

TK builds one-stop audio shop

by Dan Page

TK Audio's Tom Krol is one of those entrepreneurial spirits persistent enough to take on the challenge of running his own full service audio business. His varied client base has grown 30% in his second year of business.

Before taking out the "sizable" business loan to convert a 2,500-square-foot floor of his Wilmette home into a digital audio production studio, Krol was confident his experience had prepared him for the new challenge.

Even Krol's music education at DePaul in the mid-'80s would seem to hint at the variety of his later career. He began with clarinet performance, eventually moved to the guitar, his second instrument, and then graduated with a degree as a recording major.

During college, Krol got a gig as a studio assistant and later an engineer at Universal Recording. He seized the opportunity to learn all that he could at one of the city's historic breeding grounds of audio talent.

After a one-year stint in Los Angeles as audio engineer/technician at Devonshire Studios, Krol returned to the commercial music house arena in his native Chicago.

Hooking up with Ken Hale's What the Hale Music shortly after returning to the session recording scene, Krol spent three years there as a full-time freelance producer, engineer and session player. While the music house deepened the range of Krol's commercial music experience, he aspired to set on his own business path with the freedom to pursue session work at any time.

After an initial attempt to set himself up as a mobile audio editing facility, Krol opted for a more traditional full-service studio with location recording capabilities that is TK Audio.

Krol's workload spans the range of pro-

ducer/composer/engineer/musician for corporate video and multimedia scoring; radio commercials; voiceover demo production; location recording; and a bit of everything in between.

He has kept his chops and ideas fresh through prolific work as guitarist, vocalist, and clarinetist for commercial sessions including Oscar Meyer, Kraft, Cap'N'Crunch, and KFC.



Tom Krol

Krol's producer/engineer reputation has seen considerable growth in voiceover demo work, and has also led to editing and producing demo reels for various composers

and music houses.

In the corporate realm, Krol says suburban headquartered clients have been especially receptive to his multi-purpose production studios and their North suburban proximity. "They can get downtown quality without going downtown," he notes.

Krol attributes some significant growth to a rise in corporate outsourcing of audio and production work.

Sporting 20 tracks of digital recording capability via ProTools, TK Audio's arsenal features a Mackie mixing console, multiple ADAT machines, synthesizers, sequencers, analog and midi equipment, a music library, and CD burning capabilities.

Krol's collaboration with local recording artists last year was recognized in a Billboard Achievement award for "Any Day Now," a ballad from Wendy Morgan's latest CD. Krol co-wrote, performed, engineered and produced. Other producing projects include CDs for local artists Butch Zeppo, and Dustin Parker.

Krol is currently working on recording a CD of seven original songs slated for a summer release. Writing, performing, and producing the CD, he is also collaborating with local artists who may appear on some of the songs.

TK audio is located at 1725 Walnut Ave, Wilmette 60091; phone 312/400-5765. ★