

A Forrester Total Economic Impact™  
Study Commissioned By Adobe  
August 2019

# The Total Economic Impact™ Of Adobe Sign

Cost Savings And Business Benefits  
Enabled By Adobe Sign

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**Project Director:**  
Sarah Musto, Connor Maguire

## ABOUT FORRESTER CONSULTING

Forrester Consulting provides independent and objective research-based consulting to help leaders succeed in their organizations. Ranging in scope from a short strategy session to custom projects, Forrester's Consulting services connect you directly with research analysts who apply expert insight to your specific business challenges. For more information, visit [forrester.com/consulting](https://forrester.com/consulting).

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# Executive Summary

Adobe commissioned Forrester Consulting to conduct a Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) study and examine the potential return on investment (ROI) enterprises may realize by deploying Adobe Sign. The purpose of this study is to provide readers with a framework to evaluate the potential financial impact of Adobe Sign on their organizations.

To better understand the benefits, costs, and risks associated with this investment, Forrester interviewed several customers with years of experience using Adobe Sign. Adobe Sign, part of Adobe Document Cloud, provides e-signature capabilities that allow organizations to digitally send, sign, track, and manage documents that require a signature. Additionally, Adobe Sign can be used for internal or web forms to gather critical information. Users can easily fill out and return forms on any device or browser. Forrester examined the use of Adobe Sign in various lines of business as well as its use to digitize companies' enrollment processes, expediting customer and employee onboarding.

Prior to using Adobe Sign, the interviewed organizations managed document signatures with mostly manual processes, using a combination of paper, faxing, scanning, and shipping to acquire said signatures. Employees spent significant amounts of time waiting for documents to be returned and attempting to monitor the status of documents pending signature. Employees frequently found themselves having to resend documents that were lost or not filled out correctly, thus increasing the cycle time and creating inefficiencies. Users both internally and externally were often faced with lengthy delays caused by executive travel and other circumstances that would cause signers to leave their offices, making them unavailable for a signature until they returned. The organizations found that for both employees and for customers, these manual processes increasingly fell short of expectations and had a negative impact on the overall experience of all parties involved.

With Adobe Sign, interviewees described how they have converted their formerly paper processes into digital processes, which reduce, among other things, the amount of forms that need to be printed and shipped. Using Adobe Sign, the interviewed organizations have templated many of their forms, creating standard workflows for editing and generating new documents. The organizations now use the mobile capabilities of Adobe Sign to reach users who are frequently out of the office. This capability reduces the amount of time users spend waiting for signatures to come back and significantly reduces the cycle times of these workflows. Organizations have also integrated Adobe Sign with their Microsoft Office 365 applications to improve adoption, enabling e-signature functionality within the tools that employees use every day. Overall, the Adobe Sign investment improves the signature experience for internal and external audiences, simplifying these previously manual processes and making it easier to get documents signed.

## Key Findings

**Quantified benefits.** The following risk-adjusted present value (PV) quantified benefits are representative of those experienced by the companies interviewed:

### Key Benefits



Cycle times with Adobe Sign:  
**28x faster time-to-business**



Year 3 total time savings from using Adobe Sign:  
**125 hours saved per user**



Year 3 paper and shipping cost savings:  
**\$6 per document totaling \$600,000**



**ROI**  
**420%**



**Benefits PV**  
**\$6.8 million**



**NPV**  
**\$5.5 million**

- › **Reducing manual signature steps saves employees 1.5 hours per transaction, on average.** Digitizing and automating formerly manual ink and paper signature workflows creates significant time savings for organizations. Eliminating inefficiencies associated with these processes saves organizations an average of 1.5 hours per transaction.
- › **Reducing the use of paper documents results in cost savings of \$6 per transaction, on average.** By switching to a digital signature process, organizations reduce costs for shipping, paper, ink, printers, and scanners.
- › **Digitizing enrollment processes saves organizations 2 hours per form.** Using digital processes to expedite onboarding and enrollment forms allows organizations to reduce time spent on these traditionally time-consuming processes by 2 hours.
- › **Standardizing regulation and compliance forms allows organizations to repurpose three compliance FTEs for higher-value work.** Transferring forms to standard templates as opposed to relying on manually generated documents allows organizations to reallocate resources formerly dedicated to maintaining these forms to more value-added work.

A transaction is defined as the entire process to send an electronic document or collection of related documents to a recipient through the electronic signature service.

**Unquantified benefits.** The interviewed organizations experienced the following benefits, which are not quantified for this study:

- › **Improved customer experience from using all digitized workflows.** Interviewees noted that by using a more modern approach to their signature processes, they appear more professional. Eliminating traditional paper and ink processes has enhanced their reputation in the eyes of their customers. These improved processes have also led to higher levels in customer satisfaction as customers no longer have to complete time-intensive signature processes or wait on long cycle times.
- › **Streamlined line-of-business processes.** Interviewees mentioned new hires use Adobe Sign to reduce time spent filling out employee policy paperwork and other onboarding documents. Sales teams can turn around contracts faster than in their legacy systems, and legal departments can make mass edits to document language without significant difficulty.
- › **Generated incremental revenue through process automation and increased competitiveness.** In addition to decreasing the drop-off rate with digital enrollment, interviewed organizations have found that Adobe Sign generates incremental revenue in other ways. Reduced cycle times mean that salespeople can be more efficient, increasing the volume of deals per salesperson. Reduced cycle times have also improved competitiveness in the market, resulting in less lost business compared to long paper-based processes.
- › **Reduced environmental impact through the reduction in paper.** Interviewees achieve savings in water usage, wood, and waste by reducing the use of paper in signature processes.

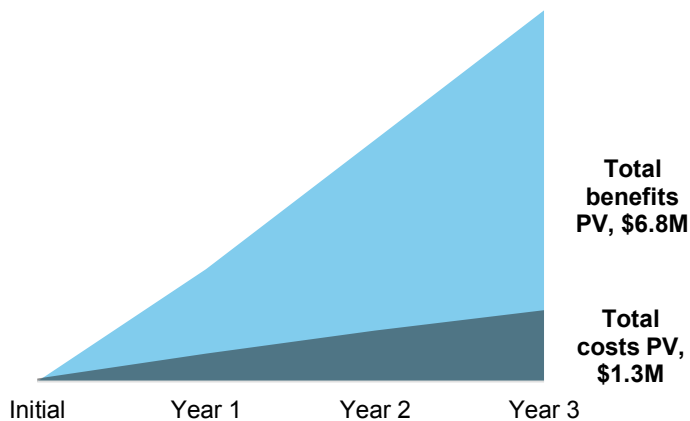
**Costs.** The interviewed organizations experienced the following risk-adjusted PV costs:

- › **Adobe Sign license fees.** The interviewees use enterprise pricing based on the volume of transactions and a cost per transaction.

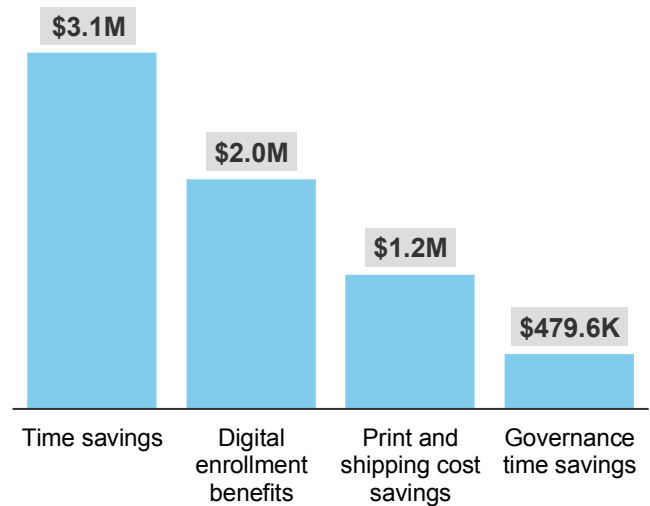
- › **Time spent on management of Adobe Sign.** Central administrators spend time creating training materials, educating groups internally, setting up new Adobe Sign use cases, and training active users on general usage and new use cases. Administrators spend minimal time on troubleshooting.
- › **Time spent on training.** Administrators receive training as their organizations begin using Adobe Sign, and active users receive both general training and training on specific use cases.

Forrester’s interviews with six existing customers and subsequent financial analysis found that an organization based on these interviewed organizations experiences benefits of \$6.8 million over three years versus costs of \$1.3 million adding up to a net present value (NPV) of \$5.5 million and an ROI of 420%.

### Financial Summary



### Benefits (Three-Year)



“50% of all of our agreements that we conduct electronically are completed within 1 hour. We also know that 70% of all agreements are completed within one day. Physical agreements cannot match the speed at which we can get agreements signed electronically.”

*Product manager, technology provider*



The TEI methodology helps companies demonstrate, justify, and realize the tangible value of IT initiatives to both senior management and other key business stakeholders.

## TEI Framework And Methodology

From the information provided in the interviews, Forrester has constructed a Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) framework for those organizations considering implementing Adobe Sign.

The objective of the framework is to identify the cost, benefit, flexibility, and risk factors that affect the investment decision. Forrester took a multistep approach to evaluate the impact that Adobe Sign can have on an organization:



### **DUE DILIGENCE**

Interviewed Adobe stakeholders and Forrester analysts to gather data relative to Adobe Sign.



### **CUSTOMER INTERVIEWS**

Interviewed six organizations using Adobe Sign to obtain data with respect to costs, benefits, and risks.



### **COMPOSITE ORGANIZATION**

Designed a composite organization based on characteristics of the interviewed organizations.



### **FINANCIAL MODEL FRAMEWORK**

Constructed a financial model representative of the interviews using the TEI methodology and risk-adjusted the financial model based on issues and concerns of the interviewed organizations.



### **CASE STUDY**

Employed four fundamental elements of TEI in modeling Adobe Sign's impact: benefits, costs, flexibility, and risks. Given the increasing sophistication that enterprises have regarding ROI analyses related to IT investments, Forrester's TEI methodology serves to provide a complete picture of the total economic impact of purchase decisions. Please see Appendix A for additional information on the TEI methodology.

## DISCLOSURES

Readers should be aware of the following:

This study is commissioned by Adobe and delivered by Forrester Consulting. It is not meant to be used as a competitive analysis.

Forrester makes no assumptions as to the potential ROI that other organizations will receive. Forrester strongly advises that readers use their own estimates within the framework provided in the report to determine the appropriateness of an investment in Adobe Sign.

Adobe reviewed and provided feedback to Forrester, but Forrester maintains editorial control over the study and its findings and does not accept changes to the study that contradict Forrester's findings or obscure the meaning of the study.

Adobe provided the customer names for the interviews but did not participate in the interviews.

# The Adobe Sign Customer Journey

## BEFORE AND AFTER THE ADOBE SIGN INVESTMENT

### Interviewed Organizations

For this study, Forrester conducted six interviews with Adobe Sign customers from across the globe. Interviewed customers include the following:

INDUSTRY	EMPLOYEES	INTERVIEWEE	ADOBE SIGN TRANSACTIONS ANNUALLY
Managed healthcare	300,000	Business project program manager	127,000+ transactions
Conglomerate	300,000	General manager of operations	Approximately 1,000 transactions
Financial services	235,000	Head of multichannel operations	1,000,000+ transactions
Technology provider	135,000	Product manager	2,000,000+ transactions
Pharmaceuticals	53,000	Global product manager	30,000 transactions
State/local government	14,000	IT specialist	300,000 transactions

### Key Challenges

The interviewed organizations experienced common challenges prior to investing in Adobe Sign, including:

- › **Signature processes that did not meet employee or customer expectations.** Manual processes prevented employees from completing tasks quickly, reducing the time they could spend on high-impact work. Employees who traveled frequently or worked remotely needed a solution that was easy to use on a mobile device and didn't require access to printers or fax machines. Interviewees with employees across different regions needed a faster way than shipping to sign off on important documents. Customers increasingly expected more digital and mobile experiences, and this expectation extended to signature processes.
- › **Inefficient signature processes that resulted in long signature cycles.** Interviewees highlighted inefficiencies from preparing, printing, mailing, scanning, faxing, and tracking documents manually. Paper documents were more likely to be lost, extending signature cycles. Once organizations received signatures, employees spent time on reentry of data into systems, scanning documents to store electronically, or filing documents in physical filing cabinets.
- › **Expensive existing signature processes.** Existing signature processes required spending on paper, printers, ink, fax machines, and postage or shipping rates. The rates could be costly depending on the volume of documents interviewed organizations were sending annually.
- › **Security and compliance challenges posed by signature processes interrupted with paper-based tasks.** Interviewees noted that paper documents with sensitive information were easily lost and

“Any changes to our documents created significant delay. We were completing more contracts, and we had a lack of audit trail. There was a lack of obvious ownership, and there was also the risk of unauthorized signatures from both parties.”

*General manager of operations, conglomerate*



didn't always go directly to relevant parties. Paper documents were also more difficult to update when text around compliance and regulation needed to be altered. Employees had to locate source files and ensure that all forms were sent out with the correct updated text, which was difficult to do without standardized digital forms.

## Key Results

The interviews revealed that key results from the Adobe Sign investment include:

- › **Reduced signature cycle times.** Interviewees have experienced significant reductions in overall cycle times to obtain a signature. These reductions come from the use of mobile functionality to sign documents when working remotely, fewer cycles by reducing errors and rework associated with errors, automation of manual e-signature workflows directly within Microsoft applications, and easily templated forms that limit the amount of customization that needs to be completed by end users.
- › **Less time spent on signature processes.** By using templates, tracking and notification features, signature workflows, and integrations between Adobe Sign and systems of record, employees spend less time preparing documents, negotiating, tracking documents, reentering data, and storing documents.
- › **Less time spent enrolling new customers.** By digitizing their enrollment processes, interviewees can now save additional time not captured in a typical Adobe Sign transaction. Lengthy and complicated enrollment processes can be completed in a fraction of the time needed for legacy workflows. Using digitized forms streamlines the customer experience and eliminates errors and delays produced from manual processes that require duplicate data entry. This creates a better overall customer experience and leads to fewer customers dropping out of enrollment processes.
- › **Cost savings from less paper usage.** Digital processes reduce costs for paper, ink, printers, and shipping. Customers have also accrued savings by avoiding the cost of storing their documents in a physical location.
- › **Improved compliance.** Interviewees find it significantly easier to update and maintain documents with Adobe Sign. This makes updating documents that are subject to strict and rapidly changing compliance regulations a less complex and more thorough process. Interviewed organizations no longer worry that forms with incorrect and outdated text are being sent as all forms are standardized with templates.
- › **Digitization adoption throughout the organization.** Interviewees noted several different methods through which Adobe Sign use and benefits have spread throughout their organizations. Most organizations have top-down initiatives, where executives champion the use of Adobe Sign to the teams they interact with. This was found to be the most effective way to get new teams to start using Adobe Sign. The benefits of using Adobe Sign also spread through word of mouth among employees, and administrators actively promote the use of Adobe Sign and identify new use cases. Some interviewees found that a fast way to introduce employees to Adobe Sign is by using Adobe Sign for HR documents. Due to Adobe Sign's ease of use and

“Adobe Sign has significantly reduced the turnaround time and the time to process, the cost of processing, and very interestingly it reduced the number of complaints because it was taking us a long time to process these pieces of paper before.”

*General manager of operations,  
conglomerate*



“Having the central repository has allowed us to make legislation changes much faster. If we find that there's a stipulation in our contract that opens us up to risk, we're able to quickly find that information, determine what customers or providers are impacted by it, and then do a mass amendment that would allow us to amend all of the contracts that are affected.”

*Business project program  
manager, managed healthcare*





ability to easily scale, new users can access and start using Adobe Sign very quickly, accelerating overall benefits.

## Composite Organization

Based on the interviews, Forrester constructed a TEI framework, a composite company, and an associated ROI analysis that illustrates the areas financially affected. The composite organization is representative of the six companies that Forrester interviewed and is used to present the aggregate financial analysis in the next section. The composite organization that Forrester synthesized from the customer interviews has the following characteristics:

**Description of composite.** The global, multibillion-dollar organization has 25,000 employees. The organization operates in a highly regulated industry and relied on paper-based processes and various pockets of free and paid PDF solutions to obtain a signature prior to investing in Adobe Sign. These processes included shipping or emailing documents, tracking documents in email or spreadsheets, and then rekeying data and scanning or physically filing documents for storage.

**Deployment characteristics.** The organization began deployment by spreading awareness and garnering interest from users in various lines of business. Adobe Sign usage spreads across the company to 1,200 users by the end of Year 3. Usage spreads by a combination of internal education efforts, word of mouth, and executive/top-down initiatives. Forrester assumes that active users generate documents for signature and modify templates as well as many one-off use cases. During the initial year of using Adobe Sign, the composite organization completes 75,000 Adobe Sign transactions; this number grows to 100,000 transactions per year by Year 3. The composite organization uses Adobe Sign to digitally enroll and onboard new customers and employees. The organization also integrates Adobe Sign with Microsoft Office 365 to enable e-signature functionality within Microsoft applications.



### Key assumptions

- 1,200 Adobe Sign users
- 100,000 total transactions per year by Year 3
- 25,000 digital enrollment transactions per year by Year 3

# Analysis Of Benefits

## QUANTIFIED BENEFIT DATA AS APPLIED TO THE COMPOSITE

### Total Benefits

Ref.	Benefit	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Present Value
Atr	Time savings	\$1,075,781	\$1,290,938	\$1,434,375	\$3,801,094	\$3,122,541
Btr	Digital enrollment benefits	\$693,281	\$831,938	\$924,375	\$2,449,594	\$2,012,304
Ctr	Print and shipping cost savings	\$405,000	\$486,000	\$540,000	\$1,431,000	\$1,175,545
Dtr	Governance time savings	\$85,000	\$255,000	\$255,000	\$595,000	\$479,602
	Total benefits (risk-adjusted)	\$2,259,063	\$2,863,875	\$3,153,750	\$8,276,688	\$6,789,992

### Time Savings

Interviewees highlighted several different ways in which they generate time savings with Adobe Sign:

- › Interviewees often used the paper-to-digital transformation required by Adobe Sign to reevaluate existing workstreams. Some interviewees have simplified and consolidated documents, reducing the number of places or forms signers needed to fill in or provide a signature. Others have simplified the workflow to obtain a signature by removing time-consuming print and ship workflows. This process improvement has amplified efficiencies generated with Adobe Sign.
- › Interviewees have found that transforming documents into templates or forms reduces time spent on document preparation or contract generation. Organizations have also sped time-to-market by automating manual e-signature workflows within Microsoft SharePoint. By digitizing contracts without making any other changes to the documents, organizations can reduce errors, unapproved edits, and misplaced signatures that can extend the signature cycle.
- › Adobe Sign integrates with Microsoft Office 365 applications, further increasing time savings by providing e-signature solutions within the tools that employees use every day. Employees can send documents for signature with Adobe Sign directly from Microsoft Office applications used every day such as Outlook or Word. Integrated tracking provides the status of e-signatures within their Microsoft applications, and signing steps can be added to SharePoint workflows.
- › Employees and customers use the Adobe Sign mobile application and mobile functionality to send and sign documents from anywhere, on any device. This is especially important for executives and other employees who travel frequently. The ability to sign documents easily from a mobile device without a download prevents processes from slowing down while key signers travel.
- › The overall result for interviewees has been significant reductions in signature cycle times, efficiencies for employees that allow them to focus on higher value tasks, and an improved experience for customers and other external parties.

For the composite organization, Forrester assumes that:

The table above shows the total of all benefits across the areas listed below, as well as present values (PVs) discounted at 10%. Over three years, the composite organization expects risk-adjusted total benefits to be a PV of approximately \$6.8 million.

“The probability of somebody making a mistake when trying to comply with the policy was high when it was manual versus when we can do it automatically. The workflow is easier for the employees to follow. They don’t have to work out which document they are supposed to use, where to find it, if they are using the correct version, etc. By automating this process, you take away all of that.”

*Global product manager,  
pharmaceuticals*

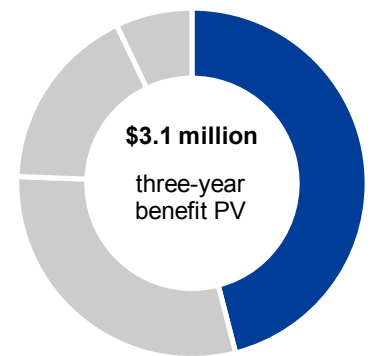


- › A broad userbase across the organization uses Adobe Sign. The organization processes approximately 75,000 transactions in Year 1; this number grows year over year to 100,000 in Year 3. Seventy-five percent of these transactions are comprised mainly of standard form signature and approval workflows; 25% of transactions qualify as digital enrollment workflows that often generate more time savings for users and are quantified in the next benefit.
- › The average time savings for employees across these standard transactions is 1.5 hours saved per transaction. Some transactions may have smaller time savings, while some may provide more significant savings. One and a half hours is reflective of the average amount of work time saved and does not include the time employees may have spent waiting for a signature to be returned.
- › The average cycle time decreases from approximately seven days to 2 hours, which is a 96% reduction in the overall cycle time.
- › Not all saved time is repurposed for additional work. To capture the value of repurposed time, Forrester conservatively assumes a 50% productivity capture.
- › The average fully loaded hourly compensation for end users experiencing these times savings is \$30.

This benefit will vary based on the following risk factors:

- › Adoption of Adobe Sign functionality by employees both for larger use cases, requiring sweeping templates changes or integrations, and for ad hoc use.
- › Adoption of Adobe Sign mobile capabilities for executives, other frequent travelers, and external parties.
- › The speed at which Adobe Sign is adopted by new users and integrated into their existing workflows.

To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this benefit downward by 15%, yielding a three-year risk-adjusted total PV of \$3.1 million.



Time savings: 46% of total benefits

Impact risk is the risk that the business or technology needs of the organization may not be met by the investment, resulting in lower overall total benefits. The greater the uncertainty, the wider the potential range of outcomes for benefit estimates.

### Time Savings: Calculation Table

Ref.	Metric	Calculation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
A1	Annual Adobe Sign transactions	Interviews	56,250	67,500	75,000
A2	Time savings per transactions from Adobe Sign (hours)	Interviews	1.5	1.5	1.5
A3	Average hourly fully loaded compensation, end user	Assumption	\$30	\$30	\$30
A4	Productivity capture	Assumption	50%	50%	50%
At	Time savings	A1*A2*A3*A4	\$1,265,625	\$1,518,750	\$1,687,500
	Risk adjustment	↓15%			
Atr	Time savings (risk-adjusted)		\$1,075,781	\$1,290,938	\$1,434,375

## Digital Enrollment Benefits

Interviewees highlighted several different ways in which digital enrollment generates efficiencies within their organizations:

- › Adobe defines the digital enrollment use case as any transaction which transforms a formerly time-intensive onboarding process into an entirely digital process through the use of Adobe Sign.
- › Prior to investing in Adobe Sign, these transactions were typically very time-intensive and complex, which often negatively affected customer experiences. Digitizing this process has saved organizations significant amounts of time and made the enrollment process simpler and more user-friendly for customers.
- › Interviewees also noted that by using digital enrollment with Adobe Sign, they are able to decrease the number of customers who drop out of their enrollment processes.

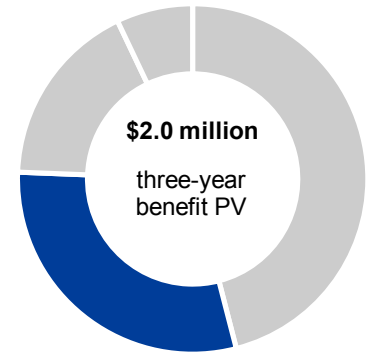
For the composite organization, Forrester assumes that:

- › A quarter of all transactions qualify as digital enrollment transactions. This proportion of digital enrollment transactions remains constant throughout the three-year period so that by Year 3, there are 25,000 total digital enrollment transactions.
- › Digital enrollment transactions are particularly lengthy and complex processes that have been digitized using Adobe Sign. These processes produce a higher time savings on average than a typical Adobe Sign transaction. Forrester assumes that on average digital enrollment transactions save internal users 2 hours. External customers using these enrollment practices also experience time savings of their own; however, this is not included in Forrester's analysis.
- › Not all saved time is repurposed for additional work. To capture the value of repurposed time, Forrester conservatively assumes a 50% productivity capture.
- › The average fully loaded hourly compensation for end users experiencing benefits from digital enrollment is \$30.
- › Prior to using Adobe Sign, transactions that qualified as digital enrollment had a high drop-off rate. By digitizing the process with Adobe Sign, the composite organization can create a more intuitive and seamless enrollment process. This lowers the drop-off rate for these transactions by 30%.
- › The composite uses digital enrollment specifically to facilitate customer purchases of discrete products and services. Each transaction completed for this process generates incremental revenue of \$450 for the composite organization. Forrester assumes the average operating margin for the organization is 10%.

The benefits received from digital enrollment will vary with:

- › The extent to which digital enrollment is adopted across organizations and the complexity of the legacy enrollment processes.
- › The speed at which organizations can digitize their enrollment processes and expand the use of digital enrollment across their organizations.
- › The specific use case where digital enrollment is used, which can affect how much (if any) additional revenue is generated through automating enrollment.

To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this benefit downward by 15%, yielding a three-year risk-adjusted total PV of \$2 million.



## Digital enrollment benefits: 30% of total benefits

“One interaction that we would have done via the telephone previously was review our terms and conditions. We went from putting our customers through 20 minutes of compliance statements to sending electronic terms and conditions that they can look through and confirm over on the phone.”

*Product manager, technology provider*



“We do thousands of contracts each year, and when we use our paper process, there’s a 50% drop off. Using Adobe Sign, we were able to move our completion rate to 84%.”

*Head of multichannel services, financial services*



## Digital Enrollment Benefits: Calculation Table

Ref.	Metric	Calculation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
B1	Digital enrollment transactions annually	Interviews	18,750	22,500	25,000
B2	Time saved per transaction (hours)	Interviews	2.00	2.00	2.00
B3	Average hourly fully loaded compensation, end user	Assumption	\$30	\$30	\$30
B4	Productivity capture	Assumption	50%	50%	50%
B5	End user savings with digital enrollment	$B1*B2*B3*B4$	\$562,500	\$675,000	\$750,000
B6	Incremental transactions due to reduced drop-off rate with digital enrollment	$B1*30%$	5,625	6,750	7,500
B7	Average revenue per transaction	Interviews	\$450	\$450	\$450
B8	Operating margin	Assumption	10%	10%	10%
B9	Incremental profit with digital enrollment	$B6*B7*B8$	\$253,125	\$303,750	\$337,500
Bt	Digital enrollment benefits	$B5+B9$	\$815,625	\$978,750	\$1,087,500
	Risk adjustment	↓15%			
Btr	Digital enrollment benefits (risk-adjusted)		\$693,281	\$831,938	\$924,375

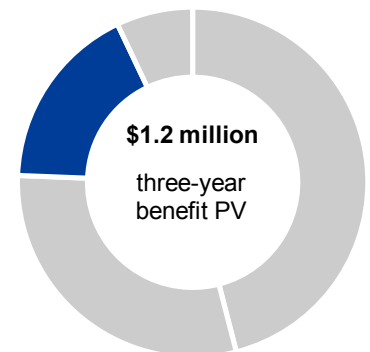
## Print And Shipping Cost Savings

Interviewees highlighted several different ways in which they generate print and shipping cost savings with Adobe Sign:

- › Adobe Sign reduces the amount of paper that the organization uses, as paper processes are transformed into end-to-end digital processes. Although not all processes are completely digitized, most of them no longer require paper to be completed.
- › Along with reducing printing of documents, organizations can route documents to signers through Adobe Sign and integrate Adobe Sign with enterprise systems for automatic storage. This reduces the need to pay for postage or shipping. One interviewee highlighted how the company no longer needs its employees to spend time physically transporting the documents from one place to another. Converting processes to digital formats has eliminated the need to file and store physical documents. The interviewee noted these savings as a significant benefit of using Adobe Sign.
- › One interviewee shared: “Adobe Sign is generating hard savings on cost because we automate an awful lot of our paper production processing. There is a genuine hard cost reduction when we send out a document. We no longer have to pay to have them printed and shipped — it all happens digitally.”

For the composite organization, Forrester assumes that:

- › While documents varied greatly in the number of pages depending on their use case, on average the composite paid \$1 to print out documents that needed a signature.
- › The price to ship a document varied greatly based on how quickly the document required a signature and where it was shipped. For this



**Print and shipping cost savings: 17% of total benefits**

analysis, Forrester assumes the average cost to ship a document prior to investing in Adobe Sign was \$5.

This benefit will vary based on the following risk factors:

- › The amount of hard cost savings will depend on the prior processes in place and how much signature transactions depended on paper, shipping, and scanning.
- › Some organizations may have lower shipping rates depending on the urgency of delivering documents and any volume discounts that can be negotiated with delivery services.

To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this benefit downward by 10%, yielding a three-year risk-adjusted total PV of \$1.2 million.



**\$540,000** in print and paper costs saved per year by Year 3

### Print And Shipping Cost Savings: Calculation Table

Ref.	Metric	Calculation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
C1	Annual Adobe Sign transactions	A1+B1	75,000	90,000	100,000
C2	Mailing/shipping cost savings, per transaction	Interview	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
C3	Printing/scanning/faxing cost savings, per transaction	Interviews	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$1.00
Ct	Print and shipping cost savings	C1*(C2+C3)	\$450,000	\$540,000	\$600,000
	Risk adjustment	↓10%			
Ctr	Print and shipping cost savings (risk-adjusted)		\$405,000	\$486,000	\$540,000

## Governance Time Savings

Interviewees highlighted several different ways in which Adobe Sign enables them to save time and resources while remaining in compliance with regulations their organizations are subject to:

- › Prior to investing in Adobe Sign, organizations dedicated significant manpower to governing and updating their various documents to keep them up to date with ever-changing security and compliance standards required in their respective industries.
- › With traditional methods, employees were required to manually review and change the text of all documents when new regulations were announced. This was a time-intensive process that required constant supervision to prevent lapses in compliance. Adobe Sign allowed interviewees to templatize and digitize many of these forms, which made them easier to locate, maintain, and remove sensitive data as needed.
- › Increasing the automation associated with template management allowed organizations to reallocate employees to areas of the company where they could add more value.

For the composite organization, Forrester assumes that:

- › Prior to investing in Adobe Sign, the composite organization employed six compliance FTEs who were responsible for ensuring the various forms and documents used by the organization were always up to date and in compliance with the latest statutes and regulations.

“Particularly in the last year, our organization has faced implications from GDPR. We’re able to automatically scrape data subjects from all of our agreements, and we’re able to manage that centrally. So, if you have a privacy concern and you contact us and you look to exercise your digital rights, then we have the ability to do that really quickly thanks to Adobe Sign.”

*Product manager, managed technology provider*

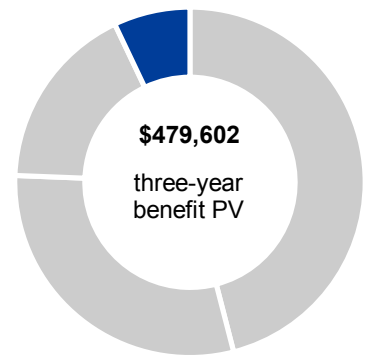


- › Digitizing these forms allows the composite organization to repurpose three FTEs for higher-value tasks by Year 3 of the analysis.
- › There is a slight adoption curve for this benefit as the compliance team is still be required to update forms while the organization works to transfer these forms to standardized templates. To account for this adoption curve, Forrester assumes that only one compliance FTE is reallocated in Year 1.
- › The average annual fully loaded compensation for a compliance employee is \$100,000.

This benefit will vary based on the following risk factors:

- › The speed at which organizations can templatize their existing documents and forms.
- › The frequency and extent to which compliance language needs to be changed in forms and documents.

To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this benefit downward by 15%, yielding a three-year risk-adjusted total PV of \$479,602.



**Governance time  
savings: 7% of total  
benefits**

### Governance Time Savings: Calculation Table

Ref.	Metric	Calculation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
D1	Compliance FTEs needed to manage documents prior to Adobe Sign	Interviews	6	6	6
D2	Compliance FTEs needed with Adobe Sign	Interviews	5	3	3
D3	Average annual fully loaded compensation, compliance	Assumption	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000
Dt	Governance time savings	$(D1-D2)*D3$	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
	Risk adjustment	↓15%			
Dtr	Governance time savings (risk-adjusted)		\$85,000	\$255,000	\$255,000

## Unquantified Benefits

The interviewed organizations experienced the following benefits, which are not quantified for this study:

- › **Improved customer experience due to modernization.** Interviewees noted that an important benefit of using Adobe Sign as their e-signature solution is the improvement to their brand image. The general manager of operations at a multinational conglomerate noted: “I think it makes us look a lot more professional. I think Adobe is more of a blue-chip organization, and partnering with them makes us appear more modern. It seems quite a minor thing but certainly in the business we’re in, it backs up the reputation that we are looking to become a more modern company.” The partnership that organizations established with Adobe made them more appealing to work with from a customer perspective, which was a significant experience benefit to them.
- › **Streamlined HR, sales, and legal processes.** Several interviewees mentioned that before Adobe Sign, new hire onboarding documents would be printed and filled out by the employee on their first day, and then HR would manually rekey and scan documents into their systems.

With Adobe Sign, new hires can fill out paperwork online in advance, in 30 minutes or less, saving new hires several hours on their first day, allowing them to be productive immediately. HR also uses Adobe Sign to automate their benefits enrollment process. Instead of physically filling out a multitude of forms, employees can enroll in corporate benefits with a few clicks. Sales teams benefit from the shortened cycle times that e-signatures create. Faster turnaround on documents allows them to close more deals as they spend less time simply waiting for documents to be returned. Lastly, legal departments are able send and receive nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) very quickly, freeing up employees to attend to more strategic issues.

- › **Reduced environmental impact through the reduction in paper.** Removing paper and shipping processes from established workflows allows customers to save significant amounts of paper waste while also reducing their contribution to the environmental impacts of shipping large amounts of packages. With 100,000 transactions in Year 3, the composite saves 167,000 gallons of water, 58,188 pounds of wood, and 9,000 pounds of waste.

## Flexibility

The value of flexibility is clearly unique to each customer, with the measure of its value varying from organization to organization. There are multiple scenarios in which a customer might choose to implement Adobe Sign and later realize additional uses and business opportunities, including:

- › **Expanding the use of Adobe Sign within departments and to additional departments.** The interviewees noted ongoing efforts to identify new use cases for Adobe Sign and to spread the benefits of using Adobe Sign to more employees. Most interviewees felt that even though they had already achieved benefits with their current Adobe Sign deployments, they still had a significant opportunity to spread Adobe Sign usage within their organizations.
- › **Continuing the paper-to-digital journey with ambitious goals.** Some interviewees strove to continue to drive adoption across their organizations with the goal of achieving a near 100% adoption rate in the matter of just a few years.

Flexibility would also be quantified when evaluated as part of a specific project (described in more detail in Appendix A).

“Adobe Sign is definitely something that’s sped up the whole onboarding process. We automated a couple of steps in this workflow including enrolling in our benefits package, which is one of the building blocks of the whole contract. “

*Product manager, managed technology provider*



Flexibility, as defined by TEI, represents an investment in additional capacity or capability that could be turned into business benefit for a future additional investment. This provides an organization with the "right" or the ability to engage in future initiatives but not the obligation to do so.



# Analysis Of Costs

## QUANTIFIED COST DATA AS APPLIED TO THE COMPOSITE

### Total Costs

Ref.	Cost	Initial	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Present Value
Etr	Adobe Sign licensing fees	\$0	\$265,781	\$318,938	\$354,375	\$939,094	\$771,451
Ftr	Management time	\$24,012	\$208,104	\$156,078	\$104,052	\$492,246	\$420,363
Gtr	Training time	\$26,910	\$30,466	\$34,021	\$40,876	\$132,273	\$113,434
	Total costs (risk-adjusted)	\$50,922	\$504,351	\$509,036	\$499,303	\$1,563,613	\$1,305,248

### Adobe Sign Licensing Fees

For the composite organization, Forrester assumes that:

- › The composite has an enterprise license where costs are based on the volume of transactions purchased and the cost per transaction.
- › Like the interviewees, the composite purchases more transactions than it is likely to use to provide some buffer and avoid going over its transaction limit. The composite purchases 112,500 transactions for Year 1, increasing to 150,000 transactions purchased for Year 3.
- › The composite pays \$2.25 per transaction.

This cost will vary based on the following risk factors:

- › Volume and other discounts can vary from organization to organization based on the number of transactions and other products licensed from Adobe.
- › The buffer between actual transactions and transactions purchased varies from organization to organization.

To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this cost upward by 5%, yielding a three-year risk-adjusted total PV of \$771,451.

The table above shows the total of all costs across the areas listed below, as well as present values (PVs) discounted at 10%. Over three years, the composite organization expects risk-adjusted total costs to be a PV of more than \$1.3 million.

Implementation risk is the risk that a proposed investment may deviate from the original or expected requirements, resulting in higher costs than anticipated. The greater the uncertainty, the wider the potential range of outcomes for cost estimates.

### Adobe Sign Licensing Fees: Calculation Table

Ref.	Metric	Calculation	Initial	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
E1	Adobe Sign transactions purchased	Interviews		112,500	135,000	150,000
E2	Cost per transaction	Assumption		\$2.25	\$2.25	\$2.25
Et	Adobe Sign licensing fees	E1*E2	\$0	\$253,125	\$303,750	\$337,500
	Risk adjustment	↑5%				
Etr	Adobe Sign licensing fees (risk-adjusted)		\$0	\$265,781	\$318,938	\$354,375

## Management Time

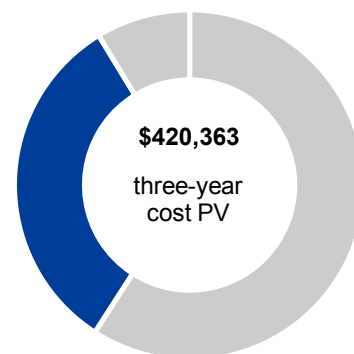
For the composite organization, Forrester assumes that:

- › The composite has three central administrators dedicated to the management of Adobe Sign.
- › The central administrators initially spent time collaborating with representatives from various departments to determine which processes could benefit from the use of e-signature and planning for Adobe Sign deployment. The administrators spent time creating training materials and a training site for others in the organization to use. The administrators also spent time building and deploying initial use cases across the organization. The central administrators trained active users in this initial group. In total, this initial time spent by the central administrators was 120 hours.
- › On an ongoing basis, the central administrators help to build and deploy new use cases. Building a use case could involve process design, creating a template or form, developing a workflow, or integrating Adobe Sign with systems of record. Once a new use case is built, the administrator trains the active users who will be using it.
- › The central administrators also identify additional Adobe Sign use cases throughout the organization. In the first year of the analysis, the administrators spend significant time evangelizing to others within the organization. During Year 1, the administrators spend 50% of their time educating employees on the benefits of Adobe Sign, identifying new opportunities to use Adobe Sign, and preparing these opportunities for Adobe Sign use. Over time, they spend less time on these activities as Adobe Sign use spreads by word of mouth and executive leadership.
- › The central administrators spend minimal time on troubleshooting issues with Adobe Sign and on managing user accounts or licenses.

This cost will vary based on the following risk factors:

- › Interviewees reported a wide range of time spent on management tasks. Time spent will vary based on internal education efforts, the amount of training required, time spent building out more complex use cases, and time spent on troubleshooting user errors.

To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this cost upward by 15%, yielding a three-year risk-adjusted total PV of \$420,363.



**Management time: 32%  
of total costs**

### Management Time: Calculation Table

Ref.	Metric	Calculation	Initial	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
F1	Central administrators	Interviews	3	3	3	3
F2	Hours spent on Adobe Sign	Interviews	120	1,040	780	520
F3	Average hourly fully loaded compensation, IT admins	Assumption	\$58	\$58	\$58	\$58
Ft	Management time	F1*F2*F3	\$20,880	\$180,960	\$135,720	\$90,480
	Risk adjustment	↑15%				
Ftr	Management time (risk-adjusted)		\$24,012	\$208,104	\$156,078	\$104,052

## Training Time

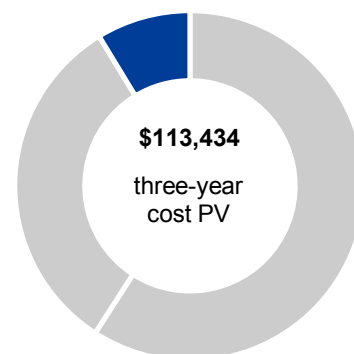
For the composite organization, Forrester assumes that:

- › The central administrators provided training to all users; these trainings lasted about 1 hour per session. After the initial training, users spend on average 1 hour per year on self-training or training for new use cases.
- › The central administrators go through annual training sessions to better understand new features and functionalities of Adobe Sign. The central administrators also make training documents, including Adobe training videos, available for users to review on their own time.

This cost will vary based on the following risk factors:

- › Interviewees provided a wide range of training estimates, ranging from minimal training to longer sessions or multiple sessions over time.

To account for these risks, Forrester adjusted this cost upward by 10%, yielding a three-year risk-adjusted total PV of \$113,434.



Training time: 9% of total costs

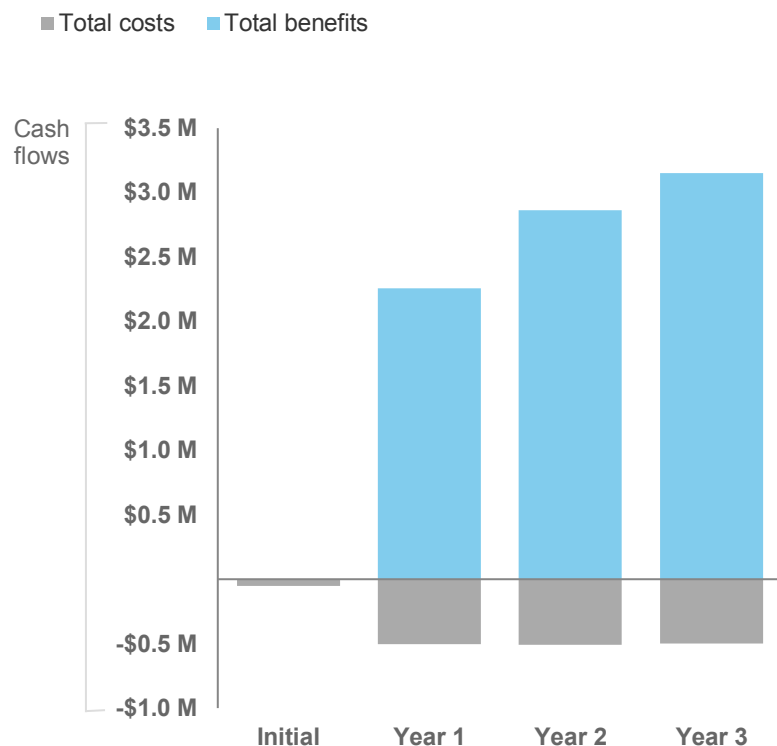
### Training Time: Calculation Table

Ref.	Metric	Calculation	Initial	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
G1	Training for IT admins (hours)	Interviews	8	12	16	20
G2	Average hourly fully loaded compensation, IT admins	Assumption	\$58	\$58	\$58	\$58
G3	Training for active users (hours)	1 hr/user	800	900	1,000	1,200
G4	Average hourly fully loaded compensation, end users	Assumption	\$30	\$30	\$30	\$30
Gt	Training time	$(G1 \times G2) + (G3 \times G4)$	\$24,464	\$27,696	\$30,928	\$37,160
	Risk adjustment	↑10%				
Gtr	Training time (risk-adjusted)		\$26,910	\$30,466	\$34,021	\$40,876

# Financial Summary

## CONSOLIDATED THREE-YEAR RISK-ADJUSTED METRICS

### Cash Flow Chart (Risk-Adjusted)



The financial results calculated in the Benefits and Costs sections can be used to determine the ROI and NPV for the composite organization's investment. Forrester assumes a yearly discount rate of 10% for this analysis.



These risk-adjusted ROI and NPV are determined by applying risk-adjustment factors to the unadjusted results in each Benefit and Cost section.

### Cash Flow Analysis (risk-adjusted estimates)

	Initial	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Present Value
Total costs	(\$50,922)	(\$504,351)	(\$509,036)	(\$499,303)	(\$1,563,613)	(\$1,305,248)
Total benefits	\$0	\$2,259,063	\$2,863,875	\$3,153,750	\$8,276,688	\$6,789,992
Net benefits	(\$50,922)	\$1,754,712	\$2,354,839	\$2,654,447	\$6,713,075	\$5,484,744
ROI						420%

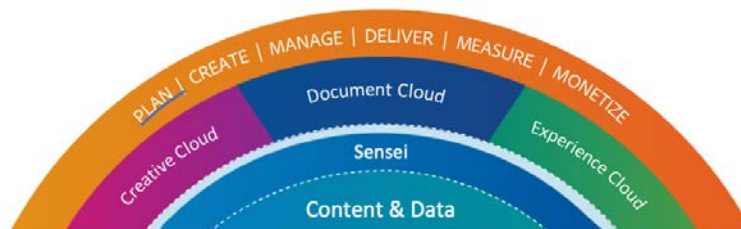
# Adobe Solutions: Overview

The following information is provided by Adobe. Forrester has not validated any claims and does not endorse Adobe or its offerings.

Digital technology is changing many aspects of life faster than ever before. While exciting, these digital changes put enormous pressure on businesses to reach the right people with the right content at the right time, faster than they ever have before.

A great customer experience is the differentiator that separates market leaders from the pack. Adobe is changing the world through digital experiences. Adobe empowers everyone to create exceptional experiences that inspire people, transform industries, and move the world forward.

Adobe is uniquely positioned in the industry because it is the only company that can provide everything needed to design and deliver exceptional experiences. Adobe's cloud solutions enable its customers to work across the content workflow from inspiration, to planning to creation and delivery, to management and measurement, including:



## Adobe Creative Cloud

Bringing together the world's most innovative creative applications, services, assets, and community so people can create and share their best work, anywhere. Including Photoshop, Lighthouse, and Stock to name a few.



## Adobe Document Cloud

Providing everything needed to digitize document workflows, including e-signatures — quickly, easily, and integrated with systems (e.g., Microsoft Office 365) that are used every day. Includes Acrobat DC, Sign and powerful mobile apps — backed by industry leading security and compliance.



## Adobe Experience Cloud

Helping companies deliver amazing customer experiences and better performance with a collection of best-in-class solutions for marketing, analytics, advertising, and commerce, integrated on a cloud platform. Includes Adobe Advertising Cloud, Analytics Cloud, and Marketing Cloud.

Artificial intelligence is changing the way business works. And Adobe Sensei is leading the way, powering creativity, document workflows, and digital marketing. Adobe Sensei powers dozens of features across Adobe solutions with many more innovations on the way.

## Return on your investment

Adobe is proven to deliver immediate benefits and value to and across any enterprise.

According to published Forrester Total Economic Impact™ studies, customers using an Adobe solution, on average, can expect to benefit from: improved revenue performance, IT cost savings, and improved business efficiency and agility.

Furthermore, based on those same studies, companies can expect that the more solutions they utilize from Adobe, the greater impact and value companies can realize.



The Total Economic Impact™ of Adobe Analytics & Adobe Audience Manager, A Forrester Total Economic Impact Study Commissioned by Adobe, December 2018

# Appendix A: Total Economic Impact

Total Economic Impact is a methodology developed by Forrester Research that enhances a company's technology decision-making processes and assists vendors in communicating the value proposition of their products and services to clients. The TEI methodology helps companies demonstrate, justify, and realize the tangible value of IT initiatives to both senior management and other key business stakeholders.

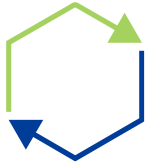
## Total Economic Impact Approach



**Benefits** represent the value delivered to the business by the product. The TEI methodology places equal weight on the measure of benefits and the measure of costs, allowing for a full examination of the effect of the technology on the entire organization.



**Costs** consider all expenses necessary to deliver the proposed value, or benefits, of the product. The cost category within TEI captures incremental costs over the existing environment for ongoing costs associated with the solution.



**Flexibility** represents the strategic value that can be obtained for some future additional investment building on top of the initial investment already made. Having the ability to capture that benefit has a PV that can be estimated.



**Risks** measure the uncertainty of benefit and cost estimates given: 1) the likelihood that estimates will meet original projections and 2) the likelihood that estimates will be tracked over time. TEI risk factors are based on "triangular distribution."

The initial investment column contains costs incurred at "time 0" or at the beginning of Year 1 that are not discounted. All other cash flows are discounted using the discount rate at the end of the year. PV calculations are calculated for each total cost and benefit estimate. NPV calculations in the summary tables are the sum of the initial investment and the discounted cash flows in each year. Sums and present value calculations of the Total Benefits, Total Costs, and Cash Flow tables may not exactly add up, as some rounding may occur.



### Present value (PV)

The present or current value of (discounted) cost and benefit estimates given at an interest rate (the discount rate). The PV of costs and benefits feed into the total NPV of cash flows.



### Net present value (NPV)

The present or current value of (discounted) future net cash flows given an interest rate (the discount rate). A positive project NPV normally indicates that the investment should be made, unless other projects have higher NPVs.



### Return on investment (ROI)

A project's expected return in percentage terms. ROI is calculated by dividing net benefits (benefits less costs) by costs.



### Discount rate

The interest rate used in cash flow analysis to take into account the time value of money. Organizations typically use discount rates between 8% and 16%.



### Payback period

The breakeven point for an investment. This is the point in time at which net benefits (benefits minus costs) equal initial investment or cost.