



Camunda BPM at Sony

- Orchestration of digital supply chain
- Delivery of several hundred thousand digital orders each day
- Operational transparency thanks to BPMN

The Background

Sony DADC New Media Solutions provides innovative digital supply chain solutions for customers in the media industry. Specializing in the music market, systems are developed in Salzburg that enable our customers to distribute their content in all formats across all channels and on all devices, from traditional purchases and downloads to streaming on mobile platforms. The global reach of the solutions and their flexibility and scalability play a key role.

Since the end of 2013, Sony has been using the Camunda BPM platform to orchestrate the digital supply chain. This includes the registration of content and metadata in the system, fully automated order processing, customer-specific processing of data as well as their delivery.

The following interview was conducted with the Director New Media Solutions, Thomas Winkler.

The Challenge

“We had a proprietary workflow engine based on Oracle PL / SQL in operation, which had its origins in the physical production of disks.

We wanted to provide business analysts and operations with a better insight into the implemented processes and their current execution, but at the same time increase the flexibility to address customer demands.”

Why Camunda BPM ?

“Since we have very experienced developers on the team, we were initially considering developing a new workflow engine, but then weighed up a ‘make or buy’ decision. In favor of ‘Make’ was:

- control of your own source code
- depicting our special process requirements (high load, concurrency, automation)

On the ‘buy’ side we saw:

- existing and detailed documentation
- faster on-boarding of new developers
- availability of consulting and support
- continuous development by the manufacturer

Considering ‘buy’, the focus on Java and Open Source were essential to us, which is why we evaluated Camunda and jBPM. We then decided on Camunda, mainly due to the very good integration with the Spring Framework and among other features, commercial support was more convincing.”

The Implementation

“The first challenge was the duration of the project: We only had six months from making the decision to going live. In addition, we were expecting a very high number of simultaneously running processes or events to be processed,

which is why we were eager to understand the Camunda Process Engine in detail. We succeeded in this, not least because of the very good support offered by Camunda. It has been very helpful to have a Camunda consultant on site, who went over questions regarding the implementation with the developers and also gave support in the modelling of our existing processes in BPMN.

We had no problems with the actual development. Both the BPMN standard and the work with the Camunda BPM platform were very easy to learn for us. It surprises us again and again how quick and efficient we are in the implementation of new requirements.”

The Impact

“We now deliver hundreds of thousands digital orders per day with Camunda, without any problems with scalability. The orders add up to several hundred TB digital content per month.

Depending on system load, thousands of process instances are started per day, with running time varying from a few minutes to several hours or even days – often depending on how much bandwidth is available to partners and how much content we deliver to them.

We use Camunda BPM to link different services of our supply chain to processes.

Due to the direct execution of BPMN this is transparently comprehensible for all those involved: developers, operations and business analysts. This has also led to a better understanding of the processes and significantly affects the communication amongst the teams.

Camunda BPM was absolutely the right choice for us – especially as we were able to use the full flexibility of Java and Spring and still received a perfect integration into the Camunda Process Engine.”

Learn more

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