A SIGN OF THE TIMES: Out of the filing cabinet and into the future

2015 Adobe Survey Report

October 2015
METHODOLOGY

We Surveyed:

305 legal professionals in the U.S.

Lawyers, paralegals, administrators, office managers and legal operations staff

Working at law firms as well as in-house at companies

Data Collected:

07.22.15 and 08.04.15

Through an online survey via a Crowdology panel

Margin of Error:

5.6%

For statistical comparisons
Key Findings

Businesses are in the midst of a massive digital transformation, with a relentless push to streamline all business processes. Now, more than ever, there’s a clear case for legal professionals to embrace new technology to save time, money and resources.

- 71% of legal professionals think their workplace needs to embrace new ways of working to be more competitive, and the vast majority (87%) believe it’s important to adopt new technology to get their jobs done efficiently.  

- Nearly all (92%) also believe that technology is important to their success on the job.

- But the industry is holding them back. Nearly 70% think the legal profession is resistant to technological change.

- Half of legal professionals still store legal documentation in outdated filing cabinets.

Often, legal professionals just aren’t provided with the technology to work effectively and keep up with business today.

Time is money, and it’s being lost.

- More than half of legal professionals have had to wait 24 hours or more for someone to physically sign a document in their office.

- A fifth of legal professionals have missed an important revenue deadline because they had to wait for a handwritten signature.
Key Findings

Flexibility is key, and old habits need to change.

- More than 80% of legal professionals either work remotely now or desire to do so. Pg 11
- But, nearly half (45%) of legal professionals have had to stay in the office working late to secure a handwritten signature. Pg 11

How can they achieve more flexibility, something they clearly want, if they are chained to their office desk by physical signatures?

E-signatures are gaining momentum, and the legal industry needs to accelerate adoption.

- While only 62% of legal professionals use e-signatures at work, 95% use them in their personal lives, for example, to accept a package delivery or sign for a purchase on a touchscreen. Pg 13
- 53% of legal professionals think their industry is very resistant to change and view the lack of partner/senior management support as one of the biggest inhibitors. Pg 13
- 72% of legal professionals say their work is easier since they started using e-signatures. Pg 14
- 32% of e-signature users in the legal profession have started using them within the last year. Pg 14

If e-signatures were utilized at work as much as home, think of the time, money and resources that could be saved!
There’s a clear case for legal professionals to embrace new technologies.
Legal professionals claim their workplace needs to embrace new ways of working, and technology has a significant role to play.

71% agree they need to embrace new approaches to working to be more competitive.

4 out of 5 believe that adopting new technologies is important to improving efficiency in the legal profession.

92% view technology as important to their personal success on the job.
But the legal profession’s outdated systems and resistance to change are holding them back.

Half of all legal professionals are still using file cabinets to store documents.

7 out of 10 think the legal profession is resistant to technological change.
Time is money,
and it’s being lost.
Outdated practices equate to lost time and money.

52% of legal professionals have had to wait 24 hours or more for a handwritten signature.

20% have missed an important revenue deadline while waiting for a handwritten signature.
Flexibility is key, and old habits need to change.
The legal profession is becoming increasingly flexible, but traditional working practices have them chained to their desks.

More than 80% of legal professionals either work remotely now or desire to do so.

Nearly half of legal professionals have had to stay in the office working late to secure a handwritten signature.
E-signatures are gaining momentum, and the legal industry needs to accelerate adoption.
Legal professionals embrace technology in their personal lives, but there’s a disconnect at work.

- **33%** of legal professionals use e-signatures more in their personal lives than at work.
- **53%** of legal professionals think their industry is very resistant to change and view the lack of partner/senior management support as one of the biggest inhibitors.
There are positive signs that the legal profession is evolving.

E-signature adoption rates are advancing quickly. **More than 30%** of e-signature users have started using them within the last year.

62% of legal professionals are using e-signatures today at work.

72% of legal professionals say their work is easier since they started using e-signatures.
Adobe eSign services bring trusted e-signatures to any organization and make 100%-digital workflows a reality.

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