eSignatures 101

An Essential Guide to Paperless Signing

Scriptel® CORPORATION

The Trend Towards Paperless

Organizations of all types and sizes are working to remove paper from everyday processes that require a signature. As a result, the trend to digitize and move to paperless workflow is accelerating.

In fact, according to new research published by P&S Market Research, the global eSignature market is projected to reach **$9,073.1 million by 2023**, growing at a CAGR of **34.7% during 2017–2023**.

Now is the time

to modernize your document approval process, and transition to a paperless workflow. To help you get started, this eBook will provide you with an overview of key concepts related to eSignatures.

$9,073.1 million by 2023

What is an Electronic Signature (eSignature)?

An electronic signature is any method that indicates a signers' intention that can be confirmed later as authentic.

The **Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce or E-Sign Act** defines an electronic signature as "an electronic sound, symbol, or process, attached to or logically associated with a contract or other record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record."

In other words, any interaction that:

✓ **Shows intent—such as a click, typed text, sound, picture, fingerprint scan, etc.**

✓ **Can be properly applied to the document at the time of signing**

✓ **Becomes part of the document in a way that can't be repudiated**

eSignature vs Digital Signature

The terms eSignature and digital signature are often confused. It is important to note the differences.

A digital signature is a cryptographic or mathematical technique for proving authenticity, integrity and non-repudiation of an electronic document. It is NOT an electronic signature, nor a handwritten signature captured on a signature pad.

Applying a digital signature to a document encrypts a version of the document using a cryptographic key. This encrypted hash is bound together with the document and another file referred to as the digital certificate. The set of encrypted hash, certificate and document is then a digitally-signed document.
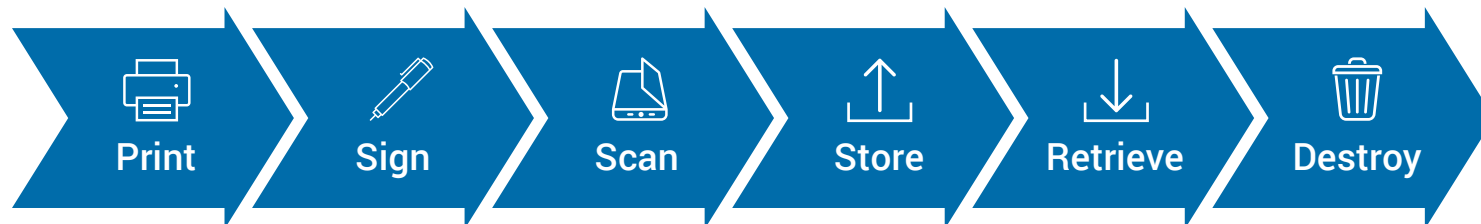
In other words, a digital signature is the technique vs the actual signature itself.
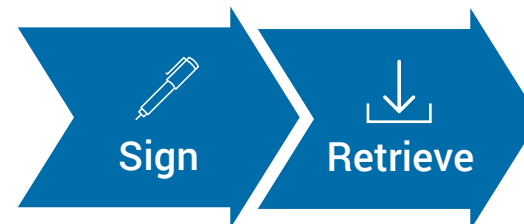
Benefits of eSignatures

✓ **Increase Operational Efficiency –** Eliminate the need to print, scan and file documents for signature capture.

✓ **Boost Productivity –** Reduce the amount of time spent sorting, filing, and searching for files.

✓ **Reduce Costs –** Save money on paper, ink and toner, printer maintenance, and record storage and destruction.

✓ **Save Physical Space –** Remove bulky file cabinets to reduce your physical footprint, and related overhead costs.

✓ **Go Green –** Use less paper, and boost your image to attract environmentally-conscious customers.

✓ **Prevent Document Loss –** Keep critical records safe in the event of a disaster with cloud storage.

✓ **Improve Customer Satisfaction –** Streamline the document authorization process for faster, easier transactions.

Digital Workflow with Paper and Wet Signature

Print	Sign	Scan	Store	Retrieve	Destroy

Digital Workflow with Electronic Signature

Eliminate four steps in the digital workflow process, and modernize your workflow, by transitioning to a paperless process. With electronic signatures, you can manage your business *instead of managing paper.*

Sign	Retrieve

Why Use Handwritten Signature Capture?

Handwritten signatures are unique to the signer, adding a level of identity assurance to intent and authenticity. In addition:

✓ **Handwritten signatures create the best signing experience**

✓ **People expect to see a graphic representation of their signature**

✓ **Many legal departments and authorities still insist on handwritten signatures**

Biometrics and eSignatures

What is biometric verification? It enables a person to be uniquely identified by evaluating one or more distinguishing biological traits. Biometric techniques include eSignautres, fingerprints, retinal scans, iris patterns, facial characteristics, voice prints, signature dynamics, and more.

How does it work? Handwritten eSignatures capture the biometric features of the signer. Biometric data collected includes:

✓ **Pressure applied when signing**

✓ **Angle of the pen when signing**

✓ **Variations in the stroke**

✓ **Stroke order, acceleration and speed**

In addition, since biometric data is unique to each person, biometrics add another layer of security to eSignatures.

How Are Handwritten Signatures Captured?

Typically using a special-purpose pad, handwriting can be captured in the form of a stream of vectors (signature data) and converted into an image representing the signature.

Mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets can also be used to capture handwritten signatures. However, signing with a finger is not the most accurate replication of one's signature.
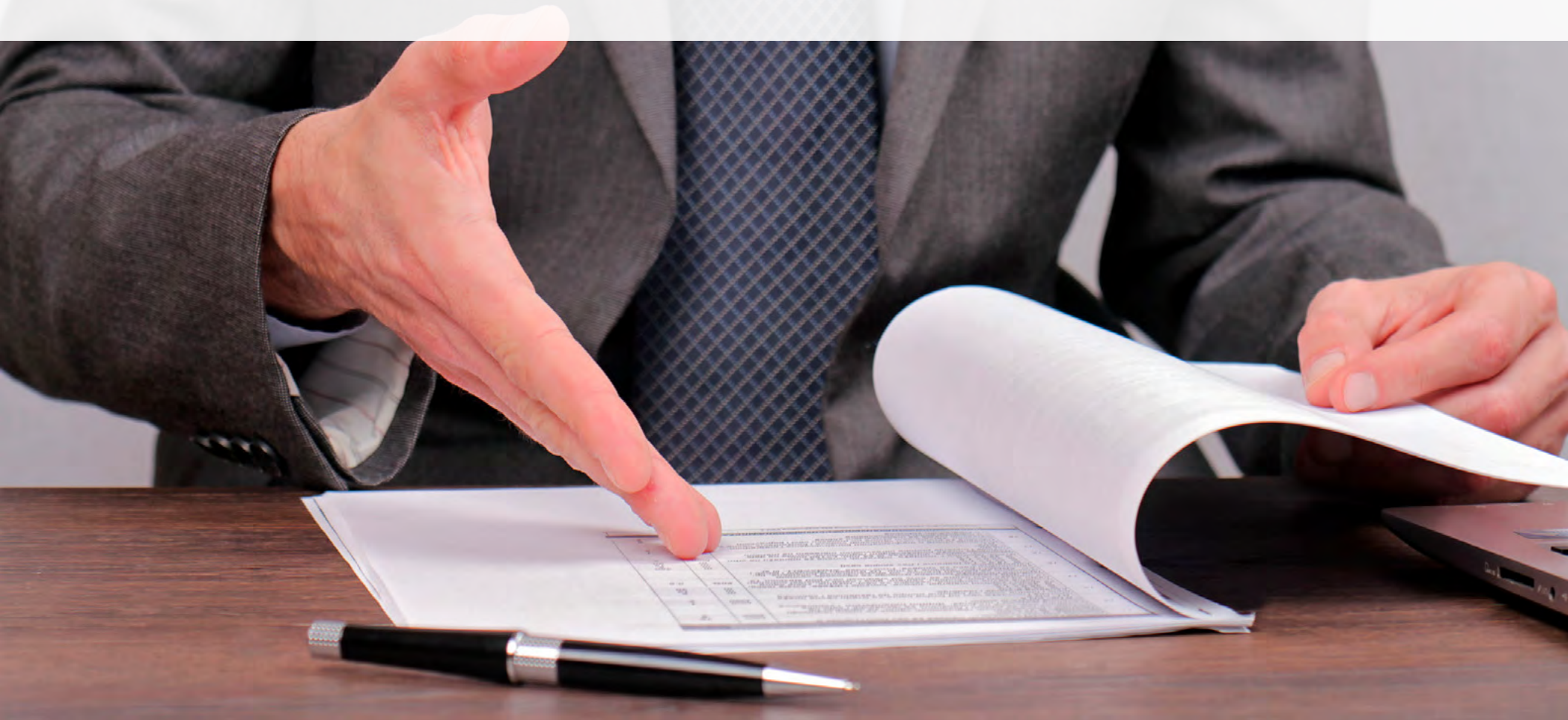
Are eSignatures Legal?

[The Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce or E-Sign Act](#) grants legal recognition to electronic signatures. Passed in 2000, it stipulates that no contract or agreement can be denied or unenforced due to an electronic signature. However, laws and regulations can vary widely by state or industry. To ensure an eSignature is legally binding in your specific situation, you should consult an experienced attorney.

To learn more about the legalities surrounding eSignatures, [check out our guide to understanding legally binding electronic signatures](#).

Industries Adopting eSignatures

Accounting & Tax	Banking & Financial	Government
Healthcare	Higher Education	Human Resources
Insurance	Legal	Real Estate

About Scriptel

✓

35 years
industry expertise

✓

3 million+ solutions
deployed worldwide

✓

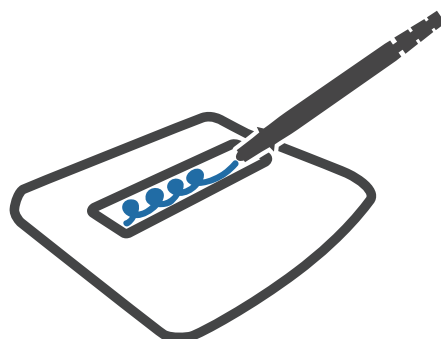**100% U.S. manufacturing,**
service and support

Based in Columbus, Ohio, Scriptel has been the leader in capacitive pen digitizing since 1982. We're the only maker of electronic signature pads that uses capacitive sensing technology; the same technology used in smartphones. Our ScripTouch electronic signature pads and custom OEM components for the retail point-of-sale and digital workflow markets deliver high reliability with unrivaled support.

Ready to power your paperless future? Wondering if Scriptel is the right solution for you?
Contact Us Today!