

# Next level complex billing and payment

An interview with Ulrike Pannek, Project Manager GVL in Berlin



The Gesellschaft zur Verwertung von Leistungsschutzrechten mbH (GVL) in Berlin, Germany, represents the neighbouring exploration rights and interests of labels, artists and event organisers. That's 160,000 performers, over 13,000 producers and about 70 event organisers. Ensuring that broadcasters and TV fulfil their payment obligations and guaranteeing that each party involved receives its fair share of the royalties and earnings from sound recordings played in radio, TV and streaming services. In 2022 they distributed €257,000,000. This is next level complex billing and payment. And that's why GVL has been working with ICORP for the last seven years.

Ulrike Pannek explains why GVL chose ICORP and what makes them the best partner for complex billing and payment. Ulrike has been GVL's weekly contact with ICORP almost since the beginning.

## Automated invoice checks: accurate payments, tax law compliance

**Ulrike:** "ICORP supports an essential part in GVL's distribution process. For the rights owners this money is a part of their salary, they need it as quickly as possible. For example, this means ensuring that we have the correct tax information on each invoice, depending on the country where the rights holder pays his/her tax. We must ensure that the contract with the rights owner is valid, the bank data is accurate, the address is correct, tax numbers are in order, and the remuneration is directed to the appropriate business partner or heir. Additionally, any prior payments made to this business partner should be considered. All of these checks need to be carried out automatically.

This is one of the main reasons why ICORP was chosen by GVL seven years ago. They were capable of handling the enormous data volume. ICORP processed all that data, generating up to 60,000 invoices within one or two days, benefiting both broadcasters and rights holders. Before partnering with ICORP, invoices were sent out to broadcasters with significant human effort, and money was distributed only once, perhaps twice a year. Now, there are 20-25 distributions per year, which significantly benefits all those awaiting their payments."

## ICORP Complex Billing: more detailed, more fair

**Ulrike:** “The rights holder must provide us with their ownership information for a product, such as a song produced by a producer, or their participation in a product, like a song, through our GVL Portal. We receive usage data for these products, including from radio stations. Having this information allows us to accurately calculate and send invoices to the rights holder, ensuring everyone receives their fair share. In the past, this precision was not required, but changes in European law have compelled collective management organisations in Europe to update their distribution processes.”

### Ideal service and new ideas

**Ulrike:** “We have a really good relationship with ICORP, they understand us. ICORP provides us with immediate assistance, if necessary. We hold regular weekly calls, and most of the time, my contact person at ICORP, Jacques Seegers, participates. He is completely involved.

Whenever I have an issue, I can always call him. We talk it over, we work it out and we always solve things.” “ICORP is continually innovating and developing new ideas. We are currently looking into other ICORP functionality that we can use to improve our services. This is also something that our business unit really appreciates. Finding new ways to make things more automated and more efficient.”



**Are you part of the copyright industry or a collective management organisation? Do you recognise the issues raised? Or are you in a similar business that requires extremely complex billing or payment solutions?**

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