

The definitive guide to eSignatures in fintech



 **Dropbox** Sign

Contents

Chapter 1: Deliver an A-class signing experience

Chapter 2: Accelerate back-office processing

Chapter 3: Bridge the trust gap

Chapter 4: Keep financial agreements secure and compliant

Chapter 5: Build or buy?

Chapter 6: The Dropbox Sign API is built for fintech

Conclusion: Fintech won't wait



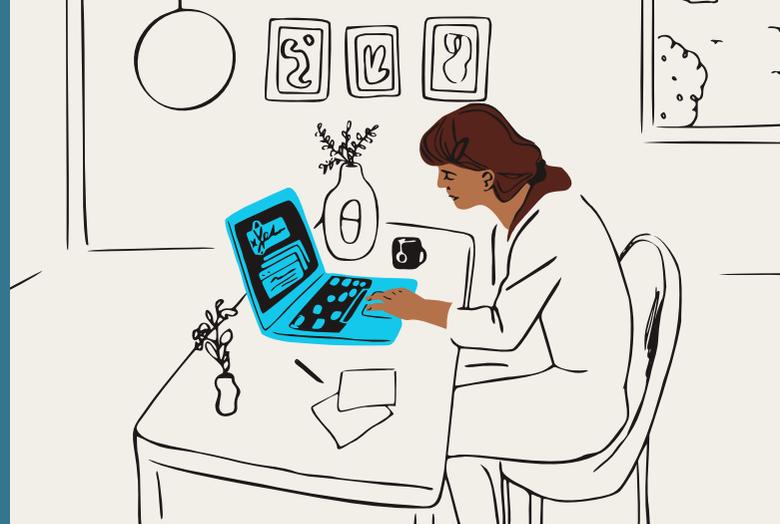
Fintech has a customer experience dilemma

While fintech as an industry has digitized payments, created decentralized currencies, and offered commission-free stock trading, many fintechs still struggle to deliver one of the sector's biggest value propositions: a superior digital experience.

The thing is, when it comes to offering exceptional customer experiences, fintech doesn't set the standard; tech giants do—and they keep moving the goalposts on what "superior" means to customers.

And one of the biggest areas where fintechs are forced into a less-than-desired customer experience is document signing, which trips up so many workflows across the sector:

- Opening accounts is a process few are getting right—with many still requiring customers to sign paper documents or even sign in-person, facing long waits while documents are printed and errors corrected.
- Loan processes are delayed by manual print-sign-scan or print-sign-fax workflows.
- Wealth management has a long sales process that typically involves multiple meetings and high error rates.



Even the most impressive fintech businesses will struggle to compete against trusted institutions if customers are turned off before they even sign up or are forced to grapple with lengthy paperwork processes just to transact.

But with eSignature technology, fintech teams are delivering faster, more cohesive signing experiences that are converting more customers, retaining them, and building a deeper level of trust. And that's not all. They're also automating tasks to reduce errors and make employees more productive.

Here's how eSignatures are helping fintech companies build more robust signing experiences.

Deliver an A-class signing experience

While many fintech customer experiences are slick and automated, as Liz High, EVP Strategy and Marketing at Nymbus, explains, “In an automated fintech workflow, the minute something doesn’t stack up, you go back into a manual process. That’s the point at which additional paperwork needs to occur.” She describes this breakdown as the point when customers either need to send you something, or you need to send them something.

What’s more, there are a number of workflows like opening joint accounts, disclosures, and personal information changes that are too difficult to automate, so still require manual workflows and traditional signatures.

And for customers, who have come to expect a fast and seamless experience, it’s frustrating to navigate complex financial paperwork in such a slow and time-consuming way. Not only does it require reading and signing piles of documents, but it also demands multiple other stakeholders—customers, managers, regulators—to do the same



In these instances, you need to preserve your customer experience as best you can—something that doesn’t always happen. Signing maturity levels vary greatly among fintechs. Many either email PDFs and expect customers and stakeholders to either print, scan, and send or simply figure out which third-party application to use. But neither of these options make for a satisfying experience for your customers.

How embedded eSignatures improve form completions and speed up signing

From what we've seen, eSignatures increase contract completion rates by up to 26% compared to paper contracts. That's because they're simply easier to use. For example, by using embedded eSignatures, important paperwork is securely embedded into your website or app, so customers can review and sign important documents immediately using any device that has an internet connection.

And eSignatures don't just make signing easier, they make it faster, too. With a fully embedded process, eSignatures can increase contract processing times by up to 80%.

Even when it's not the signing process that holds up a transaction, but the people involved, eSignatures can help. Sophisticated eSignature solutions combat this "people problem" by automatically tracking and sending regular reminders to signers at every step of the approval process, speeding up the process further.



“eSignatures increase contract completion rates by up to 26% compared to paper contracts. With a fully embedded process, eSignatures can **increase contract processing times by up to 80%.**”

CUSTOMER STORY

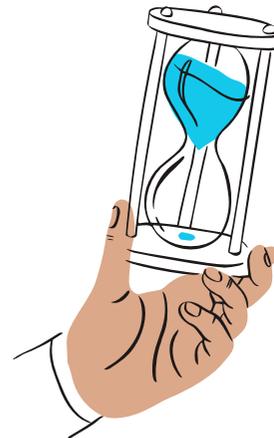
DEALMAKER

How DealMaker sliced the transaction completion time from 72 hours to 30 minutes

DealMaker developed a digital transaction management platform that automates the circulation, management, and tracking of private placement documents and funds—accelerating the capital-raising process and providing significantly better investor experiences.

Before DealMaker, a single transaction could take upwards of 70 hours of manual complex work, requiring a professional to review, correct, and re-circulate documents.

Integral to providing a frictionless experience, they needed an eSignature solution that would embed into the DealMaker platform seamlessly and deliver users a streamlined, transparent signing experience.



With Dropbox Sign-powered eSignatures, DealMaker has transformed its capital-raising process, realizing a **70% gain in speed and cost savings**. Compared to the traditional process, DealMaker and Dropbox Sign have reduced a **72-hour process to just 30 minutes**, providing tremendous value to all parties involved in the capital-raising process.

"HelloSign [now Dropbox Sign] embedded beautifully into our platform and unlike other vendors, it didn't require users to leave our platform, open new accounts or separately log in. The HelloSign [now Dropbox Sign] API helped us deliver on our mission of speed, efficiency and ease of use." — Mat Goldstein, CRO and Co-Founder

Accelerate back-office processing

Not only is lengthy paperwork a chore for customers, it also weighs down teams. Transferring information, like account holder details, and disclosure documents, from one system to another or inputting data from a PDF into a system requires manual double-handling that risks introducing errors. And even minor errors in complex financial product paperwork results in a slow signing process at best, and stiff fines at worst.

What's more, it chews up employee time, which could be spent on more important tasks, like prospecting new customers.

Living up to fintech's "digital by DNA" mantra with eSignatures

Using eSignature solutions, you can present customers with legally binding documents that are digital from the get-go.

This eliminates the need for employees to double-handle information, which cuts the chances of human error significantly.

Plus, with eSignatures, signers can't submit forms without filling in all the requisite fields—reducing the chances of an incomplete form being processed.



Go even further with metadata automation

eSignature tools can reduce the administrative load even further by integrating with other software applications to automatically transfer data.

Fintechs can integrate eSignature tools with customer management systems like Salesforce, for example, so when a customer signs a document, all of their information is automatically stored in a central location.

Even better, integration is a two-way street. The Dropbox Sign for Salesforce integration, for instance, lets employees send legally binding documents out for signatures directly from the Salesforce interface, saving employees time switching between windows and juggling different versions of the same document.

This means that your team spends less time on paperwork and more time on selling. From what we've seen, eSignatures have saved teams up to 700 work hours per year.



“[By integrating eSignature tools with customer management systems], your team spends less time on paperwork... saving up to 700 work hours per year.”

CUSTOMER STORY



How AdvicePay reduced user contract management time by 50%

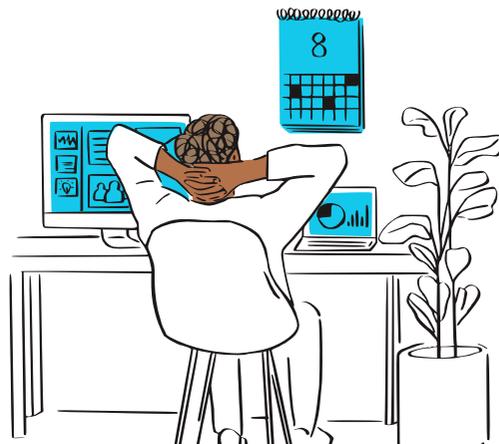
Managing paperwork adds unnecessary steps for users and customers alike. And that's exactly what financial planning provider AdvicePay discovered in the early versions of its application.

Users (advisers) could only send invoices to clients and collect payment from their platform. They needed to use other software for document signatures, which meant their clients also had to use more than one system to work with an advisor. This was time-consuming and prone to data errors that delayed payment or required client refunds if contract and invoice fee data didn't match.

That's when they looked to Dropbox Sign. "[Now] when a user creates an invoice in AdvicePay, our application automatically creates a contract in HelloSign [now Dropbox Sign] and pulls the invoice amount and other key data fields into the contract so the documents are 100% synced," says Joe Timmer, Lead Developer at AdvicePay. "We've met our goal of adding eSignatures in one to two clicks, and eliminated an external workflow for our users."

For AdvicePay, the difference is huge. "Instead of having to spend double or triple the time to create and match invoices and contracts, it's now done automatically, which has definitely sped up the time to manage contracts for advisors by 50%," says Joe.

Even better, its streamlined document management has helped AdvicePay realize a **30% bottom-line boost for enterprise clients**.



Bridge the trust gap

When it comes to money, customer trust is paramount. However, fintechs are fighting an uphill battle against financial institutions people have trusted for generations—only 27% of users trust fintechs companies more than financial institutions.

“All financial institutions struggle with trust. When people switch from one bank to another, the top reason is about protecting data. It’s number one, before interest rates, before convenience. The number one thing that makes someone switch is a lack of trust,” says Liz.

Frustratingly, this isn’t a battle any fintech can win overnight. It demands consistent results, tight security, and an unblemished reputation. But just because there’s no quick fix doesn’t mean you can’t make progress.

One way to quickly boost trust is by presenting a consistent and identifiable brand throughout every single customer interaction. “If people recognize your fintech as a brand they know and like, then they will trust you that little bit more. And you start with a little bit, and then you build it out,” says Liz.



Even this minor branding adjustment can make a customer feel like they’re transacting with an established business rather than an unproven startup—altering customer perceptions and inspiring greater trust in your services.

Build trust with eSignatures

While eSignatures won’t instantly make you the most trusted financial institution in the world, they are a crucial part of building a trusted reputation.

Using eSignature APIs, fintechs can add logos, colors, and fonts to create a consistent brand experience across every signing interaction. That way, transacting with you feels as legitimate as transacting with established players.

“If people recognize your fintech as a brand they know and like, then they will trust you that little bit more. And you start with a little bit, and then you build it out,”

– Liz High, EVP Strategy and Marketing at Nymbus

Chapter 4

Keep financial agreements secure and compliant

Paper documentation can easily be tampered with and signatures forged. Even if papers are locked away in filing cabinets, there's still a risk of documents being stolen, lost, damaged, or misplaced.

With a single instance of fraud costing companies an average of USD\$1.5 million, there are huge consequences when private and commercially sensitive documents fall into the wrong hands.

It's not just bad actors, though—the average cost for an organization that fails to comply with data protection regulations is also a whopping \$14.82 million.

That's why you need to ensure every signature and document is secure, traceable, and accountable. It's the only way to protect everyone involved in the transactions and ensure compliance.

eSignature solutions keep your signed agreements and consent forms protected with advanced encryption.

Additionally, any worthwhile eSignature tool will create a non-editable audit trail that ensures every action on your documents is thoroughly tracked and time-stamped, so you have defensible proof of access, review, and signature.



Compliance and security are a Dropbox Sign staple

Dropbox Sign has diligently built processes to keep its service internationally compliant.

Specifically, Dropbox Sign encrypts every document and stores it in a SOC 1 Type II, SOC 2 Type I, and ISO 27001 certified data center. Access to this data center is strictly controlled by security staff equipped with video surveillance, multi-step authentication, and state-of-the-art intrusion detection systems.

Additionally, Dropbox Sign is compliant with the following: HIPAA, the U.S. ESIGN act of 2000, the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act (EUTA) of 1999, and the eIDAS regulation for the EU of 2016 (EU Regulation 910/2014).

“eSignature solutions keep your signed agreements and consent forms **protected** with advanced encryption.”

Build or buy?

The benefits of eSignatures for fintechs are obvious. The real question is, what's the best way to implement eSignatures into your business—build your own or buy a ready-made solution?

It's a decision no business should take lightly. Both options have their upsides and risks. Sure, building gives you a more bespoke result, but what about all the added functionality you miss like automated reminders, app integration, and dedicated security?

To help you make the best decision for your business, here's how the build versus buy debate compares.



	Build	Buy
Timelines	Building an eSignature tool yourself gives you total control over its functionality and it can be customized to your exact specifications. The downside is, you could be waiting weeks, months, or even years for a team of developers to build, test, and launch your tool. Even then there's no guarantee it's what you want.	Integrating eSignatures into your workflows via API is a fast process that would take a skilled developer just a few days. Even better, your development team can use that time saved tackling problems unique to your business. The downside is, you have less control over which future developments are prioritized.
Security and compliance	With an in-house product, you have total control over how much time and resource you dedicate to keeping everything secure and compliant. But security and compliance demand more than just checking a few boxes; it requires security experts to track the latest threats, frequent independent audits to test controls, and comprehensive privacy measures.	Integrating third-party eSignature APIs means a team of experts is dedicated to monitoring your signing security, protecting data privacy, and updating your tool to meet compliance standards like SOC 2 Type II and ISO 27001.
Legal	Which areas of the law apply to your operation and which you need to comply with is in your hands. But you're also tasked with building infrastructure that timestamps and authenticates documents to a court-admissible standard.	Your eSignature provider maintains the legal infrastructure around eSignatures and keeps everything up to date with the latest legal changes to ensure your eSignatures stay legally binding. Any worthwhile eSignature provider will offer a comprehensive legality guide .
Maintenance and support	If you're building an eSignature tool, you'll need developers, engineers, and security experts on staff to maintain it and quickly respond to customer issues at the drop of a hat.	A dedicated team takes care of maintenance and updates, keeping your signatures secure and compatible with new tech. And if there is an issue, a support team is on hand to fix it for you.

The Dropbox Sign API is built for fintech

Here's why the Dropbox Sign API is perfect for fintech companies.

Fully embedded

Deliver a seamless signing experience by embedding forms directly into your website or app via API. That way, customers don't even have to leave your workflow to get everything done.

An ecosystem of integrations

Dropbox Sign integrates with an entire world of other business apps to make your business operations faster and easier.

- Connect with Salesforce to send documents directly out of your CRM.
- Connect with Gmail to email contracts directly from your inbox.
- Connect to Dropbox to store all of your documents securely in the cloud.

Custom-brand everything to suit your aesthetic

Dropbox Sign eSignatures are completely customizable. You can add your brand's logo, colors, and fonts to create a consistent brand experience in every signing interaction.

Integrate 2X faster with Dropbox Sign

With user-friendly documentation, a library of SDKs, and a technical support team behind you, integrating the Dropbox Sign eSignature API only takes an average of 2.5 days.



CUSTOMER STORY



Pigeon Loans

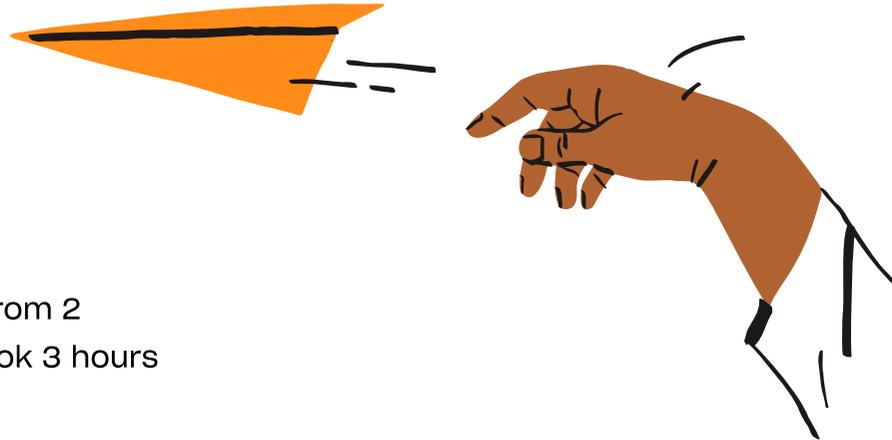
Pigeon Loans reduced borrowing from 2 weeks to 8 minutes—and it only took 3 hours

Seeing a unique opportunity to solve a fragmented, confusing, and not always legally binding peer-to-peer lending process, Brian Bristol created Pigeon Loans, the world's first global lending platform that's dedicated to facilitating and enabling loans between trusted parties.

Unsurprisingly, one of the biggest parts of loan applications is electronic signatures. Searching the market and comparing eSignature API solutions, the HelloSign [now Dropbox Sign] API stood out to Pigeon Loans.

And the results were more than worthwhile, as Pigeon Loans reduced their loan process from **2 weeks to 8 minutes**.

But just as impressive is how quickly they made it happen. "I've implemented other APIs and it usually takes about a week. HelloSign [now Dropbox Sign] is using such forward-looking technology, along with clear and easy to understand the documentation that **I was able to do it in less than 3 hours**. This was a record for me," Brian explains.



Conclusion

Fintech won't wait

The fintech industry is by nature a disruptive and fast-moving field. While you've built an innovative solution, if you're not leveraging tools that deliver better experiences for your customers and increased productivity for your employees today, you're treading water while the incumbents catch up.

That's where the Dropbox Sign eSignature API can help. With an integration that takes an average of 2.5 days, you can deliver a better customer experience, reduce admin, and present a credible brand—the things you need to grow and legitimize your financial innovations.

If that sounds good, [try the Dropbox Sign API for free](#).

[Or book a demo with our expert API team to see how eSignatures can work for your business.](#)



Make Dropbox Sign your signature move

Dropbox Sign simplifies work for millions of individuals. Companies all over the world rely on the Dropbox Sign API to power their applications, making it easier to close deals faster, onboard new hires, save developers time, complete documents without error, and much more. For more information, visit the [Dropbox Sign](#) website.