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New ZDFmediathek at the IFA in Berlin Stronger focus on TV viewing experience

Large picture, modern design and user-friendly control: ZDF is presenting its revamped Mediathek online video player at the IFA consumer electronics fair in Berlin. The new video portal introduced by Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen demonstrates the public-service broadcaster's stronger focus on enhancing the television experience for its viewers.

The new ZDFmediathek delivers videos in TV quality, either as replays after the scheduled broadcast or live or even in advance of the schedule. This online player offers easy and convenient access not only on home computers and television sets but also on mobile phones for people on the move.

A wider TV experience

Upgraded features make it even easier to access ZDF's wide-ranging on-demand programming: with just a few clicks, users can browse through other content options, without interrupting the stream they are current watching, and select some video items for playing one after another. A preview feature lets users know what is coming up next – and they can simply forward if they want.

The content of the ZDF video portal is arranged by programme or topic. Programme recommendations and an convenient search function make control and navigation clear and simple. Users can also call up their own list of favourites and choose an item for playing. The Mediathek also presents editors' viewing tips drawing attention to interesting highlights.

More content

You're looking for, say, a programme that was broadcast last Thursday. No problem – ZDF's Mediathek contains a "Programmes missed?" menu giving a quick overview of all week's on-demand videos. The programmes of the last seven days appear on one side of the screen and can be clicked for download.

The Mediathek already includes a large proportion of ZDF's information-based programming: ranging from the latest "heute" news and "heute-journal" through selected items from "Frontal21" to "auslandsjournal", "Maybritt Illner" or "WISO". Other programmes, which are popular not in the schedule but also as internet replays, include ZDF's classic crime thrillers like "Der letzte Zeuge", the new series of crusty country doctor "Doktor Martin", the monthly satire show "Neues aus der



Anstalt" and, as the many fans will know, the telenovela "Wege zum Glück". As it steadily expands, the Mediathek will be offering more and more entertainment formats like series, television films and shows. Again, most of the videos in this big range of programmes are available for replay for seven days, while some items remain downloadable for much longer.

The new Mediathek also features an overview of the week's highlights on ZDF, listing not only on-demand content but also live video streams. Viewers can see at glance the greatly extended range of live broadcasts, many of which are aimed at sports fans. And the Mediathek remains ZDF's central platform for picture galleries and multimedia specials. The new photo galleries, with subtitling or audio, come in a large format and modern design and reflect viewers' interests, showing for example the best scenes from the quiz spectacular "Wetten, dass..?" or moments of high drama from the world of sport.

Video, photos, multimedia

In the multimedia specials for ZDF-online, users can explore Berlin's Museum Island as if they were really there. Or fans of the telenovela "Wege zum Glück" can find the door to "Ninas Welt". In this multimedia format, backgrounders on topical issues like education or energy become vivid and entertaining, making difficult subjects easy to understand. A key advantage of the new Mediathek is that it can be used wherever and however users want: on their computers, on television sets and on mobile phones while on the move. The controls for all three modes are more or less identical, as the Mediathek always works the same way.

The newly updated PC edition is ready to run on all the main operating systems: ZDF has introduced the H.264 open video standard for the platform's relaunch at the IFA. This enables Mac and Linux users to access ZDF programmes without any difficulty. PC users can continue to watch videos in the Windows Media format or use the new format by installing the appropriate player software (QuickTime).

Video on Demand at home or on the move

To enjoy the viewing experience on the large screen in the living room, ZDF has created a TV edition of Mediathek. Users need a media center system ("home theater PC") with which the content of the video portal can be operated conveniently from the sofa using the remote control. With an appropriately equipped PC it is even possible to switch back and fore between live and on-demand programmes.

When on the move, users can access the Mediathek on their mobile phones if they have internet-enabled devices. In the next few months mobile video access should be up and running on all major mobile phone models.

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