



NFL Draft: Built from scratch, broadcast live

The NFL Draft is rebuilt from the ground up in a new city every year. The three-day fan festival is expected to draw 500,000 or more attendees, with millions following the live national broadcast.

4Wall Entertainment deploys the complete lighting and video infrastructure for the 2026 draft in Pittsburgh. A full NETGEAR AV network, spanning 78 M4250 switches and 6 access points, makes that possible.

A different city, every year

4Wall has been handling live events of every scale since 1999, servicing clients across concert touring, television, corporate events, theatre, and major outdoor productions.

The NFL Draft is among the most logistically complex events 4Wall works on. The event is staged in a different host city each year. It requires a complete production infrastructure to be assembled from nothing.



In Pittsburgh, the 2026 draft runs from April 23 to 25 across two sites: the main stage and Draft Theater outside Acrisure Stadium on the North Shore, and a second site at Point State Park. Organizers anticipate 500,000 to 700,000 attendees over the three days, with a live national television broadcast running throughout, reaching millions more.

Zero latency, no exceptions

The draft stage runs eight grandMA3 consoles and 28 grandMA3 L processing units for lighting control, with video providing a significant proportion of the trigger cues. That means lighting and video are deeply integrated over a single network. When a lighting designer hits a cue, the command travels through the network, and the fixture must respond instantly. Any delay is visible on screen, to a national television audience, in real time.

“Generic IT switches aren’t built for what we do. NETGEAR’s managed switches are purpose-built for this environment: the profiles, the speed, the ease of management. They just fit the way live events work.”

Noah Abrams, Show Staff, 4Wall Entertainment



The physical scale of the deployment puts additional pressure on the infrastructure. The stage spans two outdoor sites connected with 2.63 miles of tactical fiber. 30 spools, 13,900 feet in total. On a large outdoor site with hundreds of crew members moving equipment, cable damage is a routine hazard. A fiber failure that takes any part of the system offline during a live broadcast is simply not an option.



The rig is distributed across nine locations: six dimmer and network pits serving the main theater, greenroom, and player entrance tunnel, plus three front-of-house positions. This is part of what makes a robust, redundant backbone so critical. “We’ve got 78 switches throughout various areas, all NETGEAR M4250s of various sizes”, explains Noah Abrams. “It’s a huge stage, a huge audience package, and all of it is broadcast live on TV. That’s why we’re using NETGEAR’s AV Line.”

Network management runs through NETGEAR Engage. Its visual VLAN layout and color-coded topology give any engineer an immediate picture of how the network is structured, which matters in a setup that runs around the clock. The network architect cannot always be present, and the system needs to be clear enough that a colleague arriving for a night shift can take it over without an extended handover.

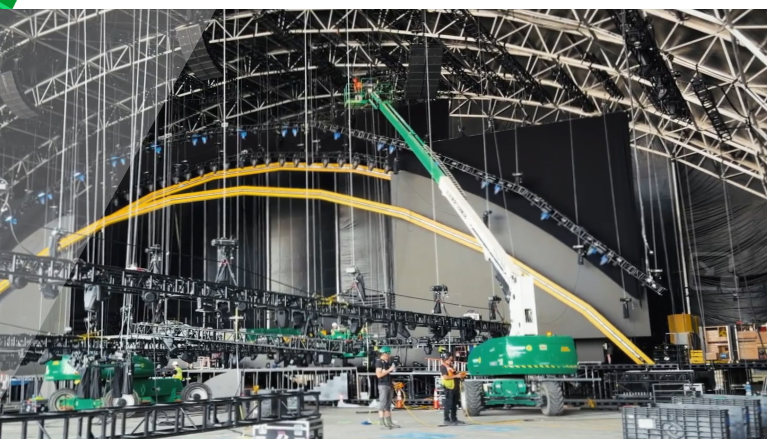
“Being able to pass off the network to somebody for the night shift is really important. Using Engage makes it a lot easier. The user interface is so streamlined that somebody who has never dealt with a switch in their life can log in and make things happen.”

**Noah Abrams, Show Staff
4Wall Entertainment**

One network, full redundancy

4Wall deployed NETGEAR M4250 AV Line switches of various sizes as the sole network backbone for the entire production. The lighting data, video systems, and integrated trigger workflows all run on a single cohesive network, built entirely from scratch on-site. To guard against fiber damage across the sprawling outdoor footprint, the architecture is fully redundant, with two integrated parallel AV Line networks. That way, if one path is severed, a secondary path takes over without interruption. That redundancy is essential, given the rig’s over 1,000 lights.

Wireless connectivity across the site is provided by six NETGEAR Enterprise Access Points, three WAX608Y outdoor units and three WBE758 units, extending the AV Line network across the full outdoor campus. With crew moving constantly between the two sites during load-in and show, having wireless on the same managed infrastructure as the wired network keeps the entire system coherent and visible from a single point of control.



the broadcast goes out live, and millions of fans are watching. That is why 4Wall Entertainment chose to run the infrastructure on a network they can trust.

The gear on the ground

NETGEAR AV Line switches:

- 29× NETGEAR M4250-12M2XF
- 34× NETGEAR M4250-16XF
- 6× NETGEAR M4250-26G4XF-PoE+
- 9× NETGEAR M4250-40G8XF-PoE

NETGEAR Access Points:

- 3× WAX608Y outdoor access point
- 3× WBE758 access point

Network management:

- NETGEAR Engage



The standard across every show

The NFL Draft deployment is one expression of a broader strategic commitment at 4Wall. The company has standardized its entire networked production infrastructure on NETGEAR AV Line, running hundreds, if not thousands, of M4250 switches across touring productions, festivals, country music shows, and large-format corporate events out of its Nashville operation and other locations nationwide.

Running the same switches across every rack makes this operationally viable at scale. Every pre-built rack that leaves a 4Wall warehouse runs the same NETGEAR switches with the same pre-configured AV profiles, so any engineer picking up any rig, whether it's a country music tour in Nashville or the NFL Draft in Pittsburgh, is working with a familiar system. Knowledge transfers between crew members with minimal explanation, deployment is fast, and the standard holds regardless of the show's complexity.

The NFL Draft offers no rehearsal, no second take, and no tolerance for failure. The stage is built from scratch,

"We really appreciate how fast and responsive NETGEAR's managed switches are. For live events, that's what matters. When you're broadcasting live, you can't have a network that makes you wait."

Noah Abrams, Show Staff, 4Wall Entertainment

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