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# **Lyon Video** Road Testing the New LDX Series Camera at Sebring International Raceway


## CUSTOMER

**Lyon Video**, US

## CHALLENGES

Meeting a variety of production requirements that change with every assignment

Investing in equipment that delivers high-quality images, reliability, and lower cost of ownership

## SOLUTION

A full format, high-sensitivity camera that performs under a variety of conditions and provides cost-efficient integration and maintenance

## BENEFITS

Camera and transmission system delivers the ability to meet any production requirement, without compromising image quality

Design and function gives greater control and access for higher quality images

Robust and efficient architecture lowers maintenance and support costs to preserve investment over time

The new LDX Series of software upgradable cameras from Grass Valley, a Belden Brand, were road tested during the 61st Mobil 1 Twelve Hours of Sebring—part of the American Le Mans Series of Formula One racing — held March 2013 at the Sebring International Raceway in Florida. Veteran mobile production company Lyon Video, based in Columbus, Ohio, used a dozen of the new top-of-the-line LDX WorldCam cameras. SPEED, owned by Fox Sports, was televising and streaming the race live to Formula One racing fans around the world.

"We were getting some good feedback from some of our friends [in the industry] and from tests we did with Grass Valley engineers, and we're confident that these new cameras offered us more in the way of value and performance without sacrificing image quality," said Bob Lyon, President of Lyon Video. His company has relied on Grass Valley cameras (and other Grass Valley live production solutions) for over two decades. "They use less power so they run a lot cooler than other cameras. We think in the long run that will make them last longer. That's important to our business operations and bottom line."

The highly popular race was shot in 720p, just one of the four production formats — including 1080p (3G), 1080PsF (artistic), and 1080i — the LDX WorldCam offers.

## Fewer Parts Means Less Maintenance

Maintenance and field operation efficiencies are other advantages that come with using the new LDX Series cameras, according Lyon, now that he's seen them in operation.

"There are remarkably fewer circuit boards inside the camera head, which not only makes them a bit lighter, but more importantly means better balance for handheld camera operators. They feel better on the shoulder," he said, adding that the camera's new ergonomic design offers an adjustable shoulder pad with side grip, as well as easy access to improved color management and automated controls, allowing operators to concentrate on framing their shots.

Lyon also said that fewer parts inside the camera mean fewer things that can go wrong, thus preserving his initial investment. "When you purchase equipment, you have to consider the expense of operating and maintaining it," said Lyon. "With these cameras, I don't have to worry that the cost of ownership will exceed the benefit they provide."

## LDX Series Offers Larger View(finder)

Lyon's state-of-the-art LYON-12 HD production truck, complete with a fully loaded 4.5 M/E Grass Valley Kayenne Video Production Center switcher, handled all the production requirements for SPEED. While covering the race, Lyon also field tested a new 9-inch color LCD HD viewfinder for the Grass Valley RefleX SuperXpander kit, which operators loved. The kit turns any LDX camera into a studio camera, complete with box-style lens, extended camera controls and color viewfinder.

Lyon said his company plans to purchase several of the larger viewfinders, especially since they can be used with both the LDX Series and most current LDK HD cameras. Another benefit of the LDX Series is that the company is able to reuse its full complement of OCP camera control units, originally purchased with its LDK cameras.

"We plan to get a lot of use out of them," Lyon said, "Especially when shooting fast moving objects and looking for critical focus, the larger viewfinder certainly helps."


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Bob Lyon, President, Lyon Video

## Technological Versatility

Lyon Video has been able to upgrade the Grass Valley camera system over many years because the LDK design is modular and flexible. Depending on client needs, for over a decade Lyon Video has been able to adjust to client requests for fiber and triax camera transmission systems without the need to repurchase complete systems. When signal processing enhancements have been offered for LDK cameras, Grass Valley has been able to "package" the enhancements so the camera systems continue to improve, retaining most of Lyon Video's investment. Lyon Video looks forward to the same flexibility with the Grass Valley LDX Series of cameras.

"With very little modification, we're able to significantly upgrade our cameras — and I don't have to empty the company's [Lyon Video's] bank account to make it happen," Lyon said.

Lyon Video has also been a big user of Grass Valley's 3G Twin base station, with 3G Transmission technology, which can use either triax or fiber cabling and works with the LDX Series and most current LDK HD cameras. With its large area, fiber was used at Sebring — with 4 km (2.5 miles) between the camera and the production truck.

At the end of a long day, a veteran video engineer — who has worked the American Le Mans Series for Fox Sports and SPEED — admitted he was very pleased with the LDX WorldCam and its pictures on TV and over the Internet (and subsequent mobile devices). He had used "and loved" the images captured with the previous generation LDK 6000 camera, with its field-proven CCD imagers, and remarked that the new Xensium-FT CMOS imagers of the LDX Series cameras actually made the image look better.





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