



Adobe government forms: Serving people first

Challenges to automating forms-based processes

To enable end-to-end efficiencies, an e-Government forms solution must meet specific criteria:

- Diverse end-user computing environments
- Familiar look and feel for faster adoption
- Strict adherence to mandated document layouts
- Integration of forms-based processes with back-end systems
- Re-use of user-supplied data
- Cross-agency interoperability
- End-to-end security of private data
- Indexed and searchable form archives for long-term availability

Reaching out to constituents with responsive, convenient, and cost-effective services isn't the daunting challenge it once was. By leveraging open technology standards such as XML and Web services, your agency can replace inefficient, stand-alone processes with automated, interoperable business processes.

Crucial to these efforts are documents and forms—effectively the “front lines” of many constituent-facing services. Traditionally produced and distributed on paper—which is costly, cumbersome, and vulnerable to data errors—forms are a common interface between an agency's constituents and its back-end systems and work processes.

Adobe makes electronic forms easy

Leveraging the *Adobe® Intelligent Document Platform*, agencies can extend their legacy and core business systems to easily and more securely interact with citizens, business, employees, and other agencies. Combining the familiarity, security, and visual fidelity of PDF with the business logic and data exchange capabilities of XML, Intelligent Documents provide the ability to automate document-based processes, maintain process familiarity, access systems offline, share information securely, and exchange data with people and systems.

With Adobe solutions, agencies can take a phased approach, moving from simple to sophisticated forms processes that enable users to access, download, complete, and securely return electronic forms using the free Adobe Reader® software. Completed forms can be returned via e-mail or directly to a Web services back end for processing.

Meeting strict government requirements

Adobe forms solutions fully support standard XML data and schemas so agencies can quickly integrate their data and processing into internal and external systems via Web services. By building a common XML-based document component framework, agencies can reuse forms, form components, and work processes across multiple organizations, including other government departments, suppliers, or local businesses. Better back-end integration leads to improved service, easier process administration, and a common user environment.

With Adobe forms solutions, government organizations can protect sensitive or personal information throughout the document life cycle. By applying digital signatures, agencies can ensure document authenticity and integrity, while providing an auditable electronic paper trail for future reference. Add document controls to protect confidentiality and prevent unauthorized access, modifications, or distribution. Security remains persistent with PDF documents, so contents are protected even after transmission across the agency's network. And it can be controlled throughout the document life cycle, enabling agencies to expire or revoke documents even after distribution.

The Adobe Intelligent Document Platform provides an interoperable suite of components that make designing, securing, deploying, consuming, interoperating, managing, and archiving electronic forms easy and affordable. And agencies can phase in their new forms-based processes in stages, allowing for a more manageable transition to serve people better than ever before.

Benefits of Adobe form solutions

Meet e-government deadlines

- Quickly, easily, and cost-effectively deploy PDF/XML forms online
- Create a single form for print and online use
- Minimize costly application development

Provide better services to all

- Enable citizens, businesses, and other agencies to view and interact with PDF/XML forms using Adobe Reader
- Accelerate user adoption by ensuring that form completion is easy, intuitive, and free to users
- Enable users to save PDF/XML forms locally, complete them online or offline, and submit them at their convenience

Improve internal efficiencies

- Minimize process delays and data-entry errors by eliminating unnecessary manual intervention
- Leverage support for XML data and schema to prepopulate forms and integrate captured data with back-end systems
- Use captured data to automatically trigger follow-on processes

Enhance information security

- Certify document authenticity and integrity using Adobe Reader
- Add document controls to protect sensitive and confidential information from unauthorized access or distribution
- Maintain security even after the document has been published

Enable forms and collaborative processes with Adobe Reader

With more than 500 million copies distributed to date, the free and ubiquitous Adobe Reader provides a globally trusted and recognized way for anyone to view and interact with an Intelligent Document. Agencies today have the option of creating rights-enabled forms that let Adobe Reader users take advantage of enhanced capabilities, such as:

- Saving forms locally for offline filling and archiving of completed forms
- Adding comments and routing via e-mail for easier collaboration
- Applying digital signatures to authorize applications or transactions
- Interacting with forms that prepopulate with user data
- Submitting forms and data directly to a Web service for back-end processing and archival

The broad global acceptance of the Adobe Reader universal client means agencies can collect information from anyone in a way that is convenient, intuitive, and completely free of charge for citizens.

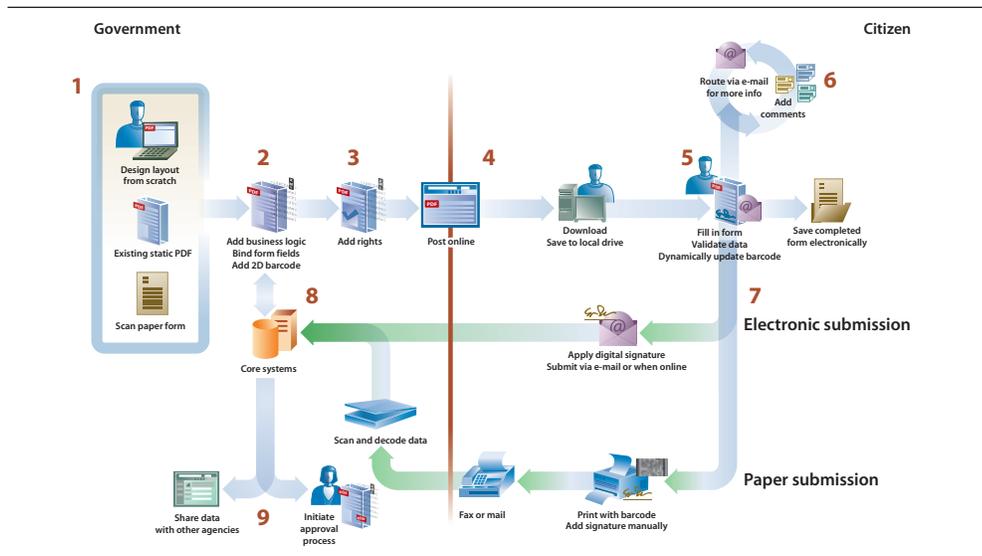
FEATURE/CAPABILITY	PAPER FORMS	STATIC PDF FORMS	PROPRIETARY FORM CLIENTS	HTML INTERFACES	INTELLIGENT FORMS
Fast, cost-effective implementation		■			■
Preserves mandated layout and appearance	■	■			■
Viewable with free, ubiquitous client software		■		■	■
Can be filled online or offline					■
Low abandonment rates for lengthy forms	■	■	■		■
Data prepopulation and validation embedded in form			■	■	■
Enables constituents to save personal copy	■	■	■		■
Can be integrated with back-end systems			■	■	■
Information remains secure outside of agency network					■
Rapid, efficient, automated routing and processing			■	■	■

Form options at a glance

The chart at the left illustrates how each of the various forms solutions respond to agencies' process requirements.

Intelligent forms in action: How they work

A government agency responsible for delivering citizen benefits, such as national pension plans, wants to make it easier for citizens to apply for these benefits, while reducing the costs associated with managing paper forms and rekeying data.



1. The agency begins simplifying the application process by designing PDF/XML forms that look exactly like the existing paper versions, either from scratch using Adobe Designer or by leveraging PDF forms already in use (or even scanning in paper forms). The familiar look and feel helps users adopt the new electronic processes.
2. The form author adds business logic into the form to provide assistance to users as they fill it out and to validate the data at the time it is entered. At the same time, form fields can be linked to a database or bound to XML schema to enable prepopulation of known citizen data and for seamless integration of new data submitted. In addition, a 2D barcode can be placed on the document. This supports paper-based processing for agencies whose constituents are not yet able to adopt electronic processes, or when hard-copy signatures are still required for legal purposes.
3. Adobe Reader Extensions Server can enable the form with additional usage rights, so users with the free Adobe Reader can easily sign and save a completed version.
4. The form is posted on the agency's external Web site, where it can be downloaded and accessed from virtually any combination of hardware and operating system.
5. Citizens can now fill the form online or save it to their local drives and complete it offline at their convenience. If a 2D barcode is included on the form, it dynamically updates to include all data within the document.
6. If users need to gather additional information from someone else, they can quickly route the form via e-mail with electronic annotations attached to the file.
7. Once they've completed the form, users can add a digital signature if required, save the form with the data included as an electronic record of their request, and reconnect to the Internet to e-mail the form or upload it back through the agency's Web site via Web services. Alternatively, if a hard-copy signature is required, the user can print out the form with the updated barcode and mail or fax it back to the agency.
8. The captured data can then be instantly integrated, or scanned and then transferred, into the agency's back-end systems, where it can trigger automated workflows to route the form to the agency's officers for approval.
9. Forms are then linked to multiple processes across departments and even among separate agencies.

The result is that citizens have a faster, easier process that enables them to receive their benefits more rapidly. The agency benefits by minimizing errors and delays associated with manually entering data into systems, as well as reducing the costs of printing, distributing, storing, and managing inventories of paper forms. IT leverages existing back-end systems for enhanced forms-based processes without having to modify enterprise applications. And with Adobe solutions, the agency can phase in its electronic forms implementation as its needs and budgets dictate.

More examples of Adobe form solutions in action

Forms administration

As an integral part of their daily operations, government agencies need to manage hundreds or even thousands of different forms—from benefits applications to business compliance reporting to internal processes and more. The importance of smooth forms administration is significant: The way agencies manage forms can impact the image of government services overall. So the quality, efficiency, and convenience of forms administration are crucial.

Long the mainstay of government processes, paper forms are slow and costly to print, order, distribute, store, and dispose of, and are highly dependent on human interaction and handling. Simple updates to forms, such as the addition of a single new field, is also time-consuming and expensive, and version control challenges make it difficult for users to be able to access the most current form.

By leveraging the Adobe Intelligent Document Platform for forms administration, agencies can:

- **Improve operational efficiencies.** Automating processes reduces costs, improves data accuracy, simplifies processing, and reduces workload for agency staff and IT.
- **Accelerate user adoption.** By making it more convenient and faster for users to access the correct forms, prepopulating data fields, leveraging the benefits of PDF and the ubiquity of Adobe Reader for completing forms, and enhancing the security of online transactions, users are more likely to participate in new automated processes.
- **Enhance constituent satisfaction.** Streamlined processes enable agencies to respond more quickly to constituent requests.

Compliance reporting

Many agencies regularly issue, gather, and process lengthy reports submitted by corporations required to meet environmental, financial, health, or other regulations. After weeks of intense effort to gather and summarize data, corporations submit these data-intensive reports in paper form. The process is slow for both the constituent organization and the agency responsible for manually reviewing and processing what can amount to regular—even monthly—influxes of massive documentation.

With Adobe solutions, agencies can vastly simplify compliance reporting by minimizing dependence on expensive paper-based processes and instead implementing intelligent forms that streamline the reporting experience for both company and agency. Adobe forms-based processes can produce a broad range of benefits, including:

- **Reduced workload on reporting companies.** PDF/XML forms can be completed and processed faster, making it easier for regular and more accurate compliance reporting. In addition, where supporting documentation is required, PDF can be used as a standardized format for the complete submission.
- **Lower agency costs.** Agencies can streamline form creation, distribution, and processing, resulting in end-to-end savings.
- **Easier interagency collaboration.** Automated sharing and processing of materials helps government-to-government work.

Serve people first with Adobe forms solutions

For more information on how you can leverage the Adobe Intelligent Document Platform to bring better services to more constituents while meeting e-Government mandates, cutting costs, improving efficiencies, and extending forms-based processes to citizens, businesses, and other agencies, visit www.adobe.com/government.

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