



THE KEY PRODUCTIONS, LLC



Production Anecdote

There were a lot of lessons I learned while making THE KEY, but one tends to stand out more than others: You WILL have problems and obstacles that come up, however, it is important to remember that each of these difficulties arise for a very deliberate reason. And that would be to force you to be more creative – to dig deep within yourself and come up with a different, usually unexpected, and ultimately better solution than what you originally intended.

It was a couple of weeks out from shooting and I found out that my line producer promised large amounts of money (\$\$ we just didn't have) to crewmembers without my knowledge. At the same time, I found out that we lost our apartment location. *“How could this be happening?!?”* was my first thought. After firing my line producer, we decided to push the shoot one month to regroup and get back on track.

Over the next 2 1/2 weeks, and hundreds of miles later, my location scout and I were at a loss for the ideal yet **affordable** apartment location that worked with our budget and schedule. At the end of our two-week scouting marathon, my location manager glibly mentioned, “why don't we just use your apartment? It looks like it would be perfect.” *Wait a minute... it is perfect!* Yet, I was incredibly hesitant to see my two worlds collide. I've worked on sets before and know what's in store when you have 30 plus people traipsing around the set (that just happens to be where you live). The other difficult part was going to be convincing my fiancé to have the two of us (and our dog) move out of our apartment for about a week, take all of our furniture out, paint walls, put up wallpaper, build new walls, remove doors, and bring in tons of rented furniture into our home – our “sanctuary”.

Well, lucky for me, and the film, she agreed. My production designer came up with an incredible design. We made an insane “steal” - I mean “deal” - with Universal Props for all the set dressing. And now we didn't have any location fees for prep, shooting or wrap. *“Oh, I love when things go right....”*

Cut to the day before shooting and we find out that there's a problem with our grip/electric package – as in we didn't have one. The favor/deal we worked out was no longer possible and the amount of equipment we requested would cost 8x what we had in our budget. *Yikes!!!!*

No lights means no image on the film! No image on the film means no movie! No movie means all the money and incredibly hard work spent so far will amount to absolutely

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nothing! And everything amounting to nothing means you'd find my obituary in the following day's newspaper!

This can't be happening!!! Plus, we already had a full camera truck parked outside with a sweet Panavision camera package, paid film permits and fully bound insurance only covering through the following week.

After a few deep breaths, some heated conversations with my producing team; I regrouped and made the decision to push the shoot one more day. This allowed us to find a much smaller grip/electric package for just the weekend so we can shoot out the apartment location. (There was no possible way my fiancé would ever agree to letting me do this to our place again.) Since pushing one day forced us to lose our other locations, we would temporarily shut down the production while devising a better plan on how to finish. This seemed like the better alternative than insanely forging ahead, running the risk of spending astronomically more money (of which we didn't have) and still not get what I wanted and/or needed to complete the film.

We ended up having a great two-day shoot.

It took 8 long months before an opportunity presented itself and we could finish out our shoot. Finally there was a break in everyone's busy schedule to come back together and shoot out the last three days. Now, going into "part 2" of the shoot I knew there would still be uncontrollable, last-minute, heart attack inducing problems, and in fact there were. However, this time I was ready for whatever was going to come our way, knowing full well that these difficulties would bring us to a much better, more inspired place.

Chalk another one up for the universe.

--Todd Kaufman
Writer/Director/Producer
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