music happen for over 27 years!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Winter NAMM 2006.....	1, 3, 4, 5, 6
Sweetwater Honored With Awards 1, 12	
Great River EQ2NV, MP2NV, ME1NV...2	
America's Next Top Modeler	7
Gator Sweet Gear Bag.....	7
JBL LSR4326P Pak	8
Customer Studios	8
Portable Recorders	9
10 Tips for Creating Better Podcasts ..9	
Inside Sweetwater.....	10
Peavey Amps	10
Universal Audio Solo110, Solo610...11	
BOSS BCB 60	11
Q & A	12
Sweetwater Difference.....	13
Technotes	14
Gibson Signature Guitars	14
Massenburg Masterclass	15
True Systems P-Solo	15



Winter NAMM 2006

By Mitch Gallagher

Each January thousands of manufacturers and retailers gather in Anaheim, California for the NAMM (National Association of Music Merchants) show, the largest tradeshow dedicated to music gear in the United States. The show is ostensibly aimed at manufacturers pitching their new products to retailers, though a healthy cadre of journalists and industry visitors also make their way into the show to check out what's new and cool.

The show is huge, completely filling the Anaheim Convention Center's five main halls and rooms in the two floors above, and spilling over to the adjacent Marriott hotel's ballrooms.

Everything from synthesizers to guitars to brass instruments

to pianos to drums to software to recording gear is represented — if you can make music with it, it was probably represented at NAMM.

Naturally, Sweetwater was there in force. Not only did we have two “teams” visiting manufacturer booths, we also had several people “floating” to cover the overall show (yours truly included). Take a deep breath and gather your strength; here's just a quick sampling of what we came across at the show. (Call your Sales Engineer for detailed product info and availability for these items.)

— continued on page 3

Sweetwater Honored With Awards

It's always nice to be recognized for your efforts. So forgive us if we proudly let the world know that *Music Inc.* magazine named us the “Indie Retailer of the Year” in their December 2005 issue. As the accompanying article in the magazine pointed out, “Musicians, sound engineers, manufacturers, and even competitors know that Sweetwater aims to satisfy customers at all costs.” The magazine's cover story also acknowledged the industry-wide respect we've earned, noting, “Sweetwater dominates an ever-increasing share of the pro audio and recording market through honorable treatment of both its customers and employees.”

This is actually the second such award we've won from *Music Inc.* We also received their “Retailer of the Year” award in 1999. In addition, the magazine has cited us for Customer Service Excellence and Dealer Excellence in recent years.

At the recent 2006 Winter NAMM show in Anaheim, California, we were also honored with awards from a number of manufacturers. Eventide named us “Dealer of the Year” for

— continued on page 12



from the editor



Mitch Gallagher
Editorial Director

mitch_gallagher@sweetwater.com

NAMM and more!

Just got off the plane from Anaheim, California, where I was attending the 2006 Winter NAMM show. I believe I had the most fun at the show that I've had at a tradeshow in some time. Why? Because my job was to cover the show — to visit all the booths and collect information on everything that was new and cool. For the past seven years or so, attending a tradeshow meant an endless stream of back-to-back appointments. Yes, I saw some new stuff, but mostly I missed seeing the actual show. At this show I actually got to see everything... what a difference!

I was quite impressed with the show this year. There was so much new stuff to check out, and the energy was great. You can peruse my report beginning on page one of this issue. Enjoy, it's going to be a great year for gear, whether you're a player, composer, engineer, producer, or a weird combination of all four like me.

Ain't Technology Grand?

For years Sweetwater has been putting out *SweetNotes* as a paper newsletter mailed right to your door. And that's not going to change; we know that's how most of you prefer to receive it. Some time ago we also added a PDF version of each issue to Sweetwater.com for your downloading pleasure, which has been quite popular — you no longer have to keep old issues, as they're archived for you on our site.

Now we're taking the next step and offering a Zinio version. Have you checked this technology out? Zinio is a new digital format that uses a small free reader program for Mac and PC. It makes viewing the issue on your computer screen just like reading the paper version: you turn pages as if you had a "real" newsletter. As an added bonus, you don't have to wait for the post office to get around to delivering your issue — you can have it as soon as we finish it. Plus we have the ability to add links to important web addresses, and even include multimedia content, such as embedded audio and video. We think you're going to love this new way to receive *SweetNotes*. Go to Sweetwater.com/sweetnotes for the Zinio reader and the Zinio version of each issue.

Your Shot At Fame

The legendary George Massenburg is back in this issue with another of his masterclasses, answering another *SweetNotes* reader's burning question for all of our benefit. If you have a question for George, send it to me at the address at left — don't miss this opportunity to pick the brain of one of the industry's greats!

We also want to see your studio, and to show it off to hundreds of thousands of readers in our Customer Studio feature — it's your chance to show the world just how cool your room is! Email me low-res pictures, and tell me something about your rig. If you're selected, you'll need to be able to provide us with high-res, print-quality photos.

Welcome Great River

We're constantly looking for outstanding products that we can bring to our customers and friends. Our approach is always the same: When we find a product or product line, we ask ourselves, "Is this something we'd use in our own studios? Does it provide the quality we need to make better recordings and music?" With Great River Electronics, the answer to both questions is a resounding "Yes!" So we're proud to welcome Great River to the Sweetwater family, and to offer you the entire Great River line of products.

Great River understands that today's top recording professionals produce great recordings thanks to not only top-rate performances, but also to gear that's capable of delivering articulate, defined audio quality every time. Which is why the company uses only legendary Jensen and Sowter transformers and gold-plated contact switches, and stands behind every product with a full 2-year warranty.

The Great River EQ-NV Series includes two digitally controlled, analog-driven equalizers, the **EQ-2NV** (stereo) and **EQ-1NV** (mono), both of which are loosely based on vintage 1081/1083 models, but with the latest precision components that allow the equalizers to deliver the greater clarity and dynamic range that's required for high-resolution digital audio. The front-panel input selector and sensitivity switches allow you to use the balanced bridging transformer's coupled input from +8dBm to -20dBm, or you can choose the companion NV Series preamp's patch loop signal.

The Great River NV Series mic preamps, which include the stereo **MP-2NV** and the mono **ME-1NV**, have been designed to produce audio that combines vintage richness with the clarity and detail necessary for 24-bit recording. Both units offer users the ability to tune the overall audio, much like the treasured 1970s 1073s, for brilliant transformer saturation or the soft distortion of a single-ended amplifier. You can push the units hard to augment the sound of electric guitars, basses, sound modules, and drums.

The company also offers a special rackmount solution, the **RK-2**, that combines a single channel ME-1NV preamp and the mono EQ-1NV to give you the MEQ-1NV, which includes TRS patch and power cords.

>>> Great River EQ2NV • Sweetwater price \$2750.97 • www.sweetwater.com/eq2nv
>>> Great River MP2NV • Sweetwater price \$2150.97 • www.sweetwater.com/mp2nv
>>> Great River ME1NV • Sweetwater price \$1075.97 • www.sweetwater.com/me1nv



—NAMM Report continued from page 1

It All Happens At...

the
NAMM
show[®] 06

get personal

NAMM TRENDS

NAMM is always a great place to spot trends, and this show was no different. Topping the trend list: portable digital stereo recorders, electric guitars aimed at female players, signature and special-edition guitar amps, MacIntel software support announcements, and integration of hardware synths with DAWs through control plug-ins.

KORG, as usual, debuted an array of new products. New keyboard releases included the **RADIUS**, with its unusual appearance; the synth is a tabletop/rack module that can mount to a matching controller keyboard via a movable rail system — cool, but the **RADIUS** sounded great, too. **MicroX** is a compact 25-key synth packed with 1,100 sounds based on the synthesis system in the Triton series. **OASYS v1.1** software brings new string modeling and more. On the software front, the **Legacy Collection Digital Edition v1.1** (free upgrade) expands the M1 synth to include the entire sound library from the classic T-series workstations. New MIDI controllers included the **K-series** 25-, 49-, and 61-key models, each with two knobs, two switches, a slider, footswitch, and clickpoint X/Y joystick controllers. The **padKontrol** includes 16 velocity-sensitive trigger pads, an X/Y touch pad controller, and tons more. The pads feel great for playing drum parts. If you're after one of the most advanced metronomes ever, **BeatLab** will blow you away. We've never seen a metronome with so much flexibility. The **D888** is a lightweight portable mixer with built-in effects and an integrated 8-track digital recorder. High-speed USB 2.0 allows fast transfers to computer for editing and mastering.

MOTU caught our eye at the show with the surprise announcement of **Digital Performer 5**. New

— Cont. on next page

Mitch's Top Picks

There were hundreds (if not thousands) of great new products on display at Winter NAMM, but these jumped out at me as particularly noteworthy:

Native Instruments Kore — a universal VST/AudioUnits host for software instruments and effects that can operate standalone or as a plug-in within a DAW. This one is going to be big.

Taylor GS — new acoustic guitar series heralds a new sound for Taylor: fatter, punchier, and louder.

Korg RADIUS — unique rack/tabletop/keyboard form factor, Multi-Modeling Technology synthesis engine, and a vocoder. It sounds thick, juicy, and wonderful.

MOTU Digital Performer 5 — track folders, new editing tools, tons of sound-for-video features, and more — plus six bundled software instruments.

BOSS RC-50 Loop Factory — with seven footswitches and three simultaneous stereo loops it's a live looper's dream machine.

Peavey VersArray — a flexible, powerful, modular, lightweight, rugged, affordable, great-sounding ribbon-driven line array.

Cakewalk Rapture — overwhelmingly deep software synthesis power, plus it's available for Mac and PC!

TASCAM GVI — Giga Virtual Instrument, a VST/RTAS plug-in sampler based on GigaStudio 3. A Mac version is on the way!

Digidesign Xpand! — free RTAS soft synth. Did I mention it's free?

Fender Super-Sonic — 1965 Vibrolux and 1966 Bassman voices plus a Drive channel with more gain than any previous Fender. I heard incredible sounds from this amp, from clean twang to singing sustain to crunchy chords.

Apogee Ensemble — FireWire interface designed in collaboration with Apple Computers for extremely low latency and native control from within Logic Pro software.

IK Multimedia Stealth Plug — a guitar cable that has a 1/4-inch plug on one end and a built-in USB interface for connecting to a computer on the other. It doesn't get easier than this to connect your guitar to your computer.

Sony Acid Pro 6 — this version of the loop software that started it all moves firmly into the full-on DAW category.

Vox AC30BM — Queen's Brian May in a box! Just one control: Volume.

Vienna Symphonic Library Vienna Instruments — the amazing VSL in eight VST/AudioUnits plug-ins!

M-Audio EX66 — I had a chance to listen to these monitors in private, and I was blown away by the sound and flexibility...and the price.



GSMS



RC50



Xpand



RADIUS



Rapture



Ensemble

—NAMM Report continued from page 3

SH201



features include track folders, new editing tools, Meter Bridge, clip-based volume automation, enhanced post-production features, and much more, including six new bundled instruments: BassLine (single-oscillator, 2-waveform mono synth), PolySynth (polyphonic analog-style synth), Modulo (subtractive synth), Nanosynth (sample player), Model 12 (drums), and Proton (2-op FM). Can't wait for this one! **Ethno** is a new ethnic/world virtual instrument delivering 4GB of instrument sounds and 4GB of loops. Sound-sculpting tools and convolution reverb are built-in.

ROLAND, with sister brands **BOSS** and **EDIROL**, had a very busy show. Just a few of the new offerings: The Boss **BR600** records eight tracks to CompactFlash cards; it has built-in effects (including COSM amps), drum machine, stereo mic, and USB. It can operate

off batteries for portability. Boss was also showing the **RC-50 Loop Station**, heralded as the "ultimate looper." It looks to live up to the title: seven footswitches, three stereo phrase/loop tracks, 49 minutes of record time, stereo I/O, mic pre with phantom power, plus USB for connection to computer. The Edirol **R-09** is a super-compact portable stereo digital recorder. Edirol also introduced the **motion dive. tokyo** video performance package, designed

for DJ-style video control. Roland's **Juno-G** synth sports the same processor as the famous Fantom-X series. There's an arpeggiator, chord memory, effects, and USB built-in. The **MC-808 Sampling Groovebox** has eight motorized faders and top-of-the-line sampling, sequencing, and synthesis features. The **SH-201** caught a lot of buzz at the show; it's an analog-modeling synth designed to be ultra-easy to use.

There was a lot of activity at the **GIBSON/EPIPHONE** booth. Epiphone introduced a reissue **ES-175**, as well as a new **Les Paul Plain Top** and the **Worn Studio Firebird**. The Epiphone **Masterbilt EF-500RCCE** acoustic was another standout. On the Gibson side of the fence, the **Digital Guitar** garnered some buzz. Also interesting were several new series of guitars: The **Goddess** series (aimed at female players), the **GT** series for giggers, the **Menace** series, designed to put some "bad" in rock and roll, and the **New Century** mirror-fronted series. The **Les Paul Vixen**, a weight-reduced

version for women was introduced, as well as the 3-soapbar **Peter Frampton Les Paul Special** signature. But the star of the Gibson booth was the amazingly beautiful **Jimi Hendrix Psychedelic Flying V**.

PEAVEY had the place rocking with the new **Generation** series guitars, as well as the rock-ready **Vortex EX** guitar, and the Dave Ellefson-inspired **Zodiac** bass. New custom coverings are available for **Classic** series amps, and the long-awaited **Classic 30** head and 2x12 cabinet were on display. The **Windsor** amp/4x12 cab caught my eye. It's a straight-ahead single-channel all-tube monster, at an amazingly low price.

For those looking for a guitar practice solution, the **TASCAM GA100CD** combo amp lets you play along with tracks, while providing an amp solution big enough to take on stage. But the big news at TASCAM was the **GVI** — a plug-in version of GigaStudio 3. Even bigger news is that there will be a Mac version of GVI... I can't wait! **GigaViolin** also put in an appearance; excellent violin sounds.

APOGEE turned heads with two new products: the **Ensemble** FireWire interface was designed in cooperation with Apple Computers, and offers extremely low



GVI

60th Anniversary Strat



—NAMM Report continued from page 4

latency and integration with Apple's Logic Pro software. **Symphony** is a PCIe card that allows connection of up to 96 channels of Apogee I/O to a Mac or PC.

The good folks at **FENDER** rolled out an amazing array of Strats, Teles, Jazz and Precision Basses, and more. The company is celebrating its 60th year with special **60th Anniversary Strats, Teles, and J- and P-basses**. The new **Standard Strat, Tele, P-bass, and Jazz Bass** feature many improvements, while holding onto what traditionally has made Fenders great instruments. The **Special Edition Jaguar Bass** is designed to be slung low and played with a pick, and the **Special Edition Koa Telecaster and Koa Stratocaster** feature beautifully figured tops on alder bodies. I was enthralled with the new **Super-Sonic** series amps; they offer two voices (1965 Vibrolux and 1966 Bassman) plus a high-gain cascaded Drive. We're talking great versatility. Head/cab and combo versions will be available.

The traditionally Windows-only **CAKEWALK** continued their move into the Mac domain begun with

Dimension Pro with **Rapture**, an amazingly powerful softsynth. Cakewalk was also showing the **PowerStudio 250** and **PowerStudio 660** bundles, pairing **SONAR 5 Studio Edition** with a 2-in/2-out and 6-in/6-out USB audio interfaces respectively.



EX66

The **M-AUDIO** booth was buzzing with the new dual-driver **EX66** monitors (they sounded great in the private demo I heard), and two new series of MIDI controllers — **Oxygen 8 v2** (25-, 49-, and 61-key versions) and **Axiom** (25-, 49-, and 61-key versions, each with integrated drum trigger pads). Also on display were the new **Sputnik** large-diaphragm tube mic, the slimmer and lighter **ProKeys 88sx** stage piano, and USB-based **FastTrack Pro** audio/MIDI interface.

ALESIS rolled out the **DM5** electronic drum kit, a 4-pad set with two natural-motion cymbals and hi-hat controller, the DM5 sound module, kick pedal, and tube support rack. The **IO/14** and **IO/26** audio/MIDI interfaces are compatible with Mac and Windows, and support 14 and 26 channels of audio respectively, as well as 16 channels of MIDI.

Satellite from **MACKIE** is a 2-part FireWire audio interface. The Base Station portion stays

CME was showing **Bitstream 3X**, a MIDI-based DAW/soft synth/plugin control surface with 35 knobs, eight sliders, 16 buttons, a joystick, crossfader, and infrared controller. The **GPP-3** is a triple-pedal for piano-like performance with a weighted synth or digital piano. The **Matrix X** is a mic/guitar preamp and 5-channel mixer designed to be the front-end for a computer-based studio, while **Matrix Y** is a 4-channel headphone amp.



VoiceSolo200

on your desk with all the connections for your studio, while the Satellite Pod can be removed and used as a portable interface. Mackie also introduced two new mid-format live sound mixers, the 4-buss **Onyx 24.4** and **Onyx 32.4**. The **M Series** stereo power amps come in three flavors: 2,000, 3,000, and 4,000 watts. **C4 Commander** software is a companion to the Mackie Control C4 control surface, and allows the C4 to address virtual and hardware processors and synths.

EAST WEST unveiled **Artist Complete**, comprising three instrument plug-ins: Artist Drums (with 5.1 surround option), Artists Grooves, and Artists Rhythm, featuring sounds, loops, and grooves from all-star drummers. **RealGuitar 2** (free upgrade) updates RealGuitar with Pattern Manager, hammer-ons and pull-offs, legato slides, and more. The **Elastik series** includes three new virtual instruments: **60s a GoGo**, **HipHop Underground**, and **The Resource**, a huge collection of beats, chords, licks, and percussion. **The Liquid series** adds three new virtual instrument titles: **The Voice 1**, **The Voice 2**, and **Horn Section**. **DPH EZdrummer** is a multi-mic drum sample engine designed to be compact, affordable, and easy to use.

The **YAMAHA MW10** and **MW12** Mixing Studios provide 10 and 12 inputs with four or six mic preamps, and can connect to a computer via USB. The **P70** digital piano delivers maximum Yamaha performance at a minimum price, while the **P140** offers realistic touch and tone with a 2-track song recorder. Both are available in black and silver finishes.

DIGIDESIGN pushed the **Pro Tools 7 LE** envelope with **DV Toolkit 2**

(plug-ins and tools aimed at video post-production) and the **Music Production**

Toolkit (synths and processors for music production), both of which expand LE to 48 mono or stereo tracks. **Hybrid** is a new RTAS-format soft synth for Pro Tools, combining the warmth of '70s analog synths with 21st century digital capabilities.

G-Sharp is a dual-engine single-rackspace processor from **TC ELECTRONIC** featuring effects specifically voiced for guitar. TC Helicon's

VoiceSolo is a range of nearfield voice

— Cont. on next page

000C-28 Andy Summers.

Jimi Hendrix Psychedelic Flying V.

—NAMM Report continued from page 5



GL2800



P8ENat

monitors providing easy setup for live vocalists. The line includes the passive **VSM-200P** and active **VSM-200** and **VSM-300**. Need 4-part harmonies in Pro Tools or PowerCore? You need the new **Harmony 4** plug-in. For reverb and compression, choose the **Fabrik R** and **Fabrik C** plug-ins, which feature innovative user interfaces.

MARTIN introduced the **D45 Marquis** with Adirondack spruce top, East Indian rosewood back and sides, as well as an ebony fingerboard. The limited-edition **Felix II** is an all-new follow-up to Martin's first Felix the Cat model. The **JC-16ME** Aura is a production guitar with a cutaway and featuring the Fishman Aura System for great amplified tone. New signature Martins include the **OM-45 Roy Rogers**, **OMJM John Mayer**, and **000C-28 Andy Summers**.

New from **PRESONUS** is the **DigiMax FS** 8-channel mic preamp with ADAT optical and balanced analog outs, and inserts on each channel. **FaderPort** is a MIDI/USB control surface with a motorized automatable fader, transport, pan, mute, and solo controls, and more. Offering 18 ins and outs, the FireWire-based **FireStudio** is the big brother of PreSonus' popular FirePod. It comes with the MSR (Monitor Station Remote) for headphone, talkback, and monitor control.

E-MU was showing the next generation **Emulator X2** and **Proteus X2**, which include new filters, function generators, transform multiply, "TwistaLoop," and much more. Emulator X2 includes "SynthSwipe," a handy tool for automatically sampling and creating presets from hardware synths — if you've ever tried to

sample a synth, you know what a tedious-reducer this will be! The **PS12**

Precision Subwoofer offers a 12-inch driver and 200 watts of MOSFET power. The **Xboard 61** USB/MIDI 61-key controller comes with Proteus X, and features 16 real-time control knobs and 16 program change buttons.

ABLETON's Live v5.2 brings native support for Apple's new Intel-based Macs. Live 6 will be out later this year with many new features and multi-core/multiprocessor support. **NOVATION** unveiled the **ReMOTE SL series** of keyboard controllers in 25-, 37-, and 61-key versions. Automap technology detects the software in use and automatically configures the sliders, knobs, and trigger pads. Huge LCD displays show 16 parameters simultaneously. The **ALLEN & HEATH GL 2800** live sound mixer offers 56 inputs, eight groups, 10 auxes, and a 12x4 matrix. The FireWire **Saffire Pro 26i/o** interface from **FOCUSRITE** has eight preamps, eight analog outs, and 18 channels of digital I/O. **GARRITAN** revealed their new **Steinway** piano sample-based software instrument, which was authorized by Steinway and Sons. **GATOR** showed the cool **Pedal Tote**, which combines a pedalboard with a carrying case, and an optional power supply so you can ditch the wall-warts. **MUSE** showed their **UniWire** protocol, which allows multiple **Receptors**

to be networked using a single Ethernet cable to carry audio and MIDI information. **RODE's Podcaster** is a USB condenser mic, while the **NT55** is a matched pair of small-diaphragm condenser mics in a custom case. **WECHTER GUITARS** announced the **5700 series** (**5711** Dreadnought, **5713** Parlor, **5712C** Grand Auditorium Cutaway, **5714** Jumbo, and **5730** Pathmaker with spruce tops and rosewood backs and sides) and the **6500** series of square-neck resonator guitars. **ARTURIA** expanded their line of modeled classic synths with the awesome **Prophet V**. The three **SSL** plug-ins from **WAVES** are designed to duplicate the response of the Solid State Logic 4000G console's Master Bus Compressor, G292 channel strip EQ, SL611E channel strip dynamics, and 242 "Black Knob" channel strip EQ. A visit to the **PARKER** booth revealed two new acoustic/electrics, the uniquely shaped **P6E** (Sitka spruce top with mahogany back and sides) and **P8E** (cedar top, flame maple back and sides). Each includes Fishman electronics for true amplified tones. Finally, **DIGITECH** debuted the **EX-7 Expression Factory**, which combines models of seven classic pedal effects (wahs, whammy, ADA flanger) with seven models of classic distortion pedals.

Need More NAMM?



To get a feel for the flavor and excitement of the NAMM show, visit www.sweetwater.com/publications/reports, and navigate to the Winter NAMM 2006 item. Not only have we included a comprehensive listing of the new products we saw, but we've also included a daily blog and live, from-the-floor videos from Mitch Gallagher. It's the next best thing to being there! Also be sure to tune in to our daily e-newsletter, *inSync* (www.sweetwater.com/insync), for more info as these products become available.

Have It Your Way!

Now you can receive *SweetNotes* in three versions: The standard paper version you hold in your hands, as a PDF downloadable from Sweetwater.com, or as a Zinio file.

What's Zinio? It's the latest way to read a document on a Mac or PC. Try it — it's the closest thing to paper you can find, but it offers the convenience and flexibility of being computer-based. Get the Zinio Reader and Zinio-format *SweetNotes* at Sweetwater.com



America's Next Top Modeler

There was a time when being a modeler meant that you were part of a very passionate subculture that designed and built exacting models of cars, ships or planes. In recent times the term has expanded to include sound. Of course, one thing about modelers hasn't changed, and that is their passion and desire to build exacting models — and ever since they turned their attention to guitars, modelers have made it a great time to be a guitarist.

Paul Reed Smith makes Waves

Paul Reed Smith has teamed up with Waves to create **GTR** (Guitar Tool Rack), an extensive amp/cabinet/effects modeling plug-in with an impedance-matching interface (key to great quality sound), designed to give guitarists, producers, and engineers some exciting alternatives come record-making time. To guarantee sound quality commensurate with the PRS name, Smith shipped his handpicked boutique and vintage amps to Waves headquarters in Tel Aviv and personally selected the tones. The plug-in not only offers a sound that will make you think twice about ever miking an amp again, but a number of virtual studio-production techniques.

Going Native

Native Instrument's ability to create exacting models is the stuff that songs are made of — literally. Designed for guitar tweaks, **Guitar Rig 2**'s modular structure makes it possible to combine any of eight amplifiers, 15 guitar cabinets, 10 bass cabs, and 40 effects in any order or quantity you desire, while a special Split Module allows you to duplicate the sound of recording multiple amps and effects. Plus, you can choose from nine microphone models and place them in any of four positions. On the hardware side, Guitar Rig 2's newly redesigned Rig Kontrol 2 foot controller allows direct control over any parameter you wish. It also serves as a DI box and USB audio interface.

One McDSP with Everything, Please

McDSP's mission is to provide dead-on emulations of vintage and modern sound-makers with a side order of expanded functionality in the extreme. McDSP's **Chrome Tone** amp and effects modeling plug-in does just that. For starters, it includes six distortion modes and frequency controls for fine tuning distortion tone, a full featured noise gate, compression and sustain circuits, low-cut filters, shelving and parametric EQ, a guitar cabinet simulator, and reverb. There are four different effect configurations available — Amp, Wah, Tremolo, and Chorus. Just to barely scratch the surface of Chrome Tone's sound-shaping options, you can use MIDI to trigger performance effects within the modules, offering amazing rhythmic possibilities.

You Need an AmpliTube Adjustment

You know the old saying, "You can never be too rich, too thin, or have too many amp models." IK Multimedia is certainly familiar with the last part, as any owner of award-winning **AmpliTube** will attest. The best part is that you don't have to be rich or thin to have an astounding 1,260 amp combinations! For example, you can blend models of a Fender® Super Reverb's™ preamp and EQ with a VOX® AC30 amp and a Marshall® 4x12" cabinet. AmpliTube allows you to select mic type, axis, and placement. AmpliTube Live let's you go virtual for live performance.

Environmentally Sound

If you do all of your guitar-work in the Pro Tools environment, you should be aware that Line 6/Digidesign's **Amp Farm 3** can be habit forming. Amp Farm 3 lets you to plug any guitar directly into a Pro Tools|HD, HD Accel, or Venue live sound system and instantly hear it running through your choice of simulations of world-class guitar amplifiers and miked cabinets. Amp Farm 3.0 works on live input tracks as well as pre-recorded Pro Tools tracks.

- >> Waves GTRNat • Sweetwater price \$450.00 • www.sweetwater.com/gtrnat
- >> Native Instruments GuitarRig 2 • Sweetwater price \$499.97 • www.sweetwater.com/guitarrig2
- >> McDSP ChromeTone • Sweetwater price \$399.97 • www.sweetwater.com/chrometone
- >> IK Multimedia AmpliTubeLive • Sweetwater price \$79.97 • www.sweetwater.com/amplitulivelive
- >> Line 6 AmpFarm • Sweetwater price \$595.97 • www.sweetwater.com/ampfarm



GTR



GuitarRig2



Chrome Tone



AmpliTube Live



Amp Farm 3

Grab It And Go!

When Sweetwater owner and President, Chuck Surack, started looking for a classy padded gear bag he could use to carry his laptop and other gear (like mics, cables, and sheet music) to gigs or back and forth to the office, he couldn't find exactly what he wanted. So he had our friends at Gator customize one for him. Almost immediately, people began asking where they could get one of those killer gear bags. So Chuck did what any smart entrepreneur would do: He partnered with Gator to put the bag into production.

Made of super tough Gator-Hyde (which looks an awful lot like leather), the **Sweetwater Gear Bag** has a padded handle and a removable non-slip shoulder strap. It has two good-sized padded compartments plus a file compartment along with another collapsible interior compartment, giving you room for anything from a portable audio or MIDI interface to a laptop or an armful of guitar effects. Plus it meets or exceeds all the strict new airline regulations for carry-ons.

While other companies might take a product like this and put their name in big letters across it, the only thing we did was mount a tasteful Sweetwater "badge" on top of the front flap. Check it out and you'll agree: This is the best-looking, most versatile gig bag available!

- >> Gator Cases SweetGearBag • Sweetwater price \$84.99 • www.sweetwater.com/sweetgearbag



Remodel Your Speakers, Not Your Studio

There are many factors that affect how a mix translates from system to system. But no matter how well the mics were placed, or how great the performances, room acoustics and the monitors being used in the mixing room are arguably the most critical factors that cause a mix to translate poorly. Most of us don't have the luxury of having studio designer extraordinaire Russ Berger custom design an acoustically perfect monitoring space. But what if you could adjust your monitors to compensate for a properly treated, or untreated room?

Using JBL's RMC™ Room Mode Correction system, each speaker — whether two for stereo or five for surround — automatically analyzes and compensates for problems caused by low-frequency standing waves and proximity to boundaries. The process is remarkably simple; just plug the LSR4300 calibration microphone into the speaker and push a button — the **LSR4300** meter provides a reference of the output from each speaker in the system. The result is a calibrated listening environment where the monitors truly work in harmony with the room. This creates a stunningly clear and articulate sound stage enabling reliable mixes that translate faithfully to the outside world.

Since a small studio may lack the space to position speakers at the optimal distance from the mix position, the system is automatically aligned so the sound arriving at the mix position from each speaker is synchronized, producing precise

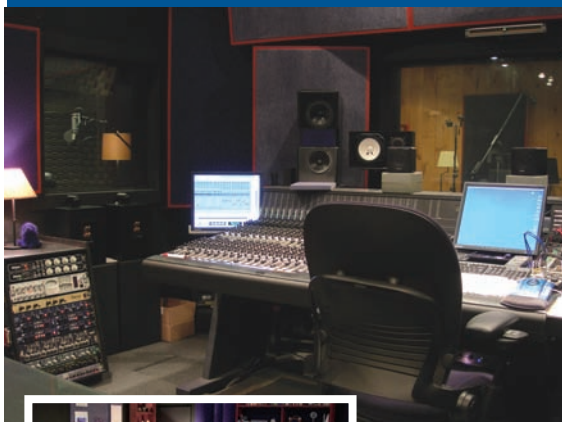
imaging. Adjustment of all parameters can be made via each speaker's front panel, by infrared remote control, or with JBL's Control Center Software (Mac/PC). The LSR4300 monitor provides accurate mixes in any workspace, and is priced well within the reach of any project studio.

Since the company's inception in 1927, the name JBL has been associated with excellence, innovation, and superior sound quality. Live, JBL became the sound of Woodstock and other major rock festivals. JBL studio monitors were ranked first in a U.S. recording industry survey by Billboard. Here's what Chuck Surack, Sweetwater's Founder and President, has to say about JBL: "After 27 years in the studio and retail music technology business, I've listened to hundreds of monitors and seen a lot of technology come and go. The bottom line is I started with JBLs, and have trusted JBL speakers in my studios for years."

>> **JBL LSR4326Ppak • Sweetwater price \$1149.97 • www.sweetwater.com/lsr4300**



Customer Studio: **Thomas Eaton Recording**



When Thomas Eaton composes, the result is densely layered electronic music that reflects the influence of Tangerine Dream. However, when Eaton records, the project is likely to be an acoustic ensemble or a singer/songwriter. That's the music he built Thomas Eaton Recording (Newburyport, MA) to capture.

"My focus is primarily on producing and recording folk, roots, and acoustic music," Tom says. "I typically help solo artists gather a group of great musicians for sessions where together we turn a basic idea into a finished product. Many world-class players are in the Greater Boston area, and I tend to serve as a connection to that talent pool."

Eaton's studio is a 1,200-square-foot facility with 10-foot ceilings and a homey vibe. He offers clients multiple digital recording platforms: Pro Tools, Digital Performer, Nuendo, and RADAR. An Otari Elite console combines the ease and flexibility of digital with an analog mix.

There are more than 90 microphones in-house. Eaton installed a Hear Back monitoring system purchased from Sweetwater to provide personal monitor mixers for each musician. Other Sweetwater-bought gear includes a Universal Audio 2-610, an Empirical Labs Distressor, and a Royer R121 ribbon mic. On the software side, Eaton has added Spectrasonics Atmosphere and Stylus RMX to his setup. "I've been a customer of [Sweetwater Sales Engineer] Dave Brow's for years," he says. Brow adds, "Tom is really focused on quality. When he adds a piece of gear to his studio, you know it's going to enhance the service he gives his clients." It's working; Eaton's studio was recently named one of the top ten studios in the country for under \$100/hour in *Performing Songwriter* magazine.

Visit Thomas Eaton Recording at www.thomaseaton.com.

Want to see your studio in SweetNotes? Email photos to Mitch Gallagher now! (mitch_gallagher@sweetwater.com)



Sony PCM-D1



TASCAM HD-P2

M-Audio
MicroTrack 24/96

Marantz PMD670

Hit the Road, Jack!

Edirol R-09



There was a time when location work meant renting a recording truck, loading it with a tape machine and mixer, running snakes and cables everywhere to get everything miked up, and so on. There was nothing horribly convenient about it; in fact a famous song was written about a recording truck going up in flames! Then came the days of digital, which simplified things slightly from the analog days, yet still involved dragging quite a bit of stuff to the venue. As technology progresses the size of portable recorders shrinks, with the current crop coming in at sizes comparable to a trade paperback. Gone are the days of lugging a laptop, mics, and a rack of gear with you to do a location recording. With this new generation of portable recorders, many with mics built in, there's no reason to take a ton of gear with you to get a top-notch recording.

Sony breaks new ground with the **PCM-D1**. Housed in a rugged titanium case, it's capable of 24-bit/96kHz audio capture to a built-in 4GB flash memory, with a Memory Stick Pro slot for added storage. The real showstoppers on the PCM-D1 are the built-in pair of electret condenser microphones in a handy XY configuration, which makes it ideal for live recording of acoustic guitar, string quartets, or small choirs.

The latest inheritor of TASCAM's PortaStudio legacy, the **HD-P2** records at sample rates up to 192kHz to Compact Flash media cards. Along with balanced XLR in and phantom power, it's equipped with a built-in microphone for maximum portability. The ability to lock to SMPTE/LTC timecode makes this an ideal unit for broadcast journalism, ENG, location recording — anywhere audio needs to be synced to video.

Ready for any situation from live music to a desktop interview, the Edirol **R-1** is equipped with dual omnidirectional electret microphones and operating with virtually no self-noise. It records 24-bit/44.1kHz to Compact Flash — and just on the heels of NAMM, the forthcoming **R-09** boasts many of the convenient features of the R-1 at half the size!

Taking remote recording efficiency to the next level the M-Audio **MicroTrack 24/96** recharge via bus power while you transfer files to your computer. With two 1/4" TRS mic/line inputs with phantom power and 24-bit/96kHz capabilities, you'll find countless uses for this little box.

With no moving parts and a built-in mic, the Marantz **PMD670** offers convenient one-touch, digital recording of 70-plus hours on a 1GB Compact Flash card or Microdrive. It's perfect

for recording long meetings, field interviews, and more.

As you can see, there's no shortage of options out there when it comes to portability, convenience, and quality recording. As technology progresses, better things come in smaller packages!

- >> **SONY PCM-D1** • Sweetwater price \$1,849.97 • www.sweetwater.com/pcm-d1
- >> **TASCAM HD-P2** • Sweetwater price \$999.97 • www.sweetwater.com/DH-P2
- >> **Edirol R-09** • Sweetwater price \$399.97 • www.sweetwater.com/r09
- >> **M-Audio MicroTrack 24/96** • Sweetwater price \$399.97 • www.sweetwater.com/microtrack
- >> **Marantz PMD670** • Sweetwater price \$699.97 • www.sweetwater.com/pmd670

10 Tips For Creating Better Podcasts

The 21st century has brought about technological advancements that are nearly mind-blowing. The Apple iPod has revolutionized portable music, and its influence has morphed into broadcast journalism, turning your average, everyday Joe into a nationwide media superstar via podcasting. (Check out the last issue of *SweetNotes* and visit Sweetwater Podcast Central at Sweetwater.com for information on how to create a podcast.) The following ten tips can help you create interesting and professional-sounding podcasts, and kick start your rise to the top of independent media.

1. Choose a topic you're passionate about

— You're not going to be able to create an interesting podcast about something you're not deeply inspired by... and if your heart's not in it, your listeners will know!

2. Keep your focus

— When you get in front of a microphone, it's easy to have the topic drift all over the place. Though this can be interesting, it may make it hard to hold onto listeners.

3. Strive for great audio quality

— The big things are to avoid distortion, not compress too heavily, use EQ sparingly, and make sure any voiceovers are clearly audible against background music. Remove any clicks, pops, or noise from your audio, as well as dead space.

4. Keep the length down

— We live in the age of short attention spans. Try to stay at 30 minutes or under; 10 or 15 minutes is even safer. Remember

that you can spread your program out over several installments and keep the listeners wanting more.

5. Pace it

— Record your podcast, then listen back for pacing before you upload it. Try to achieve an easy, comfortable speaking pace that listeners can focus on for extended periods of time.

6. Plan what you're going to say

— While it can be fun to "free-style" a podcast, your listeners may get more out of it if you have a clear plan in mind for what you're going to cover.

7. Add interesting transitions

— If your podcast consists of different sections or "segments," use music or signature sounds to transition from segment to segment. Listen to the radio to hear how the "pros" do it.

8. Create a "donut"

— Find or put together identifiable music or sound that you can use as the intro and outro for your podcasts. This opening

and closing material will quickly become your trademark, so choose carefully.

9. Clean it up

— When you're listening to yourself in #5 above, be on the lookout for annoying habits, such as saying "um," "uh," "like," or other things too much.

10. Be yourself!

— Remember your audience downloaded your podcast to hear you. Be yourself, don't worry about following the rules (even these rules), and above all, have fun!

Finally, be careful to observe proper copyright — using someone else's music or sounds in your podcast without permission can land you in hot water! And remember that you can upload your podcasts free of charge to Sweetwater Podcast Central at Sweetwater.com/podcasting for your listeners to hear!



Last issue I mentioned some of the milestones we passed at Sweetwater during 2005, and how grateful all of us are for your support — without our friends and customers we wouldn't be here at all. Now we have even more to be thankful for: Sweetwater has been named the Indie Retailer Of The Year in the December 2005 issue of *Music Inc.* magazine. We won this honor once before in 1999, and we're so proud to be a repeat winner!

The recent Winter NAMM show in Anaheim saw us bring home a number of manufacturer awards as well: Eventide and Kurzweil both named us Dealer of the Year, Monster Cable cited us for Monstrously Outstanding Achievements in Sales and Marketing on the Internet, and Ilio gave us their first ever "Rocket" award in the Internet/Mail Order retailer category.

As great as it is to receive these awards, it only makes us want to work even harder to improve what we do. We want to provide you with the absolute best possible service, support, added benefits, and prices we can, so we can win the award that we value most of all: your business. I just can't express enough how much we appreciate it when you

choose to spend your hard-earned dollars on a purchase with us. I said it last issue, and I'll repeat it now: Thank you for your support and business.

NAMM

Speaking of NAMM, we just got off the plane returning from the annual Winter NAMM tradeshow in Anaheim, California. Winter NAMM is the industry's biggest U.S. show, with the main focus being on musical instruments, though music technology and recording are a big part of what is on exhibit there as well. I was talking to our Editorial Director Mitch Gallagher at the show, reminiscing about some of the early NAMMs that I attended. (Sweetwater is about to enter its 28th year in business, so that should give you an idea of how many I've been to...) What amazes me is that, even after all those years of going to NAMM shows (and Summer NAMMs, AES shows, and more), I still come away from the show feeling

excited about the year to come. There are always so many new products on display, there's lots of music being played in the booths and at NAMM events, and there are always interesting new manufacturers exhibiting items that catch my eye. It's a lot of fun, and it makes me want to get back to my own studio and work on music!

This year's show was no different, and as you can see from our NAMM coverage in this issue, as well as our comprehensive NAMM report at Sweetwater.com, there was an array of new things to check out at the Anaheim Convention Center. (By the way, be sure to check out Mitch's live videos from the show at our site; they'll give you a good idea of the flavor and excitement of the 4-day event.)

We've already started receiving many of the new NAMM products covered in our reports into stock, and we'll see a lot more in the next few months. I hope that you'll check out some of the new products... it just gets easier and easier to create great-sounding music no matter whether you're working at home, in a professional studio, or on stage. Enjoy!



Peavey Amps Rock

I've been using Peavey amps as part of my guitar sound for many years. In fact, the first "real" amp I ever bought was a 2x12 Classic, way back in 1978. Since then I've owned a succession of Peaveys; Specials, Renowns, Encores, and more. Currently, my amp collection includes a tweed 4x10 Classic 50, and a compact

Classic 20 — for the past 10 years or so, these have been my main gigging amps because of their portability, durability, flexibility, cost-effectiveness, and great tube tone. Despite being a Peavey fan, when they joined the Sweetwater family of



manufacturers, I had no idea of the extent and diversity of the company's guitar amp offerings.

The **Bandit 112** and **Envoy 110** solid-state models are perfect for practice, rehearsal, or stage use, with plenty of power and tone at wonderfully affordable prices. For low-volume practice, the 10-watt **Backstage** or 15-watt **Rage 158** can't be beat.

The TransTube series, including the **TransTube 110, 112, 212, and 258**, bring the reliability of solid-state to amazingly authentic tube tonality. Built-in digital effects make this series the complete onstage solution to guitar tone.

For singing all-tube tone, check out the aforementioned **Classic** series (including the brand-new **Classic 30** head), or the down-home **Delta Blues** models. To take that all-tube performance to the boutique amp level, you need the **ValveKing**, which has hot-rod sounds, and can sweep between Class A and Class A/B power amp structures.

If you're after rock or metal crunch, then prepare yourself to experience the awesome 120-watt, 3-channel **Triple XXX** head and matching 4x12 cabs or the monstrous **XXL** head, which has switchable 25-, 50-, and 100-watt operation. For the ultimate in flexibility, check out the **Penta**, a single-channel tube amp with five totally different personalities courtesy of its selectable EQ/gain voicings.

If you're after your favorite artist's tone, check out Dweezil Zappa's **Wiggy** (I was privileged to have Dweezil himself demo this for me in Frank Zappa's studio not long ago — we're talking great sound!) or one of my new favorites, the shredder-approved Joe Satriani **JSX** models. Serious gain, serious power, and serious guitar tone! —Mitch Gallagher



Flyin' Solo



Bill Putnam Sr. — legendary recording engineer, studio designer, and inventor — founded Universal Audio in the 1950s. A favorite engineer of Frank Sinatra, Nat King Cole, Ray Charles, and many other music icons of the time, he designed and operated studios that were acclaimed for their distinctive sound and that gave him an environment to test and refine the analog processors that made Universal Audio gear a studio staple.

After his death in 1989, his sons reformed the company to build recording equipment based on the principles their father held dear.

The newest members of the UA line are the **Solo/110** and **Solo/610**, solid-state and all-tube preamps/DIs. With the Solo series, you get the best of Universal Audio's preamp designs in a single-channel format. These compact units are designed for desktop use, but their size makes them an easy fit anywhere. On stage, in the studio, or as the front end to a portable rig, the Solo series offers the sound and dependability audio professionals have relied on for decades in easily transportable units.

The Solo/110 is a solid-state model based on the acclaimed 8110 and 4110 preamps. It features uncompromised dynamics and clarity, has mic and DI inputs, switchable input impedance, low-cut filter, and more. It's tube-driven brother, the Solo/610 — duplicating the classic Putnam 610 preamp circuit — has the same features with additional mic/line level input selection, and imparts the characteristic warmth that only the finest tube gear can provide. These little boxes are an excellent way to breathe new life into your mic locker — just plug in your favorite microphone, and hear it perform like you never have before. That's the Universal Audio difference.

There's a reason many professional recording facilities are loaded with Universal Audio equipment — it's some of the best gear out there. With the Solo line, the signature UA sound is attainable by anyone. Now you have the opportunity to bring the classic UA tone and vibe home at a price that won't break the bank, in a convenient, portable format.

>> Universal Audio Solo/110 • Sweetwater price \$799.00 • www.sweetwater.com/solo110

>> Universal Audio Solo/610 • Sweetwater price \$799.00 • www.sweetwater.com/solo610

Wired And Ready

If you're into guitar pedals, then you know the hassles: dead batteries, bad cables, noise and hiss, figuring out how to haul them around, and so on. Getting the most from your guitar pedals means wiring them up correctly, in the right order, and making them easy to transport and set up for gigs and studio work.

- For more intense effects, place distortion pedals early in the chain. This gives later processors, such as phasers, wahs, flangers, and choruses more rich harmonic material to work with, resulting in more heavily effected sounds. If you place a distortion pedal after another processor, it will tend to wash out the sound, reducing the intensity — which may be exactly what you want. Experiment with different effects orders, and use your ears to choose what sounds best to you.
- For the least noise and signal loss, use the shortest possible cables. This is especially important if you have true-bypass pedals in your chain — with true bypass, there's no buffer amp to drive longer cable lengths without signal loss. In any case, try to keep cables between pedals as short as is possible — 6" usually works fine. If you have buffered pedals, then you can run longer cables, though it's generally a good idea to avoid excess cable if possible.
- "L" plugs on the cables can cut down on space requirements over straight connectors if you're trying to keep things compact. If you're putting together a pedalboard, be sure to leave enough room to plug and unplug pedals.
- In many cases, you can power your pedals via batteries. While this has the convenience factor of not having to deal with wall-warts or power strips, you do have to contend with dead batteries — especially since some pedals turn on and begin to drain power as soon as you plug into their input. If you go for AC power, look for ways to get wall-warts and external power supplies under control. If you're using Boss pedals, an option is to add a Boss **NS-2 Noise Suppressor** pedal to your rig; not only will it quiet noise, it can power up to seven other pedals. The Boss **BCB-60** pedalboard has a built-in AC power supply for powering pedals as well. The newly announced **Pedal Tote** from Gator Cases is a pedalboard with a carrying case; an optional power supply can drive both 9V and 18V pedals.
- Putting together a pedalboard is the best way to ensure that your toys get to the gig in good shape. Not only does this simplify set up, since the pedals stay wired together, it also saves wear and tear on the boxes, cables, and connectors, which reduces breakdowns, cable problems, and noise. The boards from Boss and Gator mentioned above are great solutions; for smaller rigs, the Boss **BCB-30** (holds three pedals) may do the job for you.

—Mitch Gallagher



BOSS BCB-60

>> BOSS BCB60 • Sweetwater price \$129.97 • www.sweetwater.com/bcb60



Q: How do I delete Pro Tools Preferences and Databases for Windows XP and Mac OSX?

A: Trashing Pro Tools Preferences and Digidesign Databases can be helpful when your Pro Tools system isn't behaving normally. However, it's important to make sure that "not behaving normally" isn't just a preference you can easily change or even user error. Be sure to check manuals, check with tech support, and visit our online knowledge-base before resorting to these steps.

On Mac OSX:

Deleting Digidesign Databases:

1. On the root level of every mounted hard drive, go into the Digidesign Databases folder and delete the "Volume.ddb" and "WaveCache" files.
2. Go to: Mac HD > Library > Application Support > Digidesign > Databases > Volumes. Delete all of the files in this folder (they will have very odd names).

Trashing Preferences:

1. Go to: Mac HD > Users > (your user name, aka "the house icon") > Library > Preferences. Delete the following files:

- com.digidesign.protools.plist
- DAE Prefs (entire folder)
- Digisetup.OSX
- ProTools...v6.x Preferences (this may be either ProTools LE or TDM, and any version, such as 6.4 or 6.9).

Empty the Trash after trashing preferences and/or databases.

On Windows XP:

Deleting Digidesign Databases:

1. On the root level of every mounted hard drive, go into the Digidesign Databases folder and delete the "Volume.ddb" and "WaveCache" files.
2. Go to: My Computer > C: > Program Files > Digidesign > Pro Tools > Databases > Volumes. Delete all of the files in this folder (they will have very odd names).

Trashing Preferences:

1. Go to: My Computer > C: > Documents and Settings > (your user name) > Application Data* > Digidesign. Delete the file entitled "ProTools...v6.x Preferences.PTP" (this may be either Pro Tools LE or TDM, and any version, such as 6.4 or 6.9).

*If the Application Data folder isn't there, go to: Tools (in the menus at the top) > Folder Options > View, and select "Show Hidden Files and Folders."

2. Go to: My Computer > C: > Program Files > Common Files > Digidesign > DAE. Delete the entire "DAE Prefs folder."

Empty the Recycle Bin after trashing preferences and/or databases.

Indie Retailer of the Year cont. from page 1

2005, Kurzweil gave us their "Platinum Award for Dealer of the Year" for 2005, Ilio recognized us with their first-ever "Rocket" award in the Internet/Mail Order Category for "forward thinking" and sales growth, and the fun folks at Monster Cable gave us an award for Monstrously Outstanding Achievements in Sales and Marketing of Monster Products by an Internet Retailer. Pretty cool!

This all just serves to emphasize the validity of the fundamental business philosophy Sweetwater founder and president Chuck Surack put in place more than 27 years ago. In Chuck's to-the-point words: "You just do the right thing for the customer." At Sweetwater, we strive to treat our customers as friends and partners, and we've found the long-term result of that approach is a loyal supporter who feels comfortable doing business with us again and again. Plus, it's sure a heck of a lot more fun to serve your friends and to help them achieve their musical dreams, than just being concerned with making a quick sale.



In lieu of a tedious acceptance speech for these awards, we'd rather just extend one great big "thank you" to all of our friends, customers, vendors, and supporters across the country and around the world. We're well aware that we wouldn't have won a single one of these honors without you and your business. We're grateful for each and every order you place with us, whether you're purchasing a single cable or a complete state-of-the-art recording facility.

Rest assured, there are no worries that any of this recognition will be going to our heads! We know that we're only as good as your last experience with us, and we're 110% committed to making sure that each and every time you call, email, or write to us, you're getting the best possible service and support that we can possibly muster. We'll never stop trying to improve ourselves and doing all we can to offer you more and more of what you need to make the best music you can make.



As you may have noticed, we now produce more issues of ProGear and SweetNotes than ever before. In our ongoing effort to better serve your interests, (as well as the environment), we're initiating a program to guarantee that you receive only those publications you desire. Please take a moment to contact us if you are not receiving the publications you'd like, or are finding duplicates in the mailbox.

Call 800-222-4700



I was cruising our web site the other day and was reminded of (and knocked out by) all of the cool “value-added” things we do as a company for our customers. I have to admit; I’m so close to it that I was really taking this stuff for granted! Until I took a step back and tried to look at things from an “outside” perspective, I just wasn’t aware of all of the value-

added things that are offered.

To clarify, I’ll term “value-added” as any service we offer that doesn’t result in a direct profit for Sweetwater. We don’t charge for these services, nor do we expect to charge for them in the future. So, why do we invest the time, energy, large sums of money, and manpower to make them happen? It’s simple... because we genuinely care about providing our customers with more than just a box with a product. Of course, we hope that you’ll appreciate the effort and be more inclined to invest your gear dollars with us!

Here’s just a partial list of the value-added “tools” Sweetwater offers (this doesn’t include the normal “every day” stuff like having a knowledgeable and long-term Sales Engineer to help you with your decisions and making sure you get exactly what you need, free shipping, or *GearNet*):

inSync — Since 1997 on every business day, we have posted bite-sized industry news items, Tech Tips, new shipping product information and a “Word for the Day” pro audio term definition to Sweetwater.com in *inSync*. That’s well over 2,000 postings! A summary of the week’s postings is e-mailed to all subscribers every Friday. I know of quite a few universities who’ve made this required reading for

their students; there’s just an amazing amount of information in these!

ProGear Directory — Three times a year we produce and ship this mammoth product directory listing all of the latest products, as well as short primers on subjects such equalizers, mixers, digital audio storage & backup, hardware DSP, plug-ins, and much more.

SweetNotes — This is an information newsletter we publish six times a year, assembled by our Editorial Director, Mitch Gallagher (yep, that’s the same guy who was the editor at *EQ* magazine for years). *SweetNotes* is all about providing you with in-depth product reviews, the latest happenings, and some really neat insights on Sweetwater — like the one you’re reading right now!

Tech Support — We have a group of folks (not just 1, 2, or 3, but a bunch... many more than most manufacturers, in fact) dedicated to helping you when the owner’s manual just can’t fix the problem. They’re able to support your system so you can focus on making music or money and maybe even both!

On Our Website (I could invest this whole column on how we add value there!)

- **Expert center** — This is where you’ll find a lot of the things I’ve covered here. Check it out at www.sweetwater.com/expert-center/
- **Exclusive videos**. We have videos from factory (and in-house) experts like Roger Linn talking about the Black Box, Jerry Kovarsky (who helped develop the amazing Korg OASYS), and lots of others. We even have the late Bob Moog talking about his Moog Voyager.
- **Buying guides**
- **Gear reviews**
- **Feature articles** on subjects like “The Insider’s Guide to Virtual Instruments,” “How To Choose Your Next Marshall Amp,” “Configure Your Own Workstation in 5 Steps,” and more.
- **Discussion forums**
- **Monthly giveaways**
- **13,000-article knowledgebase**
- **Trade show coverage**
- **Monthly web themes** offering unique and valuable articles and insight from pros (like Mitch Gallagher, Craig Anderton, Nick Batzdorf, Jim Miller, etc.)

Guitar Setup and 55-point Inspection — That’s right, on all of our higher quality guitars (that’s most of them for us), we have a guitar tech run a complete inspection and set up to make sure your guitar plays and sounds great right out of the case.

“Quick start” guides for many products/product categories (like the microphone info sheet, etc.)

All-Access Workshops — We schedule regular workshops for our local customers. These include a recent Martin guitar showcase featuring the last public showing of their 1,000,000 guitar, a “How to” Surround Sound Workshop, sessions with Cakewalk, Digidesign and even a huge event “starring” Russ Berger (one of the top studio designers in the world) and sponsored by Auralex, covering Real World Acoustics and Studio Design.

Candy! With every order, we include a bag of candy (talk about a cool tradition!) for your enjoyment. Who knows, it might help your kids or significant other feel better about the amount of money you spend on your “hobby”...

I could go on, but the candy seems like a “sweet” place to end. Every one of us here at Sweetwater sincerely appreciates all the business you’ve sent our way. We hope that all the “value-added” things we do help make Sweetwater the kind of place you want to work with because you know you can trust us and count on us to take great care of you... we’re here to help, just give us a call!

Rock and Roll!

Jeff (VP of Sales)



It's hard to believe I've been writing for Sweetwater since 1992. That's about 14 years, making it the longest I've ever held one particular job. Just for fun, I dug out some of my earliest contributions to *SweetNotes*. It was interesting to note which products we were excited about in 1992-'94 and their prices. Just a few of the products I wrote about back then:

- The Kurzweil K2000 Sampling Option (Winter 1992). The K2000 (and later the K2500 and 2600) had an amazingly long run as the "top dog" in ROM playback plus cutting-edge sampling technology.
- Session 8 (Spring 1993) was the first Digidesign product that ran on the PC platform using DOS 5.0 or Windows 3.1. \$3995. Digi's AudioMedia II with Sound Designer II software (\$1995) for Mac II, Centris, and Quadra arrived in Summer '94, as did their SampleCell II card for Macs and PCs (\$1995).
- DAT recording was in its prime in our Spring '93 issue with the Sony PCM-2700 (\$2985), TASCAM DA-60 (\$5499), Panasonic SV-3900 (\$2100), and Fostex D-Series Pro (\$8500)
- E-MU's Vintage Keys module (Spring 1993) had 8MB of classic analog synths, various electric pianos, Hammond B-3s, and more. \$1095.
- Opcode's Vision software (\$495) got *Keyboard's* "Best Music Software of the Year" honors in 1993. Their \$995 Studio Vision package ran on the Mac II,

Quadra, or SE. Vision 1.4 for Windows 3.1 arrived in '94 for \$299

- CD data and audio recording also arrived in Summer '94 with JVC's Personal Archiver (\$3295). Blank CD media? A whopping \$20 each — and we were happy to have them at the time.

Today everyone takes for granted the fact that we can burn audio or data to a CD for about 15-25 cents! Our Mac IIs, Quadras, and Centris models have been replaced by screaming fast Quad Core descendants, not to mention models powered by Intel processors. The Alesis Fusion combines four types of synthesis, 128-note polyphony, a 24-bit sampler, and 24-bit hard disk recorder plus an 88-note weighted keyboard for under \$2000. The Digidesign Digi 002 Factory Bundle with hardware control surface and bundled plug-ins lets you record multitrack audio with 24-bit/96kHz resolution for about \$2195.

I don't know about you, but I'm spoiled. I laugh when someone asks, "Have you got a fax machine?" Thermal paper is just so, well, '90s. I'm happy to see it go, along with VHS tapes, 44MB Syquest cartridges, dot matrix printers, and music on cassettes. Who on the planet could have guessed that Leo Fender's Telecaster would outlive all these "modern conveniences?"

Even our vocabulary has changed. We can watch HD content on our LCD TVs. Acquire video via FireWire, then save it using USB. You can call me on your cell to remind me of a URL on the web. Our digital cameras store JPEGs on CF, XD, or SD cards. Our music downloads come as MP3s. In ten years we've progressed from megabytes to gigabytes to terabytes and even gigaflops!

Still, I remember just how totally blown away I was the day I brought home my TEAC 3340 four-track reel-to-reel and found that I could, at long last, play lead guitar over my rhythm and bass tracks. When digital multitracking arrived in the form of the Alesis ADAT, I thought life couldn't get any better. Now I can record an almost unlimited number of 24-bit/96kHz tracks using my dual-processor Mac G5 and MOTU Digital Performer.

It's now 2006 and I can't wait to see what lies ahead. Let's plan to get together in the year 2020, in whatever form *SweetNotes* may take by then, and reminisce about "the good old days." There's one thing I do know for certain: People will still be playing Telecasters.

Signed, Sealed, and Delivered

Gibson

Gibson has been building guitars for well over a century, making it one of the few manufacturers whose heritage goes back to the 1800s. During that time, Gibson has had several signature models, though they didn't always promote them as such. The best example is the Les Paul line, but the company also had Tal Farlow, Barney Kessel, Johnny Smith, and Trini Lopez models. Today, the emphasis is more on the contemporary music scene with new "Signature Editions" of some of Gibson's most inspired designs.

As an example, Gibson recently released the **Pete Townshend Signature #9 1976 Les Paul Deluxe**, based on a '76 cherry sunburst Les Paul Deluxe that Townshend had modified with an extra middle pickup plus two toggle switches for adding it into the mix. Gibson also released reproductions of Pete's **#3 Deluxe Goldtop** and his **#1 Deluxe in Wine Red**, as well as a **Pete Townshend SJ-200 Limited** acoustic. All have been released in very small numbers — there will only be 75 of each of the Deluxe models.

Other Signature Series Gibsons include the **Angus Young SG** and the **Jimmy Page Les Paul**, as well as a **BB King 80th Birthday ES-355 "Lucille"** and the Gibson Montana **Sheryl Crow Signature** acoustic. For those who want to sound like Larry Carlton, just get a **Larry Carlton Signature ES-335** and then study hard for about 20 years or so. Other models include those for Johnny A, Joe Perry, Lee Ritenour, and Duane Eddy. Additional models are upcoming, including the **Peter Dinklage Les Paul Special** with three P-90 pickups, part of Gibson's new "Inspired By" Series, which also includes the hand-painted **Jimi Hendrix Flying V**.

Why create Signature Editions? First, it's to honor the guitarists who have made a huge impact on today's music with their particular playing styles, but also to provide new instruments that will become almost instant collector items. It's doubtful that any 1958-60 Les Pauls are available today, and if they were, only a chosen few could afford them. These new signature instruments will become tomorrow's '58-'60 Les Pauls, so grab them now!

Pete Townshend Signature #9
1976 Les Paul Deluxe

Angus Young SG

Massenburg Masterclass

By Mitch Gallagher

SweetNotes reader Mike Venezia sends the following for George Massenburg's consideration:

"While I'm very good at creating mixes that are well balanced with regard to width (stereo field) and height (frequency), I notice my mixes don't seem as 3-dimensional as other mixes I listen to do. Nothing leaps out of my mixes. What are some common problems that cause mixes to lack 'depth' or '3-dimensionality'?"

GM: Without being able to hear an example, it's difficult to know what Mike means when he says his mixes are well balanced. Because what it takes to make an interesting mix isn't just pure homogeneous frequency content. I try to have things that are not homogeneous, something coming out of right or left or something that's musical in its balance.

When Mike says, "nothing leaps out of my mixes," what I see so many guys do is create a mix that's balanced to death. The mix is over-compressed, or it's EQ'd so everything kind of overlays everything else. But it's not musical, and it's not musical because nothing sticks out. Music is about being provocative. If you have something musical that breaks through, it can still be balanced in a larger window — something coming out of the right speaker in this verse, something coming out of the left speaker in the next verse, or some other changes.

There are two types of balance with any kind of mix: Internal balance, referring to the relationship of the sounds in a piece of music to one another, and external balance, which is how your mix relates to the outside world.

Internal balance is how a mix presents itself. Think bass drum and cowbell. Low-frequency component and high-frequency component. Clearly there are different stories told by the setting. What's the setting for the bass drum, is it in a beat-box van, roaring down the highway at 135dB SPL, boom, boom, boom? Is the cowbell a real cowbell? What kind, what size is it? The internal balance would be where you can hear both and they share a story, whatever that is. They share a setting. It spins a vision in your brain. You get a sense of time and place. I see the internal balance in a mix as not being so technical, I see it as more musical. An external balance would be, "okay, when I play it in my car, I can't hear the kick." Or "I can't hear the cowbell," or the playback circumstance is such that it just doesn't work.

So many guys muddle up the internal *and* external balance. What happens is the mixes don't sound very dimensional. That's because they don't allow things to pop out; they're over-compressed, or the arrangements aren't there — it's as likely to be a musical problem as anything else. Maybe the keyboard shouldn't play all the time; the keyboard should be sparser, and the acoustic guitar should only come in on certain parts of the song and then go away.

I don't think internal balance issues are always solved by technical gestures. External balance is more at the mercy of purely technical parameters — how your stuff relates to the outside world and how you find the least common denominators so your mixes work on the greatest number of systems.



George Massenburg reveals insights to Sweetwater Sales Engineers at a recent training session

Do you have a question for George Massenburg? Send it to mitch_gallagher@sweetwater.com



A Dream Come TRUE

A member of the Neumann USA family, TRUE Systems has had a hand in projects for some pretty impressive clientele, including Bill Gates and Skywalker Sound. They've built their business by offering audio professionals and enthusiasts products that sound amazing without costing a fortune, which is why we get so excited here at Sweetwater when they offer up something new.

The **P-Solo** is a new single-channel microphone/instrument preamp with the same design as TRUE's acclaimed line of preamps, including the Precision 8 and P2 Analog. Designed to be extremely musical and detailed, with a natural, open sound, the P-Solo is compatible with any microphone, even finicky vintage ribbon mics, and is well suited for use as a DI. This desktop model is compact and portable, making it a great addition to a live rig or as a control room tool.

According to Tim Spencer, CEO and designer for TRUE Systems, "Our goal was to design a single-channel mic preamp that provides high-end sonic performance at a cost-effective price for the serious musician or recording engineer... we feel that we have achieved, if not exceeded this goal."

A mic preamp offering transparency, articulation, presence, and depth that's also a great DI? No question, TRUE has come up with another winner. Call your Sales Engineer now for more information on this compact, great-sounding, affordable preamp!

>> TRUE Systems P-Solo • Sweetwater price \$599.97 • www.sweetwater.com/Psolo

Sweetwater®

music technology direct™

5335 BASS ROAD, FORT WAYNE, IN 46808
(800) 222-4700 • sweetwater.com

Change Service Requested

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SWEETWATER
SOUND

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Winter NAMM 2006.....	1, 3, 4, 5, 6	Universal Audio Solo110, Solo610....	11
Sweetwater Honored With Awards .	1, 12	BOSS BCB 60	11
Great River EQ2NV, MP2NV, ME1NV....	2	Q & A	12
America's Next Top Modeler	7	Sweetwater Difference.....	13
Gator Sweet Gear Bag.....	7	Technotes	14
JBL LSR4326P Pak	8	Gibson Signature Guitars	14
Customer Studios	8	Massenburg Masterclass	15
Portable Recorders	9	True Systems P-Solo	15
10 Tips for Creating Better Podcasts ...	9		
Inside Sweetwater.....	10		
Peavey Amps	10		

...and much, much more.



©2006 Sweetwater Sound, Inc. All rights reserved. All trademarks are property of their respective owners.



Meet Robert Williams

Name: Robert Williams

Position at

Sweetwater: Sales
Engineer

Start date: 01/04/04

Education: BFA
Painting, Arizona
State University, Music

Minor, grad studies in History of African-American Photography.

Where are you from originally? Born in Louisville, KY, raised in Denver, CO.

What was your occupation before coming to Sweetwater? Broadcast Automation Engineer for Encoda Systems.

Why did you first apply for a job at Sweetwater? My wife and I moved to the Fort Wayne area after the tech decline in Denver. Sweetwater was a natural progression to take all of my background and move it to the next level.

Foreign languages: Near fluent Spanish, limited familiarity with French, Italian, Swedish, and Mandarin Chinese.

Technical strengths: Windows OS, computer components, networking, signal processing/effects, guitars, and amplification.

Favorite music-related website(s): groups.yahoo.com, gearsutz.com, hugeracksinc.com, thegearpage.net

Instruments you play: Guitar, bass, drums, and percussion.

Gear you own: Various guitars, basses, amps, odd pedals and rack gear. Digidesign Digi002, Korg MicroKontrol, several mics, recording software, plug-ins, and virtual instruments.

Family info: Wife, Tami

Other stuff we should know about you: My wife and I have a borderline excessive movie collection on DVD, as well as music and books. We love to experiment with recipes and are both photography and art buffs.

Favorite magazine: No favorite, too many runners-up to mention.

Real-life hero: Monroe Fredericks.

Guilty pleasure of choice: Tivo-ing odd TV shows and movies!

How would your boss describe you? Hard working, dedicated, focused.

How would your best friend describe you? Dry sense of humor, a reliable friend who's fun to be around.

What did you dream about doing for a living when you were growing up? Sci-fi fighter pilot followed by actor followed by musician followed by film music composer.

What in your life best prepared you for the work you do here at Sweetwater? Everything prior, warts and all.

What do you enjoy most about being part of the Sweetwater Team? The routine is there is no routine. The exchange of information with the variety of truly interesting characters I come in contact with every day.

What is the most important thing you've learned at Sweetwater? With guidance, motivation and a lot of hard work, all things are possible.