IdenTrust Digital Certificates for Digital Signing and Sealing of Plans

IdenTrust Global Common (IGC) digital certificates used for digital signing and sealing of architectural plans and documents — trusted by government agencies

THE ESIGN ACT AUTHORIZES USE OF DIGITAL SIGNATURE

Although every state has at least one law pertaining to electronic signatures, it is the federal law that lays out the guidelines for interstate commerce. The general intent of the ESIGN Act is spelled out in the very first section (101.a), that a contract or signature "may not be denied legal effect, validity, or enforceability solely because it is in electronic form." This simple statement provides that electronic signatures and records are just as good as their paper equivalents, and therefore subject to the same legal scrutiny of authenticity that applies to paper documents.

IDENTITY-BASED DIGITAL CERTIFICATE

Digital signing requires that the signer use a credential (such as a digital certificate) that is bound to his or her identity. Binding the identity of a signer to the credential that is used for signing creates assurance that the individual who is signing a document really is who they say they are. When an identity-based credential is used, the signature is considered non-repudiable and is legally binding, thereby preserving data integrity and establishing legally binding non-repudiation of the signed document.
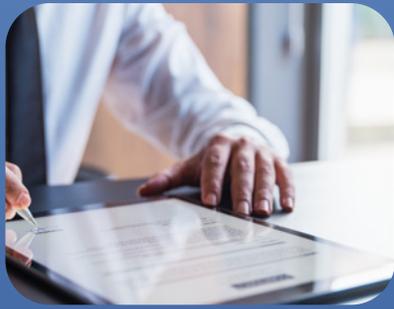
The IdenTrust IGC digital certificate is cross-certified with the Federal Bridge, so it's trusted by most federal, state and local government agencies. It is also compatible with standard applications such as Adobe® Acrobat or Microsoft® Word so you don't need any additional software to create digital signatures.

SUBMITTING DIGITAL DOCUMENTS

Many government agencies now accept digital documents that have been digitally signed and sealed with a professional seal (such as engineer, architect, surveyor and notary seals). In fact, many federal, state and local agencies now require the use of digital signing and sealing on plan submissions. A digital version of a professional seal is easily incorporated into a digital signature that is produced when signing with an identity-based IdenTrust IGC digital certificate.

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DIGITAL SIGNING (X.509 CERTIFICATE-BASED SIGNING)

- A legal term
- Tied to a specific individual via x.509-based digital certificate
- Created using a digital algorithm to bind the document using a digital certificate, resulting in a unique signature fingerprint
- Non-repudiable and auditable
- A "hash" of the content being signed so it's tamper-resistant

ELECTRONIC SIGNING

- A functional term
- Not technically bound to a specific individual or validation process
- Created through multiple options such as typed names, scanned images or a "click-wrap" agreement on a website
- Legal, but not easily audited and can be repudiated
- Cannot be verified through electronic means

Certificate Specifications

Software or Browser-Based Certificate	Personal or individual
	Installed within a browser
	  - Microsoft® Edge
	  - Mozilla® Firefox
	  - Google® Chrome
	1–year, 2–year or 3–year validity periods

Hardware-Based Certificate	All the features of a software-based certificate installed on a hardware device providing portability and added security:
	  - USB token
	  - Smart card

Agencies Accepting Digital Signatures	Any federal, state or local agency that accepts electronic documents that have been digitally signed using digital certificates cross-certified with the Federal Bridge
Technical Specifications	x.509 v3 digital certificate 2048+ bit key length SHA-256 hashing algorithm Maximum warranty up to $10,000,000 USD
How to Obtain a Certificate?	1. Apply for Digital Signing & Sealing certificate from the IdenTrust webpage at **identrust.com/certificates/digital-signing-sealing** 2. Select the agency of your choice 3. IdenTrust will vet the identity and issue the appropriate IGC digital certificate
How to Digitally Sign a Document?	Please visit following for instructions on how to digitally sign a document using digital certificate. Or visit **identrust.com/support/howdoi** for more information. Adobe® PDF Document Microsoft® Word Document

For more information about IGC digital certificates, contact the IdenTrust Sales Team at 801-384-3514 or **IGCSales@IdenTrust.com**

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