

Digital Signatures Bring on a Very Happy New Year at Duke Realty

Overview

As the New Year quickly approached, Duke Realty's Chief Information Officer Paul Quinn grew eager to add some extra merriment to his team's holiday season. With the December rollout of his firm's new digital signature-enhanced web portal, it wasn't long before his team was tossing the greeting cards and opting for bear hugs instead.

Duke Realty, one of the largest owners, managers and developers of commercial real estate in the United States, was in the process of developing a secure, online partner portal called ConstructionConnect where subcontractors and Duke Realty Construction Managers would be able to manage contracts, change orders, payment applications, and other documents online. In order to make the best of ConstructionConnect and to most substantially reduce costs and speed transactions, they decided to integrate a [digital signature](#) solution that would automate their signature approval processes and ensure integrity and authenticity in their online transactions.

"While developing the online portal, we predicted that we could obtain tremendous cost savings from digital signatures by reducing or eliminating the need to print and distribute documents for the sake of obtaining approvals," said Paul Quinn, CIO at Duke Realty. "In addition to hard cost savings, we identified additional savings from increased employee efficiency since Construction Managers, Construction Administrators, and Construction Account Specialists would no longer need to process and handle paper contracts and other documents. We also anticipated improved customer service and environmental friendliness as added benefits."

Satisfying the Wish List

Once the decision to implement digital signatures was made, Duke Realty set out to find the most suitable solution to meet their needs. After a thorough evaluation process, they found that the CoSign digital signature solution satisfied all of their desires and needs, from simple integration to audit efficiency and regulatory compliance.

"The challenge was not identifying the benefits of automating business processes using electronic signatures, but identifying the solution that would meet federal and state legal compliance, integrate with our internal systems, and prove to be most cost-effective," explained Quinn. "With CoSign, it was as if we'd found a solution designed with our specific needs and applications in mind."



Digital signatures enabled Duke Realty to eliminate the handling of more than 32,000 paper documents annually. As a result, 15,000 hours will be saved yearly, which equates to 6-8 full time associates.

- » Country - USA
- » Industry - Real Estate
- » Applications - Word, PDF via web portal



[CoSign's adherence to ESIGN and UETA](#) standards played a key role in Duke Realty's decision to integrate the solution, since it was imperative that the e-signature solution be valid in all 50 U.S. states. Further, CoSign runs through a centralized server which, along with a high-level software development kit ([SAPI®](#) - Signature API), enables 100% browser-based signing without any client-side software, hardware, or special configuration. These features allowed Duke Realty to integrate the solution with their internal applications (particularly multi-approval workflows and record retention) simply and seamlessly.

"CoSign's API allowed us to have a common user interface when managing [electronic signature](#) approvals for multiple types of documents across multiple business processes," said Quinn. "The executed documents will also be stored so they adhere to our record retention policy."

Out with the old, in with the new!

With the initial rollout of the ConstructionConnect web portal, Duke Realty employed CoSign for contracts and change orders, which are only fully executed after signatures from both the subcontractor and Project Manager are obtained. Soon after, CoSign was also adopted for use with payment applications and supporting documents (e.g. lien waivers), as subcontractors quickly realized how much faster they could receive payments when handling all associated documentation electronically rather than via 'snail mail'. With CoSign, they could convert documents from Word into PDF, and securely sign and submit the PDFs in a matter of minutes.

"The adoption rate was unbelievable," explained Quinn. "We weren't sure how well people would adopt electronic signatures, but with only an in-house demo and a 2-page document that we provided, we achieved a 96% acceptance rate."

Duke Realty's partners were also satisfied; says Murette Ekart of Ace Air (a provider of heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems), *"Kudos to Duke! The money and time this will save Ace Air is very much appreciated!"*

A Very Happy Holiday Season

Through ConstructionConnect enhanced with CoSign digital signatures, Duke Realty achieved their goal of automating construction processes to achieve faster project turnarounds, more efficient processes, and greater satisfaction among subcontractors and internal associates. Digital signatures have enabled them to eliminate the handling (i.e. printing, signing, routing, and archiving) of upwards of 32,000 paper documents annually. As a result, approximately 15,000 hours will be saved yearly, which equates to 6-8 full time associates.



About Duke Realty

Duke Realty Corporation owns and operates more than 134 million rentable square feet of industrial, office, and medical office space in 18 major U.S. cities. Duke Realty Corporation is publicly traded on the NYSE under the symbol DRE and is listed on the S&P MidCap 400 Index. More information about Duke is available at <http://www.dukerealty.com/>.

About CoSign Digital Signatures

ARX (Algorithmic Research) is a global provider of cost-efficient digital signature solutions for industries such as life sciences, healthcare, government, engineering, and energy. ARX's CoSign digital signature solution automates approvals affordably in a compliant manner, allowing organizations to go paperless, expedite business processes and save costs. CoSign is the only digital signature solution that is seamlessly integrated with Microsoft SharePoint and other popular DM/ECM solutions. CoSign signatures are globally accepted by external partners without the need for proprietary-validation software. CoSign is also centrally managed through the organization's user directory for reliable control of signature privileges, and ease of use and administration. Learn more about the CoSign [digital signature](#) solution.

CoSign is a registered trademark of Algorithmic Research, Ltd. All other trade names and trademarks are the property of their respective holders.

 *Keep Your Business Moving*

ARX | 855 Folsom St. Suite 939 San Francisco, CA | (415) 839 8161 | www.arx.com | sales@arx.com