IDC MarketScape

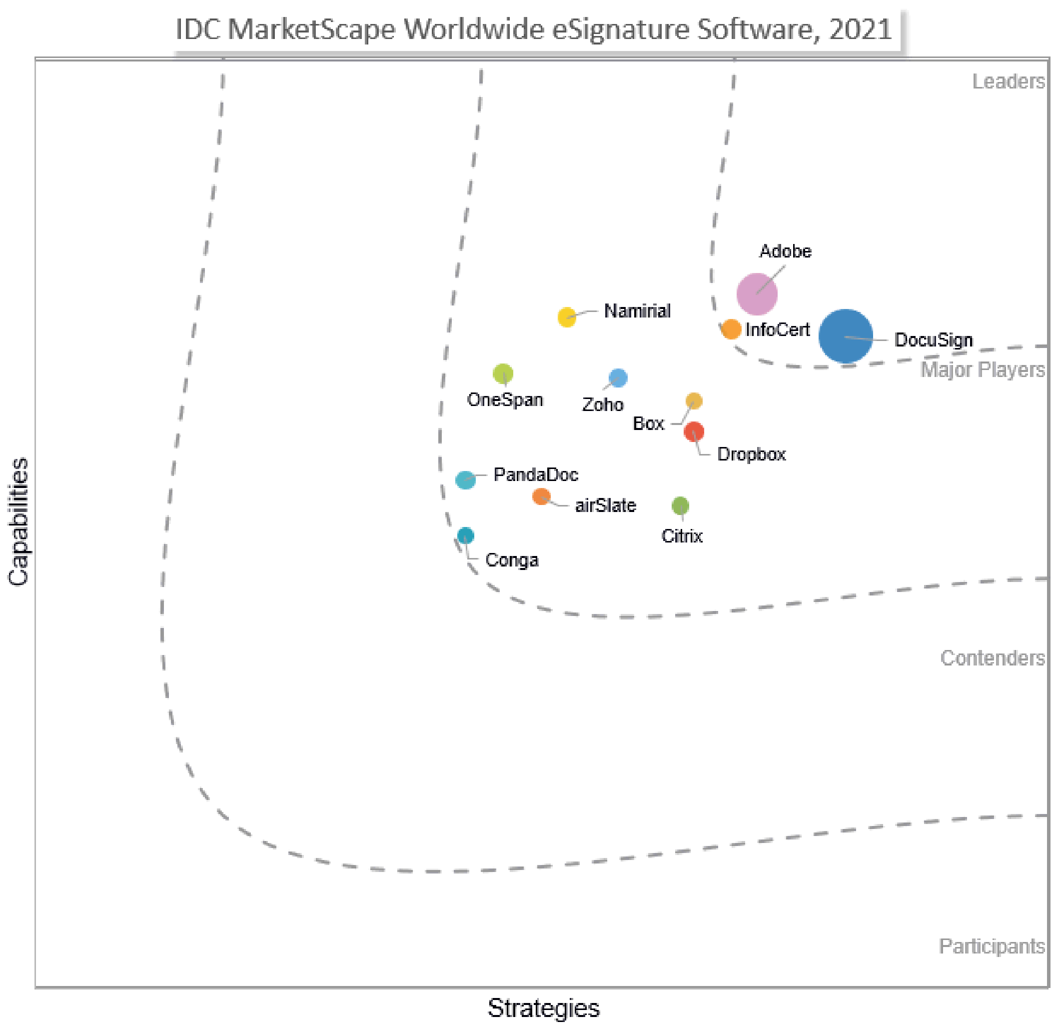
IDC MarketScape: Worldwide eSignature Software 2021 Vendor Assessment

Holly Muscolino Steve Charbonnier Marci Maddox

IDC MARKETSCAPE FIGURE

FIGURE 1

IDC MarketScape Worldwide eSignature Software Vendor Assessment



Source: IDC, 2021

September 2021, IDC #US46742320

Please see the Appendix for detailed methodology, market definition, and scoring criteria.

IDC OPINION

An electronic signature, also known as esignature, is a legally agreed upon replacement for uniquely identifiable physical acceptance or agreement to a form, document, or other digital source. Digital signatures are an advanced form of esignature that require the signer to authenticate their identity using a digital certificate issued by an independent certificate authority (CA).

eSignature software refers to software and cloud service solutions that:

- Issue an encrypted digital document from a sender requesting a signature.
- Transport the document via a secure communications channel.
- Present the document to one or more signers.
- Capture the electronic equivalent of a handwritten signature.
- Record the signers' actions.
- Re-encrypt the document.
- Return the document to the originator via secured communications.

The software or service may include certain other features or functions, such as workflow automation and analytics, but must, at minimum, meet the aforementioned requirements.

eSignature solutions are an important element in improving both the efficiency and the experience surrounding business-to-business and business-to-consumer content-centric workflows. Frequently, these workflows involve parties outside the organization that are engaged in a business relationship that requires verified contractual consent by either the business, one or more external parties, or both. As an increasing number of documents are "born digital" and organizations continue to digitally transform content-centric workflows, esignature technology has enabled those workflows to remain digital and drives a number of benefits including reduction in transaction time and cost, increased security, and improved employee, supplier, partner, and customer experiences.

The contribution of esignature technology to business continuity became glaringly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. Gaps were exposed in organizations without end-to-end digitally transformed business processes — including when agreements were previously manually routed, faxed, scanned, or printed for signature and remote workers had to seek alternative methods to move the process forward with a less than secure digital signature.

eSignature Trends

As businesses head into recovery, forward-looking organizations are taking stock. They are reviewing the investments and changes made in the pandemic era and making sure that these are scalable, built using modern architecture, and able to support a broad range of often complex use cases. They are codifying those changes that will endure and making sure that these can not only ensure business resiliency but also lay a foundation for future growth, innovation, and agility. We don't expect most organizations that accelerated digitization of signing workflows to revert to pre-pandemic manual processes, though the astute business will evaluate current solutions and seek to expand use cases across the enterprise.

There is growing focus on employee experience and sustained focus on customer experience, both of which improve with the adoption of digitized, automated, and transformed signing workflows. Other trends of note are:

- Tighter integration with enterprise applications via connectors and APIs to extend automation and support a broader range of use cases
- Anytime, anywhere, any device access to initiate and participate in signing workflows
- Scalability to support fluctuations in signing requests
- Automated document generation and bidirectional data management (including "smart contracts")
- Flexible deployment models (e.g., on premises, private cloud, public cloud) to support content security and data residency requirements
- Increased awareness of tiered models of authentication and security
- Compliance with global government electronic identification (eID) platforms
- Growing demand for, and regulatory acceptance of, digital signatures that use hosted keys and transient keys, particularly in response to the perceived difficulties of rendering and verifying qualified digital signatures that use persistent keys in the users' absolute possession and control
- Continued development of advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, and biometric capabilities to authenticate, verify identity, audit, and provide robust non-repudiation services
- Growth of video signing and use of video as an authentication type (along with ID verification and matching facial features), and by extension, of online notaries

IDC MARKETSCAPE VENDOR INCLUSION CRITERIA

eSignature software refers to software and cloud service solutions that issue an encrypted, signed document from a sender, transport the document via a secure communications channel, present the document to one or more signers, record the signers' actions, re-encrypt the document, and return the document to the originator via secured communications.

Though this IDC MarketScape evaluates esignature software as its own market, the reality is that there are few "pure-play" esignature software vendors, particularly when we consider the larger vendors that met the inclusion criteria for this IDC MarketScape (described in this section). eSignature solutions are frequently a component of a broader portfolio of content or identity services. This makes sense because an electronic signature must be part of a digitized signing workflow, and the more that workflow is truly transformed from its paper-based origins, the more those electronic signatures can be leveraged for efficiency, productivity, and security gains.

eSignature software vendors roughly fall into several broad categories, all of which are represented in this IDC MarketScape:

- Content services (e.g., Adobe, Box, Citrix, DocuSign, Dropbox)
- Productivity suites (e.g., airSlate, PandaDoc, Zoho)
- Contract life-cycle management (e.g., Conga)

- Authentication and identify services (e.g., InfoCert, Namirial, OneSpan)
- Online notaries (e.g., Notarize)

Any vendor participating in this IDC MarketScape had to showcase that it met the following inclusion criteria:

- Minimum of $5 million in annual revenue from esignature solutions
- Minimum of 50,000 paid esignature users
- The solution is sold in more than one region (North America, Latin America, Western Europe, CEE, Middle East and Africa, Asia/Pacific)
- The solution offers, as a minimum, "simple or basic electronic signature" (i.e., scanned images and typed names with no cryptographic protection)
- Must be able to provide three customer and two partner references

ADVICE FOR TECHNOLOGY BUYERS

In the resilient enterprise, business-critical signing workflows can operate anytime, anywhere with minimal reliance on print infrastructure and paper, a particular physical location, or specific human resources. Not only does this ensure business continuity and provide optimal employee, customer, and partner experiences but this enables scalability, organizational agility, innovation, and competitive differentiation. eSignature solutions are an essential component of digitally transformed signing workflows.

However, before adopting an esignature solution, organizations should perform an organizational assessment to clearly understand the current state of signing workflows, identify gaps, and develop a plan for moving forward. Other recommendations are:

- Identify specific use cases that can benefit from deploying an esignature solution and develop a pilot program (if you have not already done so). Develop metrics to measure progress including reduced cost, increased productivity, improved security and compliance, and improved customer and employee satisfaction.
- Select technologies that can support a broad number of enterprise use cases and that integrate well with the organization's existing front-office and back-office business applications.
- Seek vendors that are equipped with the necessary solutions and professional services expertise to address business-critical issues around content security, data privacy, and regulatory compliance.
- Note that esignature must be part of a broader strategy for digitizing, automating, and transforming document processes and will be most successful as part of an organization's overall digital transformation initiatives.

VENDOR SUMMARY PROFILES

This section briefly explains IDC's key observations resulting in a vendor's position in the IDC MarketScape. While every vendor is evaluated against each of the criteria outlined in the Appendix, the description here provides a summary of each vendor's strengths and challenges.

Adobe

Adobe is positioned in the Leaders category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. Adobe is a public company founded in 1982 and headquartered in San Jose, California.

Quick facts about Adobe are as follows:

- **Employees:** 22,516
- **Market coverage:** North America, Europe, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Financial services, public sector, healthcare/life sciences
- **Ideal customer size:** Midmarket, enterprise
- **Product evaluated:** Adobe Sign
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** Over 1 million individual accounts
- **Cloud architecture:** Public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Click-to-sign, basic signature, advanced signature, qualified digital signature
- **Pricing models:** Seat based, user based, and signature based
- **Key differentiator:** Adobe Sign provides the ability to automate digital document workflows with integrated esignature and PDF Services APIs, optimized for remote experiences. Adobe's heritage encompasses broad experience and vision around how integrated productivity software (Adobe Acrobat) and digital workflows transform business processes and customer and employee experiences.
- **Interesting fact:** Adobe Sign is Microsoft's preferred esignature solution. Adobe provides more than 35 prebuilt integrations that are embedded directly inside Microsoft's productivity and collaboration applications, making it easier to deploy and use Adobe Sign and Adobe Acrobat. Microsoft, as a customer, is also transitioning all internal use cases for esignatures over to the Adobe Sign platform.

Strengths

- **Authentication:** Adobe Sign offers a full range of authentication capabilities that supports all types of esignatures. Adobe has partnerships with a large ecosystem of trust service providers across multiple regions. Adobe also announced a partnership with Notarize to provide remote online notarization services integrated with Adobe Sign.
- **Customer success:** Adobe includes full customer life-cycle assistance from migration and up-front launch to onboarding and expansion of new use cases with Adobe Sign implementations. Customers that we spoke with consistently indicated that the Adobe solution provided good value for their investment. All had integrated Adobe Sign with other enterprise applications using Adobe's APIs and were leveraging the solution for a broad number of use cases.
- **Integrations:** Adobe Sign offers embedded integration with a number of enterprise applications at no extra cost, including tight integrations with Microsoft 365, Salesforce, and Workday. Adobe Sign customers can access the solution directly from Microsoft Office applications, including Teams, with no additional application or sign in required.

Challenges

- **Internal silos:** Adobe is a large company with multiple product lines in multiple business units. In some cases, Adobe customers are not aware of the opportunities to integrate and deploy Adobe Sign with adjacent applications, such as AEM forms, AEM Sites, Adobe Commerce

(Magento), and Adobe Marketo Engage. Adobe is actively working on breaking down these silos, which will increase the value of Adobe solutions to its customers.

- **Deployment time:** Though customers provided positive feedback regarding deployment of Adobe Sign, all noted that deployment time was over two months.
- **Competition:** From a go-to-market perspective, Adobe is frequently in competition with larger competitors that continue to acquire and develop solutions up and down the signing value chain. Adobe must be nimble and aggressive to gain share in this market.

Consider Adobe When

Consider Adobe if you are looking for a robust, global, enterprise-class signing solution that can be integrated with a broad range of applications and support a large number of use cases. Microsoft users can exploit the tight integration between Adobe Sign and Microsoft 365. Users of other Adobe solutions should look at opportunities to integrate Adobe Sign into existing Adobe workflows.

airSlate

airSlate is positioned in the Major Players category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. airSlate is a private company founded in 2008 and headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts.

Quick facts about airSlate are as follows:

- **Employees:** 875
- **Market coverage:** North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Financial services, government, healthcare, transportation, education
- **Ideal customer size:** Small business, lower midmarket
- **Product evaluated:** signNow
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** 72,000
- **Cloud architecture:** Private cloud user managed, public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Click-to-sign, basic signature, advanced signature, qualified digital signature
- **Pricing models:** Subscription, usage based, seat based, transaction based, time based
- **Key differentiator:** signNow delivers ease of use without sacrificing advanced features, integrations, and compliance certifications. The included 24 x 7 customer support is also a differentiator.
- **Interesting fact:** signNow was initially built as a mobile-first esignature app. David Price used signNow to sign up with the Red Sox while golfing.

Strengths

- **Workflow platform:** signNow is part of a broader document workflow platform that also offers PDF editing, automated document generation, form designer, no-code workflow automation, and robotic process automation (RPA). In 2019, airSlate acquired U.S. company Legal Forms Inc., an online publisher of state-specific legal documents.
- **Ease of use and deployment:** The customers that we spoke with told us that the implementation process was much easier than expected and planned for. They praised the solution for ease of use, vendor support, and value for the price paid. The customers that we spoke with had deployed signNow in a user-managed private cloud.

- **Customization:** signNow's user interface can be branded by the customer. Users may not necessarily see airSlate's branding during the signing experience.

Challenges

- **Limited templates and reports:** signNow does not offer a large number of out-of-the-box document templates or preconfigured reports for users and administrators, though documents can be saved as reusable templates.
- **Certifications:** signNow is lacking some certifications; specifically, ISO 27001, 27017, and 27108, as well as CSA Star and FedRamp.
- **Language support:** signNow's support for user interface languages beyond English is limited; however, signNow does allow users to esign in their native language.

Consider airSlate When

Consider airSlate if you are a small to midsize organization looking for a cost-effective, versatile, full-featured esignature solution. signNow may be a good choice for companies seeking a private cloud option. Of course, users of (or prospect for) other solutions in the airSlate portfolio will find signNow an easy add-on. In particular, signNow would be the obvious choice for signing workflows automated by airSlate's robotic process automation and/or no-code workflow solutions.

Box

Box (SignRequest) is positioned in the Major Players category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. Box Inc. is a public company founded in 2005 and headquartered in Redwood City, California.

Box closed its acquisition of SignRequest, an esignature company based in the Netherlands, on February 8, 2021. Box has begun the roll out of Box Sign, based on the SignRequest technology, with full availability expected in fall 2021. In this IDC MarketScape, we evaluated the capabilities of SignRequest. Box's plans to enhance the solution are highlighted in this profile. Box will continue to support existing SignRequest customers and partners with the standalone SignRequest product.

Quick facts about Box are as follows:

- **Employees:** 2,000
- **Market coverage:** North America, Europe, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Financial services, life sciences, professional services, public sector
- **Ideal customer size:** Lower midmarket, upper midmarket, enterprise
- **Product evaluated:** SignRequest
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** At full release, Box Sign available to all paying Box customers, currently numbered at over 105,000
- **Cloud architecture:** Private cloud (SignRequest), Public cloud multitenant (Box Sign)
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Click-to-sign, basic signature
- **Pricing models:** SignRequest's pricing model – per user/per month; Box Sign to be an integrated component of Box offering unlimited esignatures to Box customers at no additional cost
- **Key differentiator:** At full release, Box users will be able to execute a full signing workflow without leaving the Box environment.

- **Interesting fact:** SignRequest seals the signed document with a digital certificate and adds a time stamp from its own server to the signing log. In addition, SignRequest sends the hash codes of the documents by email. These hash codes are unique for each document and can be used to validate the authenticity of the signed document and the signing log. As an extra option, SignRequest offers the capability to add the hash code to the LTO Network blockchain. This allows signers to validate whether the hash code is valid and allows for an additional time stamp.

Strengths

- **Ease of use:** The SignRequest customers that we spoke with emphasized the product's affordability and ease of use, with rapid installation and good support from the vendor. The customers deployed the solution across multiple use cases. With Box's user-focused heritage, we expect this attribute to be continued in the upcoming Box Sign solution.
- **Broad portfolio of content services (at release):** Once the solution is fully integrated, all signed documents will be stored in Box's content repository, reaping all the benefits of the Box Content Cloud. The Box Sign user experience will be consistent with the overall Box look and feel. Signed documents will have the same access and security protection as any other content stored in Box. In addition, Box Sign customers will have access to Box's broad portfolio of content services, including authoring (Box Notes), workflow (Box Relay), governance and compliance (Box Governance), data residency (Box Zones), and increased security (Box Shield). As noted previously, the sender will not need to leave the Box experience.
- **Continuous innovation:** As one of the first multitenant SaaS vendors to offer a cloud content management solution, Box delivers continuous innovation and continuous deployment of content life-cycle capabilities in addition to its feature-rich collaboration and file sharing offering. We expect to see Box leverage AI and machine learning (ML) to further augment and automate signing workflows, including advanced and qualified signatures, tighter integration with enterprise applications (e.g., CRM), advanced forms capabilities, and AI-enabled automation.

Challenges

- **Limited signature types and authentication options:** SignRequest (and the initial version of Box Sign) supports click-to-sign and basic esignatures. Advanced and qualified esignatures are on Box's road map. Authentication is limited to email, SMS, and sending an access code.
- **Content must reside in Box:** While Box can orchestrate processes that span multiple systems, it does not provide native content in-place processes within external content repositories; so Box Sign users will be required to ensure that their documents that require signing reside in Box, though it is important to note that for any esignature product, the content has to be stored somewhere. On the web, even if the file is not in Box, a user can upload and prepare the doc for signature in the same flow so there is no additional friction. Furthermore, Box offers APIs and the ability to integrate esignatures from Box into other systems. In addition, Box's latest version of Box Shuttle enables ingestion of content from a broad range of content repositories.
- **Market competition:** Though SignRequest is representative of a long tail of small esignature vendors, the market is dominated by several large players. Today, Box provides robust connectors to those vendors' solutions. We expect Box to continue to support those connectors and that users of those competitive solutions will continue to use them with Box as their content repository. Of course, some may switch to Box Sign, once available, to take advantage of the convenience of signing without leaving the Box experience.

Consider Box (SignRequest) When

Existing Box users should certainly consider Box Sign when available, especially if advanced forms of authentication and qualified esignatures are not a requirement. For those organizations that are evaluating Box as their primary content services platform, the addition of Box Sign at no additional cost for customers on Business and Enterprise plans and the ability to leverage other Box capabilities and products within signing workflows should prove to be an attractive feature. Since Box Sign was in development at the time this document was written, we evaluated the capabilities available during our assessment period. When considering Box Sign, be sure to validate what features, including enhancements and integration with core Box, are available.

Citrix

Citrix is positioned in the Major Players category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. Citrix is a public company founded in 1989 and headquartered in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Quick facts about Citrix are as follows:

- **Employees:** 9,000
- **Market coverage:** North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Healthcare, insurance, accounting, legal, finance, banking, real estate
- **Ideal customer size:** SMB, upper midmarket, enterprise
- **Product evaluated:** Citrix RightSignature
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** 400,000 Citrix customers globally
- **Cloud architecture:** On premises, public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Basic signature, advanced signature
- **Pricing models:** Subscription, seat based, time based
- **Key differentiator:** Citrix Workspace unites document and work management, providing a comprehensive out-of-the-box solution for customers spanning multiple use cases. Customers can integrate electronic signature capability into their line-of-business applications using the rich public APIs to automate key tasks within the unified workspace, reducing context switching and driving productivity.
- **Interesting fact:** Citrix indicated that its RightSignature solution is one of the products within Citrix with a high Net Promoter Score in Citrix's own research of existing users' satisfaction levels and ease of use.

Strengths

- **Intelligent digital workspace:** As noted previously, Citrix RightSignature is available as an integrated component of Citrix Workspace. Citrix Workspace is a device- and location-agnostic solution that includes a suite of features that support document and workflow management, including an integrated, secure file sharing product. With electronic signature, the solution provides an out-of-the-box solution for signing workflows for multiple use cases. Customers can integrate electronic signature capability into their line-of-business applications using the rich public APIs to automate key tasks and set up triggers for actions – all within the unified workspace.
- **Flexibility:** Citrix provides a variety of packaging and pricing options, focused on providing flexibility. Users can select per-license pricing versus transaction or volume-based pricing, either for the standalone esignature solution or for Citrix Workspace.

- **Partner network:** Citrix has a strong partner network, and the partners that we surveyed gave the vendor strong marks for ease of deployment, security features, and ease of integration with other enterprise solutions.

Challenges

- **Narrow feature set:** Customers we surveyed noted features that they would like to see added to the solution. For example, users do not have an option to see the list of all documents that they signed and those pending for their signature. Customers considered Citrix as average for value for price, ease of use, and ease of administration. Citrix notes that these items are on its road map.
- **Limited signature types:** RightSignature does not support qualified esignatures; however, the company plans to add this capability and meet all European Union (EU) requirements.
- **Additional modules required:** Additional software is required for workflow automation and detailed workflow audit trails. This is also on Citrix's road map.

Consider Citrix When

Consider Citrix if you are an existing Citrix Workspace or Citrix ShareFile customer or if your organization is looking for a robust intelligent digital workspace solution with integrated esignature. The Citrix heritage in virtual computing, security, and digital workspace make the company a front-runner for secure integration with mission-critical enterprise applications. Citrix RightSignature is suitable for customers that don't require a qualified electronic signature.

Conga

Conga is positioned in the Major Players category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. Conga is a private company founded in 2006 and headquartered in San Mateo, California.

Quick facts about Conga are as follows:

- **Employees:** 1,800
- **Market coverage**: North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Financial services, business services, tech, telecom
- **Ideal customer size:** Lower midmarket, upper midmarket, enterprise
- **Product evaluated:** Conga Sign
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** 2,000
- **Cloud architecture:** Public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Click-to-sign, basic signature, advanced signature
- **Pricing models:** Seat based, transaction based
- **Key differentiator:** Conga Sign is a secure esignature tool built for Salesforce. Conga Sign can streamline document processes by allowing users to manage and track the entire signature process within Salesforce using the processes, workflows, and apps they already have in place.
- **Interesting fact:** 4Culture, a nonprofit cultural funding agency based in Seattle, switched from another solution to Conga Sign for its 2020 relief programs. By switching over to Conga Sign, the agency was able to generate additional savings, which it passed along to organizations in need during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Strengths

- **Built for Salesforce:** Conga Sign is fully integrated with Salesforce, providing a familiar look and feel for Salesforce users and enabling sales teams (and others) to speed up signing workflows, including contract execution.
- **Broad portfolio:** Conga offers a broad portfolio of solutions including automated document generation, workflow automation, contract life-cycle management, CPQ, order management, and billing solutions. Conga Composer is preconfigured with Conga Sign to enable fast generation of documents for signature.
- **Customer satisfaction:** The customers that we spoke with were enthusiastic about the Conga Sign solution. They cited short time to implement and excellent support.

Challenges

- **Non-Salesforce users:** Conga Sign is not a good fit for users that do not wish to use it within Salesforce.
- **Limited signature types and authentication options:** Conga Sign supports click-to-sign, basic esignatures, and advanced esignatures. Authentication is limited to email and SMS.
- **Integration:** Conga does not provide connectors to third-party solutions other than Salesforce and does not provide public APIs.

Consider Conga When

Consider Conga if your organization has standardized on Salesforce, and particularly if you are seeking a robust, end-to-end contract life-cycle management solution. Existing Conga users would also benefit from adopting Conga Sign. Conga Sign is not suitable for highly regulated use cases that require more complex authentication capabilities and qualified electronic signatures.

DocuSign

DocuSign is positioned in the Leaders category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. DocuSign is a public company founded in 2003 and headquartered in San Francisco, California.

Quick facts about DocuSign are as follows:

- **Employees:** 5,630
- **Market coverage:** North America, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, Africa, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Financial services, healthcare, life sciences, real estate, public sector
- **Ideal customer size:** SMB, lower midmarket, upper midmarket, enterprise
- **Products evaluated:** DocuSign eSignature, DocuSign Click, DocuSign Identify, DocuSign Rooms for Mortgage, DocuSign Rooms for Real Estate
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** Over 1 million customers and over 1 billion users
- **Cloud architecture:** Public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Click-to-sign, basic signature, advanced signature, qualified digital signature
- **Pricing models:** Subscription, transaction based, maintenance fees
- **Key differentiator:** DocuSign is the largest esignature software vendor, and the DocuSign brand largely defines the electronic signature category. The company notes a high level of customer satisfaction.

- **Interesting fact:** A large multinational pharmaceutical company worked with DocuSign's Global Customer Success team to identify 400+ new use cases and to deploy esignature to 80+ countries, resulting in a 300% increase in DocuSign usage. DocuSign's Success team consulted with the company's center of excellence on adoption best practices, conducted use case discovery and design sessions, and enabled teams across the globe.

Strengths

- **DocuSign Agreement Cloud:** DocuSign offers a suite of applications for preparing, signing, acting on, and managing agreements, including contract life-cycle management, content analytics, automated document generation (DocuSign Gen), guided forms, and payments. DocuSign recently announced online notarization capabilities. In addition, DocuSign offers remote and electronic notarization and electronic witnessing capabilities.
- **Integration:** DocuSign offers more than 350 integrations as well as a robust set of standard APIs for building custom integrations.
- **Continuous innovation:** DocuSign continues to add capabilities to its portfolio both organically and through acquisitions. Recent additions include support for a large number of country IDs and expanding a global network of trust service providers. DocuSign also introduced its own QES-compliant signature appliance, which is a qualified signature creation device (QSCD).

Challenges

- **Cost:** DocuSign was repeatedly cited as a higher cost solution by non-DocuSign customers that we spoke with. Many DocuSign capabilities are offered as extra-cost options, including qualified signatures. Nonetheless, DocuSign customers that we spoke with give the solution high marks for value delivered relative to the price paid.
- **White labeling:** DocuSign does not provide a white-labeled solution or a solution that can be completely branded for the customer, though it does offer robust branding support options. (DocuSign notes that some organizations perceive value in including the DocuSign brand as part of their esignature signing experience.)
- **Template support:** The core DocuSign application does not support some of the automated document generation capabilities, such as a library of reusable content blocks or dynamic updates of templates and text blocks, that are valued by customers. DocuSign Gen supports the automated creation of agreement templates.

Consider DocuSign When

Consider DocuSign if you are looking for a robust, global, enterprise-class signing solution that can be integrated with a broad range of applications and support a large number of use cases, especially when white-labeling is not required. Customers have the opportunity to leverage DocuSign's Agreement Cloud portfolio, which provides an extensive array of capabilities up and down the signing value chain.

Dropbox

Dropbox (HelloSign) is positioned in the Major Players category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. HelloSign, a Dropbox company, is a public company founded in 2010 and headquartered in San Francisco, California.

Quick facts about HelloSign, a Dropbox company, are as follows:

- Employees: 2,760

- **Market coverage:** North America, Europe, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Retail, business services
- **Ideal customer size:** Small business, lower midmarket
- **Product evaluated:** HelloSign
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** 16,140,000 paying Dropbox end users
- **Cloud type:** Public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Basic signature, advanced signature, qualified electronic signature
- **Pricing models:** Subscription based, user based
- **Key differentiator:** Dropbox offers unlimited signature requests, white-labeling of esignature solution for customers, and API support for complex integrations.
- **Interesting fact:** Owing to the ease of implementation, HelloSign API customers can be up and running in an average of 2.5 days, with 39% of the customers completing their integration in less than one day of development.

Strengths

- **Customization:** Dropbox (HelloSign) exposes 80% of its functionality through both microservices and APIs. In addition to this, its ability to white label the solution allows customers to fully embed and customize their own signing experiences.
- **Support services:** Dropbox was highly rated by the customers IDC spoke with for the support services offered in the HelloSign product. The customers interviewed during this process also gave it praise for service requests, communications about updates, and user forums.
- **Dropbox road map**: Dropbox continues to integrate HelloSign more tightly with the core Dropbox product. Dropbox plans to expand functionality and services around agreement generation, negotiation, approvals, and management to automate and improve the agreement process. These functionalities will be tightly integrated with the storage, collaboration, and management tools that Dropbox has or is developing. Dropbox also plans to extend the new functionalities to its network of integration partners.

Challenges

- **Deployment methods:** HelloSign is currently only available to customers in on-premises or public cloud deployment methods.
- **Template creation:** Automatic document ingestion is available; however, it requires the use of a third-party application.
- **Pricing options:** The only pricing models available to customers of HelloSign are currently subscription based and transaction based.

Consider Dropbox (HelloSign) When

Current customers of Dropbox with plans to integrate signing functionality into their suite of storage, collaboration, and management products should consider HelloSign when evaluating esignature vendors. The ability to white label and embed signing through APIs and microservices give small and midmarket businesses robust tools to customize their own signing experiences. The ease of use for both users and administrators should also make HelloSign an attractive choice for businesses of this size.

InfoCert

InfoCert is positioned in the Leaders category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. InfoCert is a private company founded in 2007 and headquartered in Rome.

Quick facts about InfoCert are as follows:

- **Employees:** 300 at company level (500+ at group level)
- **Market coverage:** Latin America, EMEA
- **Industry focus:** Financial services, retail, tech, telecom, utilities, healthcare
- **Ideal customer size:** Small business, lower midmarket, upper midmarket, enterprise
- **Products evaluated:** GoSign, LegalCert
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** 3.8 million end users worldwide
- **Cloud type:** On premises, private cloud user managed, private cloud partner managed, public cloud single tenant, public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Click-to-sign, basic signature, advanced signature, qualified digital signature
- **Pricing models:** Subscription, usage based, transaction based, time based, maintenance fees
- **Key differentiator:** InfoCert is one of the largest trust service provider in Europe, specialized in the "management of trust." The company provides an open platform that allows customers to manage all types of users' identification and signature options. The company also offers business and compliance consulting services to support customers in tailoring the products around their business and compliance needs.
- **Interesting fact:** In less than 10 days, InfoCert was able to implement a signature process based on AdES with biometrics on tablets for the first COVID-19 Vaccination Centre in Italy (December 2020). This allowed the center to digitally collect the consent authorization for patients receiving the COVID-19 vaccination.

Strengths

- **Ease of use:** InfoCert received excellent feedback from the customers IDC interviewed on ease of use from both end-user and administrator perspectives. InfoCert provides a variety of deployment support options to its customers as well as a library of prebuilt templates, dynamic updates, and automatic document ingestion to accelerate implementation time frames.
- **Support:** During our customer and partner interviews, we found that both groups were pleased with the support services provided by InfoCert. In addition to the standard learning and help options for users/administrators, InfoCert offered APIs for developers to customize the solution.
- **Deployment methods:** InfoCert offers on-premises deployments as well as public/private cloud options for its customers. Public cloud deployments are available in single- and multitenant configurations. Private cloud options include both user- and vendor-managed scenarios.

Challenges

- **Compliance certifications:** InfoCert does not currently support a number of standard compliance methods including ISO 27017, ISO 27018, SOC 1&2, PCI, CSA STAR, FedRamp, and HIPAA.

- **Regional limitations:** Currently, InfoCert only supports English, French, Portuguese, Italian, German, and Spanish languages. InfoCert also only has three regional datacenters, which may limit its viability for international businesses with data residency concerns.
- **Security:** Granular, role-based, and use case–based permissioning requires minor customizations to configure in InfoCert GoSign. Integrations to company active directory or LDAP also require customization or third-party add-ons.

Consider InfoCert When

The variety of deployment methods and pricing options offered by InfoCert should make its solutions an attractive choice for small to upper midmarket businesses. InforCert's ease of use and support services are also positive factors to consider for businesses of the sizes it caters to. Large organizations that plan to embed or customize their signing experiences should consider InfoCert for their robust API and consulting services.

Namirial

Namirial is positioned in the Major Players category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. Namirial is a private company founded in 2000 and headquartered in Senigallia, Italy.

Quick facts about Namirial are as follows:

- **Employees:** 480
- **Market coverage:** North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Financial services, business services, tech, telecom
- **Ideal customer size:** Small business, lower midmarket, upper midmarket, enterprise
- **Product evaluated:** eSignAnyWhere
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** 77,000 companies and 2.6 million end users
- **Cloud type:** Private cloud partner managed, public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Click-to-sign, basic signature, advanced signature, qualified digital signature
- **Pricing models:** Subscription, usage based, seat based, transaction based, time based, maintenance fees
- **Key Differentiator:** Namirial offers tools for both esignature and trust services. The company offers full omni-channel support for remote and in-person engagement with a broad range of methods to create esignatures. The company also has flexible deployment models (cloud/hybrid/on premises) and fully customizable branding.
- **Interesting fact:** Namirial esignature solution is selected as a global standard for esignature by two large global organizations. Both companies strive to use Namirial and gradually phase out other solutions used in silos within their respective organizations.

Strengths

- **Security:** Namirial is considered as among the most proficient in terms of security features offered. The solution supports all of the features we identified as critical out of the box, as well as the ability to authenticate users based on digital identities through trust services and/or smart cards.
- **Pricing models:** Namirial provides flexible pricing models by offering customers subscription, usage-based, seat-based, transaction-based, and time-based pricing options.

- **Customizations:** Namirial exposes 60% of its application's functionality through microservices and 85% through APIs. The company also offers white-labeling capability with text translation for end users. The ability to white label the sender's user interface is on its road map and will be available to its customers within the next year.

Challenges

- **Adjacent technology:** Namirial indicated limited integrations with adjacent technologies. RPA for automated filling of forms from data sources and automated document generation are available but require a separate product.
- **Connectors:** eSignAnyWhere does not offer connectors for many enterprise applications including electronic forms applications, human resources management (HRM), supply chain management (SCM), and others.
- **Online support:** Namirial does not currently have an online knowledge base, online chat, or end-user community sites. The company does plan to support these "help" methods within the next 12 months.

Consider Namirial When

Organizations of any size should consider Namirial due to their flexible pricing and hosting options. Namirial is prominent in digital trust management (DTM) and (in addition to the eSignAnyWhere application) offers tools for business transaction automation and document archiving. With its omni-channel approach to DTM and focus on security, organizations in the financial, business services, technology, and telecom industries should consider Namirial when evaluating esignature providers.

OneSpan

OneSpan is positioned in the Major Players category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. OneSpan is a public company founded in 1991 and headquartered in Chicago, Illinois.

Quick facts about OneSpan are as follows:

- **Employees:** 835
- **Market coverage:** North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Financial services, healthcare, government, tech, telecom
- **Ideal customer size:** Upper midmarket, enterprise
- **Product evaluated:** OneSpan Sign
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** Over 1,000
- **Cloud architecture:** Private cloud user managed, private cloud partner managed, public cloud single tenant, public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Click-to-sign, basic signature, advanced signature, qualified digital signature
- **Pricing models:** Subscription, usage based, seat based, transaction based, maintenance fees
- **Key differentiator:** Organizations select OneSpan because of its deep expertise in regulated industries (e.g., banking, insurance, government) and focus on security and compliance (e.g., bank-grade cloud security, strong identity proofing options, digital signature encryption, detailed audit trails). OneSpan Sign enables organizations to fully white label the experience.
- **Interesting fact:** OneSpan Sign is used by some of the most security-conscious organizations globally — including prominent banks, insurers, and government agencies. The majority of

OneSpan customers white label the solution behind their brand, so consumers never know that the esignature experience is powered by OneSpan.

Strengths

- **Security:** OneSpan is particularly strong in terms of security features offered. Granular role/user/use case–based permissioning, multifactor authentication, and encryption of user and system data are all supported out of the box. Corporate directory integration is available through a minor configuration. The company also ensures that any configurations or customizations are upwardly compatible with new update releases.
- **Deployment types:** OneSpan is one among the vendors that support on-premises, private cloud, and public cloud deployments. Private cloud deployments include either user- or vendor-managed scenarios. OneSpan also has options for both single- and multitenant public cloud deployments.
- **Authentication and compliance:** The only authentication method not currently supported by OneSpan is phone call authentication. In addition to the methods considered in this IDC MarketScape, OneSpan also supports government-issued ID authentication, U.S. government CAC/PIV cards, and European eID. OneSpan supports most of the compliance certifications except for PCI.

Challenges

- **Templates:** OneSpan does not offer prebuilt templates or content blocks. The company also does not support dynamic updates of templates or content blocks with versioning and archiving capability.
- **AI/ML:** OneSpan does not currently offer any AI/ML or NLP technology for tagging, manipulating, or collecting documents. AI technology to automatically initiate or recommend a workflow/signer do not appear to be on the company's short-term road map.
- **User administration:** Customers of OneSpan that were interviewed noted that the ease of use for administrators left room for improvement. Also noted from our customer interviews was that the configuration of the solution was somewhat difficult without technical expertise and assistance.

Consider OneSpan When

Larger organizations and enterprises should consider OneSpan when evaluating esignature solution vendors. OneSpan is popular among businesses in heavily regulated verticals (e.g., finance, insurance, healthcare, government) since the company offers multiple authentication methods, flexibility in deployment, and wide array of security and compliance certifications. With a large number of its current clients white labeling the solution, businesses looking to customize their signing experience should also take OneSpan Sign into consideration.

PandaDoc

PandaDoc is positioned in the Major Players category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. PandaDoc is a private company founded in 2013 and headquartered in San Francisco.

Quick facts about PandaDoc are as follows:

- **Employees:** 650
- **Market coverage:** North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Tech, manufacturing, business services

- **Ideal customer size:** Small business, lower midmarket, upper midmarket
- **Products evaluated:** PandaDoc Free eSign, PandaDoc eSign, PandaDoc Essentials, PandaDoc Business, PandaDoc Enterprise, PandaDoc API
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** 30,000
- **Cloud type:** Public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Basic signature
- **Pricing models:** Subscription, seat based
- **Key differentiator:** PandaDoc has announced enhanced product integrations that make esigning easier within solutions and products from Google, Microsoft, Canva, Zoom, Monday.com, and others, including many CRM solutions. PandaDoc users can use the product to request and track signatures within Microsoft Word documents, access millions of Canva design features within PandaDoc, and leverage enhanced integrations with Gmail and Google Docs to save both time and effort.
- **Interesting fact:** PandaDoc launched its forever free and unlimited esignature product at the beginning of the pandemic. The free product has been used to send over 1 million documents by over 200,000 users and has led to a 60% increase in active PandaDoc users. As an increasingly important productivity asset to businesses of all sizes across industries, the Free eSign plan has evolved to provide an easy and seamless esignature experience that integrates with users' existing workflows.

Strengths

- **Workflow capabilities:** PandaDoc received praise for its advanced workflow capabilities. Customers have access to most of these capabilities out of the box. PandaDoc also allows for workflows to be triggered based on external signals/events through customization or a third-party add-on, as well as the ability to manage the entire document life cycle from its mobile app.
- **Adjacent technology:** A PandaDoc eSign strength is adjacent technologies. Included out of the box are tools for design/creation/deployment, content analytics for entity extraction, RPA for automated filling, digital certificates for hardware and software, and automated document preparation and generation.
- **Templates:** PandaDoc provides customers prebuilt templates for repeatable signing processes. Out-of-the-box customers have access to their library of prebuilt basic templates and content blocks, as well as dynamic updates and automatic ingestion of documents into templates. They were one of only two vendors to offer all of these options without the need for a third-party add-on.

Challenges

- **Tracking and reporting:** PandaDoc only offers one preconfigured report for users and one for administrators. Many of the reporting features and capabilities offered by competitive applications such as report customization, cloud security and uptime reports, and configurable reports for departments or personas are not currently offered by PandaDoc.
- **Connectors:** PandaDoc currently only offers connectors to authoring applications, content sharing and collaboration applications, and CRM. All other connectors are not supported, nor is there an option for a third-party add-on for these connectors.
- **Hosting options:** Currently, the only option for hosting PandaDoc eSign is through Amazon Web Services. On-premises and alternative cloud options are not available.

Consider PandaDoc When

The forever free option of the PandaDoc eSign solution is a great choice for small businesses beginning their digital transformation. Organizations up to 500 employees should also consider PandaDoc eSign as it comes preloaded with templates, supports several adjacent technologies, offers advanced workflow capabilities, and provides the ability to customize the signing experience with company logos and colors. While PandaDoc does not currently offer advanced and qualified esignatures, the company has indicated that those capabilities are on its short-term road map.

Zoho

Zoho is positioned in the Major Players category in this 2021 IDC MarketScape for esignature software. Zoho Corp. is a private company founded in 1996 and headquartered in Austin, Texas and Chennai, India.

Quick facts about Zoho are as follows:

- **Employees:** 9,000
- **Market coverage:** North America, Latin America, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia/Pacific
- **Industry focus:** Business services
- **Ideal customer size:** Small business, lower midmarket, upper midmarket, enterprise
- **Product evaluated:** Zoho Sign
- **Number of esignature customers worldwide:** 110,000+ paying business users across 30,000+ organizations
- **Cloud type:** Public cloud multitenant
- **Type of esignatures offered:** Basic signature, advanced signature, qualified digital signature
- **Pricing models:** Subscription, seat based, usage based
- **Key differentiator:** Zoho Sign has an easy-to-use interface and provides customers with unlimited document signing and storage, as well as technical support, and transparent pricing. The company offers tight integration with the suite of Zoho apps as well as third-party apps. In addition to this, Zoho has regional datacenters in the United States, EU, India, and Australia, with near-term plans to open datacenters in Canada, China, Japan, and Singapore.
- **Interesting fact**: Over 30% of Zoho's users migrated from another solution and they are happy with the truly unlimited document signing ability offered in Zoho's Enterprise Edition.

Strengths

- **Road map:** With over 45% of its revenue invested in R&D, Zoho boasts one of the strongest road maps. Over the next three to five years, Zoho Sign plans to add online notarization, AI-based facial recognition and ID matching for signer identification, and smart contracts along with many regional and industry compliance measures. The company intends to offer seamless signing experiences with automated document workflows across Zoho's suite of online productivity tools and SaaS applications and more than 200 third-party applications.
- **Ease of use:** Zoho received high marks from the customers that we spoke with for ease of use for both users and administrators. Customers also rated the company highly on value delivered in relation to the price paid for the application.
- **Integrations:** Integrations with the family of Zoho Apps (including Docs, CRM, Desk, Books, Invoice, People, and Mail) are available in the free and standard packages. These packages also include import/export capabilities with third-party cloud applications such as Dropbox,

Box, Google Drive, and OneDrive. The professional version includes integration to Zoho Forms. Zoho is currently beta testing blockchain time stamping for customers of its enterprise package.

Challenges

- **Microservices:** While 80% of the esignature application's functionality is exposed as APIs, Zoho does not expose any of the functionality as microservices.
- **Reporting and compliance:** Zoho Sign does not currently offer reporting and analytics for different personas or departments. The company also lacks PCI, CSA Star, and FedRamp certifications within its product. It should be noted that Zoho plans to add these reporting methods and certifications within the next three to five years.
- **Authentication methods:** Zoho currently offers email, SMS/OTP, passcode, biometric, and smart cards for authentication. However, the company does not currently support phone, knowledge-based, or government ID-based authentication methods.

Consider Zoho When

Organizations of any size that are looking for an easy to use, low-cost solution for signature should consider Zoho Sign. Zoho Sign received positive reviews from both administrators and end users of the tool, especially in regard to value delivered compared with the price paid. Current users of any of the other Zoho Apps should strongly consider Zoho Sign when looking for an esignature solution. The integrations into the Zoho apps allow users to initiate signing experiences and workflows from within the other applications, helping simplify document signing and streamline business processes.

Vendors to Watch

There is a long tail of esignature software vendors that have not been included in this IDC MarketScape because they did not meet the revenue, customer, and/or geographical criteria. There are also many in adjacent markets, including those offering authentication services, digital certificates, and other supporting "upstream" and "downstream" solutions. In this section, we highlight only two of these vendors. In addition, an esignature vendor, AssureSign, came to our attention due to a recent acquisition.

Entrust

Founded in 1969 and headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Entrust has over 2,500 employees globally. Entrust provides solutions for identity and access management, data protection, trust services, and card issuance systems. Its portfolio includes secure ID solutions, card personalization systems, passport systems and security, card delivery and fulfillment systems, PKI, SSL/TLS, multifactor authentication, physical/logical access, digital certificates and signatures, identity-based security, hardware security modules, cloud security, encryption and key management, financial instant issuance, access control, bureau solutions, and trusted identities.

Entrust offers a comprehensive suite of digital signing services globally that can be tailored for a business depending on its specific use cases.

In 2021, Entrust announced its new Signing Automation Service, a cloud-based digital signing service that enables public and private sector organizations to create tamperproof electronic documents. The service connects to a company's document toolkit or document workflow system and enables the automatic generation of trusted digital seals for electronic documents, establishing a verifiable cryptographic bond between the company's legal entity and its electronic documents. Entrust also launched a workflow-agnostic Remote Signing Service (RSS) solution.

Nintex AssureSign

Nintex is a process management and automation solutions vendor founded in Australia in 2006 and currently headquartered in Bellevue, Washington. In June 2021, Nintex announced that it had acquired AssureSign, an esignature software provider, to add native electronic signing capability within the Nintex Process Platform.

Founded in 2000 as a third-party verification solution, AssureSign launched its esignature software in 2007 and currently has more than 100,000 active monthly users and 500 customers. AssureSign primarily serves the insurance, financial services, legal, and state and local government industries. The solution can be completely branded by the customer and the majority (85%) of AssureSign's signatures are initiated via the solution's APIs. Though most AssureSign customers are based in North America, there has also been uptake in the United Kingdom and Australia.

AssureSign offers authentication via SMS, multifactor authentication, and knowledge-based authentication as well as REAL ID. The solution does not currently support advanced and qualified electronic signatures, but that capability is on its road map. Native signing integration across the Nintex platform will be available in the first quarter of 2022.

Notarize

Founded in 2015 and headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, Notarize is a pioneer in remote online notarization. During its six years in business, Notarize has worked with several state governments and chaired multiple committees crafting remote online notarization legislation. From 2020 to 2021, the company experienced 600% year-over-year growth, and in March 2021, it announced $130 million in Series D funding.

The Notarize solution works with an organization's own notaries, the company's nationwide network of notaries, or a mix of both. The signing platform supports the end-to-end notarization workflow from a web interface or a mobile device, automatically configured for a specific state and document type. Signers must be American citizens or people with a federal tax ID, but they can be located anywhere in the world. The Notarize compliance engine analyzes over 14.5 million rules to ensure compliance, by industry, state, and/or commercial program. Notarize uses patent-pending forensic analysis to rapidly verify government-issued photo IDs and passports.

The platform is configurable and brandable, and much of its functionality is exposed via a set of APIs. In addition to its horizontal remote online notarization platform, Notarize offers an intelligent closing platform specifically designed for the real estate market. Notarize also allows consumers to upload and notarize documents from its website or mobile app.

APPENDIX

Reading an IDC MarketScape Graph

For the purposes of this analysis, IDC divided potential key measures for success into two primary categories: capabilities and strategies.

Positioning on the y-axis reflects the vendor's current capabilities and menu of services and how well aligned the vendor is to customer needs. The capabilities category focuses on the capabilities of the company and product today, here and now. Under this category, IDC analysts will look at how well a vendor is building/delivering capabilities that enable it to execute its chosen strategy in the market.

Positioning on the x-axis, or strategies axis, indicates how well the vendor's future strategy aligns with what customers will require in three to five years. The strategies category focuses on high-level decisions and underlying assumptions about offerings, customer segments, and business and go-to-market plans for the next three to five years.

The size of the individual vendor markers in the IDC MarketScape represents the market share of each individual vendor within the specific market segment being assessed.

IDC MarketScape Methodology

IDC MarketScape criteria selection, weightings, and vendor scores represent well-researched IDC judgment about the market and specific vendors. IDC analysts tailor the range of standard characteristics by which vendors are measured through structured discussions, surveys, and interviews with market leaders, participants, and end users. Market weightings are based on user interviews, buyer surveys, and the input of IDC experts in each market. IDC analysts base individual vendor scores, and ultimately vendor positions on the IDC MarketScape, on detailed surveys and interviews with the vendors, publicly available information, and end-user experiences in an effort to provide an accurate and consistent assessment of each vendor's characteristics, behavior, and capability.

Market Definition

eSignature Software

eSignature software is a submarket of the document applications functional market. Document applications enable users to create, author, edit, and publish content, including text documents, spreadsheets, and presentations. These documents may include embedded images, audio, and/or video.

eSignature software refers to software and cloud service solutions that issue an encrypted, signed document from a sender, transport the document via a secure communications channel, present the document to one or more signers, record the signers' actions, re-encrypt the document, and return the document to the originator via secured communications.

Types of eSignatures

In this IDC MarketScape, we consider four types of esignatures:

- **Click-to-sign (click wrap):** Users "sign" and agree by clicking a button or checking a box.
- **Simple (basic):** Signing is accomplished with scanned images, handwritten and/or typed names with no cryptographic protection. The signature must be applied by the individual associated with the signature, and the signature must be associated with the document that the signer intended to sign.
- **Advanced electronic or digital signature:** In addition to the requirements for the simple signature, advanced signatures must be uniquely linked to, and capable of identifying, the signer and must be linked to the agreement. It must be possible to detect changes to the document after signing.

- **Qualified electronic or digital signature:** This type of signature requires signers to use a certificate-based digital ID issued by a qualified trust service provider. The digital certificate is a secure, personal, and unique electronic identity credential that must be issued to the signer in a form they can keep under their control. The term *qualified esignature* is based on the EU regulation known as eIDAS, but other regions have similar models.

eSignature Laws

The legality and admissibility of electronically signed documents vary both by country and with degrees of authentication of the signer. In 1999, the United States National Conference of Commissioners introduced the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (UETA). The UETA only acquired authority through the enactment of state legislators, so the legitimacy of electronic signatures depended on the individual states. In 2000, the U.S. Congress adopted the Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act (ESIGN), recognizing the significance of electronic transactions and updating many commerce-related regulations. (Some highly regulated transactions are excluded from this legislation.)

A similar directive was established in the European Union (The Electronic Signatures Directive 1999/93/EC); however, this was replaced in 2014 by eIDAS (Electronic Identification, Authentication and Trust Services) and is augmented by advanced electronic signature (AdES) and qualified electronic signature (QES) for digital signatures using qualified certificates.

Similar laws have been enacted in many other regions. A few examples are:

- Canada's Ontario Electronic Commerce Act (ECA) and Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act define electronic signature and its use and acceptance. In 1999, the Australian Parliament passed the Electronic Transactions Act (ETA) 1999, designed to facilitate the development of electronic commerce in Australia.
- Singapore's Electronic Transactions Act 2010 was passed in 1998. The Act provides a legal framework that governs digital services including esignatures. The ETA was amended in 2010 to bring the law in line with the United Nations Convention on the Use of Electronic Communications in International Contracts.
- In Japan, the legislation governing electronic signatures is the Act on Electronic Signatures and Certification Business (2000), also known as the Japan E-signature Law. In Japan and some other Asian countries, a seal or stamp (called hanko) can be used in lieu of signatures in documents. Some esignature solutions support the use of seals.
- In Brazil, the Provisional Executive Act of August 24, 2001, provides for the validity of general electronic agreements signed digitally. Brazil maintains its own public key infrastructure (PKI) for digital certificates called Infraestrutura de Chaves Públicas Brasileira (ICP-Brasil).

Strategies and Capabilities Criteria

Tables 1 and 2 provide key strategy and capability measures, respectively, for esignature software solutions. The assessment criteria are divided into two primary categories: capabilities and strategy. IDC analysts look at how well a vendor is building/delivering capabilities that enable it to execute its chosen strategy in the market. In the strategy category, IDC evaluates whether a supplier's strategies in various areas are aligned with customer requirements (and spending) over a defined future time period and the supplier's business and go-to-market plans. For key capabilities, IDC not only evaluated the native capabilities offered in the esignature application but also considered adjacent vendor products and third-party and partner capabilities that were natively connected and supported by the vendor.

TABLE 1

Key Strategy Measures for Success: Worldwide eSignature Software

Strategies Criteria	Definition	Weight (%)
Financial contribution rate	▪ Revenue generated per employee, 2018–2020	15.00
Growth	▪ Company growth, 2018–2020 ▪ eSignature product/portfolio growth, 2018–2020	35.00
Delivery — partner ecosystem	▪ Partner contribution to vendor growth, 2018–2020	15.00
Delivery — implementation	▪ Methods used to deploy the esignature solution, including how the software is delivered to customers, implementation time, and partner and customer support	5.00
Functionality or offering road map	▪ Product enhancements on the road map (e.g., reporting improvements, support for hardware and software certificates, authentication and compliance options, workflow)	15.00
Innovation	▪ How the vendor is driving innovation, including investments in cognitive technologies ▪ How the vendor is investing in R&D and talent acquisition for innovation	15.00
Total		100.00

Source: IDC, 2021

TABLE 2

Key Capability Measures for Success: Worldwide eSignature Software

Capabilities Criteria	Definition	Weight (%)
Functionality or offering	▪ Deployment options (on premises, private/public cloud) and types of esignature offered (click-to-sign, simple, advanced, qualified)	5.00
Signing experience	▪ Signing experience, including how documents are signed, supported file formats, signing location, and types of help available	3.00
Authentication and compliance	▪ Supported authentication methods and compliance with industry and government standards, including those specifically governing electronic signatures	3.00
Security	▪ Breadth and complexity of security capabilities, including permissioning granularity, encryption and integration with corporate directory data	3.00

TABLE 2

Key Capability Measures for Success: Worldwide eSignature Software

Capabilities Criteria	Definition	Weight (%)
Tracking, reporting, auditability	▪ Reporting and auditing capabilities, including status, analytics, non-repudiation capabilities, and configurability as well as preconfigured reports, for both end users and administrators	5.00
Pricing model	▪ Supported pricing options across all deployment methods, including use of maintenance fees	8.00
Cloud capabilities	▪ Support for a variety of popular cloud platforms, communication and frequency of updates, datacenter locations, and uptime SLAs	5.00
Innovation — capabilities	▪ Geographic support including user interface languages and compliance with local laws governing electronic signatures ▪ Workflow automation capabilities, including configuration of approval workflows and support for multiple signers, triggers, and branching logic as well as automated alerts ▪ Creation and automation of templates, including library of prebuilt templates and/or template components, dynamic updates of templates, and automatic ingestion of documents into templates ▪ Adjacent technologies including form design, advanced analytics, notarization, robotic process automation (RPA), hardware and software certificates, and automated document generation	24.00
Architecture	▪ Solution architecture, including user-initiated applications, white-label branding and as a service to a third-party solution ▪ Availability of out-of-the-box and third-party connectors to a variety of enterprise applications including authoring applications, content management, electronic forms, ERP, CRM, HRM, supply chain management, automation solutions, finance applications, and customer support solutions ▪ Support for developers including standard APIs, training, sample code, a developer community and events, and direct support ▪ Portion of the solution's functionality that is exposed via APIs and/or microservices as well as partner branding opportunities	19.00
Customer satisfaction	▪ Customer survey and interview score, including implementation process, ease of use for end users and administrators, performance, support, overall satisfaction and value delivered	15.00
Partner satisfaction	▪ Partner survey score, including ease of deployment and integration, customizability, development tools, as well as vendor communication, rules of engagement and support; also includes the reliability and security of the solution as well as overall satisfaction with the product and the vendor	10.00
Total		100.00

Source: IDC, 2021

LEARN MORE

Related Research

- *Worldwide eSignature Software Forecast, 2021-2025* (forthcoming)
- *IDC Market Glance: Digital Content Services, 3Q20* (IDC #US45394620, September 2020)
- *Worldwide eSignature Software Forecast, 2020-2024* (IDC #US46756720, August 2020)
- *IDC TechBrief: eSignature Software* (IDC #US46257920, May 2020)

Synopsis

This IDC study examines various esignature software vendors worldwide. eSignature solutions are an important element in improving both the efficiency and the experience surrounding business-to-business and business-to-consumer content-centric workflows. As an increasing number of documents are "born digital" and organizations continue to digitally transform content-centric workflows, esignature technology has enabled those workflows to remain digital and drive benefits including reduction in transaction time and cost, increased security, and improved employee, supplier, partner, and customer experiences.

"The contribution of esignature technology to business continuity became glaringly evident during the COVID-19 pandemic," says Holly Muscolino, research vice president, Content Strategies and the Future of Work. "Gaps were exposed in organizations without end-to-end digitally transformed business processes, and remote workers had to seek alternative methods to move the process forward."

About IDC

International Data Corporation (IDC) is the premier global provider of market intelligence, advisory services, and events for the information technology, telecommunications and consumer technology markets. IDC helps IT professionals, business executives, and the investment community make fact-based decisions on technology purchases and business strategy. More than 1,100 IDC analysts provide global, regional, and local expertise on technology and industry opportunities and trends in over 110 countries worldwide. For 50 years, IDC has provided strategic insights to help our clients achieve their key business objectives. IDC is a subsidiary of IDG, the world's leading technology media, research, and events company.

Global Headquarters

140 Kendrick Street
Building B
Needham, MA 02494
USA
508.872.8200
Twitter: @IDC
blogs.idc.com
www.idc.com