



‘No limits’ on live broadcasting for KWTV, KOTV and Tulsa CW

Why Griffin Media counts on Dejero EnGo for mobile transmission of its breaking news, live sports and storm tracking

Overview

Two of the USA's top CBS affiliates and a consistent ratings winner in Oklahoma, KWTV's News 9 and KOTV's NewsOn 6, are dedicated to keeping Oklahomans safe, informed and entertained. Griffin Media's news team produces over 40 hours of local newscasts every week, providing severe weather reports, as well as covering live sports events. They additionally broadcast news on KQCW The Tulsa CW.

Griffin Media were looking for solutions to better mobilize their teams and keep them connected in the most challenging network environments and the ability to transmit broadcast quality video from wherever they are.

Challenge

Local news broadcasting and its 24/7 programming are driven by immediacy. Arriving on the scene before other news organizations, setting up your cameras first, getting the first interviews, getting video back to your station and keeping your viewers informed as situations unfold is a top priority.

About Griffin Media

Griffin Media has been serving Oklahoma for more than 100 years. With an extensive range of properties from TV and radio to digital platforms and outdoor billboard network, it focuses efforts entirely in the state to help keep Oklahomans safe, informed and entertained.

Griffin Communications is one of the few privately-owned media companies in the United States, reaching over 90% of Oklahoma households with its television stations, statewide radio network, Internet sites, digital outdoor network, and mobile information distribution.

Being mobile is key, and being able to transmit high quality video from anywhere is more important than ever when it comes to today's viewers. Most of Oklahoma state lies in an area known as Tornado Alley, named so because of the severe thunderstorms, high winds, large hail and tornadoes that persist in the area – a frequency virtually unseen anywhere else on planet Earth. These challenging conditions call for reliable connectivity when it comes to live reporting. In total, Griffin media has 12 storm trackers throughout the state.

Like many broadcasters, Griffin Media's news and weather teams were using satellite and microwave trucks to transmit live video from breaking news scenes and to track storms.

“For storm tracking in particular, the satellite and microwave signals would drop off quite regularly,” explained Jack Mills, director of engineering at Channel 9. “The process was frustrating and the methodology to get pictures back was slow. Firstly, we had to get the trucks to the scene, gather at least three crew members (camera operators, journalist and producer), wire up the cameras and hope that we were in an area where we wouldn't lose line-of-sight. And, because the cameras were tethered to the vehicles, we only had the facility to gather three shots at a time from one location at a time.”

Mills oversees production operations at Griffin Media and his team recognized that the news and storm tracker crews needed to be more mobile and find an economical solution that would provide more reliable connectivity in challenging conditions from any location within the state. The news channel also started investigating more efficient ways to connect remotely with newsroom systems and reduce the number of people required on site, whilst increasing the number of shots they could transmit back to the station.

“Our overarching goal is to keep the people of Oklahoma safe and by capturing storms as they happen on video to show the severity, and issuing weather warnings in real time, makes a critical difference to the community so people can take the necessary precautions,” added Mills.

Solution

Griffin Media has advocated the use of bonded cellular for connectivity in the field for a number of years now, rolling out Dejero mobile transmitters in 2017 to support its news crews and storm trackers during live broadcasts.



Reporters at Griffin Media rely on the EnGo to go live from anywhere.



Griffin Media counts on Dejero *Smart Blending Technology* for mobile transmission of its breaking news, live sport and storm tracking.

In 2023, the station invested in several new Dejero EnGo 265 mobile video transmitters featuring GateWay mode. GateWay mode delivers an ultra-fast, reliable internet connection, which allows for KWTV, KOTV and Tulsa CW news and storm tracker teams to be more productive, no matter where they are. EnGo 265 is a mobile transmitter and internet gateway two-in-one device that delivers unmatched wireless connectivity in the field and glass-to-glass latency as low as 0.5 seconds over bonded cellular connections,

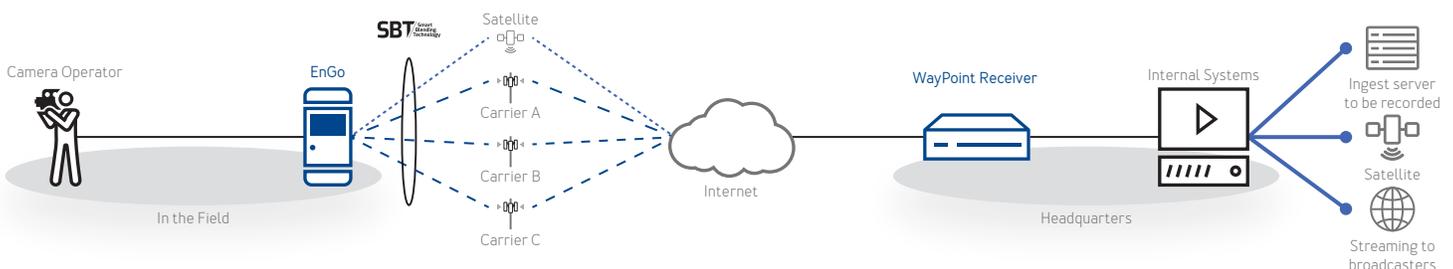
The EnGo mobile video transmitters are fitted with six SIM cards to blend connectivity paths from AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon networks to create a mobile hotspot for reliable video transmission. Griffin Media has an observer port at the station for every EnGo unit in the field. "Signals from each Dejero unit have a dedicated line that goes all the way through our distribution system and our production switchers, so we don't have to switch streams on and off – it's really fluid that way," says Mills.

The EnGo is also equipped with IFB that Griffin Media utilizes for one-way voice communication from the anchor or director at the KWTV or KOTV news studio to field talent while the EnGo is in live or standby mode. The received video can be edited immediately in the KWTV or KOTV studios with production staff able to watch the recorded content directly in the edit, so if any shots are missing, instruction can be sent to the camera operators and the missing shots can be delivered in minutes.

The 'Store & Forward' feature of the EnGo is also utilized by Griffin Media in the field to effectively transmit high-quality recorded material for feature segments directly to its production facility. With Store & Forward, Griffin's news gatherers do not have to rely on the live feed recorded on the server back at HQ; up to 60 hours of high-quality recordings can be stored on the video transmitter's internal drive.



The EnGo mobile transmitter provide next level mobility and flexibility, and minimizes the number of staff needed in the field to get the required shots.



The EnGo mobile video transmitters are fitted with six SIM cards to blend connectivity paths from multiple diverse networks, creating a mobile hotspot for reliable video transmission. Griffin Media has an observer port at the station for every EnGo unit in the field. The received video can be edited immediately in the KWTV or KOTV studios with production staff able to watch the recorded content directly in the edit.

Griffin Media also relies on Dejero CuePoint return video servers to provide low-latency, live program video to KWTW, KOTV and Tulsa CW anchors, camera operators, and other production personnel in the field to help them stay synchronized with central production while live.

“ Dejero Smart Blending Technology™ has meant there are no limits to what our teams can do in the field, and it has made things more economical for us. ”

Jack Mills, director of engineering at Channel 9

Results

Griffin Media currently relies on a total of 30 Dejero EnGo mobile video transmitters for its MMJs (Multimedia Journalists) and its large fleet of storm trackers at KWTW and KOTV.

“We haven’t rolled a satellite or microwave truck in three years,” continues Mills. “Each of our field personnel can take an EnGo backpack, in any vehicle, to an incident or storm, in any location, at a moment’s notice and set it up in minutes.”

The EnGo mobile transmitters provide next level mobility and flexibility, and it minimizes the number of staff to just one to get the required shots. “Our storm trackers are free to roam, separately – simultaneously – tracking the same storm and sending back multiple shots from different locations in and around the storm to give a more 360 view of what’s happening – we can get 14-15 live shots now compared to being limited to just 3 with the trucks,” explains Mills. “Dejero *Smart Blending Technology* has meant there are no limits to what our teams can do in the field, and it has made things more economical for us.”

The new EnGo 265 featuring ‘GateWay mode’ will provide even more efficiencies for Griffin Media.

‘GateWay mode’ provides wireless broadband internet connectivity in the field to enable mobile teams to reliably, securely and quickly transfer large files, access MAM and newsroom systems, and publish content to social media. It also provides general internet access to resources for field research, access to cloud-based services and also serves as a high-bandwidth access point for devices.



Griffin Media relies on Dejero CuePoint return video servers to provide low-latency, live program video to KWTW, KOTV and Tulsa CW anchors, camera operators, and other production personnel in the field to help them stay synchronized with central production while live.

Where traditional mobile hotspot solutions rely on a single network connection. GateWay mode uses Dejero's industry-leading *Smart Blending Technology* to combine connections, wired (broadband/fiber) and wireless (3G/4G/5G, satellite) networks, from multiple providers.

The result is increased capacity for data-intensive applications, broader coverage areas, and enhanced reliability through connection diversity. It also supports virtual private network (VPN) tunneling for secure access to Griffin Media's networks.

"With Dejero, we're not being forced into the 5G world because it blends all available networks, choosing the most efficient signal path," says Mills.

Beyond newsgathering and severe weather reporting, Griffin uses the EnGo for live sports coverage. It relied solely on EnGos for our remote production of recent NBA D league matches.

"Last May, we were able to broadcast the entire Oklahoma City Bombing Memorial Marathon live using only EnGos, with field crews covering the start and finish lines and different stages for both the men's and women's races, as well as transmitting shots of the community's heroes and survivors."

"The way Dejero has evolved its solutions is a credit to their ability to listen to customers. Their interest to improve our day-to-day work are completely genuine," said Mills. "For example, they modified the EnGo transmitter backpack and attached a wired remote so that camera operators can easily start and stop live streams and monitor status. The little interaction we've had with their customer support has also been amazing – we can contact them any time of day and know we'll get the outcome we need."

"The Dejero solutions have become a part of our working lives – we don't have to worry about transmission – they just work," concluded Mills.



Griffin Media currently relies on a total of 30 Dejero EnGo mobile video transmitters for its MMJs (Multimedia Journalists) and its large fleet of storm trackers at KWTN and KOTV.

Content is king. Connectivity is kingmaker. We're here to help you acquire, produce, and distribute your content with critical connectivity.

Start the conversation today

connect@dejero.com | +1 519 772 4824 | dejero.com

Dejero