

# MMMR

MUSICAL MERCHANDISE REVIEW

## Where Are We Headed?

... analyzing industry  
prospects for 2007



*Joseph Brodmann  
Piano Group -*

Tradition, Innovation, and Value

Nine Easy Ways  
to Promote Your  
Store's Web Site



# Joseph Brodmann Piano Group -

## Tradition, Innovation, and Value



Since the early 19th century, the Brodmann name has loomed large in the history of piano making. Joseph Brodmann's innovations in design and craftsmanship had significant impact on the development of the instrument – as did Brodmann's tutelage of Ignaz Bösendorfer, who became the most storied Austrian piano craftsmen of all time.

Joseph Brodmann was among the first and best known piano builders of the early 1800s, commonly credited with greatly improving the necessary stiffness of the piano's soundboard, needed to withstand the increased string tensions demanded by the pianists of the day. Additionally, Brodmann's advancements in cabinet design made his instruments sought-after not only by musicians, but also Vienna's

high society. Examples of classic Brodmann instruments are still in working order in the piano collections of the Vienna Arts and Berlin Museums.

Ignaz Bösendorfer studied in the workshop of Joseph Brodmann from the age of 19, where he finished his apprenticeship. In 1828, Bösendorfer took control of Joseph Brodmann's facilities and began creating the world-famous Bösen-

dorfer Pianos. Examples of early Bösendorfer pianos exist that state on the name board, "Ignaz Bösendorfer, pupil of Joseph Brodmann" and "Ignaz Bösendorfer, made in the workshops of Joseph Brodmann."



*“We are confident  
our pricing  
provides excellent  
value for money,  
for both the  
dealers and their  
customers.”*

Brodmann's present-day headquarters is located in Vienna, not far from the original factory and only a five-minute walk from the city's famous opera house and the historic old town. Vienna, with its musical history as well as the heritage of Brodmann and his pupil

Bösendorfer, inform the way pianos are built to

The Joseph Brodmann Piano Group is a global organization with additional corporate locations in London, Hong Kong, and the United States. Under the leadership of Christian Höferl, a former longtime director of Bösendorfer, and Colin Taylor, who served as sales manager at Bösendorfer

continues to Brodmann this day. The





An example from Brodmann's historic collection.

*"We are looking for between 40 to 50 top-quality dealers in all North American markets ... we plan to grow organically as our production increases."*

and is a concert technician, the Brodmann Group is comprised of a highly experienced team whose aims are to produce the highest quality pianos.

This year at the NAMM Show in Anaheim, Brodmann will be exhibiting the largest display yet of its lineup of grand and upright pianos. The company expects to show wood finish models for the first time, together with a new player system. "Having established Brodmann as a serious contender in the lower middle sector of the piano market, we aim to build on this platform to increase the number of dealers we currently have in the USA and Canada," says Colin Taylor, president of the Joseph Brodmann Piano Group. "We are looking for between 40 to 50 top-quality dealers in all North American markets. As we currently only have a limited number of dealers due to our controlled, limited production numbers, we plan to grow organically as our production increases."

Brodmann pianos feature German-made Strunz soundboards in grand pianos and larger uprights. Additionally, the company makes use of Abel hammers and Roslau strings from Germany and Burkell pin blocks made in the United States. The company feels strongly that the combination of tradition, design, product quality, and price positions their instruments to perform

strongly in North America. "Our dealers tell us that they are successfully selling Brodmann against existing brands such as Yamaha, Kawai, Petrof, Vogel, and Samick," notes Taylor. "We are confident our pricing provides excellent value for money, for both the dealers and their customers. No other manufacturers provide anything similar to the Brodmann range: a European-designed piano using European parts in the essential sound producing areas of the pianos, and assembled in China."

"We believe that over the next few years both the European and the Far East piano industry will continue to contract and there will be fewer manufacturers in total," Taylor predicts. "Quality and value for money will become more important and those manufacturers who cannot provide this because of their historically high-cost manufacturing base will suffer."

In addition to introducing wood finishes to their range of instruments, Brodmann also will have the capacity to product special one-off orders in special veneers, one example of which will also be on display at the 2007 NAMM Show. "We have traditional styles of cabinets

available," Taylor continues, "but also we have a spinet and French Provincial style for the uprights, and a turned-leg style for the grands."

Currently, 600 upright pianos are produced per year, but the annual production number of 500 grands 500 is expected to double after the company's new factory is completed in June 2007.

"Brodmann pianos are still largely built by hand in the factory," reports Taylor. "There are CNC machines to produce the finishing of the rim assembly, but the pianos remain mainly hand-assembled."

Though the Brodmann name is rich in history, the current organization is still relatively young. Already, however, some high-profile artists are singing the make's praises: "I recently had my first opportunity to perform on a Brodmann grand," comments New York

pianist Hyperion Knight. "I wasn't sure what to expect from this relatively new line of pianos, but I was immediately struck by its beautiful luster

and high-quality finish. The action was so crisp and effortless that difficult passages seemed to play themselves."



Nameplate showing the connection between Joseph Brodmann and his student, Ignaz Bösendorfer.