

20 Years of ESIGN

Cutting Government Costs and
Accelerating Paperwork Processes

Today's interconnected technology landscape offers countless ways for public sector organizations to seamlessly connect with the citizens they serve. With the push (or click) of a button, benefits paperwork can be completed, vendors can be managed and citizens can even self-service in seconds. But it wasn't always that easy. These seamless, secure modern interactions are not simply the result of innovative organizations that have created brilliant innovations. At the heart of that digital transformation are key legal guidelines, ensuring that technology used in digital public sector transactions meets appropriate criteria.

June 30, 2020 marked the 20th anniversary of the Electronic Signature in Global and National Commerce Act (ESIGN) in the U.S. Before ESIGN established the validity of electronic signature, public sector transactions required ink-and-paper signatures to finalize agreements. Just 20 years ago, the only way to complete signature-dependant processes was to set up a hodgepodge signature process involving in-person meetings, long delays, expensive physical mail, fax machines, printers, scanners and photocopiers.

The passage of ESIGN eliminated doubt about the legality and acceptance of electronic signature. ESIGN paved the way for DocuSign and others to build cutting-edge tools to streamline processes. Milestones like this one are an opportunity to celebrate how far agreement technology has come and how organizations and citizens benefit from faster, more connected systems.

In this ebook, we'll examine a highlight reel of government agencies that have used electronic signature tools to reduce the costs of doing business and give citizens a better experience. As you read through, think of the ways your organization could benefit from an improved agreement process today and imagine the exciting improvements that will come in the future.

We've entered the paperless era

1940s–1970s

Invention of photocopiers and fax machines

1970s–1990s

Birth of personal computers, the internet and the World Wide Web

1990s–2000s

Rise of e-business, CRM and the PDF

2000s–2010s

Broad adoption of mobile technology and cloud computing

Today

Focus on process automation and digital experiences

Metro Nashville Public Schools streamline purchasing by 86%

With 153 public schools that educate 85,000 students annually, Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) is one of the largest school systems in the entire U.S. Outdated manual processes were taking an average of 85 days to obtain all the signatures required to complete vendor contracts. Those long delays introduced inefficiencies and made school system personnel wait far too long to receive materials and services they needed. Each purchase required around 15 reviewers or signers, generated two to six carbon copies and relied on postal services for delivery.

By upgrading to the DocuSign Agreement Cloud, director of purchasing Gary Appenfelder and his team reduced that process to only 12 days. The new process has streamlined purchases and automated important status checks along the way. “DocuSign has many subtle but important features in areas like security, templates, tracking and reporting that add up to a big difference in the productivity of the people using it and why they emerged as the global standard,” Appenfelder said.

Because the process is now faster and more efficient, Appenfelder’s team is able to execute over 500 contracts per year, more than double the total from previous years. The efficiency gains allow the MNPS team to respond to needs with more agility and better serve the students of the Nashville community.



Reduced average contract processing time from 85 days to 12



Increased contracts processing rate by +90%



Eliminated contracts lost in processing



Covered DocuSign licensing costs through paper savings alone

Government paperwork by the numbers

\$38.7 billion

Annual cost of paperwork to the government

\$117 billion

Annual cost of government paperwork to the public

11 billion

Hours spent by the public on government paperwork

23,000

Number of unique federal government forms

“We expected that DocuSign would speed contract processing and increase the number we execute per year, but the amount of improvement blew our socks off. DocuSign delivered far more dramatic results than we ever imagined.”

Gary Appenfelder
Director of Purchasing
Metro Nashville Public Schools

Governments respond to COVID-19 by improving agreements

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of ESIGN, the world is fighting the outbreak of COVID-19. Governments across the world are racing to increase agility and keep up with the needs of the people they serve. Public sector programs in more than a dozen U.S. states have connected with DocuSign to discuss using eSignature to manage a wide range of routine services – contracting work, employment facilitation, medical consent forms, supplier agreements, special education plans, legal proceedings and more – with a remote workforce. These services fulfill basic needs for citizens and it's important that any changes to public sector workflows avoid operational lapses. DocuSign has also been at the core of new rapid response initiatives involving medical supply orders, Veterans Affairs policies and unemployment benefits.

Processing paperwork related to healthcare patients and suppliers is an especially important function of public sector work. To manage these, DocuSign's public sector customers at the federal, state and municipal level have been building processes that utilize PowerForms (a feature that automatically pulls data from connected systems) and Guided Forms (a feature that adapts new questions based on previous answers). With PowerForms, citizens can complete a form or application digitally and trigger a self-service workflow that ends in a successful electronic signature. This minimizes the effort public sector workers spend preparing agreements and collecting information, letting agencies put more effort into distributing important resources to the public.

Some state agencies have even put a HIPAA Business Associate Agreement (BAA) in place for the state. This allows them to collect and store confidential information like social security numbers using DocuSign. A state having a HIPAA BAA in place allows all agencies to manage agreements related to use cases with highly sensitive information.

“As we continue to shelter in place, e-signature technology enables individuals, nonprofits and governments to keep doing critical business in a safe, contact-free way with online signatures. We look forward to new innovations that keep us safe during COVID-19 and for years to come.”

Sam Liccardo
Mayor
San Jose, California

Focus on your public, not paperwork

Business runs on agreements and government business is no exception. DocuSign is even FedRAMP authorized and listed on the FedRAMP Marketplace. More than 800 local, state and federal agencies (with hundreds of millions of users) have improved agreement processes to enable citizens, businesses and staff to work smarter and more effectively with:

- Self-service forms
- Electronic signatures
- Prepopulated agreements
- Mobile applications
- Document tracking
- Automated approval processes

“Citizens find it easier to do business with the state because they can sign forms and documents anytime, anywhere and from any web-accessible device.”

David McCoy
Controller
State of North Carolina



Reduce cost and hassle

Save time, money and errors by eliminating manual tasks. Save trees by eliminating paper.



Deliver superior service

Give citizens and staff the speed and convenience of doing business digitally.



Mitigate risk

Ensure peace of mind and accountability with built-in audit trails that stand up in court and the strongest data encryption technologies commercially available.

“DocuSign has an unlimited number of use cases and has been the catalyst for us in making the transition to a totally digital environment.”

Howard Hill
IT Manager
Alameda County (California)

Learn more about the [DocuSign Agreement Cloud for Government](#).



About DocuSign

DocuSign helps organizations connect and automate how they prepare, sign, act on and manage agreements. As part of the DocuSign Agreement Cloud, DocuSign offers eSignature: the world's #1 way to sign electronically on practically any device, from almost anywhere, at any time. Today, more than 500,000 customers and hundreds of millions of users in over 180 countries use DocuSign to accelerate the process of doing business and to simplify people's lives.

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