AV cabling from Belden reliably supports HD, withstands outdoor conditions and helps Daytona International Speedway improve the racing experience for guests and at-home viewers.
International Speedway Corporation is known for promoting motorsports-themed entertainment activities, such as NASCAR-sanctioned events, along with ARCA, AMA Pro Racing, IMSA, ASRA, and AMA Supercross races. It owns and/or operates 13 of the nation’s premier motorsports entertainment facilities, which in total, have approximately 763,500 grandstand seats and 548 suites.

After evaluating all of its properties a few years ago and comparing them to new stadiums and arenas popping up across the country, International Speedway Corporation decided that its Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, FL, needed a revitalization to make it the most innovative speedway venue in motorsports history.

As the crown jewel of NASCAR, the venue brings in the most revenue of any International Speedway Corporation facility. To continue on this path, the speedway needed to meet the ever-increasing demands of fans who enjoy what other sports properties have to offer.

In 2013, the DAYTONA Rising project was born: a $400 million reimagination to improve the guest experience by adding three new concourse levels, doubling the number of restrooms, tripling the number of concession and merchandise stands, increasing the number of luxury suites with trackside views, expanding and redesigning five “injector” entrances that lead fans to elevators and escalators, and creating comfortable, roomy seating for 101,500.

Creating this impressive new guest experience also involved technology:

- Futureproofing infrastructure to make sure 101,500 fans can all tweet, post, link, view and share
- Establishing a secure venue, with 480 megapixel cameras and state-of-the-art access control
- Fully immersing fans through 3,000 public address speakers and 700+ outdoor HD displays for wayfinding and event coverage

Built in 1959, Daytona International Speedway needed an updated cabling infrastructure to reliably support hundreds of thousands of devices and people, and distribute superior HD quality to viewers at home.
Challenge

Investing in infrastructure to support technology now, and well into the future, was important to serve excited fans and their expectations.

Sticking to a tight timeline that did not disrupt motorsports events was crucial. The new systems and cabling installed during race season needed to be compatible with the venue’s existing systems to prevent disruption. “The revenue and net income contribution this property offers to our business is significant, and we couldn’t cut that pipeline off,” says Craig Neeb, Vice President, Business Development and Chief Digital Officer for International Speedway Corporation. “We had to complete the project over a two-and-a-half-year period while still seamlessly running events.”

Construction and installation were also challenging due to the sheer size and design of the venue. The new stadium is nearly one mile long, and DAYTONA Rising designs and solutions had to compensate for seven inches of the earth’s curvature.
The staff at Daytona International Speedway was already familiar with Belden, working together to complete previous cabling projects as part of the Daytona technology partner program.

Needing a partner to recommend the right cabling, support future technology evolution and support Daytona International Speedway’s upgrade, the team chose to work with Belden once again.

“Belden was able to get us what we needed, when we needed it and for the price we needed,” says Rodney Ward, Senior Director, Venue Technology at International Speedway Corporation. “Knowing that Belden plays in so many different infrastructure areas, we’re looking at the big picture moving forward so we can leverage the knowledge of its team to engineer specific solutions that can be used across all 13 venues – not just with this project. Belden’s team has been very good about working side by side with us to make sure we get the right solution.”
Solution

Belden bridged the gap between old and new, providing multi-channel audio, speaker, Category 6+ and HDMI cabling that allowed the existing AV systems to continue to operate while also offering the capability to support new AV systems once they were installed.

Delivering several miles worth of speaker cable that could clearly amplify sound across a vast area, including outdoors where a high level of ambient noise is present, Belden 5T00UP was installed to transmit greater power and intelligibility throughout the speedway’s public address system. Belden’s cabling solution pulls easily and is engineered to maintain signal integrity despite harsh installation conditions. With easy-to-strip jackets, the cable also kept the project on time and on budget.

To make sure the speedway could continue to generate ticket revenue during the DAYTONA Rising project, Belden provided cable in phases. This allowed certain areas of the speedway to remain operational while keeping construction moving.

“Belden was able to scale up and down to meet our demands throughout the project.” - Rodney Ward, Senior Director, Venue Technology at International Speedway Corporation.
Results

Belden helped Daytona International Speedway plan for future growth capacity when selecting an AV cabling solution; now the organization will not have to re-examine its technology infrastructure in just a few years. The cabling system supports AV needs in 2016, but can also handle any must-have AV technology that becomes a necessity in the next decade. “Thanks to Belden, we have the support infrastructure in place for any technology demands we have in the future,” says Neeb.

Being able to support concerts or other events in the off-season is a way for venue owners to increase ROI. With its new technology and infrastructure, Daytona International Speedway now has the ability to support concerts and other types of sporting events in addition to racing, turning the speedway into a first-of-its-kind motorsports stadium.