A Better Way to Keep Track of Paperwork

by (ARA)

If you had to venture a guess, how much time would you say the average American wastes dealing with paperwork each week? Before you answer, keep in mind all those incoming and outgoing contracts and purchase orders you handle on a daily basis at work, permission slips for the kidsâ€™ field trips and extracurricular activities, progress reports you have to sign for school, etc. â€œLost count yet?â€• asks Jeff Zwelling, a businessman from California. He got so tired of the constant struggle of tracking down signed agreements and other papers having to do with his lighting business, he decided there had to be a better way to keep things organized. He couldnâ€™t find one, so he and a friend developed one themselves. EchoSign is a free document management service that allows users to easily keep track of documents â€“ those being worked on, those that need signing and those that have already been signed and need to be kept someplace accessible but safe. â€œAs we were developing the system for ourselves, we realized the potential to help others and decided to put it out there for everyone to use,â€• says Zwelling. Eric Pfeiffer, a contemporary designer from Oakland, Calif., is glad they did. â€œItâ€™s important to me to do what I do best, stay creative, not spend my time chasing down paperwork and nagging my clients. As soon as I found EchoSign, it changed my business radically by simplifying it,â€• he says. Pfeiffer juggles multiple clients at any given time, producing products for them in different categories â€“ furniture, housewares, toys and/or lighting. He uses the EchoSign service to keep track of his contracts and invoices. â€œIn the short time the system has been available (since December 2005) weâ€™ve received positive feedback not only from businesses, but individuals using the system to manage information,â€• says Zwelling. â€œI know of people using EchoSign to keep track of all their financial and insurance papers, school coaches using it to keep track of permission slips they need back from parents, and there are even several homeowner associations using it to make sure residents are aware of upcoming projects. Itâ€™s amazing how far reaching it has become.â€• Getting an agreement signed through EchoSign is as easy as sending out an e-mail. Users simply send an agreement that needs to be signed through EchoSign.com. The recipient then receives an e-mail with the agreement attached, and just signs and faxes the agreement back using the enclosed EchoSign fax cover sheet. Thatâ€™s it. Upon receiving the fax, EchoSign automatically e-mails signed copies of the agreement to all parties by a PDF. EchoSign also offers a free easy-to-use e-signature service that enables two or more people to electronically sign any document instantly for free, if all you really need is a â€œclick-to-agree.â€• With EchoSign e-signatureâ€™s service, legally binding electronic signatures are instantly delivered in PDF format to both sender and recipient. The EchoSign service is free for the average userâ€“ people who need to manage 20 documents or less. For more frequent use, the cost is minimal, just $12.95 a month for unlimited number of documents. â€œI envision this service as one that will revolutionize the communications industry,â€• says Zwelling. â€œPretty soon, people will be saying EchoSign it to me as often as they request an e-mail.â€• If youâ€™d like to test the system out for yourself, all you have to do is log on to www.echosign.com and establish a free account.