



# Time to BUNDLE UP

By Alex Harrell

*Guitar picks and drumsticks and string sets, oh my! So many accessories, so little time left in the holiday selling season. But creating product bundles is one key to a jingling register this holiday*

The holidays can be as stressful for store owners as it is for shoppers. But one tried-and-true way to grab those extra holiday dollars is by creating your own custom-product bundles. These preassembled accessory kits come with all the trimmings, ideal for novices and professionals, students and teachers. Both supplier-produced and DIY bundles alike are an opportunity to upsell, gain customer trust, and keep your store buzzing with business all season long.

#### SANTA'S GOT A SIGMA

Senior Vice President of West Music, Ryan West, has developed a “build-your-own bundle” system. The Coralville, Iowa-based company’s core business focus is music education, and its clientele is mainly family members and parents investing in quality products for their children. By creating these bundles, West explained that he’s setting up his consumers for success.

“Making sure we are selling a complete solution makes the shopping experience a success for the customer and for our business,” he said. Here’s the kicker: When three or more accessories are purchased with an instrument, the entire purchase qualifies



Ryan West



A range of MusicNomad products.

for a 15 percent discount. “By allowing our customers to build their own pack, we [offer] the opportunity for them to create a bundle around a guitar that is not just at an entry price point,” he explained.

### JOY TO THE WORLD, MY SAX IS CLEAN

Yamaha’s Care and Maintenance Kits are constructed with various players in mind, although price points remain steady.

“Our kits are designed to have the basic cleaning supplies and lubricants that a student — or any player, really — will need to perform the standard maintenance that an instrument needs,” said Matt Kerns, the marketing manager for band and orchestra accessories at Yamaha.

While these supplies are ideal for any level of player, Yamaha expects that these bundles will be primarily for beginners or students. These bundles differ from instrument to instrument, and include products for daily use as well as deep-cleaning tools.

“We also include a printed guide that gives some general care and maintenance tips,” Kerns said.

Summerhays Music Center in Murray, Utah, features Yamaha’s care kits in its Christmas catalog and distributes them to its network of schools.

“The whole idea is that Santa will come in and get [the child] a new step-up horn and add-on care kit,” said Cris Behrens, store manager.

Summerhays’ best-sellers are trumpet and trombone maintenance kits along with clarinet, flute and saxophone kits. The company starts stocking up on the kits starting with the back-to-school shopping season all the way through the holidays.

Instrument care company MusicNomad is also working toward getting an instrument care kit together in time for the holiday season.

“It’s all predicated on our Grip Winder,” said Lisa Ziganti, sales manager of MusicNomad. “When that hits the warehouse,

we’re hoping the bundle will be sold in retail [stores].”

### MELE KALIKIMAKA IS THE THING TO PLAY

It’s true: ukuleles are still hot, and uke retailers have made sure to keep the revenue rolling in by designing DIY uke kits.

Andrew Kitakis, owner of the Ukulele Site in Haleiwa, Hawaii, crafts several bundles with tiered price points.

“Especially during the holidays, people don’t really know what to buy,” he said. “We put together a few different packs that combine strings, polish cloths and tuners — things like that.”

Consumers with a bit more pocket change or experience with ukuleles are encouraged to explore the upgraded bundle. The \$90 set includes a custom-made T-shirt with the Ukulele Site logo, a capo, and a book on ukulele fretboard roadmaps. Otherwise, Kitakis said sticking to the \$50 package is ideal.

### FOR THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOYS (AND GIRLS!)

Instead of selling manufacturer’s pre-assembled stocking stuffers, Jim Rupp, owner of Rupp’s Drums in Denver, makes his own goodie bags.

“I’ll make a bundle pack and kind of put it all together — a practice pad, moon gels, extra sticks and a beginner drum DVD,” Rupp explained, adding that the idea is to have all the products one would need to complete a drum set purchase, and have the customer pick and choose from the mix.

“We do this around the holidays because you have a lot less time, you want to move from one sale to the next,” Rupp said. “You want to say, here’s the ‘wham bam thank you ma’am’ pack.” **MI**



Jim Rupp