

Engineering Project Management:

9 Tips for optimizing the authentication of professional documents and drawings

Project management and records management are essential pillars of engineering firms. Signature and seal cycles can have a major impact on a firm's overall performance and compliance.

Fortunately, professional digital signatures have offered advanced authentication methods for decades, providing enhanced security compared to traditional manual processes. These digital methods, when adopted on a large scale, help to reduce costs and significantly improve the quality of engineering project delivery.

Here are 9 proven tips to help project managers effectively deploy digital signatures and drive improvements to their work processes within their engineering teams, leading to better coordination and responsiveness throughout their projects.

Schedule Management: Consider the impact of digital signatures

Remote work has revolutionized the way organizations operate. It has now been proven that effective digital signature tools can ensure the non-repudiation of documents, all while reducing the time and cost associated with managing them. This is crucial to maintaining business continuity in an increasingly decentralized work environment.

By using CertifiO professional digital signatures issued by Canadian engineering, architectural, and technologist professional associations, professionals can optimize their work regardless of their geographic location.

These digital signatures are compatible with PDF readers such as ConsignO Desktop, Bluebeam Revu, and Acrobat Reader, making it easy to manage teams, schedule work remotely, and collaborate effectively, whether from home or on the job site.

Easy Assessment: Cost savings and tangible responses for signing processes

Given that thousands of engineers adopted professional digital signature several years ago, it is easy to assess the savings based on reliable data. Professionals can also consult with experts for accurate answers and develop a realistic integration plan, which facilitates the transition to advanced digital work practices.

In addition, given the numerous case studies, project managers can rely on concrete examples to justify their drawings to management.

✓ Organizations that trust in our digital signature



Standardization of the signature and seal image to facilitate electronic stamping

The secret to a successful digital transition for firms is the ConsignO Desktop signature software. Over the past two decades, this software has evolved to meet the specific needs of engineers when it comes to affixing seals and digital signatures.

Using ConsignO Desktop, engineers and their collaborators can upload an image of a signed seal to create a digital equivalent. ConsignO Desktop's features allow you to specify the exact positions for dates and reasons for signing, ensuring documents are authenticated and compliant with regulatory requirements.

ConsignO Desktop: A digital signature PDF reader designed for compliance

Beware! Anyone can copy and paste a seal image taken from Google or a photo. As a result, a seal image is not enough to ensure the non-repudiation of electronic engineering documents!

Fortunately, in addition to standardizing electronic seal images, project managers can rely on ConsignO Desktop to ensure better governance of compliance issues. The software allows engineers to affix a professional digital signature at the same time as a signature and seal image.

This makes it easy for different professionals and engineers to comply with their respective regulatory practices.

As a reminder, professional digital signatures are verified identities crucial to preserving the non-repudiation of official documentation and complying with regulatory best practices. At its core, a digital signature is a cryptographic process that detects

modifications made to the signed document after signing, ensuring the integrity of the electronic document. Professional digital signatures incorporate the signer's civic and professional identity into the digital signature certificate. It is the combination of these two principles that ensures the non-repudiation of a digitally signed document.

Again, a simple seal image does not ensure the integrity and non-repudiation of an electronic document.

Template Creation and batch signing

Using templates for digital signatures and seals optimizes and streamlines the signing process. These templates, when integrated into the project management process, help avoid repetitive manual steps each time a document must be signed. Administrative teams can create signature zones on recurring documents, such as A1 drawings or reports. They can then save the template and share it with their teams.

Signature templates, designed for increased efficiency, allow teams to digitally sign numerous documents in different formats, applying their seals and digital signatures efficiently and processing batches of documents in seconds.

To speed up processes even further, ConsignO Desktop allows engineers to quickly apply batch signatures without even having to open the software by right-clicking in a file browser. This approach not only saves time, but also promotes consistency and compliance with regulatory standards in digital environments.

Applying seal images on multiple pages and validating digital signatures

For multi-page documents, ConsignO Desktop allows you to categorize signature zones for stamping

Creation, seal appearance and digital signature

Engineer or Assistant

Engineer or Assistant

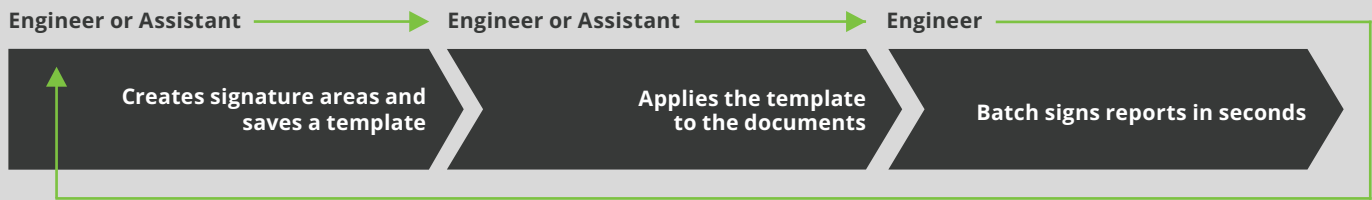
Engineer

Downloads a .jpg image of a signed seal

Creates the seal appearance and specifies the position for the date and reason

Signs a document and applies the seal appearance

Creation of templates and batch signing



images of seals or initials, simplifying the process for authenticating large volumes of documents.

When signing digitally, an engineer applies an invisible digital signature (signature certificate), thus maintaining the authenticity of the document without applying any additional visuals.

Digital signatures are verifiable in most PDF readers. The seal's appearance is important, but the underlying professional digital signature is what truly protects the document and its integrity. During the verification, the digital certificate proves the signer's identity, the signer's right to practise, and the document's integrity.

Annotations: Improving document management after signing

This is often an afterthought, but signature processes go beyond the initial application of the digital signature. Project managers must ensure that signed documents are properly received by the clients, annotated, re-signed, and archived. Using various PDF readers, department managers and other project partners can annotate documents without affecting the authenticity ensured by digital signatures. Subsequent digital signatures provide additional layers of authentication.

This approach ensures a transparent document lifecycle and traceability, both crucial for accountability and regulatory compliance. Annotation capabilities allow you to assign changes or add additional information, thereby increasing stakeholder accountability.

Electronic signatures by external parties who do not have digital signatures

In project management, managers often face complex internal-external signature processes, especially when it comes to contractual documents such as cost overrun requests, change orders, non-disclosure agreements (NDAs), subcontracts, and purchase orders, all of which require rigorous internal-external signature cycles.

For many engineering organizations, adopting ConsignO Cloud in conjunction with CertifiO professional digital signatures makes document authentication processes easier and faster.

ConsignO Cloud is a robust electronic signature platform that allows professionals to sign with their digital signatures, as well as external parties using electronic signatures with two-factor authentication (e.g. text+email).

In addition, the ConsignO Cloud electronic signature platform offers a dashboard, automated reminder capabilities, and a protected audit log, ensuring the non-repudiation of signed electronic documents. It is designed to facilitate the work of administrators and organizations with high legal requirements to strengthen the validity of electronic signatures.

Easy Training: Free tools for a smooth digitalization process

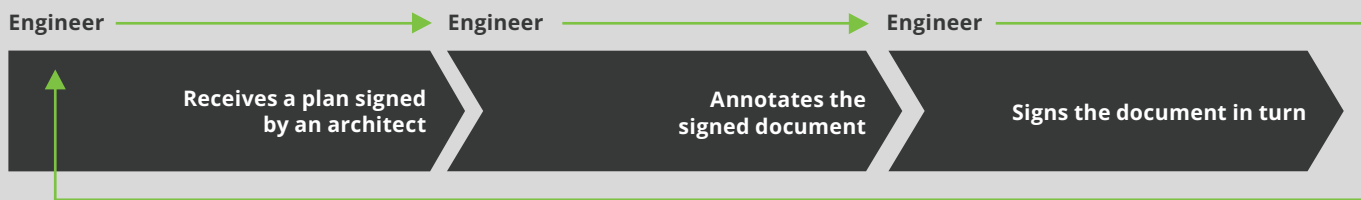
The proven effectiveness of ConsignO Desktop and CertifiO professional digital signatures, demonstrated by the substantial number of business documents that are digitally signed on a daily basis (more than 40,000), underlines the importance of digital adoption to increase a firm's competitiveness.

Project managers can advocate for the integration of the professional digital signature, highlighting the gains in efficiency, cost, and quality, as well as the free training tools available to them.

Application of seals on multiple pages and digital signature



Receipt of a signed plan, annotations and signature



The availability of free resources, including tutorials and webinars, facilitates a smooth digital transition to new digital practices. Project managers can leverage these educational tools to quickly upgrade their teams with technological innovations.

Digital Authentication: Superior performance, minimized risk of non-compliance

Ultimately, the adoption of CertifiO professional digital signatures and tools such as ConsignO Desktop or ConsignO Cloud has the potential to radically optimize the way drawings and documents are authenticated within firms.

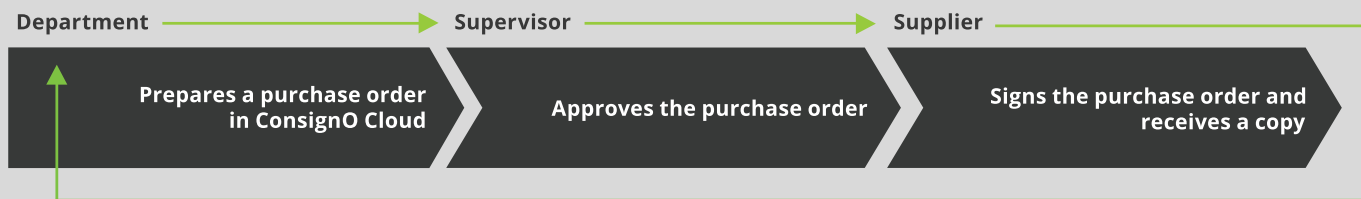
Project managers can more easily estimate time frames and costs, manage compliance risks, and simplify the authentication of drawings with proven features

such as batch signing. They can also improve the signing processes between internal and external parties. In addition, free training tools are available to them to train their team.

Professional digital signatures are revolutionizing project management by outperforming traditional manual methods. These technological advances support organizational performance while ensuring the integrity and non-repudiation of documents, which are crucial to building trust in the engineering industry.

By incorporating these digital tools, project managers in engineering firms can set new standards of excellence, facilitate the technological transition for their teams, and ensure a competitive and secure future for their organization.

Purchase order approved and sent to a supplier (Internal - External)



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