



ZDF Studios relies on Camunda for end-to-end orchestration of their media supply chain



Key Benefits

- 150K+ process instances orchestrated per month
- €70K saved by eliminating black-box integrations
- Faster ingestion with fewer manual steps
- End-to-end automation of content delivery
- Visible & measurable KPIs
- Empowered business users with DMN
- Flexible, scalable orchestration with Camunda SaaS

Camunda Product

Camunda Platform

Camunda's flexible integrations are empowering the co-production and media distribution firm to streamline workflows, cut costs, and scale operations

ZDF Studios, the private, commercial subsidiary of Germany's public broadcaster ZDF, plays a vital role in bringing entertainment to screens across the world. With a growing portfolio of licensed and co-produced content, the company manages rights and materials across platforms like YouTube, Amazon, and international broadcasters, serving billions of views annually.

Behind the scenes, ZDF Studios handles a massive volume of video assets, metadata, contracts, and rights-related documentation. To manage this complexity and ensure timely distribution, ZDF Studios is transforming how it handles digital content from a disconnected, manual environment to an automated, cloud-native media supply chain powered by Camunda.

The challenge: From digital diaspora to unified media logistics

When ZDF Studios began its transformation journey, its operations were deeply fragmented. Material was stored externally by vendors and often invisible to internal teams. Deliveries were not spontaneous. They relied on manual coordination, including emails, forms, and even faxes. Metadata catalogs were decentralized across sales departments in individual Excel files, and the company's core software was monolithic with no APIs.

This fragmented, digital environment created major barriers to operational efficiencies and scale. Streaming platforms required strict, custom formatting, yet adapting to these demands meant handling tens of thousands of files manually. As Tom Oellerich, Product Owner for ZDF's Media Supply Chain explains, "Delivering a 13,000-item package to a streaming platform means we have roundabout 26,000 items we have to touch each time." With just a two-person team and no in-house IT department, ZDF Studios needed to modernize and automate its infrastructure to work more productively without increasing headcount.

The solution: Orchestrating the media supply chain with Camunda

ZDF Studios began by establishing clear principles: own the integrations, automate everything, embrace APIs, take a cloud-first approach, and simplify and standardize operations wherever possible. They chose Camunda as the orchestration layer beneath the MAM system to centralize process coordination between material suppliers, metadata systems, transcoding engines, and delivery endpoints.

In ZDF Studios' first project, the team automated delivery of 5,000 Video on Demand (VoD) assets to a German streaming platform. Using Camunda to orchestrate quality checks, metadata enrichment, and storage updates, the team **integrated with tools such as Hybrik, Vidispine, S3, and Asana** for seamless, traceable automation. In just three months, they ingested 3,200 hours of streamable content into their MAM system—setting a new standard for operational efficiency.

Encouraged by their project's success, ZDF Studios expanded to orchestrate its full ingest pipeline. Now, new workflows connect rights management systems, placeholder creation, material suppliers, and MAM structures so that by the time content arrives, the structure and metadata are ready to go.

Why Camunda: Transparent, flexible, SaaS-based platform

"We didn't think about other solutions because Camunda is the most transparent and at the end, for us, easiest to integrate."

–Tom Oellerich

ZDF Studios selected Camunda for its clear advantages in integration, transparency, and self-service capabilities. The team needed a process engine that didn't come bundled with black-box limitations. They also needed a SaaS-based platform as access to in-house IT resources was limited.

Camunda's lightweight, standards-based, API-first solution gives ZDF Studios the flexibility to integrate cloud services like **AWS S3**, **Lambda**, and hybrid transcoding into one cohesive, auditable pipeline. And because of its visual BPMN and DMN modeling capabilities, Camunda allows business users like Metadata Managers and Content Operators to engage directly with the workflows.

The outcomes: Scaled automation, reduced costs, and staff empowerment

What started as a proof of concept for rights management expanded to support the full ingest process. Now, ZDF Studios' Camunda implementation has scaled into a platform supporting over 150,000 process instances per month, with 10 main workflows and multiple subprocesses. Camunda is enabling ZDF Studios to:

- Eliminate black-box integrations and cut integration costs, saving €70K by replacing the transcoding service
- Automate ingest and delivery for thousands of video, audio, subtitle, and metadata assets
- Expose process metrics for better planning and management
- Engage business users to manage and optimize processes using Camunda

The success with Camunda has also fostered a cultural shift. ZDF Studios now has process owners in key departments and is enabling citizen developers to support automation with lightweight training and tools.