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Adobe Acrobat

Saving more than documents with Acrobat.

How paperless processes cut costs, complexity and your carbon footprint.

Save time, costs and paper.
Help reduce your carbon footprint.

The hidden impact of paper

The world of business is more connected than ever. Advances in technology let us work seamlessly with almost anyone, almost anywhere. Faster, more robust internet connections mean video calls can bring people from all corners of the world together, without the carbon footprint of international flights.

But there are some traditional ways of working that persist. Lots of businesses rely on paper documents day in, day out, for contracts, invoices and more. Not only does this slow business down, it also has a significant environmental impact. The pulp and paper industry produces environmental problems from sources to drainage. This carbon footprint grows every time you print, courier or shred a document.

In this report, we highlight the true costs of using paper for everyday business – and the ways digitising with Adobe's all-in-one Acrobat can speed up and decarbonise your processes while accelerating your workflows.

Create documents. Create change.

The sustainable way to do to business

The approach to sustainable business has come on leaps and bounds in recent years, thanks, in part, to a genuine desire for change. Where we previously had signatures asking us to refrain from printing emails, we now have offices run on renewables, rainwater harvesting and the circular economy. But there remains one element of daily business life that can really harm your green credentials: paper.

The paper production problem

While most people understand how paper production affects the environment, the sheer scale of the impact is shocking. Producing one single piece of paper takes ten litres of water on average.[1] Even if felled trees are replaced with new ones, the effects of global paper production are huge. Pulp and paper are the third-largest industrial polluters of air, water and soil.[2]

It takes **10 litres** of water to produce one single piece of paper[3]

Paper production accounts for **42%** of all global wood[4]

This carbon footprint only gets worse once it's made its way from the mill to your desk. A paper document generally has four phases in its life: Creation, Storage, Sharing/Delivery and Archive/Destruction. Each stage adds more CO_2 emissions, and more financial outgoings to your business, whether that's through the energy and supplies used in printing or the amount the courier charges for delivery. Then there's the cost and energy consumption of shredding confidential documents at the end of their useful life. When you consider that the average attorney generates upwards of 60,000 sheets of paper per year,[5] the costs to business and the environment become astronomical.

Businesses in the United States waste **$8bn** on managing paper each year[6]

Better for business and your carbon footprint

You're no doubt aware of the advantages of going digital. You're probably already benefitting from the business benefits that digital transformation brings, as well as the paperless processes that form part of your commitment to greener business. But unlocking the true potential of Acrobat across your entire organisation could be more rewarding than you imagine. Acrobat is the complete, all-in-one PDF and e-signature solution. It offers more secure, effortless productivity and collaboration with unmatched integrations in everyday applications. Additionally, it eliminates a lot of the financial and environmental costs of working with paper documents.

66% of surveyed Acrobat Sign users said that the solution helped advance their organisation's sustainability efforts[7]

Case Study:

How ITV uses Acrobat Sign to help produce the biggest shows with the smallest environmental footprint.[8]

ITV is the largest commercial television network in the U.K., reaching over 30 million viewers a week and broadcasting some of entertainment's most popular shows. As part of addressing climate change, the company set impressive sustainability goals, including net zero carbon emissions and zero waste by 2030.

→ **The problem**

Between just two ITV shows, Emmerdale and Coronation Street, monthly contracts amounted to 20,000 pieces of paper processed annually. Contracts were usually mailed, and it took an average of two weeks for busy writers and directors to return their signed monthly contracts. There was always a chance that contracts might get lost through post, which would create risk of confidential documents falling into the wrong hands.

→ **The solution**

With Acrobat Sign, ITV completely digitised writer and director contracts. Administrative staff now spend 82% less time preparing contracts. Once sent out, 80% of contracts are signed in just two days. Since contracts are emailed directly between signers and ITV, the whole process is much more secure, reliable, and auditable. Working with electronic documents also eliminates the cost and waste of printing contracts, mailing them, and storing them in physical offices.

The impact

Acrobat Sign is now used by more than 800 people across multiple departments, including ITV Studios, human resources, and legal. ITV saves 3.4 million pieces of paper a year — a huge step for its sustainability objectives. While Acrobat Sign makes digital signing fast and easy for any type of paperwork, it has particularly made its mark transforming experiences for productions. Cast and crew can sign documents anywhere and from any device, so it's ideal for reaching people working on location.

82%
less time spent preparing contracts

80%
of contracts signed in two days instead of two weeks

280,000 pieces of paper,
360,000 gallons of water, and
20,000 lbs of waste **saved every month**[9]

> " For the Green Team, the sustainability benefits of Acrobat Sign stood out. The team were keen on making Acrobat Sign adoption a green objective for its ability to promote paperless workflows.
>
> **Matt O'Shea,**
> **Director of Group Technology Platforms, ITV**

Get more done with less paper.

Analogue processes in a digital world

Technology has made the business world both bigger and smaller. Bigger, because we can reach further around the globe than ever. Smaller, because we can do it without leaving our own office. As well as expanding our horizons, this breaking down of barriers provides one particularly valuable benefit – speed. Communication is faster. Delivery is faster. Decision making is faster. But, much like with the office printer, a single sheet of paper can bring even the speediest business to a grinding halt.

Take the humble signature, for example. From contracts to invoices, we rely on them millions of times per day. Yet getting someone to sign on the dotted line can be a labour-intensive and expensive task, especially if those physical documents need to be couriered across countries or continents; an e-signature solution such as Acrobat Sign can slash the time, expense and effort it takes to get a signature. In fact, using Acrobat Sign can lead to sustainability cost savings of £5.3 million over three years, as well as time savings of 300,000 hours per year.[10]

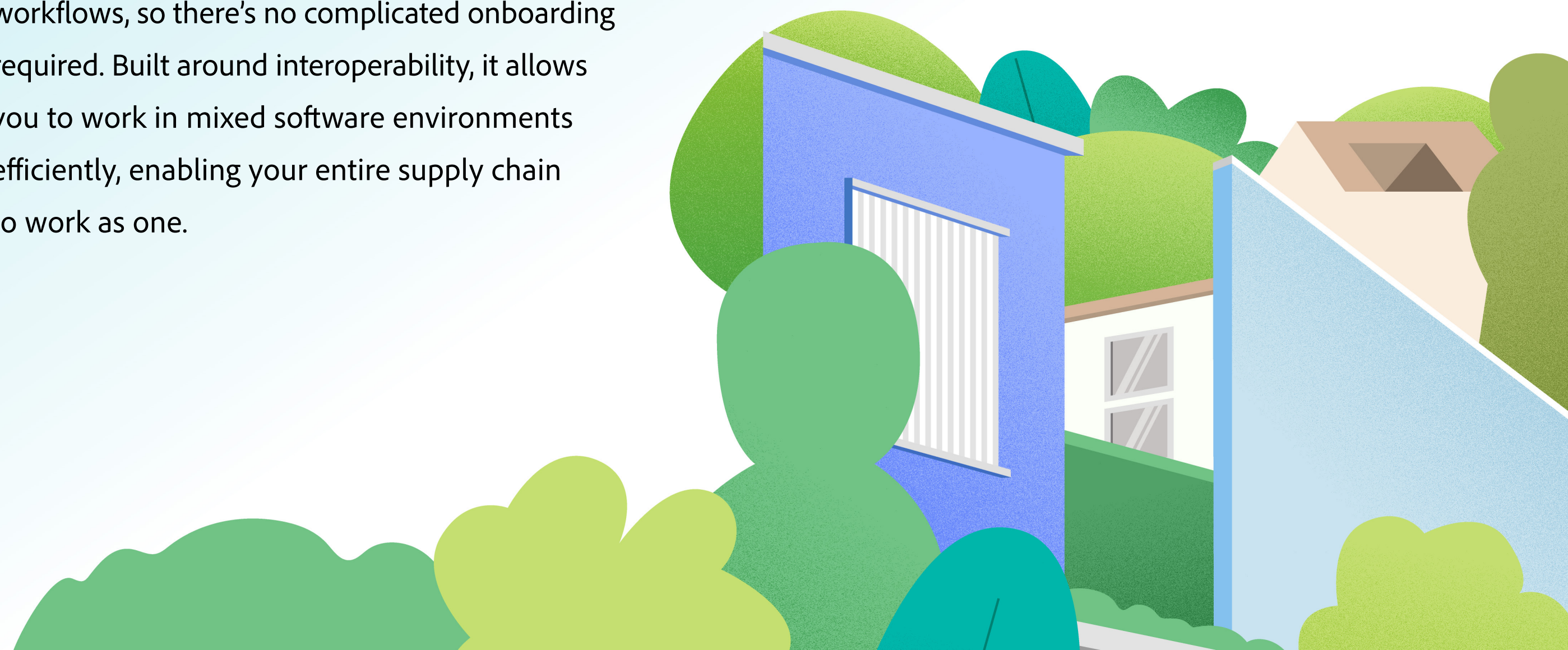Employees who use Adobe Document Cloud tools saved an average of

43 hours per year

due to improved productivity.[11]

A perfect fit for your workflow

Paperless processes also create much more seamless, much less mundane working practices. Around 32% of people surveyed believe their work week is spent on unimportant tasks.[12] Printing, photocopying, scanning and sending paper documents would surely fall into that category. Having a 100% digital sending and signing process frees people's time to spend on more important and rewarding jobs – giving business productivity a boost too.

Plus, Acrobat also fits seamlessly into your existing workflows, so there's no complicated onboarding required. Built around interoperability, it allows you to work in mixed software environments efficiently, enabling your entire supply chain to work as one.

Protect yourself from paper-thin security

A huge amount of work goes into keeping business data secure. And everybody in the business needs to contribute to maintain a tight ship. Springing a leak can be incredibly expensive: it's thought the average data breach costs 4.45 million USD.[13] It's not just money at stake, either. A lapse in security can put the reputation of your business on the line and lead clients to look elsewhere.

The global average cost of a data breach in 2023 was

$4,450,000[14]

Paper documents exacerbate the risk of breaches. As soon as a digital document becomes a physical one, the experts in IT can no longer guarantee its safety. A stolen contract can be tampered with, opening up your business to fraud. A misplaced NDA could constitute a major breach of confidentiality. Just think, every time you hand over a document to a courier or postal service, you're handing over the responsibility of security and the reputation of your business to them too.

Using Acrobat reduces the potential for documents to be lost or tampered with. Robust security features, such as encryption, sandboxing and watermarking help ensure the only people who see your documents are those you want to. And don't forget – you can't smudge a PDF.

Case Study:

How global sports brand icon PUMA accelerates contract signing with Acrobat's e-signature solution.[15]

As one of the world's leading sports and lifestyle brands, PUMA has long known that only companies that stay in motion can react quickly to today and shape tomorrow. Continuous change and environmentally conscious action are firmly anchored strategic priorities. In addition to their growing proportion of sustainable products, this is also reflected in the use of ultra-modern IT and communication processes.

→ **The problem**
The HR department at corporate headquarters handles around 500 contract processes per year. A lot of paper was used for this in the past, some of which had literally travelled around half the globe. A hiring contract for new employees from Chile, for instance, travelled for at least five working days.

→ **The solution**
The HR and legal departments chose Acrobat Sign after looking for a tool that could be integrated efficiently and pragmatically into their existing systems, that could be operated intuitively, and that could be followed up by means of a status overview. Equally important: Despite the quickly configurable standard templates, a sense of personal touch shouldn't be lost either with a friendly welcome message for employment contracts that are sent digitally.

The impact

Acrobat Sign has been in regular use since June 2020. Practically every day, 15 authorised signatories send contract documents to applicants, employees and interns, all ready to be signed using the e-signature solution. The environment clearly benefits when the HR department saves thousands of sheets of paper and a significant amount of traffic emission every year with Acrobat Sign, because it is no longer printing out contracts and attachments that are often more than 25 pages long and sending them by post.

Contract sending shortened from several days to an average of a few hours

Saving thousands of sheets of paper and CO2 emissions that result from posting contracts

Self-explanatory operation in the browser with templates that can be configured quickly[16]

> " If candidates tell us they accept, we will usually send them the signed contract with Adobe Acrobat Sign within a few hours. Many people say: 'Wow, I've never experienced getting this so fast.'

Stefanie Decker
Head of People & Organization
Corporate, PUMA SE

An upgrade for you and the environment.

Don't let paper get in the way of progress

Given the huge impact paper has on the environment, removing it from your workflows is a great way to improve your sustainability credentials. And as we've seen, committing to digital processes can be better for your bottom line too. Upgrading to our all-in-one Adobe Acrobat across your organisation will speed up business, make tasks easier, and help to protect you from fraud. Thanks to its usability and interoperability, implementation is simple and seamless, ensuring you reap the rewards of switching straight away.

So why wait? To upgrade, <u>contact us</u>

Save more than documents with Acrobat.

drive your **business forward.**

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