

The Stage of the Future:
BERNEXPO – Powered
by State-of-the-Art
Event **Technology** from
NETGEAR

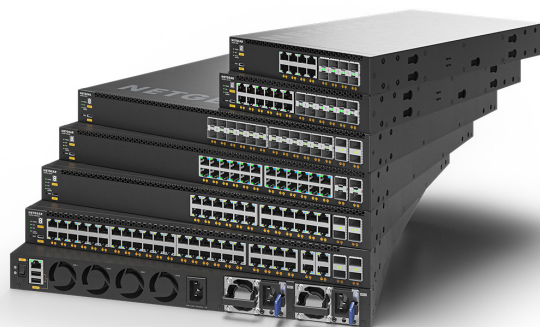
BERNEXPO

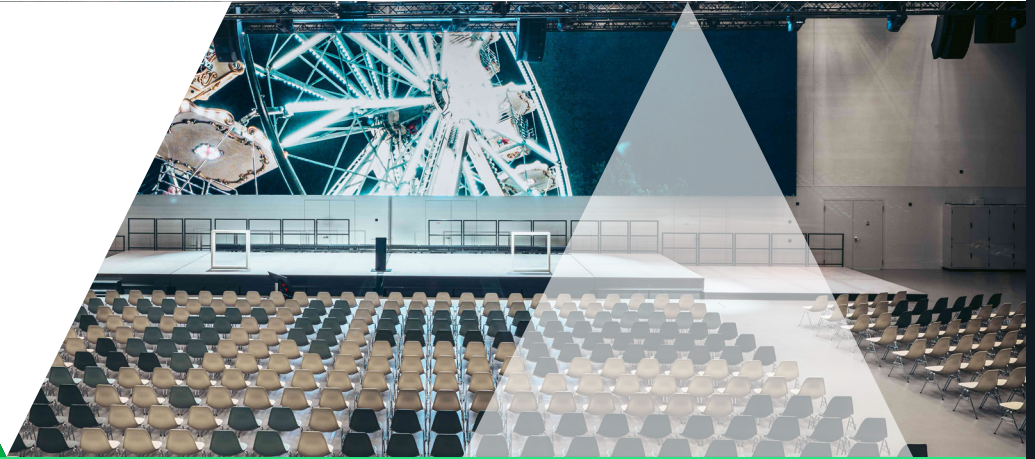


From the BEA trade fair to SwissSkills, the Sustainable Forum, the World Cheese Awards, CAVALLUNA, and concerts by Linkin Park, Pegasus, and Gotthard – BERNEXPO is one of Switzerland’s largest trade fair and event venues, offering approximately 40,000 m² of indoor halls and 100,000 m² of outdoor space.

On April 25, 2025, BERNEXPO will open its brand-new, multifunctional hall, significantly expanding its capacity. The venue will host up to 9,000 guests plus a separate “Cube” room for an additional 1,200 guests. The hall sets new benchmarks in technology – featuring the largest permanently installed LED wall

(150 m²) in any Swiss convention center, along with cutting-edge acoustics, sound-absorbing surfaces, and a roof capable of supporting over 320 tons of event technology mounted on 70 pre-installed chain motors.





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Yvo Kolly, Project Manager at Kilchenmann AG

Background

Every year, BERNEXPO hosts more than 30 trade fairs, 300 congresses, and countless events of all sizes. The new hall (“Festhalle”) adds over 21,300 m² of multifunctional event space, complementing and expanding the venue’s capabilities.

The overall technical realization was managed by Kilchenmann AG, one of Switzerland’s leading AV solution providers. For the network infrastructure, Kilchenmann AG deliberately chose NETGEAR’s high-performance AV-over-IP solutions as the central backbone for all event technology.

“We chose NETGEAR’s innovative networking solutions because they allow us to deliver technically demanding and highly reliable projects,” said Yvo Kolly, Project Manager at Kilchenmann AG. “The user-friendly nature of NETGEAR’s solutions is a major advantage. With NETGEAR Engage, we were able to configure the network quickly and easily. This saved significant setup time, minimized configuration errors, and made support much more efficient.”

Challenge

The new event hall was envisioned as more than just a venue – it needed to be a future-proof, multipurpose experience hub: technologically advanced, operationally flexible, intuitive to operate, and absolutely reliable.

The technical concept required a carefully planned event technology infrastructure meeting the highest standards for flexibility, security, and user-friendliness. Key integrations included:

- Scalable event technology adaptable to formats ranging from conferences to large concerts.
- Evacuation system (EVAK) with approximately 240 speakers for building-wide emergency announcements
- Digital signage system from easeescreen with approximately 80 networked displays for wayfinding, signage, advertising, and food service communication.
- 150 m² indoor LED wall in the CUBE event hall – the largest of its kind in a public Swiss convention center
- Advanced networking, lighting control, and media technology in STAGE and DECK breakout rooms for optimal event production.
- VIP hospitality area equipped with mobile speakers and eight IPMX-integrated screens for maximum flexibility.



Solution

A project of this scale lives or dies by the stability and scalability of its network – and this is where NETGEAR came in.

Multiple switches from the NETGEAR M4350 Series – including 24-, 28-, and 52-port models – were deployed. With a PoE++ budget of up to 3,000 watts, these switches reliably power energy-intensive AV installations such as LED walls and digital signage. High-speed 10Gb, 25Gb, and even 100Gb uplink ports ensure optimal connectivity and bandwidth.

The M4350 Series fully managed switches (1Gb to 100Gb) provide a stackable platform ideal for large-scale AV-over-IP installations. Select models include redundant modular power supplies and SMPTE ST 2110 support – the new standard for professional AV networks.

Key technical advantages of NETGEAR AV switches:

- Groundbreaking AV GUI – simplified interface for assigning configuration profiles to any port.
- AV-over-IP ready out of the box – NETGEAR IGMP Plus™ delivers instant multicast functionality without complex setup.
- Quiet operation and sleek design – low fan noise ensures silent performance in noise-sensitive event spaces; included mounting brackets make rack installation simple.
- Automatic configuration – switches auto-detect and connect to other M4350/M4250 switches for rapid deployment.

“Having quiet-mode options to minimize fan noise was a big factor for us – especially in sensitive event environments,” said Yvo Kolly. “For us, it was essential to have an infrastructure that keeps pace with the dynamic nature of modern events. The NETGEAR solution gives us the technical freedom to react quickly, plan flexibly, and ensure rock-solid signal distribution.”



“On its very first day, the new event hall proved that its multifunctional capabilities can handle any type of event. It’s not just a new concert venue – it’s a space that can deliver on any event vision and leave a lasting impression”

Tom Winter, Senior CEO of BERNEXPO.

Results

The NETGEAR-based infrastructure at BERNEXPO forms a stable, high-performance backbone for all event needs – from real-time signal distribution to live streaming and digital signage. All systems integrate seamlessly, enabling smooth operations, rapid changeovers, and maximum flexibility.

Whether for a conference, trade show, concert, or live stream, lighting, sound, and video systems can be reconfigured in record time. All components are networked for stable signal transmission, precision control, and state-of-the-art digital signage – creating a true “stage of the future.”

“On its very first day, the new event hall proved that its multifunctional capabilities can handle any type of event. It’s not just a new concert venue – it’s a space that can deliver on any event vision and leave a lasting impression,” said Tom Winter, CEO of BERNEXPO.

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