

Adobe Document Cloud Creates Better, Faster Digital Workflow Experiences

Adobe Document Cloud is a suite of services and software designed to enable organizations to digitize any type of paper-based document process. Forrester Consulting interviewed and surveyed several customers using Adobe Acrobat DC or Adobe Sign, both Adobe Document Cloud solutions. Prior to using Adobe Document Cloud solutions, these organizations struggled with inefficient and costly document processes. Enterprise systems facilitated various steps of the process, but gaps between systems were filled with email, paper, scans, faxes, and shipping. Disjointed document workflows created frustration, slowed cycle times, and resulted in a poor experience for employees and customers.

With Adobe Acrobat DC and Adobe Sign, organizations are able to close these gaps, integrating with enterprise systems to quickly and securely create, collaborate on, and sign key documents. With Adobe Document Cloud, organizations deliver more efficient digital document workflows and better customer experiences while reducing costs.

Quantified benefits. The following risk-adjusted quantified benefits are representative of those experienced by the companies interviewed:

- › **Employees save up to 50 hours per year working on documents.** Users of Adobe Acrobat DC digitize paper-based tasks, reduce rework, use mobile capabilities to continue work outside of the office, and send and track documents to get approvals faster.
- › **Employees save 1.3 hours per signing transaction by reducing manual signature steps.** Users eliminate inefficiencies in preparing documents, negotiating or reviewing documents, tracking, rekeying, and archiving using Adobe Sign.
- › **Adobe Document Cloud reduces security and compliance risk.** Users password protect sensitive documents, use templates to standardize and lock down documents, and track documents sent for signature to create an audit trail. Each Adobe Acrobat DC user saves \$150 annually related to security and compliance improvements.
- › **With end-to-end digital workflows, organizations reduce costs associated with paper.** Adobe Acrobat DC users each save \$175 per year on paper and shipping costs, and organizations save \$11 per Adobe Sign transaction on paper, ink, printers, scanners, and shipping. Organizations also reduce their environmental impact.
- › **Adobe Acrobat DC enables IT efficiencies with easier PDF software administration.** IT saves 300 hours per year on license management, deployments, and updates, and there is minimal troubleshooting for both Adobe Acrobat DC and Adobe Sign.



2.7x to 3.8x return on investment (ROI)



Up to 50 hours saved per user annually



Signatures received 21x faster

SUMMARY

Based on two commissioned studies, “The Total Economic Impact Of Adobe Sign” and “The Total Economic Impact Of Adobe Acrobat DC”

METHODOLOGY

The objective of the TEI framework is to identify the cost, benefit, flexibility, and risk factors that affect the investment decision. Forrester took a multistep approach to evaluate the impact of Adobe Acrobat DC and Adobe Sign, including interviews with Forrester analysts, Adobe stakeholders, and several current Adobe customers. Forrester constructed a financial model representative of the interviews for each study using the TEI methodology.

COMPOSITE ORGANIZATION

Each analysis uses a composite organization, based on the interviewees, to present the aggregate financial analysis.

RISK ADJUSTMENT

Forrester risk-adjusted the financial models based on issues and concerns of the interviewed organizations to account for uncertainties in benefit and cost estimates.

The Adobe Acrobat DC And Adobe Sign Customer Journey

The participants in the two studies include:

- › **Adobe Acrobat DC TEI:** Forrester interviewed two organizations with between 1,300 and 2,300 Adobe Acrobat DC seats. Additionally, Forrester fielded an online survey of 50 respondents in North America at organizations with 500 or more employees.
- › **Adobe Sign TEI:** Forrester interviewed six organizations with between 9,000 and over 400,000 Adobe Sign transactions in the past year.

Key Investment Drivers And Results

The interviewed and surveyed organizations shared the following investment drivers:

- › **Disconnected document workflows created frustration and inefficiency for employees.** While these organizations had invested in enterprise systems, most document tasks occurred outside of those systems in email, soft copy, and paper. Documents were stored as paper documents or scanned files, making it difficult to locate those files later. If PDFs needed to be edited, employees would have to locate the source document, edit it, and then re-PDF it. Lost source documents would have to be recreated. Data from paper forms would have to be rekeyed into enterprise systems. Significant time was spent tracking documents that required collaboration or were sent for signature. Often, when an employee was traveling, processes stalled without the ability to edit or sign documents from mobile devices. Time wasted on these tasks hurt an employee's ability to focus on high-value work, and difficulties in these workflows often affected an organization's customers as well.
- › **Paper-based document processes increased security and compliance risk.** The organizations struggled to secure sensitive documents, and prior processes made it difficult to have an audit trail when documents were shared, sent for signature, and stored. A common perception was that wet signatures were more secure. However, interviewees noted that paper documents with sensitive information were more easily lost and didn't always go directly to relevant parties. Paper or Word documents were more likely to have errors due to people making changes that were not approved, signing in the wrong place, or documents missing signatures.
- › **Relying on paper was expensive.** Paper-based processes required spending on paper, printers, ink, fax machines, and postage or shipping rates.

The interviewed and surveyed organizations achieved key investment results:

- › **Adobe Document Cloud increases efficiency for employees with the ability to create, collaborate on, and sign digital documents.** Employees eliminate rework of source documents with conversion and editing capabilities in Adobe Acrobat DC. They reduce inefficiencies and errors associated with paper and rekeying and convert scanned paper documents into editable digital files. They merge content from multiple sources into one PDF file to bring all relevant information into one document. Employees collaborate within one PDF file with comment and review tools. With the send and track tool, employees reduce time spent tracking documents, and with the send for signature tool, employees speed signature processes. With Adobe Sign, interviewees note significant reductions in signature cycle times. By using templates, tracking and notification features, and signature workflows, employees spend less time preparing documents, negotiating, tracking documents, and re-entering data.
- › **Organizations can easily improve document security and compliance.** With Adobe Acrobat DC, documents are securely shared and signed. Employees can password protect documents, retain document fidelity when sharing documents, use send and track to provide an audit trail, and redact sensitive information. Signature processes are more secure with Adobe Sign due to the ability to route sensitive

"You're saving a tree and you're saving time. After 30 seconds, you've filled out your expense report, signed it, and sent it off, and then you're on to the next thing instead of taking thousands of walks to the printer just to print something out and rescan it back in. It was just insane, the amount of time that we were wasting doing stuff like that."

*Manager of client services,
financial services*



"The integration allows us to utilize one tool to get our signature completed and be the repository for our contracts. Before, we were using a couple of tools to get that executed. Now it's a one-stop shop. Users only have to use Salesforce, and because Salesforce and Adobe Sign speak to each other so well, some people don't even realize that they're using two tools."

*Strategic vendor alliance
manager, medical/
healthcare company*



documents directly to signers and add passwords or digital signatures for certain regions. Interviewees also noted fewer errors on signed documents, templates to standardize documents, and tracking functionality that provides an audit trail.

- › **Integrations with key enterprise systems and mobile capabilities extend the impact of Adobe Document Cloud.** Interviewees noted that within minutes, they could set up an API to integrate Adobe Acrobat DC and Adobe Sign with CRM systems and contract repositories. Employees can begin and end their document workflows within these systems, improving their and their customers' overall experience, and they can easily ensure that documents are properly created, routed, and stored. Employees can also use the Acrobat Reader and Adobe Sign mobile apps to continue collaborating on documents or signing documents beyond the office walls, ensuring that document processes aren't affected by travel.
- › **More efficient, secure, and mobile document processes benefit an organization's interactions with customers as well.** Just as employees' expectations of simple, digital document workflows continue to increase, so do customers' expectations. Interviewees reported customer dissatisfaction with prior processes and an enthusiastic response by customers after the Adobe investment, particularly for digital signature processes. One organization noted incremental sales and faster time-to-revenue-generation for several groups due to Adobe Sign. Additionally, by reducing employees' time spent on these processes, they can spend more time delivering a higher volume and value of work for their organizations.

"One customer actually let us know they were considering leaving and not ordering through us because we didn't make it easy. And then after we deployed Adobe Sign, they sent us a note and said, 'Wow! You completely changed our mind. Thanks for revolutionizing this process.' I can tell you that it did cause our sales to be built up in that area."

Senior engineer,
pharmaceutical company



Composite Organizations

Based on the interviews, for both studies Forrester constructed a TEI framework, a composite company, and an ROI analysis that illustrates the areas financially affected.

Adobe Acrobat DC composite characteristics: The organization standardizes on Adobe Acrobat DC for PDF documents. The organization purchases 1,000 Adobe Acrobat DC seats, and it deploys all seats at the start of Year 1. The organization assumes that Year 1 involves a user adoption curve as more Adobe Acrobat DC features are adopted and Adobe Acrobat DC is used in more processes.

Adobe Sign composite characteristics: Following an initial use case, Adobe Sign usage spreads to 18 groups by the end of Year 3. The organization uses Adobe Sign for both internal and external signatures. Adoption of Adobe Sign is over 90% internally and approximately 80% externally. For each group, Forrester assumes that there are 30 active users who generate documents for signature and two built use cases (which include a template, workflow, and/or integration), as well as many one-off use cases.

Adobe Acrobat DC And Adobe Sign Transform Document Processes

With Adobe Acrobat DC, employees easily create PDF documents from source files or scanned paper documents, and they can convert the files back to source files while retaining formatting, reducing time spent recreating documents. Employees access and edit documents on mobile devices while remote. Employees review and edit PDFs and protect sensitive documents. Send and track and send for signature provide audit trails and reduce turnaround time. With Adobe Sign, employees use templates to generate documents, send them directly to the right signers, and use tracking features to speed signature retrieval. Mobile capabilities accelerate cycles by allowing traveling signers to sign from any device, and security features ensure sensitive data is protected.

Overall, Adobe Acrobat DC and Adobe Sign increase document process efficiency and reduce compliance and security risks, errors, and the use of paper. Employees use time saved on document generation, collaboration, tracking, and storage on higher value tasks.



Key assumptions

1,000 Adobe Acrobat DC users

540 active users of

Adobe Sign by Year 3

37,800 Adobe Sign

transactions by Year 3

80% agree

"Adobe Acrobat DC is an important part of our paper-to-digital process transformation."

Total Benefits: Adobe Acrobat DC

REF.	BENEFIT	INITIAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	TOTAL	PRESENT VALUE
Atr	End user efficiency	\$0	\$316,200	\$632,400	\$632,400	\$1,581,000	\$1,285,231
Btr	IT administration savings	\$0	\$6,480	\$6,480	\$6,480	\$19,440	\$16,115
Ctr	Improved security and compliance	\$0	\$67,500	\$135,000	\$135,000	\$337,500	\$274,361
Dtr	Prior process cost avoidance	\$95,000	\$101,650	\$185,250	\$185,250	\$567,150	\$479,689
	Total benefits (risk-adjusted)	\$95,000	\$491,830	\$959,130	\$959,130	\$2,505,090	\$2,055,396

Total Benefits: Adobe Sign

REF.	BENEFIT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	TOTAL	PRESENT VALUE
Atr	Time savings	\$278,460	\$556,920	\$1,002,456	\$1,837,836	\$1,466,570
Btr	Hard cost savings	\$109,725	\$219,450	\$395,010	\$724,185	\$577,890
	Total benefits (risk-adjusted)	\$388,185	\$776,370	\$1,397,466	\$2,562,021	\$2,044,460

› **Employees can create, manage, and share documents more efficiently.**

Interviewees note the ability to easily enable and control document security, gather and review data faster with digital forms, mark up PDF documents with edits, and retain document fidelity during collaboration using Adobe Acrobat DC. Users eliminate time spent recreating source documents with the ability to convert PDFs to source file types and directly edit a PDF file quickly and easily. Send and track and send for signature tools reduce time spent managing these processes, and users also noted a reduction in signature cycle times. Power users save 50 hours per year, and casual users save 12 hours per year, on average.

- › **Employees reduce time spent on signature processes.** Interviewees use Adobe Sign templates to reduce time spent on contract generation. By digitizing contracts, organizations see a significant decrease in redlines, errors, unapproved edits, and misplaced signatures, reducing cycle time. Interviewees save time on tracking by routing documents to the right people with workflows and sending reminders. Most interviewees have at least one integration between Adobe Sign and their enterprise systems, allowing for seamless use of e-signing within these systems, automated document storage, and the ability to populate or pull data from metadata fields. Overall, employees conservatively save 1.3 hours per transaction.

- › **IT staff can also reduce time spent on administration while delivering a better experience to business users.** Organizations noted IT administrative savings compared with prior PDF tools, including spending less time on license management, security concerns, and software updates, and minimal time on troubleshooting user issues. IT staff save 300 hours per year due to Adobe Acrobat DC.

- › **In addition to time savings, internal processes and interactions with customers are improved.** New hires fill out paperwork online, saving 2 to 3 hours on their first day so that they can be productive faster. Providing better customer experience with Adobe Sign increased sales over 20% for one group and reduced customer onboarding time from 22 days to 2 days for another group, resulting in incremental revenue from new deals and faster revenue generation post signature. Procurement and legal teams can manage a higher volume of contracts with the same staff.

“Which of the following tasks are improved with Adobe Acrobat DC?”

76% get signatures faster

62% access documents more quickly

52% use Adobe Acrobat DC from any device

52% create, edit documents easily

52% control document security, access



> 20% increase in revenue due to a faster, easier sales signature process with Adobe Sign

- › **Digital workflows deliver security and compliance improvements.** Previously, organizations struggled with the protection of sensitive data and the overhead required to provide audit trails, prove compliance, and resolve issues. With Adobe Acrobat DC, organizations have better document security controls and tracking features. This saves time on compliance activities, reduces the number of compliance issues, improves document security, and yields fewer penalties/fines. Organizations save \$150 per seat per year due to these improvements.
- › **Reducing the use of paper creates significant savings.** Using paper can be costly, both in time and direct expense for paper, printing, and shipping. By using Adobe Document Cloud to create digital documents that can be electronically routed and signed, organizations save \$175 per seat per year and \$11 per transaction in paper and shipping costs. With 37,800 transactions in Year 3, the composite saves 43,000 gallons of water, 14,175 pounds of wood, and 3,600 pounds of waste.



Year 3 savings:
 43,000 gallons of water
 14,175 pounds of wood
 3,600 pounds of waste

Costs Include Licensing Fees, Management Time, And Training Time

The composite organizations experienced three categories of cost.

Total Costs: Adobe Acrobat DC

REF.	COST	INITIAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	TOTAL	PRESENT VALUE
Etr	Adobe Acrobat DC license costs	\$0	\$157,500	\$157,500	\$157,500	\$472,500	\$391,679
Ftr	Implementation and training	\$68,640	\$79,200	\$13,200	\$13,200	\$174,240	\$161,466
	Total costs (risk-adjusted)	\$68,640	\$236,700	\$170,700	\$170,700	\$646,740	\$553,146

Total Costs: Adobe Sign

REF.	COST	INITIAL	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	TOTAL	PRESENT VALUE
Ctr	Adobe Sign licensing fees	\$0	\$37,209	\$74,419	\$133,954	\$245,582	\$195,971
Dtr	Management time	\$5,520	\$73,195	\$58,843	\$78,792	\$216,351	\$179,890
Etr	Training time	\$2,429	\$13,675	\$16,104	\$25,766	\$57,974	\$47,529
	Total costs (risk-adjusted)	\$7,949	\$124,080	\$149,366	\$238,513	\$519,907	\$423,390

- › **Licensing fees are the only costs paid to Adobe.** The composite purchases 500 Adobe Acrobat Pro DC seats at \$170 per year and 500 Adobe Acrobat Standard DC seats at \$130 per year. The composite purchases 15,750 Adobe Sign transactions in Year 1, increasing up to 56,700 transactions in Year 3. This represents a 33% buffer over transactions used. The organization pays \$2.25 per transaction.
- › **Administrators spend time on implementation and management.** The composite spends 300 hours upfront on Adobe Acrobat DC planning, testing, piloting, and deployment. One hundred hours are spent upfront on Adobe Sign planning and building the initial use case. Administrators evangelize and spread the use of both products throughout the organization. Minimal time is spent on troubleshooting.
- › **Minimal time is needed for training.** Adobe Acrobat DC users spend 2 hours on basic training and reviewing training materials. Adobe Sign users spend 1 hour in general training and 1 hour each on specific use case trainings. One administrator in each group is also trained to aid in troubleshooting user errors.

“I don’t get phone calls. I point out Adobe’s video trainings to users, and I send screenshots that give them a walkthrough. I get people that don’t even use it. They just go in and go, ‘Oh yeah, I can figure this out. Click send, got it.’ To me, it’s one of the most intuitive systems I’ve ever had.”

Senior engineer,
 pharmaceutical company



Financial Summary

The financial results calculated in the Benefits and Costs sections can be used to determine the ROI and NPV for the composite organization's investment in Adobe Acrobat DC and Adobe Sign. Forrester assumes a yearly discount rate of 10% for this analysis.

- › The total present value (PV) of benefits for Adobe Acrobat DC is \$2 million and the net present value (NPV) is \$1.5 million over three years.
- › The total PV of benefits for Adobe Sign is \$2 million and the NPV is \$1.6 million over three years.

Adobe Document Cloud



2.7x to 3.8x ROI

For more information, you can download the full Adobe Acrobat DC analysis [here](#) and Adobe Sign analysis [here](#).

Disclosures

The reader should be aware of the following:

- › These studies are commissioned by Adobe and delivered by Forrester Consulting. They are not meant to be competitive analyses.
- › Forrester makes no assumptions as to the potential ROI that other organizations will receive. Forrester strongly advises that readers use their own estimates within the frameworks provided in the reports to determine the appropriateness of an investment in Adobe Acrobat DC and Adobe Sign.
- › Adobe reviewed and provided feedback to Forrester. Forrester maintains editorial control over the studies and their findings and does not accept changes to the studies that contradict Forrester's findings or obscure the meaning.
- › Adobe provided the customer names for the interviews but did not participate in the interviews.

ABOUT FORRESTER CONSULTING

Forrester Consulting provides independent and objective research-based consulting to help leaders succeed in their organizations. Ranging in scope from a short strategy session to custom projects, Forrester's Consulting services connect you directly with research analysts who apply expert insight to your specific business challenges. <https://go.forrester.com/consulting/>

ABOUT TEI

Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) is a methodology developed by Forrester Research that enhances a company's technology decision-making processes and assists vendors in communicating the value proposition of their products and services to clients. The TEI methodology helps companies demonstrate, justify, and realize the tangible value of IT initiatives to both senior management and other key business stakeholders. The TEI methodology consists of four components to evaluate investment value: benefits, costs, risks, and flexibility. <https://go.forrester.com/consulting/content-marketing-consulting/>

© 2017, Forrester Research, Inc. All rights reserved. Unauthorized reproduction is strictly prohibited. Information is based on best available resources. Opinions reflect judgment at the time and are subject to change. Forrester®, Technographics®, Forrester Wave, RoleView, TechRadar, and Total Economic Impact are trademarks of Forrester Research, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective companies. For additional information, go to forrester.com