The Battle of the E-Signatures

The future of documentation is electronic signatures. During the last year, many companies have moved their wet ink signature processes to digital. This has created a huge market for electronic signature software, but which is best? This article takes 3 leading signature software products and compares them against each other.

DOCUSIGN

DocuSign is a USA based company, founded in 2003. Their system hosts over 500,000 customers including VISA, Facebook, and Samsung. Despite the software being hosted in the USA and there being no legal requirement for GDPR compliance, DocuSign adheres to GDPR legislation meaning it can be used in the UK and EU.

Features include audit trail, authentication, customisable templates, document analysis, and multi-party signing.

Cost: £8 p/m for individuals, £20 per user p/m for Standard plan, £33 per user p/m for business pro. (Including a free trial)
Platforms: Web based, Desktop – Mac and Windows, Mobile – Android, iPhone, iPad
Support Options: Email, Phone, Ticket, Chat
Training: Live Online, Webinars and Documentation

ADOBE SIGN

Adobe Sign is a product from the company Adobe. They host the massively popular Adobe Creative Cloud and make and manage software such as Photoshop, Illustrator and Acrobat. If you subscribe to Adobe products already, it may already be included in your package. However, it's not included in all so you may need to still buy it.

Features include audit trail, authentication, customisable templates, multi-party signing. Though no document analysis unlike DocuSign.

DocuSign vs. Adobe Sign vs. E-Sign

Cost: £25.28 per user p/m for individuals, £36.50 per user p/m for a Small Business plan, with options for larger (10 users+) business. (Including a free trial)
Platforms: Web based, Desktop (on premise) – Linux and Windows – Android, iPhone, iPad
Support Options: Email, Phone, Ticket, Chat
Training: Live Online, Webinars, Documentation and Videos

E-SIGN

E-Sign are a Liverpool based company founded in 2012. Despite being a smaller company than DocuSign and Adobe, they are equally as certified being ISO27001 and cyber essentials certified. Being UK based, the data doesn't leave the UK and so you're definitely safe under GDRP legislation.

Features include audit trail, authentication, customisable templates, document analysis, and multi-party signing.

Cost: £1.60 per document pay as you go, £24 for user p/m for a Small Business plan, £40 per user p/m for a larger business. (Including a free trial)
Platforms: Web based, Desktop (on premise) – Mac and Windows – Android, iPhone, iPad
Support Options: Email, Phone, Ticket,

Chat
Training: Live Online and Documentation

WHICH SHOULD YOUR BUSINESS USE?

By now, you've probably notice that they're all similar with only a few subtle differences between them all. The main difference being price. Before deciding on software, we would recommend auditing how many signatures you're likely to need and then use the pricing models to work out the most cost effective. If it's very few, it's likely E-Sign is good for you, it's much more, DocuSign might be a better bet. And if you already pay for Adobe Sign, start using that.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Geraint Harries

Before starting at Lancaster University over 4 years ago, Geraint had worked in software development roles in both IBM and the Civil Service. In addition to being a qualified teacher, Geraint has worked freelance with a varied client base as a software developer and graphic designer.