

CASE STUDY

THE BEST CONNECTIONS FOR 80,000 VISITORS

For four days in summer Bern's local mountain, the Gurten, becomes a festival ground. This year it is also connected by fibre optic cable.

The festival on the Gurten has grown from a small alternative cultural and folk festival in 1977 into one of Switzerland's largest and most media-effective music festivals which also attracts top international acts. The 34th Gurten Festival was held in mid-July: four days with 61 live acts, 63 DJs, around 80,000 visitors and the best of festival weather.

Since 1999 the Gurten Festival has been organised by the Bern event company Appalooza Productions. Each time almost the whole management team moves up onto the mountain in the final weeks. Up till now a specially leased fibre optic line ensured that there was a connection "to the outside world" before and during the festival.

A leased line was not enough

The fibre optic cable was not only used for the festival team's laptops. The ordering systems of the caterers and shops on the mountain, ticketing information and entry control, the WLAN networks, and not least the onsite radio and television teams rely on dependable broadband transmission links.

From the perspective of the festival management a single cable – and a non-redundant one at that – presented an incalculable risk. It was also expensive to lease.



Last year Appalooza discussed the problem with Arnold AG. The network service provider suggested installing their own multi-fibre cable – a solution which promptly gained approval.

New cable from Datwyler

So it was that by the time of the 34th Gurten Festival a 48-fibre single-mode cable from Datwyler was already in use. At the beginning of the year this cable was added to the existing cable run along the Gurtenbahn railway. On the mountain it terminates in a closure stored in a shaft with a long spare cable. Shortly before the festival the closure is simply taken to the festival's technical hub and hung up there. This means that during the event connections are quickly available wherever they are needed.

Appalooza shares the fibre optic cable with Gurtenbahn Bern AG, which, among other things, uses the lines for its computer connections as well as for various surveillance cameras at the bottom and top station and on the bobsleigh track.

When asked, all those involved expressed great satisfaction with the solution found. For 2018 there are even plans to further extend the local fibre optic network on the site and to create additional links. *(November 2017)*