

OUR FIRST BREAKING NEWS EVENT AS KTLA

We were satisfied that we were adequately prepared for this breaking news event. We now had two identical mobile units with cameras (two of which had electronic viewfinders), and a third vehicle for carrying supplies of cable, etc. Actually, there was an hour delay in getting on the air. The problem was in getting a commercial program line for our program sound. This is how long it took PT&T to put it in for us. In reality, this was quite fast, considering that they weren't set up for emergency service at that time. As a result of this delay, which was embarrassing, the next morning I checked to see what equipment was available that would allow us to transmit program sound to Mt. Wilson from the mobile unit. In researching this, I found equipment that would modulate a sub-carrier with program audio and embed it into the program video signal.

In actual operation of this equipment, program audio was fed to the "audio input" of an external "signal-combiner" unit, and program video was fed to the "video input". This then, internally produced an audio-embedded video signal which was subsequently fed to the "video input" of microwave transmitter to produce a resultant FM-modulated carrier.

At the receiver end, the embedded video signal was demodulated from the modulated carrier to recover the audio-embedded video signal, which then appeared at the "video output" receptacle of the microwave receiver. This signal was then cable-fed to an external video/audio separator unit. Internally, the audio signal was recovered by filtering out the audio-modulated sub-carrier and then demodulating it to produce received program audio at the "audio out" receptacle of an external "signal-separator" unit. The program video signal, which was now void of the audio-FM-modulated sub-carrier, was then available at the "video output" receptacle of the external video/audio separator unit.

This may all seem a bit complicated; but it worked very well. I immediately purchased, and put into operation, this equipment in both mobile units, which included a signal combiner unit for the microwave transmitter, and a signal separator unit for the microwave receiver.

Better a late solution than never! This equipment solved our immediate problem in getting program audio up to Mt. Wilson with the video signal during "on-the-spot" news coverages, and for many years to come. We also used this equipment on most of the other types of non-news remote telecasts, as well.

After the event, we were informed by the Press that KTLA's coverage of the Pico Blvd. Electroplating plant explosion was the first ever done, world-wide. This made everyone at the station feel quite proud of this accomplishment.

This new commercial TV broadcast status signaled a very busy year for KTLA. The year seemed to go by quickly. In December of 1947 we got the word that not only was the station doing the Rose Parade on January 1, 1948, but Klaus had contracted to televise the Rose Bowl game that followed in the afternoon of the same day. This latter event would be the first college football ever televised in the Rose Bowl. This contest was between Michigan and USC.

It seemed that the first part (the Rose Parade) would be relatively easy to do, as it would be basically a repeat of what we did on January 1, 1947. However, the second part, the Rose Bowl coverage, would not be as easy a task, and would be a three-camera set-up.









Courtesy of Don Kent