

Case z001: Lo-Fang vs. Studio Zentral (Redacted Timeline – April 20, 2025)

I. Initial Licensing Request & Conditional Approval

May 7, 2024

- JM (Head of Film and TV, Beggars Group) receives sync request and forwards JH's contact to Lo-Fang.

May 8, 2024

- JM (Head of Film and TV, Beggars Group) confirms JH will reach out directly.
- JH (Studio Zentral Representative) requests to license "You're the Friend I Need" for €600 for one end credit scene in Schwarze Früchte with limited usage.
- Lo-Fang conditionally approves the use, expressing financial hardship and openness to a larger fee.
- JH confirms contract drafting and requests song credit info.

May 9–31, 2024

- Lo-Fang shares credit info and payment instructions.
- After initial hesitation, JH confirms payment will occur before signing.
- May 31: €600 payment received.

II. Contract Dispute & Rejection of Expanded Terms

Sept 30, 2024

- JH sends contract including broad, future-proof usage rights.
- Admits expansion: "Due to a misunderstanding, they were not listed specifically..."

Oct 7, 2024

- Lo-Fang explicitly rejects expanded contract and restates original terms.

Oct 8 – Feb 21, 2025

- KJ (Studio Zentral Coordinator) sends repeated follow-ups requesting signature.
- Lo-Fang does not sign.

III. Unauthorized Use & GEMA Registration

Oct 19, 2024

- Despite no signed agreement, Episode 7 is released publicly on ARD Mediathek using Lo-Fang's song.

Feb 25 – Mar 19, 2025

- JH contacts Lo-Fang via Instagram.
- Admits continued interest in expanded contract.
- Admits GEMA registration of show using Lo-Fang's music without signed contract.
- JH acknowledges need for signed contract for GEMA/ASCAP rights management to be valid, otherwise usage is unauthorized.
- Attempts to send contract via AdobeSign.

IV. Legal Escalation

Mar 20, 2025

- Lo-Fang sends legal settlement demand based on prior sync precedent, factoring in unauthorized usage and confidentiality breach. Notes possible GEMA and ASCAP filings.

Mar 21–24, 2025

- Invoice #1002 sent with timestamped delivery confirmation.
- Legal notice Dropbox launched.
- Dr. Graef joins correspondence.

Mar 24, 2025

- Final warning issued regarding DMCA takedowns and royalty concerns.
- Dr. Graef requests Lo-Fang's phone number.

Mar 26, 2025

- ASCAP Inquiry ID: 00742184 opened.
- Lo-Fang confirms no cue sheet found by ASCAP.

Mar 27, 2025

- Dr. Graef sends letter to outdated address; Lo-Fang refuses delivery.
- Dr. Graef responds: "You better govern yourself accordingly."

Mar 28, 2025

- Full timeline sent to Studio Zentral & Dr. Graef.
- Confirms address error, restates rejection of expanded rights.

V. Institutional Escalation

Mar 29–30, 2025

- Legal Addendums prepared:
- Addendum I: Comparative sync rates (Chanel vs HBO)
- Addendum II: Unauthorized rights expansion
- Request for GEMA oversight submitted to leadership.

Mar 31, 2025

- Formal takedown requests sent to:
- WDR Rundfunkrat
- ARD Mediathek
- Landesanstalt für Medien NRW
- Legal basis: §§ 97, 108 UrhG + GDPR Article 17

VI. Final Confirmations & Public Positioning

Apr 1, 2025

- ASCAP confirms no cue sheet submitted.
- Final rebuttal sent to Dr. Graef requesting:

1. Cue sheet details
2. Confirmation of willful infringement
3. Use of correct legal address

Apr 2, 2025 – Libel Accusation

- Dr. Graef accuses Lo-Fang of defamation for contacting institutions like ARD, WDR, GEMA.
- Threatens damages for libel/slander and obstruction.
- Sends backdated contract for signing "to put matter to rest."

Apr 3–4, 2025

- Studio Zentral issues a formal cease and desist against future use of the song.
- Penalty of €5,100 per infringement added.
- Episode 7 removed from ARD Mediathek.

Apr 7, 2025

- Dr. Graef sends a closing letter:
- Reaffirms intent to pursue damages
- Denies wrongdoing despite C&D
- Declares intent to end all discussion

Apr 9, 2025 – ASCAP & Industry Confirmation

- ASCAP formally acknowledges unauthorized usage (Inquiry #00743714):
- Confirms no cue sheet submitted for the production
- Verifies no foreign income received from any territory for the title
- Acknowledges this presents as a copyright/unauthorized use dispute
- Senior executive at major music publishing group provides industry standard valuation for Lo-Fang's song "You're the Friend I Need" plus end credits usage:
- US TV sync rights: \$12,500–\$15,000 per side (all media, worldwide, in perpetuity)
- UK TV sync rights: £5,000–£8,000 per side
- Additional 50% for end credits use
- Formal notice sent to GEMA, ASCAP International, and Dr. Graef requesting:
- Verification of cue sheet submission status
- Copies of cue sheets if they exist
- Written confirmation if they do not exist
- Clarification of any alternate registrations
- Request for streaming data and associated usage reports, with a 5-business-day deadline

Apr 10, 2025

- ASCAP confirms no cue sheet filed and no royalties accounted for.
- Unauthorized usage classification upheld.
- ASCAP opens new inquiry with GEMA regarding Schwarze Früchte (Work ID: 929393998). GEMA has not yet responded.

Apr 11, 2025

- GEMA issues formal response denying responsibility.
- GEMA confirms the work was used and claims sync rights were “already clarified” through ASCAP reciprocity.
- ASCAP disputes:
- Work was registered only on March 25, 2025
- No cue sheet was submitted
- No foreign income registered
- Usage remains classified as unauthorized

VII. Present Status

- Episode 7 was reuploaded on ARD Mediathek with different end credits music:
- HEAD UP, written and performed by Charlie Harper & James George
- Courtesy of SATV / Extreme Music GmbH

- Published by SATV Publishing Ltd
- Lo-Fang maintains a growing public legal archive at StudioZentral.org, committed to transparency and artist protection.