

## BROADCAST

# STORM CHASERS – SEND IT LIVE

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### **Thrane & Thrane EXPLORER played a key role in KAKE-TV's ability to deliver high-quality broadcasting from Greensburg tornado.**

At about 9pm on the 4th May 2007, a tornado touched down and literally tore apart the small town of Greensburg in Kansas, changing the lives of the 1700 inhabitants for good.

The number one priority for KAKE, a major Kansas TV news channel, is live breaking news and in an area of the United States widely known as 'Tornado Alley', live weather reporting is just as critical. Therefore, KAKE ensures that it has the technology to help it break the news first. A technology, which also makes the FirstCam team highly mobile and ready to go at a moments notice.

Once on the scene they are able to provide live, broadcast quality footage of the events as they unfold using Inmarsat GAN and BGAN terminals from Thrane & Thrane. FirstCam relies on an arsenal of technology but the investment has helped make KAKE-TV a well-

respected live news source, which translates directly into more viewers and increased advertising revenue.

### **The importance of being there**

It is the job of FirstCam to warn KAKE viewers of bad weather, not just through traditional meteorology but through being there close to the action and showing people the extent of the danger. The quality of KAKE's live video helps to keep KAKE ahead in the ratings war, but every new viewer they get because of the reputation of FirstCam is also a possible life saved.

“Our FirstCam team provides an instant, onsite weather overview, with high accuracy directly to the viewers,” explains Terry Cole, President and General Manager, KAKE. “When live images are shown, the credibility is very high, and residents will take the warning very seriously. In fact, the National Weather Service relies on KAKE to get an eye on the storm that they wouldn't normally get on Radar and because of our footage from Greensburg, they were able to issue an official Tornado Emergency warning.”

**Live when you arrive**

Thrane & Thrane plays a key role in FirstCam’s ability to deliver high-quality video. KAKE’s larger news vehicles use microwave technology to deliver footage to the station but when it comes to live, everyday news – everything from shootings and fires to tornados and road traffic collisions – being first on the scene, and enabling the cameras to roll and broadcast immediately is vital.



**Small, fast and easy to use**

To be able to accomplish this vital goal “small, fast and easy to use” is the order of the day for the FirstCam vehicle and the technology inside it. To ensure the simple transmission of the live footage they utilize a solution developed by Thrane & Thrane and the company iPixCel, with the main elements being:

- Thrane & Thrane GAN or BGAN Satellite system (antenna, terminal)
- iPixcel VideoMover™ Software
- Video Camera
- Laptop

“It is an incredibly easy system to use. We don’t have to get the technical people in to set it up and despite the complexity of what the system does, FirstCam can go live on air with just one person on the ground – the reporter or weatherman himself,” explained Jay Prater.

Although the Thrane & Thrane satellite terminal is the hardware platform that sends the live, high quality pictures back to KAKE, this wouldn’t be possible without the compression solution developed by iPixCel. iPixCel develops custom software solutions that greatly enhance portable and mobile satellite devices and as such has become a very important part of the live news and weather reporting community in the United States. Thrane & Thrane and iPixCel work closely together to ensure that stations such as KAKE can provide the kind of high quality footage that its viewers require.

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**Immediately deployable**

“The Thrane & Thrane terminal and iPixcel solution is used for stormchasing and for live video of news events as they happen”, said Jay. “It’s immediately deployable and enables live video while moving, which makes it particularly useful for tornado chasing. In fact, by using this technology, KAKE was able to broadcast the first live tornado on television in Kansas and we have since become ‘the source’ for severe weather information in our viewing area.”



**For more information:**

[www.thrane.com](http://www.thrane.com)

