



DocuSign: When Good Enough isn't Good Enough

The tale of how an underdog is going head-to-head with a tech giant (and winning).



Think quick—what’s the first thing that comes to mind when you hear “eSignature platform?”

Odds are, it’s DocuSign. And it’s true for millions who’ve either been coerced into becoming a customer or subjected to an eSignature request through DocuSign.

Let’s admit—DocuSign did an amazing job of staking the claim as the go-to eSignature platform. And that’s because they were the first to plant their flag in the ground.

And it worked for a while because there was no competition.

Until now.

In this whitepaper, we’ll explore the truth about DocuSign and why its customers are running for the hills (and why you should too)..

Why do Customers Settle for DocuSign?

If you have ever purchased a home, rented an apartment, or signed an NDA—odds are you were sent a DocuSign document to complete. It happens so often that the brand becomes ingrained in our minds, just like we call tissues Kleenex.

People are creatures of habit, status, and prestige. When we see a product widely used by people we know and respect, we believe it’s deserving of our time, money, and effort. It’s the reason overly priced name brands can capture the wallets of consumers with lower salaries.

Even the President of OnTask fell for the gimmick at one point:



DocuSign has always been the leader and one of the original eSignature platforms. As a result, many industries use them and I’ve personally used DocuSign to sign mortgage documents.”

— STEVE WILSON, PRESIDENT OF ONTASK



In fact, most of us have had an inside look of this platform and can speak on it from first-hand experience.

So to be fair, DocuSign does have many of the features businesses desire from an eSignature tool. For example, it offers:

- Custom reusable templates you can create for common documents
- Email notifications for when someone needs to complete a document and after everyone signs a document
- Paper trail of who signed the document and when (dates and timestamps included)
- Ability to save time by signing documents digitally vs. printing, signing, scanning, and mailing/emailing them back

Great features, but it's not enough. Not when there are other alternatives offering those same features plus more with a better user experience. For instance with OnTask, you get the eSignatures and supporting features you need, plus workflows. That means you can connect the different pieces of your process and automate from start to finish and stop relying on makeshift fixes.



OnTask can act as a drop-in replacement for Adobe Sign or DocuSign but with the automation and workflow settings that the 'eSign' platforms do not have."

— BOB BASS, PRESIDENT & OWNER OF NARRO, LLC

Bigger Doesn't Always Mean Better

For centuries, names carried weight in the business industry. It's how various banks, retail stores, grocers, and builders became world renowned. But that's an outdated way of thinking.

Just because everyone knows a product doesn't mean it's the best. And this is exactly what we see with DocuSign. Yes, it's a name known across offices everywhere, but this says nothing about its quality and value.

DocuSign relies so much on its prestige that it forgets to deliver the grand customer experience customers expect demand today.

Customers are no longer loyal to brands—they're going wherever the experience is superb. Great news for the smaller brands—bad news for the big companies exploiting their name to make their way into consumer's wallets.

DocuSign users are seeing the ugly side of prestige and many are flocking to lesser-known companies that offer the same features at better pricing. And as a bonus, they receive an experience where their feedback is valued.

Where did DocuSign go wrong? Let's review.



When we started winning customers away from DocuSign and subsequently participating in case studies telling us they prefer working with OnTask, we knew we had a winner. Not just from a product standpoint; we've leveraged our 30+ years of providing software support to give those former DocuSign customers a more personal and supportive experience."

— STEVE WILSON, PRESIDENT OF ONTASK

Higher Price Doesn't Mean Higher Quality

Only the best of the best can charge high prices...right?

Not exactly.

Maybe in retail where businesses with the best connections get access to the best products—but not in the tech field. Pick a niche and you'll find most software tools have nearly identical features.

Sure, one interface may be more user-friendly than the next, but that's subjective. The way you capture a customer's loyalty remains the same—treating customers like you value their business.

And it's where DocuSign fails miserably. Visit [DocuSign's Better Business Bureau](#) (BBB) profile and you'll find a long list of customer complaints, as recently as this month.

Many of the complaints have the same horrific themes:



Mysterious Charges

I ordered services for one user and was charged for 5 users and immediately notified customer support. I spoke to a rep, waited for a refund and it never came. Contacted them again, I was told no one filed a case, so one was opened. Still nothing. Contacted again and had to submit yet another case. I never used any of the services and am still waiting on my refund—oh, but guess what—I have to file yet another case!"





Chasing Ghosts Customer Support Reps

I contacted support to have my email changed and was charged for a second account I never agreed to. Then they suspended my account, walked me through deleting it to reinstate it, then said I'd get my money back in 24 hours. It's been over a week!"



Cancellations that Disappear into the Bermuda Triangle

Canceling my annual subscription has been a nightmare. I canceled it several months before it expired and was still charged \$300."



And did this rep seriously ask for a customer's personal data on a public platform?

Yes...yes they did:



Business response

11/03/2022

Hi Mo,

Again, the only account I found was related to one setup through *****Play. If you are still being charged, please provide another email address, or the following information:

- First name and last name
- First name and last name on card (if different)
- Billing address
- All alternate email addresses
- Business name
- Exact date of charge
- Exact amount of charge
- If CC:
- First 6 of CC:
- Last 4 of CC:
- Type of card (e.g. Visa)
- If PayPal:
- PayPal email address

I want to get this resolved for you.

Regards,

[Source](#)

Sounds like issues you'd expect from mediocre companies using highly outdated models. Not a "first-class" tech giant like DocuSign.

Welp, as the saying goes—the bigger they are...the harder they fall.

The Downfall of Per-envelope Pricing

Unfortunately, the fall isn't happening anywhere near DocuSign's prices.

Not only are they higher than the average small business owner would like to pay—the pricing model isn't all that clear.

And neither is how to calculate it.

Most eSignature platforms charge users by the document signed. For example, you pay \$20/mo and you can eSign 15 documents. However, DocuSign has envelope limits which aren't disclosed on its pricing menu. You'll see it has a 5 signature limit for the lowest tier personal account. Then for the higher tier plans, there's no number shown at all.

	Best Value		
Personal	Standard	Business Pro	Enhanced Plans
\$10 per month \$120 annually	\$25 per user, per month \$300 annually	\$40 per user, per month \$480 annually	Call for more info: 1-877-720-2040
BUY NOW	BUY NOW	BUY NOW	SCHEDULE A CALL
Send documents for eSignature: 5/month	Send documents for eSignature	Send documents for eSignature	All of our Standard or Business Pro features, plus further customization
Single user only	Buy up to 50 users online. For more than 50 users, Contact Sales.	Buy up to 50 users online. For more than 50 users, Contact Sales.	APIs
Integrates with Dropbox, Google Drive, and more.	Integrates with Dropbox, Google Drive, and more.	Integrates with Dropbox, Google Drive, and more.	Integrations, connectors
Real-time audit trail	Real-time audit trail	Real-time audit trail	Embedded signing
Top-rated mobile app	Top-rated mobile app	Top-rated mobile app	Advanced branding
Automate reminders & notifications	Automate reminders & notifications	Automate reminders & notifications	Identification & authentication
Reusable templates	Reusable templates	Reusable templates	Single-sign on (SSO)
	Shared documents	Shared documents	Organization administration
	Comments	Comments	Customizable usage limits
			Industry modules
			Enterprise level support
			Other Products:
			CLM

You must scroll down to the FAQs where it explains the 100/year per user limit (applies to all business accounts, including enterprises' supposed unlimited plan), which it claims most people don't exceed. Honestly, it depends on your industry—high-volume lenders could go over that limit easily.

Even you could. When you read through their site, you'll learn each envelope (document) you create counts towards your quota whether or not you eSign the document. So if you make a mistake on a document and need to recreate it, you'll be using two envelopes.

Guess what that means: surprise charges on your bill, which is a common issue for DocuSign's small business customers. And it's the reason more people are switching over to OnTask.



We use [OnTask] in a bunch of different ways. We used to be a DocuSign customer but switched over. Obviously, the cost savings were a plus. But, it does everything DocuSign does and more too.”

— RANDALL VAN ALLEN, CEO OF MADISON CLOUD

[Read how Madison Cloud saved time and money by switching from DocuSign to OnTask.](#)

OnTask's prices are always clear and upfront, so you know exactly what you'll pay each month. If you're an enterprise and want truly unlimited documents—we've got a transparent plan for you.

Shortcomings in Customer Support

It's bad enough that DocuSign has issues with customer service processing refunds to unhappy buyers. However, they also struggle with providing customer support.

DocuSign isn't the most user-friendly eSignature tool on the market, and it's plagued with downtime. In September 2022, it was down for over five hours. Think about how many business deals were lost or delayed in that time frame.

And if you check with [Status Gator](#), surely, you'll see it has monthly, if not weekly, outages and issues.

Start Time	Type	Length	Message	Details
November 18, 2022 1:42 PM	WARN	about 2 hours	Witness name and email field not visible when marking a signer "sign with a witness"	See more
November 18, 2022 6:22 AM	WARN	5 minutes	Some users may experience issue when using web send application.	See more
November 18, 2022 6:17 AM	WARN	5 minutes	Some users may experience issue when using web send application.	See more
November 18, 2022 6:07 AM	WARN	10 minutes	Some users may experience issue when using web send application.	See more
November 18, 2022 5:52 AM	WARN	15 minutes	Some users may experience issue when using web send application.	See more

[Source](#)

Not to mention—we hear all the time about customers switching because they felt like one in a sea of a million when it comes to trying to get support.

DocuSign’s chatbots are useless, and its help documents don’t always touch on the problems customers have. So if you’re not tech-savvy but need a simple way to get documents eSigned, then OnTask is your best bet.

Why?

Because we don’t leave our support tickets to bots and guides. We have humans on standby to assist customers with roadblocks. We even offer professional service hours where an OnTask specialist can train your team or build workflows for you.



One of the things that really sets [OnTask] apart is the one-on-one support that I got, which was much better than DocuSign’s. It feels like you guys actually care.”

— RANDALL VAN ALLEN, CEO OF MADISON CLOUD

We also provide tons of free support options like:



- Lunch and learns to educate you about our platform
- [Weekly office hours](#) to go over questions you have
- Quick chat support to provide quick solutions
- One-on-one support from customer success managers



And, we highly value feedback from our end-users. The feedback we collect is used to fuel product improvements and roadmap decisions.



What I like is the responsiveness from your Customer Success team. I have been told that if there are functionalities your tool doesn’t have, your team will work on them and potentially feature them in a future release. It’s that type of partnership that I think every company looks for in choosing their software providers.”

— RANDALL VAN ALLEN, CEO OF MADISON CLOUD

What does DocuSign, the Goliath, offer its 1M+ customer base?

Automated responses that yield no resolutions for its users. Guess they don’t have the time or capacity.

Sometimes Notable Branding isn't What You Desire

You're on the verge of closing a deal with a lead you've been nurturing for a month.

They were impressed with your presentation, and now you want to follow up with a professional proposal to eSign.

But you don't want to send a generic DocuSign email—you want it to come from your business email and feature your logo. Because after all, you're a professional company who is proud of your brand and wants to show it in every interaction.

Unfortunately, this is another area DocuSign falls short. While you can pay to add your own branding, there's no white labeling available, so you're stuck having their logo on all of your eSigned documents. The giant refuses to allow this capability out of fear of losing its free advertising to millions of eSigners.

Bummer.

But it doesn't have to be for you if you opt for OnTask. We empower users with white labeling services for [Business Pro and Enterprise plans](#).

Flexibility is Lackluster to Say the Least

No unlimited eSignatures. No white labeling. Poor customer service and support. What else could go wrong with DocuSign?

Apparently, a lot.

Businesses that want to grow desire solutions that can scale with them. Getting trapped in a contract with software that doesn't keep up with your growth will create unnecessary hurdles down the road. And this is the issue with DocuSign.

There's no way to scale your eSignature capabilities without paying a hefty penny. You're stuck with a 100-per-year (per user) limit or must agree to forfeit more of your hard-earned dollars to exceed that limit.

What about integrating its API into your existing software? Well, that's an option. But it's rigid and lacks the flexibility needed to design your own workflows. There's also no way to fully integrate it with your business' site or application.

A better no-nonsense solution: OnTask's [eSignature API](#), which allows you to add a variety of [eSign and workflow capabilities](#) directly into your application with just a few lines of code.



With simple, “pay-as-you-go” pricing available for API customers, OnTask makes it easy to get started right away without having to navigate complex pricing plans or licensing agreements.

You get access to our detailed documentation, and an experienced support team to walk you through any difficulties you might encounter during implementation.



I like to get under the wire of things. With OnTask I can look at a flow chart and how specific processes are going. I can even work with APIs to make sure that things are working. You can't really look under the hood with DocuSign, so that was an advantage of using OnTask.”

— CHARLES MACCALL, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER AT ROSEN LAW FIRM

The Future of eSignatures will Keep You *On Task*

DocuSign may have a massive user base, but its list of shortcomings is just as long. It's no wonder its users are searching for a better solution with OnTask. And we're not just tooting our own horn (okay, maybe a little)—our teams also use OnTask regularly for NDAs, quotes, contracts, and BAAs (business associate agreements).

One benefit we enjoy is the dashboard to track all of our important documents and where they are in each approval and signature process. And on top of that, you can see in-depth info into the status of your document, such as whether it has or has not been viewed and signed by each signee. It's also easy to store and edit or redact sensitive information.

It even eliminates one of our CEO's pet peeves: not knowing if a document is ready to sign off.

When our CEO receives a document for signature through OnTask, he can review all of the comments and notes from the approval process between our CRO and COO. As a result, he can sign a contract in confidence that it's been thoroughly reviewed and accepted.

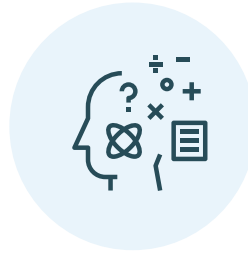
With many eSignature platforms (ahem, DocuSign), a leader just receives a link to sign and doesn't know whether they're signing the most recently approved version.



Customers that switch from DocuSign also like OnTask's ability to:



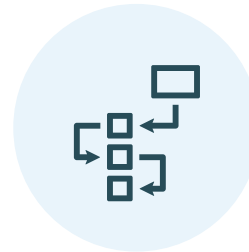
Automate processes before and after the document is signed



Control the logic of what happens when those documents are approved or rejected



Save a lot of time with faster approvals, so they can get documents into customers' hands



Route documents internally for approval

If you're tired of good enough and want better, then step into the future with OnTask.

A future where you're in complete control of your eSignature experience, design, and workflow.

Staying on task with your document signatures has never been easier. But don't take our word for it—book a demo with OnTask to see it in action.



[SCHEDULE A DEMO](#)