

Misty Jazz Records - Inventory Sourcing Guide

Internal Document - Staff Reference

This guide outlines our sources, strategies, and best practices for acquiring quality jazz vinyl inventory.

Primary Sourcing Channels

1. Customer Trade-Ins (40% of inventory)

Advantages:

- Local, immediate access
- No shipping costs
- Build customer relationships
- Control quality

Process:

- Evaluate using grading guide
- Offer 40% cash / 50% store credit
- Accept only VG+ or better
- Focus on jazz (95% rule)

Monthly Volume: 200-300 records **Acceptance Rate:** ~60%

2. Estate Sales & Collections (25% of inventory)

Finding Opportunities:

- Local estate sale companies
- **Contacts:**
 - Bay Area Estate Sales (contact: Maria Rodriguez, 415-555-8100)
 - Golden Gate Liquidators (contact: Tom Chen, 415-555-8200)
- Online estate sale listings (EstateSales.net)
- Senior community boards
- Attorney referrals (probate estates)
- Word of mouth

Evaluation Process:

1. **Initial Contact:** Get collection size, condition overview
2. **Preview:** Visit to inspect (if possible)
3. **Research:** Quick Discogs search for value items

4. **Offer:** Bulk price based on estimated value
5. **Pickup:** Arrange transportation

Typical Offer: 30-40% of estimated Discogs median (bulk)

Best Practices:

- Respect family circumstances
- Be fair and transparent
- Move quickly (competition is high)
- Have cash available
- Bring boxes and packing materials

Monthly Activity: 2-4 collections, averaging 50-500 records each

3. Wholesale Distributors (20% of inventory)

Primary Distributors:

Vinyl Collective

- Contact: sales@vinylcollective.com
- Specialties: New reissues, audiophile pressings
- Terms: Net 30, minimum \$500 order
- Discount: 40% off MSRP

Jazz Heritage Distributors

- Contact: orders@jazzheritage.com
- Specialties: Classic jazz reissues, European pressings
- Terms: Net 30, minimum \$1,000 order
- Discount: 45% off MSRP

Acoustic Sounds

- Contact: wholesale@acousticsounds.com
- Specialties: Analogue Productions, Music Matters, premium reissues
- Terms: Prepay or Net 30 (approved accounts)
- Discount: 35-40% off MSRP

Direct Label Relationships:

- Blue Note Records (reissue program)
 - Craft Recordings
 - Resonance Records
 - Pure Pleasure Records
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4. Record Shows & Conventions (10% of inventory)

Major Shows Attended:

San Francisco Record & CD Show

- Frequency: Monthly (Fort Mason Center)
- Focus: Mix of genres, some jazz dealers
- Admission: \$20 (early bird), \$10 (general)
- Strategy: Arrive early, know booth layouts, build dealer relationships

Long Beach Record Show

- Frequency: Quarterly
- Focus: Large volume, wholesale opportunities
- Worth: 4-hour drive for bulk buying

Roadium Open Air Market (LA)

- Frequency: Monthly visits
- Focus: Underpriced gems, bulk lots
- Strategy: Arrive 6 AM, negotiate bulk deals

Tips:

- Bring cash (\$2,000-\$5,000)
- Wear comfortable shoes
- Use hand truck for bulk purchases
- Network with dealers for future direct sales
- Take photos of interesting items for research

Typical Haul: 100-200 records per major show

5. Online Marketplaces (3% of inventory)

eBay

- **Search Strategy:** Misspellings, lot sales, buy-it-now
- **Best Times:** Sunday evenings (fewer bidders)
- **Focus:** Rare titles, fill-in inventory
- **Budget:** \$500/month maximum
- **Watch for:** Authenticity issues, shipping costs

Discogs

- **Use For:** Specific want list items
- **Seller Ratings:** 98%+ only for valuable items
- **Compare:** Prices across sellers
- **Note:** Higher seller fees = higher prices

Craigslist / Facebook Marketplace

- **Monitor:** Daily searches
- **Keywords:** "jazz records", "vinyl collection", "estate"
- **Response:** Fast (within 1 hour)
- **Safety:** Meet in public, bring assistant for large purchases

Auction Sites (Heritage Auctions, etc.):

- For rare, high-value items only

- Research thoroughly before bidding
 - Factor in buyer's premium (20-25%)
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6. Direct from Collectors (2% of inventory)

Building Network:

- Attend jazz festivals and concerts
- Join collector forums and groups
- Social media engagement
- Host in-store events

Advantages:

- First refusal on valuable collections
- Better pricing than retail
- Authenticity assurance
- Long-term relationships

Approach:

- Offer fair market value
 - Respect emotional attachments
 - Provide market education
 - Consider consignment for high-value items
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Sourcing Best Practices

Research & Valuation

Essential Tools:

- **Discogs:** Check median prices, pressing details
- **Popsike:** Auction price history
- **45cat/45worlds:** For 45 RPM singles
- **Goldmine Price Guide:** Reference (take with grain of salt)

Quick Evaluation Method:

1. Check label (Blue Note, Prestige, Riverside = premium)
2. Look for "RVG" or "VAN GELDER" in dead wax (valuable)
3. Verify pressing location (US vs. reissue)
4. Check Discogs for this specific pressing
5. Assess condition honestly
6. Calculate offer (30-50% of Discogs median)

Quality Standards

Accept:

- VG+ or better condition
- Complete with original components

- Authentic pressings
- Playable without major issues

Reject:

- Below VG condition
- Severely damaged
- Bootlegs (unless rare/disclosed)
- Warped unplayable records
- Moldy or severely water-damaged

Gray Area (Manager Decision):

- Rare titles in VG condition
 - Incomplete but valuable albums
 - Reissues of out-of-print titles
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Inventory Strategy

Collection Goals

Core Jazz Inventory (70%):

- Bebop (Gillespie, Parker, Powell)
- Hard Bop (Silver, Blakey, Morgan)
- Cool Jazz (Mulligan, Baker, Desmond)
- Modal Jazz (Coltrane, Davis)
- Free Jazz (Coleman, Taylor)

Jazz Vocals (15%):

- Ella Fitzgerald
- Billie Holiday
- Sarah Vaughan
- Nina Simone
- Others

Related Genres (10%):

- Blues (jazz-adjacent)
- Latin Jazz
- Jazz Fusion
- Soul Jazz

Contemporary (5%):

- Modern jazz
- New releases
- Reissues

Pricing Strategy

Acquisition Target: Buy at 30-40% of expected selling price

Selling Prices:

- **Common Titles:** 2.5-3x cost
- **Collectible:** 2-2.5x cost (higher volume)
- **Rare/High-Demand:** 2.5-3.5x cost
- **Investment Grade:** 2x cost (premium items)

Turn Rate Goals

- **Fast Movers** (<\$30): 60-90 days
 - **Mid-Range** (\$30-100): 90-180 days
 - **High-End** (\$100-500): 180-365 days
 - **Investment** (\$500 +): 1-2 years acceptable
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Seasonal Buying Patterns

Peak Buying Seasons

- **Spring** (March-May): Estate sales increase
- **Summer** (June-August): Record shows, garage sales
- **Fall** (Sept-Oct): Collections come available
- **Post-Holiday** (January): People selling gifts

Peak Selling Seasons

- **November-December:** Holiday shopping
- **April:** Record Store Day, Jazz Appreciation Month
- **August-September:** Back to school, gift-giving

Strategy: Buy heavy in spring/summer, sell in fall/winter

Budget Allocation

Monthly Inventory Budget: \$8,000-\$12,000

Breakdown:

- Trade-ins (cash): \$2,000-3,000 (40% of budget)
- Estate/bulk purchases: \$2,500-4,000 (30%)
- Wholesale new/reissues: \$2,000-3,000 (20%)
- Record shows: \$800-1,200 (10%)
- Online/misc: \$400-800 (5%)

Reserve Fund: \$5,000 for exceptional opportunities

Vendor Relationships

Building Good Relationships

With Dealers:

- Pay promptly
- Communicate clearly
- Refer customers
- Attend their events
- Give honest feedback

With Distributors:

- Meet minimum orders
- Pay on time
- Provide sales data
- Attend trade shows
- Promote their releases

With Collectors:

- Fair pricing
 - Respect knowledge
 - Follow through on commitments
 - Maintain confidentiality
 - Provide market insights
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Authentication & Verification

Identifying Originals

Blue Note Records:

- Label variations by era
- Van Gelder stamps in dead wax
- W. 63rd St. address (1955-1967)
- Liberty Records transition (1967)

Prestige Records:

- Yellow label (early pressings)
- Bergenfield, NJ address
- Rudy Van Gelder stamps

Riverside Records:

- Bill Grauer Productions credit
- Reeves Sound Studios mentions

Red Flags:

- Modern barcodes on "vintage" records
- Wrong label colors
- Suspiciously perfect condition
- Prices too good to be true

Resources

- Discogs pressing database
 - jazzdisco.org
 - Books: "The Blue Note Label" by Michael Cuscuna
 - Collector forums
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Inventory Management

Intake Process

1. **Receive & Document:** Log acquisition date, source, cost
2. **Clean:** Professional cleaning if needed
3. **Grade:** Following grading guide
4. **Research:** Verify pressing, check value
5. **Price:** Using pricing strategy
6. **Photograph:** For valuable items (\$50 +)
7. **Database:** Enter all details
8. **Display/Storage:** Floor or vault

Tracking

- **Database:** Every record logged
- **Cost:** Track acquisition cost
- **Age:** Monitor slow-movers
- **Source:** Track which sources work best

Markdown Strategy

- **90 days:** Review slow movers
 - **120 days:** 10% discount
 - **180 days:** 20% discount
 - **365 days:** 30% discount or donate
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Legal & Ethical Considerations

Authenticity

- Never knowingly sell bootlegs (except disclosed)
- Verify pressings before making claims
- Correct descriptions if errors found

Stolen Property

- Ask for ID on large collections
- Be wary of suspiciously low prices
- Report suspicious situations
- Keep records for law enforcement

Fair Dealing

- Honest grading always
 - Fair prices (not taking advantage)
 - Transparent business practices
 - Respect intellectual property
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Contact Information

Inventory Manager: Diana Foster

- Email: diana@mistyjazzrecords.com
- Phone: (415) 555-5207

Owner (Major Purchases): Duke Wellington

- Email: duke@mistyjazzrecords.com
 - Phone: (415) 555-5201
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Key Performance Indicators

Monitor Monthly:

- Total records acquired
- Average cost per record
- Acquisition by source
- Quality acceptance rate
- Turn rate by price range
- Profit margin by source

Quarterly Review:

- Vendor performance
 - Source effectiveness
 - Slow-moving inventory
 - Market trends
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This is a living document. Update quarterly based on market changes and business performance.

Last Updated: January 2026