

MODERNISE IT AND STREAMLINE PROCESSES WITH E-SIGNATURES

As businesses digitally transform and move to dynamic cloud and mobile services, they often find that traditional manual processes hold them back. The enclosed Aberdeen knowledge brief analyses how organisations are modernising their sales practices by using e-signatures, and how leading businesses tightly integrate these technologies with vital business platforms such as Microsoft 365 and Microsoft Dynamics.

This brief also uncovers how businesses implementing e-signatures are more innovative. And how, by integrating e-signatures within key systems like Microsoft Dynamics and SharePoint, they're improving customer retention and boosting their revenue.

Read the knowledge brief to learn more about how modernising and streamlining your processes using e-signature solutions can drive innovation in your business.

You'll also discover:

- How implementing e-signatures can lead to increased revenue and faster sales cycles.
- Why businesses that integrate e-signatures into key business systems are more likely to meet sales goals and reduce the cost of customer acquisition.
- How modernising IT in your organisation can have a positive impact across the entire business.

HOW IT LEADERS MODERNISE OPERATIONS WITH E-SIGNATURES

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In this knowledge brief, we'll analyse how organisations today are modernising sales practices and operations through the use of e-signatures and other new technologies. We'll also focus on how leaders are tightly integrating these technologies with vital business platforms such as Microsoft Dynamics and Office 365.

Today, many businesses are focused on modernising all aspects of their IT operations. With digital tools and new technologies, leading organisations are transforming everything from IT to sales to communications, allowing them to be more agile and flexible, plus speeding time to complete contracts, deals and everyday tasks.

This kind of modernisation can be achieved using any number of emerging technologies and practices — completely changing how new customers are discovered, how staff communicates and how daily business is conducted — improving efficiency and accuracy.

For example, artificial intelligence (AI) can be linked to customer relationship management (CRM), knowledge management and communication tools. AI can notify sales teams and other customer-facing staff that a client is looking for a solution and is ready to make a deal. And with an e-signature solution tied to the tools that sales and other staff rely on every day — like Microsoft Office 365 and Microsoft Dynamics — hurdles that slow down or prevent deals are removed and deals get closed more quickly.

In any aspect of business technology today, business workers rely on Microsoft solutions like Office and Dynamics. If you're communicating with a colleague or client, creating content, analysing data or performing nearly any other task, you are most likely using Office 365, which is essentially the default computing platform for modern business.

One of the most important factors that makes these Microsoft tools so useful and popular is their tight integration. For example, the seamless integration between Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft Dynamics makes it very simple for sales staff to quickly connect with their clients and contacts.

And as Office 365 has become more mobile friendly, it has become much easier to work and manage communications from anywhere, at any time. Another key benefit of these Microsoft tools is the integration with Microsoft's LinkedIn platform, which has in many ways replaced business cards to keep track of contacts and prospects.

All of this means that sales teams and customer-facing staff are very sceptical about any solution or tool that makes them leave the Microsoft platform to complete a task to close a deal and bring in business.

How Modernising IT Can Boost All Business

Businesses today are challenged by technology in all aspects of their operations. They must deal with complex, poorly integrated tools that are difficult to manage, slowing vital tasks and operations. And these problems and challenges increase for workers using Microsoft platforms like Dynamics.

Our research strongly shows the importance of an effective e-signature solution. Implemented correctly, it can speed the rate at which deals get done, overcome barriers and keep customers satisfied. But that “implemented correctly” point is key. We’ve found that while there are many companies that have an e-signature solution, oftentimes they’ve implemented it with limited or no integration with Office or Dynamics.

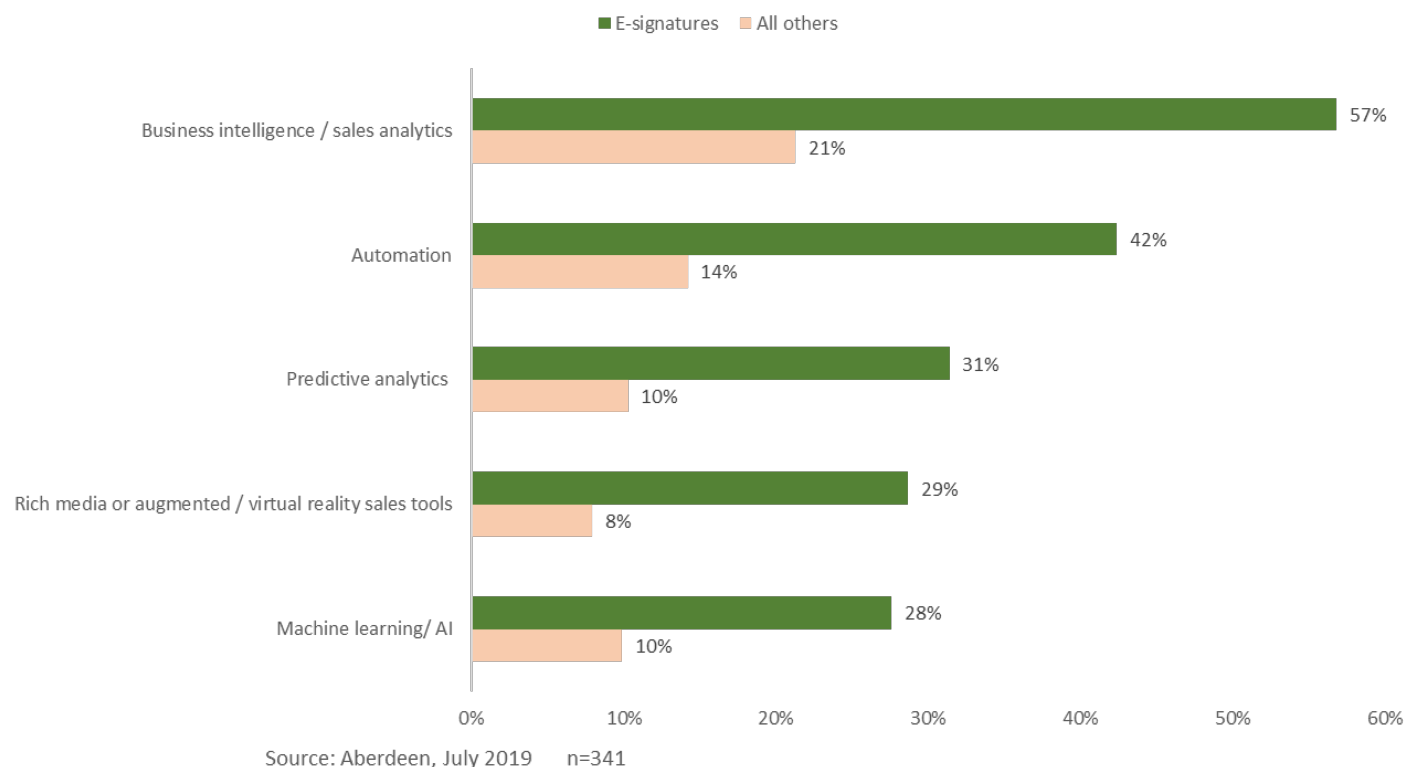
This can limit many of the benefits of e-signatures and even add new hurdles. As mentioned earlier, many of today’s sales and customer-facing teams work continuously in these Microsoft environments, and productivity suffers when they have to leave them or learn new interfaces.

Aberdeen research has found that, when it comes to saving resources, speeding deals and creating efficiencies, e-signatures are a key success metric for leading businesses. This is especially true when e-signatures are well integrated with Dynamics and Office 365. This tight integration simplifies getting contracts completed and deals closed — and leads to increased year-over-year revenue, lower customer acquisition costs and faster sales cycles.

We’ve also found that e-signatures are a strong indicator of businesses that have embraced modernisation across sales, customer-facing areas and IT overall. By identifying businesses using e-signatures, we found that they exceeded competitors when it came to adoption of other key modernisation technologies.

For example, businesses with e-signatures are twice as likely as their peers to be taking advantage of business intelligence and big data driven analytics. They are also three times more likely to be utilising automation, which means they are ridding themselves of manual tasks, inefficient processes and other time-wasting hurdles.

Figure 1: E-signatures and IT Modernisation



Businesses with e-signatures are also three times more likely to benefit from predictive analytics as well as three times more likely to use AI, giving them the knowledge to put more information and decision-making tools in the hands of staff — helping them close deals, bring in new clients and meet the high expectations of modern customers.

E-signatures and Modernisation Lead to Success

As a key indicator of IT modernisation, e-signatures are a strong way to identify those businesses that are innovating and looking to put necessary tools in the hands of users — especially in vital environments such as Microsoft Dynamics and Office 365. We've also found that e-signatures can lead to some valuable benefits beyond modernisation.

We see considerable gains for organisations that modernise their business with integrated e-signatures.

Table 1: How Sales Teams Benefit from E-signatures and Modernisation

Businesses that modernise sales processes are:

3x	More likely to see faster and more efficient sales cycles
70%	More likely to attain sales goals
80%	More likely to improve customer retention rates
75%	More likely to see improvements in annual company revenue
3x	More likely to see reductions in customer acquisition costs

With e-signatures and modernisation integrated with vital business platforms, these organisations are three times more likely to see faster and more efficient sales cycles and they are 70% more likely to actually meet the sales goals that they've set.

And by not making customers work through inefficient manual processes and paper-based contracts, they are 80% more likely to keep customers happy and signing up for more business. By retaining customers, meeting sales goals and gaining efficiencies, these leading businesses are 75% more likely to see annual company revenue growth. And finally, they are three times more likely to reduce the costs of bringing in new customers, as e-signatures remove barriers to doing business.

Today's users are used to modern technologies — they use AI in their home, they use e-signatures when they buy a car or sign a contract and they expect every business they interact with to offer these same innovations. Leading organisations know their customers and understand that they need to embrace modernisation to keep these customers satisfied.

We've found that when businesses take advantage of e-signatures that are tightly integrated with Microsoft Dynamics and Office 365, they gain valuable benefits across their entire organisation. And some e-signature solutions are not only integrated with Microsoft tools, but also include AI capabilities to streamline tasks and workflows like forms-based processes. With modernisation technologies in place, these organisations are ready to innovate to meet the demands of today's customers and increase efficiencies to stay ahead of the competition.

About Aberdeen

Since 1988, Aberdeen has published research that helps businesses worldwide improve their performance. Our analysts derive facts-based, vendor-neutral insights from a proprietary analytical framework which identifies Best-in-Class organisations from primary research conducted with industry practitioners. Aberdeen provides intent-based marketing and sales solutions that deliver performance improvements in advertising click-through rates and sales pipelines, resulting in a measurable ROI. Aberdeen is headquartered in Waltham, Massachusetts, USA.

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