

Summer NAMM 2004 departs Nashville with a yawn

By Daniel East



As merchants, vendors and musicians found their way into the summer session of the [National Association of Music Merchants' \(NAMM\)](#) conference, a common theme began to emerge: "Why am I here?" The noticeable reduction in vendor booths and attendees made for a particularly lackluster event, but some of the people, like me, were determined to make the most of this final Nashville show for SNAMM—final at least for now.

More...

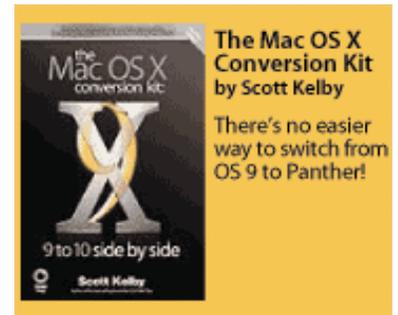
Next year's [summer session](#) will be held in Indianapolis, and word on the street is that, in so much as it doesn't seem like a "major music city," Indy boasts some 1,800-plus buyers in that market and could continue the more country music-themed event (whereas Winter NAMM is more mainstream and focuses on crossover music styles). Following 2005—and as if Nashville in July isn't hot enough—SNAMM moves to Austin, Texas. Yes, the sheep will be a little more nervous for a few years, but it is a major music city and home to other successful events like South-by-SouthWest music conference (SXSW).

Even as this was mostly about schmoozing, publications and instruments of all shapes and sizes, there were some key Mac-specific showings for me to cover for our "PC Talk/Mac Edition" radio show while at SNAMM. This is, after all, a place where sightings of Cinema Displays and Power Books are always the norm. Even our good friend Jay Curtis from "Your Mac Life" made an appearance at the [H.E.A.R. booth \(Hearing Education and Awareness for Rockers\)](#) on Saturday afternoon where their iTunes/iPod demos with professional [Future Sonics earphones](#) were a big hit along with free ear impressions for custom made hearing protection and monitoring devices.

I talked with Chris Douglass, Audio Specialist for [Edirol](#), about their release of the UA25 USB audio interface. "This new box has a lot of great features and works really well in live applications," reports Douglass. With on-board Phantom power, balanced +4 ¼-inch inputs and a compact design, it lends itself well to anything from live board mix recordings to remote performance applications. In addition, Edirol showcased their ultra-compact and portable 25-key USB controller keyboard that is just one inch high and under three pounds in total weight. The PCR-MI also can run on internal standard AA batteries.

[IK Multimedia's](#) booth was really a surprise as guitarist/tech support specialist Jason Williams performed some monster licks on his guitar - even creating live overdriven feedback - during his AmpliTube demo. This self-contained software allows emulation of almost any vintage or current guitar amplifier along with built-in digital tuner, and is available in both plug-in and stand-alone versions. Marketing Coordinator Jeni Karlieva also mentioned that AmpliTube is available in LE and full version bundles for Mac and PC.

MacMinute Headlines



A real gem had to be my visit with [M-Audio's](#) Vanessa Mering who showed off their new Sound Library "ProSessions" featuring loops formatted for nearly any application, including GarageBand, and offering an incredible range of styles and sounds for both Apple loops and workstation 24-bit refills. "We have also added a full line of accessories to our product list," Mering said, "with everything from cases and cables to USB devices and branded apparel."

One final item of note was [Bias'](#) release of Peak 4.1 for mastering and restoration. This new US\$900 bundle features their hugely successful "SoundSoap" and "SuperFreq" products in one package that provides a feature-rich product that continues to elevate Bias products in the prosumer and professional recording world. While I couldn't get close enough to the booth to actually do a hands-on demo, I'm hoping to have a full review available in the near future.

Along with the usual nightlife and concerts in a town where some of the best performers play in the smallest of places, there were some sponsored events as well. 90's pop-rock group, The Spin Doctors took over the auditorium (which is usually filled with vendors and left empty this year) for a concert at the close of the show floor; B.B. King's hosted Pearl Percussion and The Wooten Brothers later on Friday evening; and, later still, Curb Records' newest group, Feel, [Feel](#) performed a hot set at Mercy Lounge on Cannery Row. That was just a very small portion of the first night of SNAMM.

While the Nashville skyline won't be the backdrop for SNAMM again anytime soon, it is Music City and, for my end of the trip, a Mac-city as well. With more business seemingly done outside of the show floor than on it, SNAMM may be losing its foothold with more vendors reporting that they are already gearing up for Winter NAMM in Anaheim instead of planning for Indy. While I hope that next year's SNAMM lives up to the hype of the organization's planners, the success simply remains to be seen.

Daniel East is a contributing editor for Macsimum Perspective; president of The Mid-Atlantic Macintosh User Groups Team (MaMUGs); freelance writer, presenter and trainer.

Add Your Comments

Name

Email

Location

Homepage

Comments

Show email Remember me

Notify me when someone replies to this post?

SUBMIT

PREVIEW



DayChaserTM

econ
TECHNOLOGIES

The Ideal Calendar and Perfect Organizer