Increasing Sustainability by Going Paperless: A WMU Case Study

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What is a Digital Signature?

Digital signatures provide authenticity that the signer is the person he or she claims to be.
It is a verification method that helps to ensure the integrity of the content has not been changed or tampered with.
It provides non-repudiation for the signers and recipients of a document.

What is Gained?

Time, Paper, Fuel

Days vs. Hours

- Digital signatures enable expanded use of verifiable electronic documents.
- Reduced use and need for paper products, postage and logistics.
- Ability to create systemic workflows through the document’s processes.
- Loss prevention through digital storage, tracking and transparency.
- Increased speed of communication and workflows.
- Ease of sharing, signing and validating documents.
Source: http://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/kb/certificate-signatures.html

The “Life Cycle” of a Paper Process

The “Life Cycle” of a Digital Process

Student fills out and submits form
Electronic form is routed for signatures
Signatures can be routed simultaneously or systematically

Tracking the progress is facilitated quickly and efficiently

“Homebrew” vs. Software as a Service (SaaS)

SaaS, what is it?

“Software as a service (or SaaS) is a way of delivering applications over the Internet—as a service. Instead of installing and maintaining software, you simply access it via the Internet, freeing yourself from complex software and hardware management.”
Source: http://www.salesforce.com/saas/

Homebrew, what is that?

Homebrew is a traditional method for deploying and delivering applications by installing them locally within an organization, managing the forms and their systems. This method requires support personnel to oversee and manages the day-to-day operations of the system or service.

Homebrew Pros:
- Full control -- software / process / updates; complete customization

Homebrew Cons:
- Higher initial costs; support staff service many products at a general knowledge level

SaaS Pros:
- Lower initial costs; 24/7 Cloud support – highly knowledgeable support
- Staff services one product with many users

SaaS Cons:
- Lack of control - vendor chooses when and how updates will occur