Kenny Kaiser

Mixer Kenny Kaiser moves from live sound to Dolby Atmos® with Focusrite Red and RedNet Technology

Focusrite PRO

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Words: Clyne Media

Working Title Recording Studios in San Mateo, CA, is a new breed of music production facility. One of only a handful of Dolby Atmos®-certified studios in the Bay Area, it was founded by Kenny Kaiser, long-time front-of-house mixer for artists including The Killers, Sammy Hagar, and his associate Forrest Lawrence, a noted mixer and system technician.

Kaiser says mixing in the immersive, three-dimensional Atmos environment is the next step for music. "Since the pandemic lockdown, everyone is looking for a new experience," he says. "It's going to be here for a very long time." As well as his acclaimed mixing skills, Kaiser also brought some other things to the venture — key components from his inventory of Focusrite Red and Focusrite RedNet products. These included the Focusrite Red 16Line 64-In/64-Out Thunderbolt™ 3 and Pro Tools | HD™ compatible audio interface and Focusrite RedNet MP8R eight-channel mic pre. He also added his unusual but effective studio-monitoring choice: a full Atmos 7.1.4 array including C8.1T overhead speakers, CDD8 surround speakers, and CDD10 main speakers, all from Martin Audio — the same brand whose MLA line arrays he prefers on tour.

Saving costs... and walls

While Kaiser continues to work with Hagar's current project, the Circle, Kaiser and Lawrence have their sights set on music, commercial, and corporate production work at Working Title Recording, with Focusrite equipment integral to making it effective and efficient. The Dante network and Focusrite products completely cover the facility's two control rooms and four tracking/recording spaces. "I was talking to Forrest, and I said we can run one mic line on Mogami XLR cabling for $180, or we can get 128 channels over a thousand feet of Cat 5 cable for a fraction of that," recalls Kaiser. "And we don't have to be punching so many holes in walls. Between the cost saving and the ease of connections, going with Focusrite interfaces made total sense."

Kaiser says the Focusrite Red 16Line units have become the studio's go-to converters and act as the I/O between mic pre-amps and the studio's Pro Tools systems as well as the main control room's SSL Sigma console. The Focusrite MP8R moves around the facility in its own rack as needed. "We have that as a floating mic pre that we use in four recording rooms — two regular live rooms, a loading dock room which we also use to track in, and a front room that we use for either guitars or if we have somebody that has a small project coming in," he explains.

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Kenny Kaiser
Founder of Working Title Studios
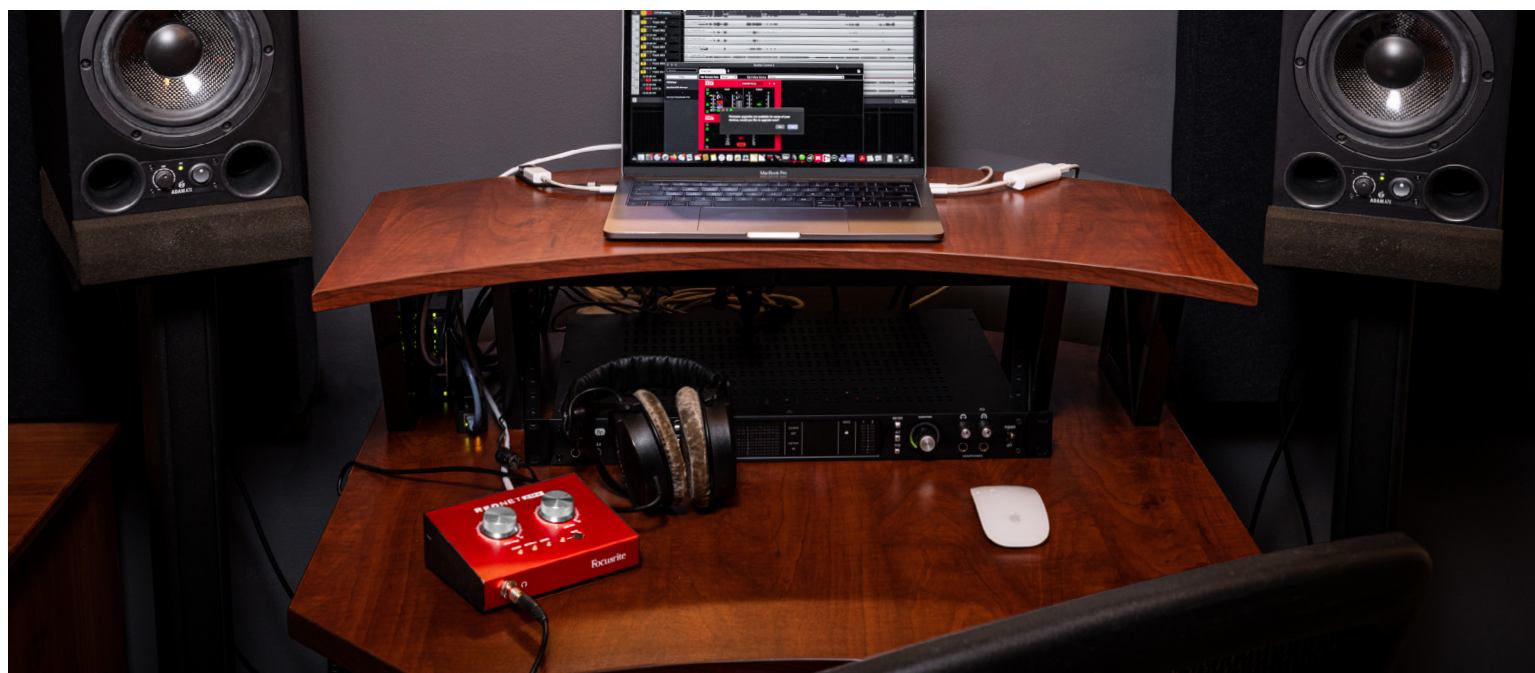
Sounds so good, it makes people cry

Collectively, Focusrite technology gives Working Title Recording Studios a flexible and reliable digital ecosystem that lets those in the studio focus on creativity. "For instance, I'm able to patch whatever I want to patch and it's all on one screen," he says. "And the Focusrite mic pres sound super, I'm a huge fan of them. Combine that with what Atmos can do with music — we've had about 15 demos with artists and record-label people, and we've seen two people actually cry when they heard it — and you literally get goosebumps hearing it. It's that amazing. And Focusrite lets us do that."

"To get the infrastructure going with a traditional analogue way of thinking, it would have been three times as expensive. Just being able to have these units and not have to worry about conversions – just plug in a Cat 5 cable and get to work – there's so much money and time saved."

Along with the Martin Audio speakers, which Kaiser says are well matched with the Dolby Atmos SPL and EQ-curve specifications, Working Title Recording Studios has what it takes to be competitive. "And the holes in the wall are a lot smaller," he laughs.
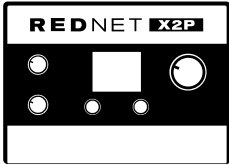
Kenny Kaiser uses:

2 x RedNet A16R MkII
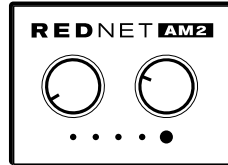16x16 Analogue I/O with independent
level control

2 x RedNet MP8R
8-channel remote-controlled mic pre
with dual PSUs

1 x RedNet X2P
2x2 analogue I/O with 2x mic pres,
headphone and line output,
PoE supplied

1 x RedNet AM2
Stereo headphone and
line output PoE supplied

About Focusrite Pro

Focusrite Audio Engineering has pioneered professional audio recording technology spanning almost three decades. Focusrite Pro, the company's professional and commercial division, meets the demands of recording, post-production, live sound and broadcast professionals. It consists of RedNet, a fully modular audio-over-IP solution, and the Red range, Focusrite's flagship multi-format interfaces, along with the heritage ISA range of microphone preamplifiers and analogue signal processors. The solutions have been developed to meet the needs of the most demanding applications through a relentless focus on ease of use, quality and reliability. Focusrite is based in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, with offices in Los Angeles and Hong Kong.

Focusrite® PRO