



The True Disadvantages to Paper-Based Processes

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Although many industries have started to veer away from paper based processes and documents, there are still many industries that use a lot of paper in their everyday business practices. With the exponential advance of technology throughout the years of e-signatures, document management systems, and more, the actual need for paper based processes is becoming more and more unnecessary — and costly.

If you are one of the businesses still undergoing the hassle of paper based processes, this blog is for you. We understand that adopting new technologies can seem daunting. However, by maintaining your paper-based processes, you are hindering your business's ability to grow successfully and efficiently. In this blog we will go over the main disadvantages of paper-based products and why they are so detrimental to the growth of your business.

Reliability

Think about the paper-based processes your business uses. How many of those rely on individuals or teams moving the document from one department to another? If you're like most, probably a lot. When it comes to most department business practices, at one point or another the document will need to be either moved, stored, edited, or signed. If you are relying on individuals to keep your documents moving efficiently, there could be some issues that arise. An individual could have misplaced the document, or got caught up in something else and forgot to pass it along. All these factors can affect the reliability of your business rules and leave them incredibly error prone.

Paper is also extremely prone to damage overall, which makes it extremely difficult and unreliable to work with. We have all been in a situation where coffee spills, tears are made — the list goes on. Not to mention the very real possibility of floods in office spaces. An extra rainy day and a leaky roof could mean disaster for businesses living out of filing cabinets. The reliability of your day-to-day operations is critical to the success of your business. By relying on paper-based processes, you are putting your business at risk for misplaced documents, increased waiting time, and overall efficiency of your business — all of which costs you overtime.

Editing and Approval

Editing paper documents can become very complicated, very quickly. If a document must be edited by multiple people, you would probably have to make a photocopy of the original and edit on that. Which not only adds a step in your process but also adds another document overall. Having to use white-out or make an entirely new copy slows down your business process, costing you time you most likely can't afford.

Approval of documents is not easy when it comes to paper-based business, especially if you work with clients. Say you need to get an invoice over to a client, the approval of the document would probably need to go through at least the AP department and then faxed over to the appropriate person. Sounds simple, right? Not really — when you take into account the time it takes to get it through AP, email it over, and wait to have them email it back, you could be hours behind in the process.

Environmental Damage

This one is obvious. Paper is one of the least sustainable business items that causes detrimental damage to our environment. Sustainability is very important in today's business world, many businesses today want to work with companies that prioritize sustainability. Using less paper, and only using it when you have to use it, is one of the first ways businesses become more sustainable.

Overall Collaboration

This is a big one. The true cost of keeping paper documents is a lot. Some documents within your process may need multiple people to be working on it at once, which can be extremely difficult when you're using paper. You would have to either have everyone working off one document or make copies and pass them around. These processes

do work, however they are limiting your company's ability to collaborate easily and efficiently and are quite slow.

Price

Price is always a big factor when it comes to any paper-based process. In another blog, we go in-depth about [The True Cost of Keeping Paper Documents](#). There is obviously the actual cost of paper, but many don't consider the cost of equipment needed to store, duplicate and share these paper documents. Be sure to check that blog out for more information on the cost of paper-based documents.

How Can You Fix it?

You now understand the true disadvantages of paper-based products, but how do you fix it? One way is to start your journey to becoming a [paperless](#) business with a Document Management System (DMS). A DMS, like [Optix](#), can help your business with document scanning, workflow automations, and more. Changing your paper-based processes to digital automations will drastically increase [your overall efficiency as business](#).

Want to get started? [Contact Us](#) today and we'd be happy to discuss what a transition looks like for many of our past clients. See in real-time how a DMS can transform their paper-based practices with Optix.