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## NAMM KEEPS ROCKING WITH BIGGEST YEAR

The annual convention at Anaheim (Calif.) Convention Center had its biggest year yet

*by Jessica Boudevin**Published: January 28, 2014* **Tweet** 1 [Print](#) [Text Size](#) 

*The NAMM Show comes to Anaheim Convention Center each January. (VT Photo)*

REPORTING FROM ANAHEIM, CALIF. — The National Association of Music Merchants' annual winter conference at Anaheim Convention Center, Jan. 23-26, marked the largest in the company's history. NAMM's continued growth is causing the convention center to look at expansion.

This year, 96,129 members of the music product industry attended the NAMM Show, up slightly from last year's 93,908.

"When it comes to exhibitors, we're en route to our biggest show in five years," said Lora Bodmer, PR director for NAMM. In total, there were 1,533 exhibiting companies representing 5,010 brands. The NAMM show is becoming increasingly more global, with a six-percent increase in international attendees.

Some brands have moved their exhibits from the trade show to individual meeting rooms, while

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others are taking up more space on the trade show floor. One such brand, Hal Leonard, expanded its booth by 40 percent this year.



NAMM's Lora Bodmer. (VT Photo)

The conference already fills the convention and, with brands using more space or moving to meeting rooms, NAMM is eager to work with Anaheim Convention Center to find more appropriate space for its members.

"We're working with the convention center to make sure the expansion they build fits NAMM Show's needs and our exhibitor's needs to stay

here in Anaheim," Bodmer said, emphasizing the need for more meeting and exhibit space. NAMM was also very involved in **the recent addition of the \$20-million Grand Plaza space at Anaheim Convention Center**, which was used for expanded programming this year including more than double the number of food trucks compared with last year. The convention center's food service provider, Aramark, brings in food trucks and arranges a revenue split.

Even with the 100,000 sq. ft. of programmable outdoor space that opened in 2013, the convention is still feeling the need to expand. "We're filling up every hotel and ballroom, and every ounce of this convention center," she added.

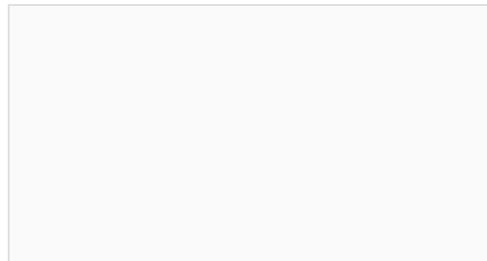
Though NAMM Show recently signed a five-year contract to stay at the convention center, Anaheim Convention Center GM Tom Morton said they could potentially look elsewhere if the convention center doesn't expand and the show continues to grow.

The convention center is looking to add 200,000 sq. ft. of flexible space that could be broken down into smaller meeting rooms or used as two large 100,000 sq.-ft. halls.

"NAMM used all of our exhibit hall space, all of our meeting space, and even the storage closets for additional meetings, which speaks to one of the three main reasons why we need to expand," said Morton. What he calls "the three legs of the stool," the convention center needs to expand in order to grow with the large annuals, attract larger conventions and run more concurrent events.

"Right now, with our lack of meeting space, we'll have a large group come in and use two [of the five available] exhibit halls, but use all of our meeting space," said Morton, adding that concurrent conventions won't schedule at the same time because additional meeting space isn't available.

Plans will be presented Feb. 4 and, if approved, the addition will begin in the summer and cost \$180 million.





*The Grand Plaza added additional programmable outdoor space for concerts and concessions. (VT Photo)*

Even with the proposed additional space, there is one concern NAMM will continue to address: noise. With five halls filled with musical gear and demonstrations, the sound level at NAMM Show can run high. Two sound control monitors are stationed in each hall, to ensure the volume stays at a dull roar.

“One of the analogies that we use is that we understand you’re buying a Ferrari, but you can’t take it out of first gear,” said NAMM’s Danny Delgado. Some exhibitors build soundproof booths on the trade show floor in order to allow potential buyers to test their products at full volume. In the open space of the exhibit hall, Delgado said that if all of the exhibitors cooperate, buyers can usually hear the products quite well.

“What can happen is one booth will turn their volume up, which makes the next one get louder and it becomes a chain reaction,” he said. “We get it, we know they want to demo their product and close the deal, so we have to find a happy medium to let it happen for everybody.”

Not surprisingly, he added that the hall featuring drums is the loudest each year.

Meanwhile, NAMM Show continues to add new exhibitors. This year 303 new exhibitors entered the show including video giant GoPro, which launched a new line of mounts for their cameras and even sponsored the main stage including streaming video of concerts in partnership with Marshall Electronics.

“GoPro came in and sponsored the main stage, which allowed us to turn the stage to face the entrance and create more of a neighborhood vibe when guests walk out, see the music and food, and funnel right into the space,” said Bodmer.

*The streaming station, which sent live concert footage directly to NAMM’s website courtesy of Marshall Electronics and GoPro. (VT Photo)*



Main stage performances were filmed through 10 GoPro Hero+3 cameras, with the HD video signals transmitted to Marshall Electronics displays and a Panasonic HS450 switchboard. The audio and video are converted through a Marshall PS-102 Producer Station and the performances are streamed to the cloud. Marshall Electronics utilizes StreamVu to distribute the content which is available to the public on NAMM.org.

Greg Boren from Marshall Electronics said that the partnership came together organically.

“GoPro offered to sponsor a stage and provide the cameras, and our marketing guy said that we can stream it through the web. We brought a lot of equipment and the technical expertise to put it all together while using GoPro’s hardware.”

He paired a GoPro Hero+3 camera with a Marshall WHD-1 wireless belt pack transmitter to send real-time HD video to the cloud. One more camera, a Marshall PS-541 box camera, captured footage of the crowd.

“We’ve been streaming since Wednesday, Jan. 22, with concerts day and night,” said Boren.

“We’ll save the video on a hard drive and make a copy for NAMM to do what they want with it.”

*Interviewed for this story: Lora Bodmer and Danny Delgado, (760) 438-8007; Greg Boren, (310) 383-5622; Tom Morton, (714) 765-8950*

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