Accelerate your business with e-signatures

Small and medium businesses are using e-signature solutions to increase their competitive advantage

Table of contents

2: Why consider e-signatures
2: How your business can benefit from an e-signatures
4: Finding the right e-signature solution
5: Why choose eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud

With the ubiquity of connected devices, it is ironic that most businesses continue to rely on pen and paper as the method of collecting a signature. Adobe research shows that only 18% of North American businesses are using an e-signature solution today, and over 60% are not aware that such a solution exists. Yet, e-signature solutions can speed up business processes dramatically, reducing the total time from weeks to days or hours. This acceleration translates into faster time to revenue, better customer service, and increased competitive advantage.

Why consider e-signatures

Using e-signatures is an automated, efficient, and cost-effective way to manage the signing of all types of documents, including acknowledgements, agreements and contracts, application forms, waivers, and formal approvals. Rather than getting bogged down by time-consuming, manual processes, small and medium businesses can generate, transmit, and receive a signed copy of any document in minutes and automatically archive it for easy access from any device.

E-signature solutions are used in a broad range of industries, including those with stringent security and privacy requirements, such as healthcare organizations, banks, and insurance companies. Some common use cases include:

Sales document acceleration—Decrease time to revenue and increase deal closure rates by automating the creation of electronic sales documents and contracts and enabling customers to sign electronically. Integration of the e-signature process can be part of a customer relationship management (CRM) deployment, such as Salesforce, Microsoft Dynamics CRM, or NetSuite, so the entire process remains electronic.

Simplification of employee onboarding and policy acknowledgements—Speed up HR processes, such as offer letters, new hire documents, and employee policy acknowledgements, by eliminating printing, faxing, and overnight mail.

Streamlining legal and procurement operations—Automate the process for nondisclosure agreements, vendor contracts, and confidential business-to-business agreements. Standalone or integrated into a contract management system, such as Ariba Contract Management or SAP, e-signatures can accelerate the contract process time by as much as five times or more.

How your business can benefit from e-signatures

E-signatures save time and money. The customer stories highlighted in this paper describe how e-signature adoption has delivered measurable results.

Eliminate staff time spent on creating, printing, and signing documents

Regardless of industry, a contract management process that requires documents to be printed, manually signed, and physically filed consumes time and labor unnecessarily. The Association for Information and Image Management (AIIM) reports that an average of 3.1 days is added to most processes as a result of collecting a physical signature.*

* AIIM, "*Digital Signatures—making the business case*," January 2013.

By speeding up the vehicle order process and minimizing the administrative support needed by clients, Leasedrive strives to constantly improve its existing award-winning, online fleet management system of more than 228,0000 vehicles in the United Kingdom.

Previously, the company relied on printing and mailing vehicle procurement agreements, which can reach up to 60 pages and require an average of three signatures per contract. The delays created from having to print, mail, and handle physical paper agreements were significant.

"Leasedrive expects significant return on investment by implementing eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud and eliminating printing and postage costs on more than 10,000 orders per year."

Paul Newman, head of IT, Leasedrive

"eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud eliminated delays created from mailing and passing the paperwork, enabling us to put the keys in the hands of our customers faster", says Paul Newman, head of IT at Leasedrive.

Make it easy to sign from anywhere

Getting a document signed can be as simple—and as challenging—as coordinating schedules. With employees, customers, and business partners more mobile than ever, a paper-based system often means that documents get lost in the shuffle. Across industries, organizations want a solution that delivers documents to wherever signers are during a business day.

Sunflower Electric Power Corporation is a regional wholesale generation and transmission supplier that operates a system of wind, gas, and coal-based generating plants and a 1,374-mile transmission system for the needs of its six member cooperatives in central and western Kansas. With hundreds of employees working at different stations and out in the field, administrators had difficulty gathering signatures. For example, if the payroll department needed a signature from a remote worker, the signature could be delayed until the worker could come into the office.

Using eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud, Sunflower can reach all its workers at once, executing HR policy documents within a tight deadline that would have been previously impossible. "MegaSign shows the power of eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud," says Maree Percival, corporate services specialist. "We had an immediate need for all 400 employees to sign a policy update agreement in less than 20 days. People were on vacation, remote, busy with other things, and still we collected all signatures with zero errors—on time."

"We deal with strict deadlines and regulations, but eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud has given us an automated and seamless workflow that makes processing documents easy."

Maree Percival, corporate services specialist, Sunflower Electric Power Corporation

Expedite employee onboarding

The ability to streamline the hiring process and get offer letters into the hands of candidates quickly is critical in the competition for talent. Using e-signatures also automates new hire paperwork, reducing costs and enhancing the employee experience.

Foursquare, with offices in New York and San Francisco, uses innovative technology to help subscribers locate nearby friends and discover interesting places and experiences. To facilitate acquiring and retaining the talented employees it requires, the company selected eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud. Now, instead of using manual processes that waste time and create redundant documents, Foursquare distributes and tracks employee-related paperwork in a few clicks.

"With eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud, we've moved toward a paperless environment and streamline our agreements with a tool so easy to use, groups across the company are pushing to adopt it," says Matt Maimoni, Foursquare talent operations manager.

Speed up contract processing

By eliminating the manual collection of wet signatures via fax or physical mail, e-signatures can accelerate contract processing, reduce time to revenue, and improve sales rep productivity. Vendor and order data stays electronic, removing the need for retyping and the potential for errors. Further, it provides procurement managers with greater visibility into the process, helps ensure document integrity, and accelerates the procurement process.

"eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud is an intuitive tool. People quickly understood how to use it and the implementation went smoothly."

Carrie Siwiec, staff accountant for North America Operations, Kantar ITP Partnership

Kantar IT Partnership (ITP) is the global information technology solutions provider for Kantar, which belongs to the WPP family of media companies. The company services and supports the majority of Kantar's worldwide business, with the underlying goal of enabling greater collaboration and information sharing through the strategic use of IT. It wanted to accelerate a document authorization process that was particularly challenging. The company believed e-signatures would expedite the approval process and improve efficiency. It chose eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud for their ability to support signers and recipients in multiple locations, compliance with regulations, and security and simplicity of use.

"Adobe has transformed the way we work, improving efficiencies across many important operational areas, including procurement and human resources," says Gemma Gervasini, finance manager.

Finding the right e-signature solution

Your solution choice is driven by your organization's needs. The beauty of a cloud-based application is that it easily scales to accommodate increasing demand as your business grows and as your organization uncovers new uses for it. When seeking an e-signature solution, consider the following key capabilities in conjunction with your organization's needs.

Ease of setup, administration, and use

With little to no IT and training resources, small and medium businesses need a solution that is easy to set up, administer, and use. An intuitive user interface is essential, as is a short learning curve. Clear and simple training materials should be readily accessible so that users can get up to speed with little formal instruction.

Ability to incorporate your brand identity

Maintaining your company's brand across all customer touchpoints reinforces your identity and sets you apart from the competition. The ideal solution provides an easily customizable signing experience that integrates your visual identity.

Works with applications you already use

If your organization is already using productivity or collaboration software, such as Google Apps, Box, Dropbox, Microsoft SharePoint, Adobe Acrobat, or Adobe Acrobat Reader, a solution that readily integrates e-signing into these applications helps increase adoption. Similarly, the availability of turnkey integrations for CRM or other business systems that you use speeds deployment.

Robust data security

Secure document sending, signing, and storage are essential. If you operate in a highly regulated environment like banking or healthcare, security is a prime concern. Even if your company is not subject to stringent regulatory scrutiny, look for a solution that incorporates multiple layers of defense, employs industry best practices, and takes an end-to-end approach.

Highly available

Signatures are a part of many mission-critical business processes, so you need to choose a vendor that you can rely on to be available. The vendor must have a fully redundant infrastructure to protect against failures, active load balancing, continuous monitoring, and transparent reporting of uptime.

Strong company stability and track record

Because critical business information is stored with the e-signature vendor, company stability and longevity are key considerations. With smaller vendors, potential acquisition by another company is a risk.

Why choose eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud

From the leader in secure digital documents for over 20 years, eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud quickly integrate with existing systems, extend mobile productivity, and reduce signature cycle times from days to minutes. Small businesses and leading organizations, such as Denver Broncos, Foursquare, Groupon, Kantar ITP, KLM, Shred-it, Jaguar Land Rover, Leasedrive, NetApp, Telefonica, Time Warner Cable, and TiVo use these eSign services, formerly known as EchoSign. Companies around the globe prefer eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud for the following reasons:

"With eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud, we've moved toward a paperless environment and streamline our agreements with a tool so easy to use, groups across the company are pushing to adopt it."

Matt Maimoni, talent operations manager, Foursquare

- **Ease of setup and administration**—A simple wizard interface walks administrators through the configuration process in a few minutes. No technical knowledge is required to build templates or customize them with the company's brand identity. Menus drive the user experience and option control.
- **Ease of use**—The interface is intuitive for those who send documents and those who sign them. To send a document for signature, all that is needed is the recipient's email address, the uploaded document, and positioning of the signature and data blocks. Signers receive an email with a link to the document. They simply review and sign instantly with a mouse, stylus, or finger, or by typing their name. eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud then securely archive the document so that you can easily access it from any device.
- **Tight integration with products you already use**—Adobe provides a broad range of turnkey integrations for popular applications, including products like Salesforce, Box, Dropbox, Microsoft Dynamics CRM and SharePoint, Google Apps, Apttus, NetSuite, Oracle CRM, and SugarCRM. In addition, eSign services are part of Adobe Document Cloud, which provides the complete power of Acrobat and Adobe PDF plus online services for signing and approval and document protection, tracking, and publishing.
- **Rigorous security at every level**—Adobe uses the same technologies and security engineering processes relied on by financial institutions and governments around the world. With eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud, security is considered at every level—from the application code and networks to the physical facilities. Along with the most up-to-date technologies, eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud adhere to the latest best-practice policies for online security. They meet or exceed a number of strict industry and regulatory standards, including HIPAA, PCI DSS, Statement on Standards for Attestation Engagements (SSAE) 16 Type II Service Organization Controls 2 (SOC 2), and the U.S.-EU Safe Harbor Framework. To learn more, see the *Adobe Document Cloud Security Overview*.
- **Reliable infrastructure for high availability**—Adobe uses state-of-the-art, geo-dispersed data centers to provide data redundancy and availability. eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud servers are housed in protected SSAE 16 Type II SOC 2 data centers with redundant power and Internet connectivity. eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud provide 100% transparent uptime data at *www.adobe.com/go/trust-dc*. Uptime is continuously monitored by the Internet's leading third-party monitoring service, Pingdom.
- **Compliance with governmental requirements for electronic signatures**—In the United States, Adobe warrants that eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud are fully compliant with the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce (ESIGN) Act of 2000. In addition, eSign services in Adobe Document Cloud comply with the e-signature laws and regulations of the following countries:
  - Australia—Electronic Transactions Act
  - Canada—Uniform Electronic Commerce Act (UECA)
  - United Kingdom—Electronic Communications Act 2000 (Chapter 7)

For more information

Solution details: *www.adobe.com/go/dc-enterprise*

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2/15