

HomeBrew Electronics, Inc.
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HomeBrew Electronics

HOMEBREW ELECTRONICS was founded in 2001, when Joel Weaver began building effects pedals for friends and co-workers while working as an amp tech at a music store in Phoenix, Arizona.

“My wife, Andrea, and myself were building pedals one at a time and giving them away or selling them for next to nothing, just to see what people thought of what we were doing!” Weaver says. “Pretty soon, we had complete strangers asking if we would build a pedal for them; ‘Can you do it this color?’ ‘Can you mod it to do this?’ and so on.”

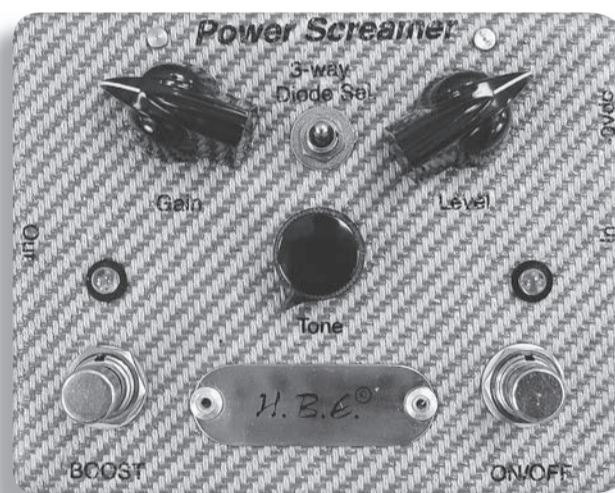
Then one day, the shop’s owner walked in with Charlie Turner, a sales rep for Upscale Marketing.

“Charlie liked what he saw, told me he’d see what he could do.” The rest is happy HomeBrew history! Today, business is rolling and the Weavers have their eyes firmly on the future. We recently talked with Jeff about that future might hold for HomeBrew.

Vintage Guitar: Was HomeBrew a full-time venture for you and Andrea

right away, or just something you did on the side?

Jeff Weaver: It was part-time for a year or so while I worked at the music store. Things took a big step forward, though, in September, 2002, when I sent a couple



of pedals to Charlie. He called a few days later and said he thought the pedals were “pretty cool” – that’s high praise from Charlie – and he thought he could sell them. He asked about backorder time, and we told him a week or two. He said, “That’s going to change!”

Charlie soon began sending us orders from dealers, and the business took off.

We started manufacturing pedals full-time after showing at the Winter NAMM show in 2003. Then it got *really* crazy! We couldn’t keep up – we’d work every night and all weekend and we just were not getting them done fast enough.

So, as scary as it was, I quit my day job and started building full-time. I tried to continue doing amp repair and mods part-time for a while, but soon had to give that up, as well.

How many pedals were you building to start, and which ones were they?

The initial product line was three pedals, the Power Screamer Overdrive, UFO-Fuzz/Octave, and the Germania Treble Booster. We just passed the 1,000-unit mark on the Power Screamer!

Other than Charlie’s involvement and the NAMM show, is there a point you can look back on as being when you really turned a corner?

As soon as we started shipping orders, we were getting feedback from dealers and users, which really helped us improve and extend our product line. We’ve also had great reviews in *Guitar Player*, and *VG* reviewed the Power Screamer and CPR. And, our great endorsers and dealers have given us great support.

But I think the biggest and most important factor is word of mouth, and that comes from the people who are buying and using our pedals. In the end, it does not matter what kind of hype or advertising a product is surrounded with. If the people you are trying to sell your product to do not like the way it sounds or looks, they are not going to buy it, and they’re not going to tell their friends about it.

So, how many models are in the current line?

We recently added our tenth pedal, so the line now includes the Power

others on the market?

We like to think that we are unique in offering a well-built, reliable product at a reasonable price. We don’t think someone should have to pay an arm and a leg for a true hand-built American-made product. All of our pedals use the best components; we start with a blank metal enclosure, then we drill, powdercoat, screenprint, load with parts, wire, and play test each one ourselves. We are also very proud of our custom colors and finishes.

Growing up, my dad was into hot rods and classic cars. I guess that rubbed off on me. I remember all the cool candy and metalflake paint jobs on those cars and have incorporated that look into some of our finishes. We also finish some in tweed, checkerboard, and even have a color chart on our website! Why have your favorite pedal finished in hammertone grey when it can be Candy Purple!

When did you hire your first employee?

We’ve had several people help us along the way, but our first real employee was Charlie. He’s now our sales manager, partner, and good friend. In February, 2004, we hired Terri Landreth, a longtime friend of the family who is now an integral part of the business. Like Andrea and myself, she has learned to do just about everything.

What are your hopes for the future of the industry?

We are very concerned with the way things are going with music in the public school system. Many music programs are losing funding or being canceled altogether. We think this is due to a lack of interest or desire on the part of the students and their parents.

Our goal is to help bring the awareness back that there are awesome musicians

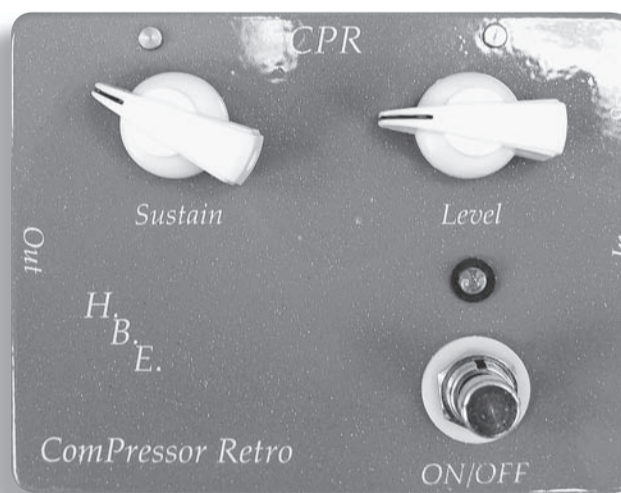
out there for kids to aspire to. If this isn’t done, there will be no growth in our industry, or it may just die altogether.

What are your goals for HomeBrew?

Our immediate goals are to build a shop behind the house with a powder coat booth, office, and work benches, so we can move manufacturing out of the house! Having everything in the house is very convenient, but it starts to consume you

after a while. It becomes hard to get away from. We also want to keep expanding the product line, and hope to soon have a phase shifter, flanger, and an analog delay. We’re also thinking about an amp.

As for the long term, we just want to be able to keep building pedals and doing the best job we can while still having fun doing it! 🎸



Screamer, the UFO, the Germania, the Tramp-Trem, the CPR compressor, the Big D distortion/overdrive, the Germania multi-frequency booster, the Dos Mos dual-mosfet preamp, the Uno Mos single-channel mosfet preamp, and the new Medicine Bawl wah.

What do you see as the difference between your effects and some of the