CAMUNDA

Building Trust and Reducing Time-Intensive Tasks with Camunda

Since introducing Camunda in 2019, Città di Lugano has reduced the time for specific administrative tasks and related costs by 90%, increased the number of online applications for citizens' certifications by 70% and greatly improved the level of trust between citizens and the public administration.

Background

Nestled in southern Switzerland's Italian-speaking Ticino region, on the northern shore of glacial Lake Lugano, the picturesque city of Lugano is one of the most forward-thinking and digitized local government agencies in Europe. With its citizens' portal, more than 67,000 residents can interact directly with the local government – Città di Lugano.

Città di Lugano's long-term vision is to increase the quality of life, provide better, sustainable services and to improve governance. One of the ways it does this is by providing easily accessible, always available, user-friendly and transparent digital services.

Città di Lugano believes all customers, whether they be citizens, visitors or businesses, should be able to trigger and actively participate in business processes – from obtaining a construction permit, organizing an event in a public space or obtaining financial support for a cultural initiative.

A Robust and Scalable Solution

Following a recommendation from the Swiss Federal Government, Città di Lugano decided to adopt BPM as a framework for modelling and executing business processes. It evaluated three different solutions available on the market, but ultimately chose Camunda.

"Camunda came out as the most robust, scalable (up and down), well documented and supported, standard-compliant and easily extensible technology," said Enrico Gulfi, Director of ICT Services at Città di Lugano. "In a very short time, with limited knowledge of the product, we were able to build working prototypes."

The Portal solution Città di Lugano built is centered around the Camunda BPM Engine executing business processes. Camunda orchestrates the interaction with back-end information systems, where data is stored, and third-party services like PSP services.

User-Friendly Interaction

Customers can interact with the Portal, through a custom web application implemented in Angular, accessing the process engine through the REST API. Città di Lugano implemented a dedicated UI to provide customers with a seamless, corporate-branded experience on desktop and mobile.

Administrative personnel interact with business processes using the out-of-the-box Camunda Task List, which can be customized so that users can focus on their respective responsibilities. Identity and access management functionality is implemented on top of ForgeRock IAM platform, with Camunda relying on a ForgeRock OpenDJ component for managing users and user groups. The full stack is completely redundant, running in two different data centers, with Camunda configured as a cluster of process engines using a shared, real-time replicated database.

Results

The benefits of adopting Camunda have been swift and far-reaching. Within just 100 days of launching the Portal, more than 3,500 customers registered to use the user-friendly service. Città di Lugano's customers can now access digital services through a simple, always available web Portal that gives them full visibility into the progress of their request. This has increased the transparency and accountability of Città di Lugano, which, as a side effect, has improved the level of trust between citizens and the public administration. From an operational perspective, all business process implemented so far have brought tangible benefits to operations. The job application service has reduced the time for administrative tasks and related costs by 90% -- which corresponds to one full-time position in the department. The summer camp registration service has cut administrative duties by 60%. The number of certificates (residence, family, etc.) obtained online has increased by 70%, reducing waiting time at the city front desk and freeing front desk staff for other activities.

In addition, the adoption of BPMN as a language to model business processes has defined a common ground for highly efficient discussions with process owners. This has helped speed and improve quality in the analysis phase, reducing the implementation and deployment time for new business processes. "It has also helped in establishing a process-oriented approach in our digitization effort, identifying common process patterns and turning them into reusable best practices," said Enrico.

Further Automation and Integration

With the first version of the Portal, Città di Lugano has barely scratched the surface of what is possible. "We have so far digitized 12 services out of roughly 120 that have been identified with the help of our business people," Enrico said.

In addition to automating all identified services, Città di Lugano plans to:

- Integrate digital signing services, such as checking the validity of documents provided by customers, or delivering official documents digitally signed by the public authority.
- Integrate the upcoming Swiss Digital ID, to simplify enrollment for new customers.
- And, improve transparency by providing customers with detailed tracing information of executed process tasks, so they can track progress.