

smartnotes

the smartmusic e-newsletter



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A New Way to Prepare Students

The start of the 2008 marching band season is fast approaching and it won't be long before your students will take their first steps on the practice field. Wouldn't it be great if at the first summer rehearsal they already knew their music and how their individual part fits into the ensemble? Wouldn't it be great if you already had a recording or assessment of them playing their individual part, in the context of the half-time show?



At Northwestern High School in Rock Hill, South Carolina, SmartMusic® has been implemented into the band program for the past two years and the results have been great. Larry Wells, director, has been teaching band for 39 years. As soon as he saw the potential for how SmartMusic might impact his program, he immediately jumped on board. He purchased home subscriptions for all of his wind players in the marching band and the students themselves purchased the microphones. He has this to say about implementing SmartMusic into his marching band, "The financial investment we made in SmartMusic had a very positive effect not only on our marching band, but on every aspect of the band program here at Northwestern.

"Smart Music provided an opportunity for all of our students, especially the younger students, to experience success while practicing in a structured and enjoyable learning environment. We were able to learn music and drill at a much faster pace than in years past. The staff found that students were much better prepared for daily rehearsals. I enthusiastically endorse the use of Smart Music in any comprehensive band program."

Many of the students in the Northwestern band were able to practice their music over the summer, receive immediate feedback on correct notes and rhythms, hear how their part fits into the ensemble, and come to rehearsals with the music already under their fingers. One student, in particular, spent 90 minutes working on one small section of the music just so she could get it correct and submit a score of 100. The second time she had the same assignment at a faster tempo, she scored a 100 within five minutes. Would she have practiced that long without SmartMusic giving her the immediate feedback? Probably not! With these graded assessments and recordings, there is also much better justification for the grades that students receive for marching band.

What can you do now to make sure this will be your most successful year? Two of MakeMusic's products, Finale® and SmartMusic, pack a powerful one-two punch in the area of individual and ensemble musical preparation.

Here are the steps to make this happen for your program:

1. Enter your show music into Finale, or have your show arranger send you the score and parts in Finale. (It is extremely helpful and a big time saver if you can have your show written in Finale to begin with.)
2. Save the parts as assessable SmartMusic accompaniments in Finale.
3. Open the files in SmartMusic to create assignments for your students. This will allow to you guide their individual practice sessions so they practice what you want them to practice in the way you want them to practice it.
4. Submit those assignments to SmartMusic Impact™ (a web-based grade book included with SmartMusic educator subscriptions).
5. Use Impact to send these assignments to all members of your marching band. Those students without home subscriptions can practice their assignments using the school's computer.
6. Students will practice the assignments and then submit their recordings. The recording and grade will be directly entered in to your Impact Gradebook™.
7. Listen to recordings and review assignment grades at your leisure from any Internet-connected computer without giving up valuable rehearsal time.

By following these simple steps you can make musical preparation easier and more efficient. Having SmartMusic assess and record your marching band assignments and performance tests will enable your staff to work more efficiently during sectionals and ensemble rehearsals. With students practicing their marching band music at home and sending you graded evaluations and recordings of their preparation, you will be able to spend more time perfecting the show, not waiting for them to learn their music.

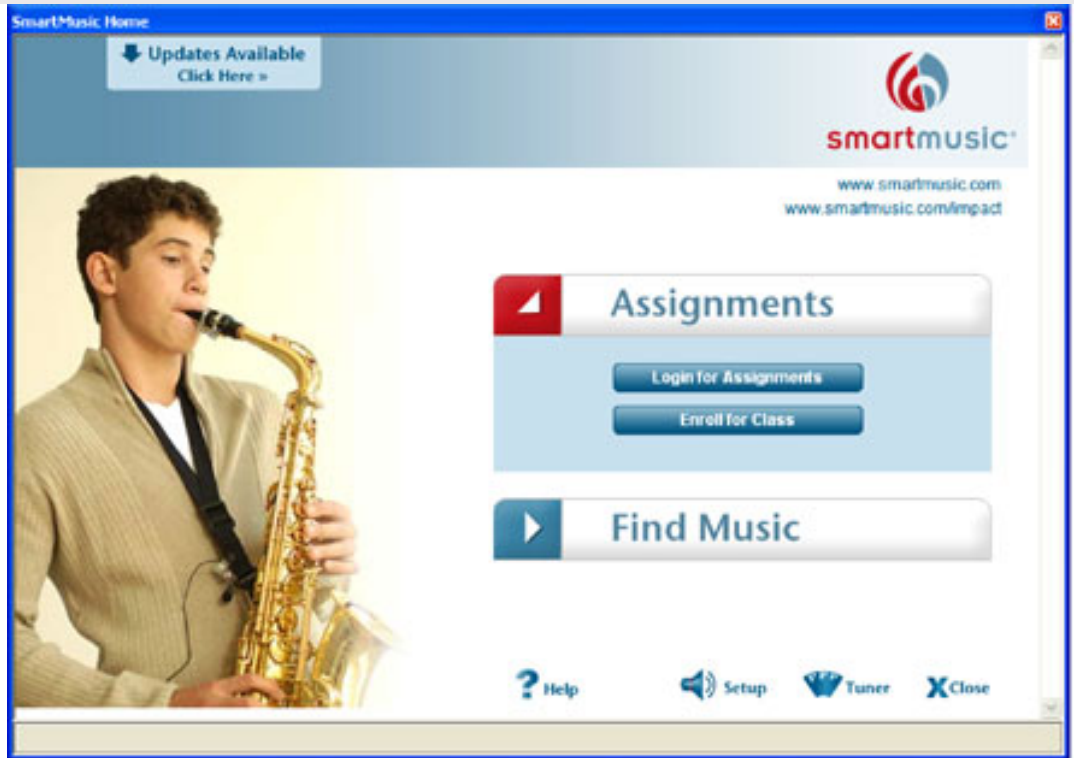
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What's New in SmartMusic 10.2

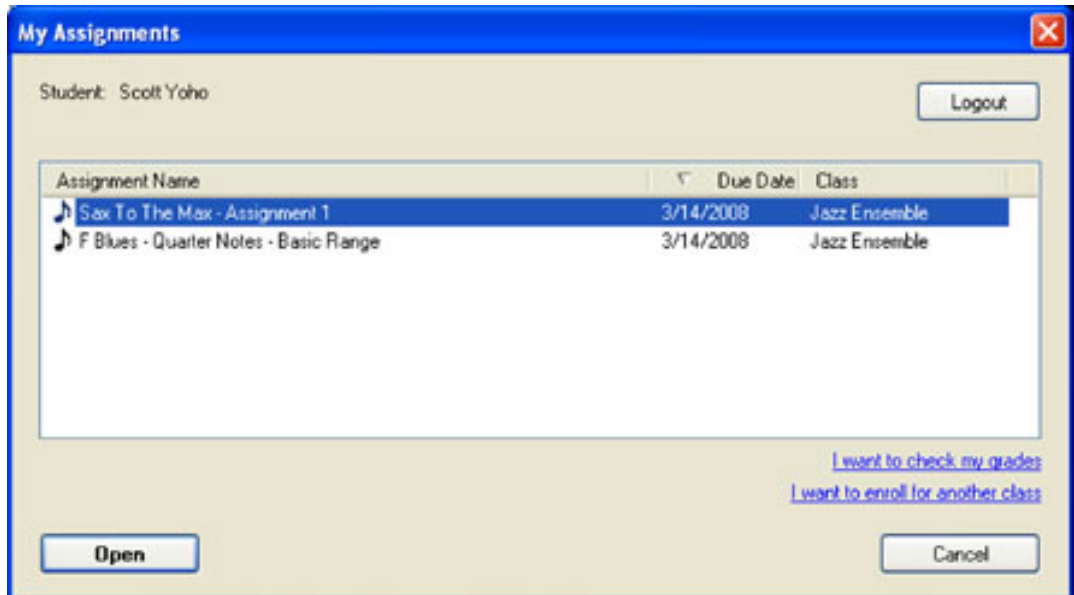
SmartMusic continues to evolve rapidly, adding new features, additional repertoire, and other advancements with each new version – all free of charge to current subscribers. By listening to customers on what areas of the program could be improved or streamlined, SmartMusic developers made several aspects of the program more intuitive and easier for students and educators to get started, find repertoire, set microphone levels, and complete assignments.

Home Screen

SmartMusic 10.2 has a new Home Screen that appears upon launch. It is easy for students to access their assignments and find music whether it's a concert band title, method book, solo or just some scales or jazz improvisation exercises.



Clicking on Assignments gives you the choice of logging in to view your assignments, or to enroll if you haven't already. In addition to clearly displaying all assignments and their due dates, the Assignment page now makes it easy for students to check their grades or enroll in another class.



Clicking on Find Music from the Home Screen gives you instant access to the wide variety of music available in SmartMusic, all in one place, regardless of whether you wish to work from a method book, practice some new exercises, search the music library, or simply play the piece you were working on yesterday.

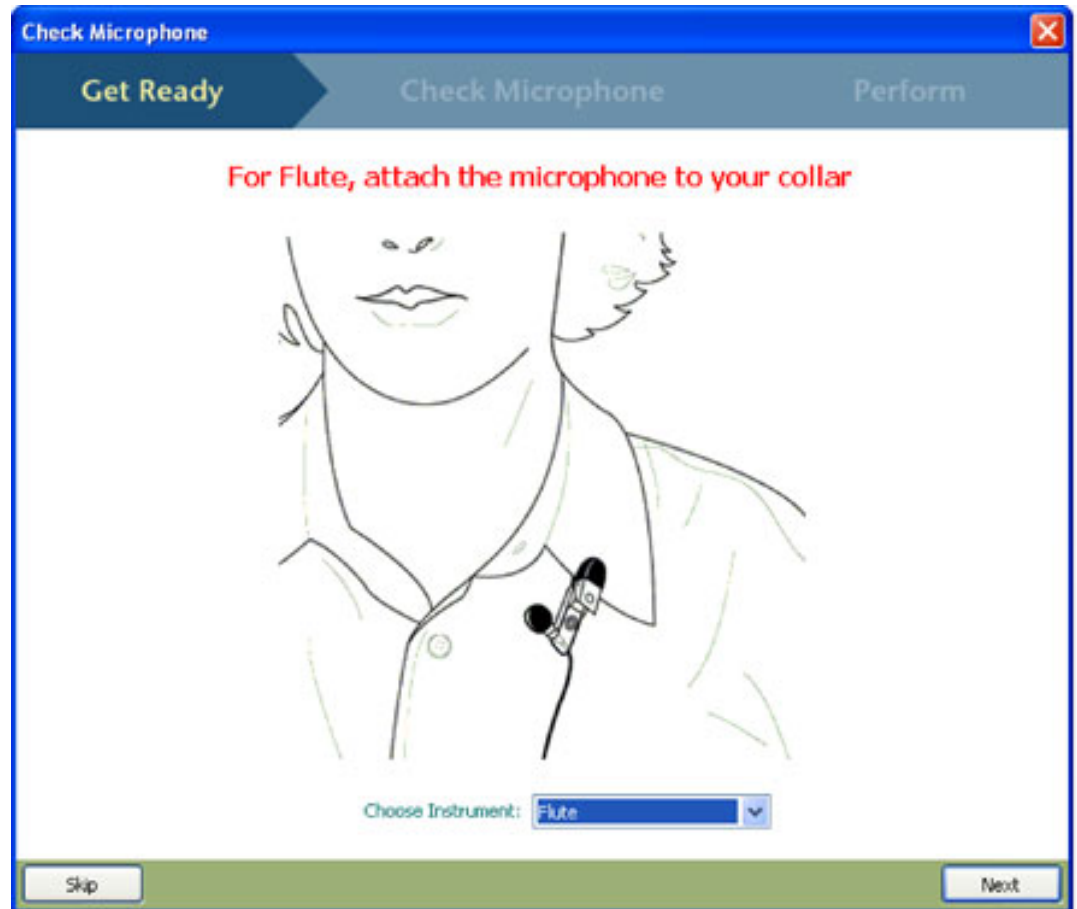
The Home Screen also offers easy access to SmartMusic's Setup Wizard, the Tuner, and information about application or repertoire updates.

Microphone Setup

Correct microphone levels and positioning are necessary for SmartMusic to provide accurate assessment and quality recordings. Optimum microphone placement differs from instrument to instrument, and not everyone knows how

to adjust input levels on their computer.

Selecting Check Microphone automates the entire process. Simply indicate your instrument from a provided list and your screen fills with a clear image of where the microphone should be placed on your instrument.



Next, a voice instructs you to play a specified note at *mezzo forte*, and as you do so, SmartMusic responds to your playing and automatically sets the microphone's level for you.



If your microphone is not plugged in correctly, SmartMusic will let you know that too, and provide clear images and other information to help you get your microphone properly connected.

Summary

The Home Screen and Check Microphone described here are just part of what's included in SmartMusic 10.2. By helping each student get up and running easily, SmartMusic 10.2 ensures that time spent in SmartMusic is time spent solely on practicing music.

Updates are free to current subscribers so click [here](#) to download yours now.

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Spotlight on Band Director Stephen Henry

"Industrial High School in Vanderbilt, Texas, is an extraordinary place to teach. The parents, administration, and community support the band in every way.



Like most schools, our band students are also involved in athletics, cheerleading, academics, one-act plays, student council, National Honor Society, FFA, and the list goes on and on. Our students are certainly well

rounded, but their time is stretched to the limit. Vanderbilt is also 100 miles from the nearest four-year college. So there are limited resources for private lessons.

So, how can Industrial students compete with other programs that offer more? Last year, the Cobra Band finished third in the state in the Association of Texas Small School Bands (ATSSB) Outstanding Performance Series. We finished 14th at the State Marching Contest as well.

SmartMusic and SmartMusic Impact have been our solution.

By using SmartMusic in my year-round curriculum, I have a tool to help students prepare for all of their competitions and concerts. Impact has given me the tools I need to monitor and give feedback to each and every student.

By making the marching music, region music, concert music, solos, and ensemble music available to every student through Finale® and SmartMusic, every child has the ability to learn at their own pace.

This year, all of my chair tests were done through Impact. It was an awesome experience, to say the least. I tested the students on the music we were working on at the time. They could see the assessment and choose to re-submit their test for a better grade, and I had a recording to listen to and evaluate.

Being a web-based program, I was even able to check on my students this past February while I was attending the Texas Music Educators Association convention. I could keep my finger on their progress from 200 miles away.

As things change over the years, I find that students are pushed more and more every year. The music student that is well rounded and versatile is pushed to the max. SmartMusic and Impact allows me to get the maximum benefit in the small amount of time that my students actually have to devote to their love of band and playing their instrument."

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Tips and Tricks

Did you know there was a shortcut?

SmartMusic uses a number of convenient keyboard shortcuts for common tasks.

Ready to start? Need to change the tempo? Need to tune? Want to know what the next pitch will sound like? Try the shortcut!

Spacebar	Starts and stops the music
Up Arrow	Increase tempo
Down Arrow	Decrease tempo
P or T	Play reference pitch/tone for the next note. Use this with Intelligent Accompaniment to hear what to play when SmartMusic is waiting for you.
A	Play an "A" to tune for orchestra players.
B	Play a "Bb" to tune for band players.
Ctrl+ /	Turn a metronome click with your accompaniment on or off.

Alt+Ctrl+S	Turn the solo line on or off to hear your part.
Alt+Ctrl+A	Turn the accompaniment line on or off. Use this with the solo line to hear only your part for tricky passages.

For even more shortcuts, check the Help and Reference manual under the help menu in SmartMusic.

Can I save the recordings and screen shots that my students submit with their SmartMusic Impact assignments?

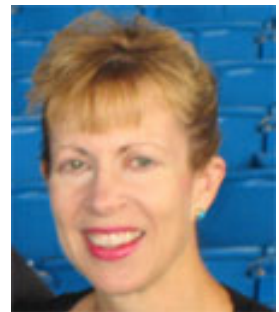
Yes! Click the Portfolio button that is available when you are reviewing a student's assignment on the Gradebook page. Follow the instructions to save a recording, assessment screen shot, or submitted attachment into a folder or any other location on your computer. Many teachers use this functionality to make CDs to document their students' progress.

The screenshot displays the 'Recording and Assessment - Concert Bb Scale Test' interface. At the top, it identifies the student as 'Dahl, Kelly' (Clarinet) with a grade of 99.8% (A+). It shows 'Time Spent on this Assignment: 2 Minutes' and 'Submitted: Part Submitted: Bb Clarinet'. A red arrow points to the 'Portfolio' button. Below this, there are sections for 'Scheduled' (Saturday, May 26, 2007), 'Reminder' (Thursday, June 07, 2007), and 'Submitted' (Sunday, September 09, 2007 at 8:50 PM). A message box says 'Now! Another perfect score. Remember that you can put your right hand down before you go over the'. There is a '100%' progress indicator and a 'Click to Enlarge Screenshot' button. The 'SmartMusic Assessment Points' section shows '10 out of 10 possible'. The 'SmartMusic Recording' section includes a progress bar and 'Points Earned: 20 out of 20 possible'. At the bottom, there are 'Email' and 'Done' buttons, and a red note: 'Edits to the Score and Comment fields are not saved in demo mode.'

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SWACDA Honor Choirs use SmartMusic

Laura Vaughan recently was the SmartMusic coordinator for the Southwest American Choral Directors Association convention. She implemented SmartMusic for a "first of its kind" approach to help prepare more than 550 singers from fifth grade through adults from seven states for the SWACDA honor choirs. "Using Impact made a huge difference in the singers' ability to prepare for their elite honor choirs," said Vaughan. The singers had access to user-created SmartMusic ensemble files where they could isolate their individual voice part.



Each member of the auditioned honor choirs activated their subscription to SmartMusic and each choir had its own set of unique assignments of their octavos. The guest conductors supplied the groups with diction recordings and audio performances that the singers were able to model as they prepared for their actual rehearsals together. Sponsoring directors were also able to

open the files and rehearse with the singers. As the coordinator, Vaughan set up a unique set of classes using Impact.

"The results were incredible! The singers arrived prepared and were able to begin polishing their selections immediately. The final concerts were just incredible!" said Vaughan, a music educator for 29 years in the state of Missouri. "We were able to prepare singers of all ages together BEFORE the event using SmartMusic to help them rehearse on their own." Practice Reports also helped those in charge of each choir to make sure their singers were rehearsing. The Honor Choir Chairs also used the Announcement feature to send out reminders and new information to the singers. Word documents were distributed as attachments using Other Assignments. Those included instructions from the grand finale conductor as to the designation of *divisi* voice parts.

"What a fantastic new way to bring together and prepare singers from Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas!" said Vaughan. The groups that performed were made up of the 5-7 Children's Honor Choir, 8-10 Boys Honor Choir, 8-10 Girls Honor Choir, 11-12 Mixed Honor Choir, Collegiate Honor Choir, and Community and Church Honor Choir. Many singers used SmartMusic to put their selections onto their iPods so they were able to memorize their pieces before the convention.

Quotes from singers in the SWACDA Honor Choirs:

"Thanks for introducing us to SmartMusic. It was a real asset and encouragement to learn the notes and rhythm."

Dr. Norma McClellan, Missouri State University, Springfield, MO

"The choral audio performances gave us something to aim toward, and SmartMusic gave us the means to achieve it."

Derek Boemler, freshman voice major, Webster University

"It was extremely beneficial to be able to use Smart Music while preparing for SWACDA. It made learning the music much easier and faster. Smart Music is the best learning tool for musicians!"

Kelsey Bell, Freshman in the 8-10 Girls Honor Choir Choir, from Blue Springs Freshman Center

"SmartMusic is very helpful for those whose only musical instrument is their voice. It's GREAT for getting notes and rhythms perfected."

Ian Simpson, 8-10 Boys Honor Choir, Liberty Junior High School

"The singers who used SmartMusic found it very helpful. The ability to have rehearsal tracks, recordings of actual performances, and diction recordings all in one place was a great benefit."

Jeff Sandquist, President, SWACDA

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Just Released

[New Band & Orchestra Titles](#)

More than 75 new concert band, jazz ensemble, and orchestra titles have been released in the last month for a total of over 750 ensemble titles. Search a listing of new titles:

- Click [here](#) and select an ensemble type.
- See a complete listing by clicking [here](#).

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Announcements

Price Increase this Summer

Starting July 24, all new and renewing educator subscriptions will be \$130 and student subscriptions will be \$30. This price change won't affect your current subscriptions until they renew after the effective date.

Interested in locking in lower pricing for you and your students over the next two years? Contact us at smartbuy@makemusic.com for more information on volume pricing – now available for a minimum of 100 subscriptions.

Have you updated to 10.2?

SmartMusic 10.2 adds support for Macintosh OS X Leopard, a microphone check wizard, the ability to record tuner sessions, and a new Home Screen that provides easy access to repertoire, assignments, and enrollment. Updates are free to current subscribers so click [here](#) to download yours now.

SmartMusic Impact Demo

Click [here](#) to preview Impact before you set up your own account and classes.

Upcoming Events

Come see SmartMusic at MENC National Conference, Pennsylvania MEA, Iowa Bandmasters, and [more](#).

Educator Resources

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Meet the Team

Leigh Kallestad is a SmartMusic Educational Sales Representative and is in his fifth year with MakeMusic. It is his job to work with large school districts across the country by helping them get set up and going with SmartMusic and Impact. Leigh also represents MakeMusic at conferences, clinics, and in-services.

Leigh started playing saxophone in middle school and soon wanted to be the next Paul Desmond or Jerry Mulligan. While in high school, he toured Japan with the USA School Band and Chorus under the direction of Dr. William Revelli. This experience, combined with working several summers at Arrowhead Music Camp near Barnum, Minnesota, was a major influence in pursuing a career in music.



Leigh is a graduate of the University of North Dakota and the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor. While at Michigan, he studied saxophone with Donald Sinta and conducting with Robert Reynolds. He taught band and vocal music in Jamestown, North Dakota, for six years and is a past president of the ND Music Educators Association. After moving to the Twin Cities area, Leigh was band instructor in the Mound Westonka Schools for 22 years. While at Mound, he also added classes in guitar and music technology. In 2002, more than 400

Westonka music students participated in a SmartMusic Pilot Program. That same year, Leigh's article "Incorporating Technology into Traditional Teaching" appeared in issues of *Bandworld* and the *School Band & Orchestra* magazines. A year later, Leigh began working for MakeMusic to show other educators how they might teach more effectively using SmartMusic.

Leigh and his wife, Mavis, were co-owners of "New Vintage," a six-piece variety group that played for private parties and events in the metro area for 15 years. Back then, they used the newly released Finale 1.0 to write arrangements for the group. This eventually led to teaching Finale and PrintMusic workshops, which were attended by many music educators and professional and community musicians from the Twin Cities and surrounding states. Mavis continues to be a freelance Finale clinician and engraver.

Leigh says: "The thing I like most about my job is that 'light bulb' moment when teachers see how SmartMusic can really help their students. It has been particularly fun to have teachers come back to conventions year after year to share their success stories. At the end of the day, you feel that you have been able to provide new tools to help students and teachers achieve success in their music making."

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