PandaDoc Academy

eBook
Proposal automation:
Learn how to automate your proposals work-flow with PandaDoc

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The future of proposals

Grow your sales by 30% in half the time.

Proposals are a crucial part of any established sales process. Over 5,000 companies are currently using PandaDoc to automate their work with proposals. As reported by our clients, on average PandaDoc helps them close 30% more business in half the time.

The Status Quo

Closing business is one of those things that have a direct impact on your work and career. Let's look at your day-to-day. This may look familiar.

— Create a Word document.
— Copy/paste all the relevant information to the Word document from your CRM, presentations, spreadsheets, emails, and other sources.
— Run your proposal by a few people on your team to make sure it looks good.
— Send the proposal to your manager and the legal department for approval.
— Email your client the proposal. You check-in a few times to make sure they read it.
— Go through a bunch of emails threads and calls, negotiating and amending the proposal.
– Send the final version and ask the client to sign it. You hope they'll open the proposal right away and sign it.

It's a done deal!
Easier said than done.

The main issues with document work are process related:

– Creating documents (contracts, proposals, quotes) is time consuming.
– There's too much room for error with pricing, discount calculations, and tweaking terms.
– Documents have low impact due to poor design and lack of personalization.
– The sender has no visibility into how the receiver is interacting with their document.
– Managers and/or legal teams are not quick enough to approve a document, creating more bottlenecks.
– Negotiations happen sporadically through disconnected emails and phone calls.
– Getting a document signed and returned is not a simple task for the recipient
or the sender.

All these issues can be fixed by streamlining the entire process. That's where PandaDoc makes a huge difference.

At PandaDoc we strongly believe that the traditional process for handling documents is outdated and that it can be significantly improved.

We're not just looking to build tools for improving this process, we want to reinvent the process.

— Process wise, PandaDoc cuts down on non-selling time so your team can spend more time closing deals and building relationships.
— As for the documents themselves, we believe that interactivity, customization and, more importantly, personalization is the new standard.

There are three parts to the client-facing proposal lifecycle: creation, delivery, and closing. Below, we'll discuss the entire proposal lifecycle in details, explaining how PandaDoc makes it significantly better.

Creating the proposal

The first step of the process is the proposal creation, that being the most complicated step. It simply takes too much time to create a proposal, because there are a few factors that slow down the process.

Putting together all the information is a scavenger hunt.
You have to dig through old proposals, spreadsheets, presentations, Word & PDF documents, the CRM, etc. As a general rule, the complexity of this process is directly proportional to the size of the organization.

There's no standardization across teams.
Everyone is using their own proposal style, allowing more errors, a lack of brand consistency, and incorrect information.

The solution is a single content management tool that ensures standardization across the entire organization. The result — better proposals, delivered faster.

Nikki Bisel
Owner & Founder,
Seafoam Media

Implementing PandaDoc has cut the time it takes to create a proposal by more than half!

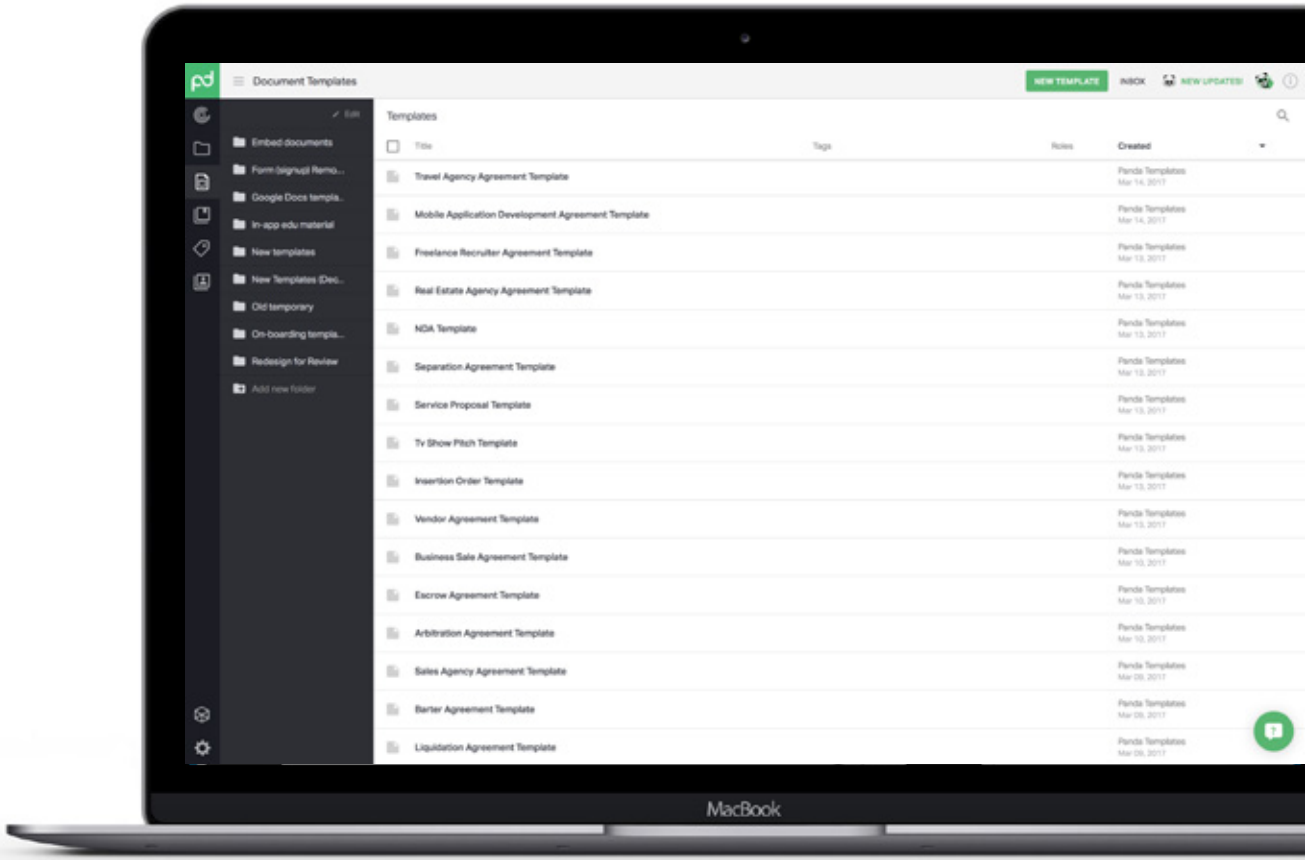
Templates

At PandaDoc, we believe that your best performing proposals should be turned into reusable templates. This allows for easy content discovery by sales reps. Proposal templates allow you to reuse and improve that content continuously, to achieve better results over time.

PandaDoc allows you to set up a template library, where you can store all of the templates you use.

Keep all of your top converting and best performing client-facing documents right at your fingertips.

Think of your templates as the blueprints, and the documents you create from them as the finished product.



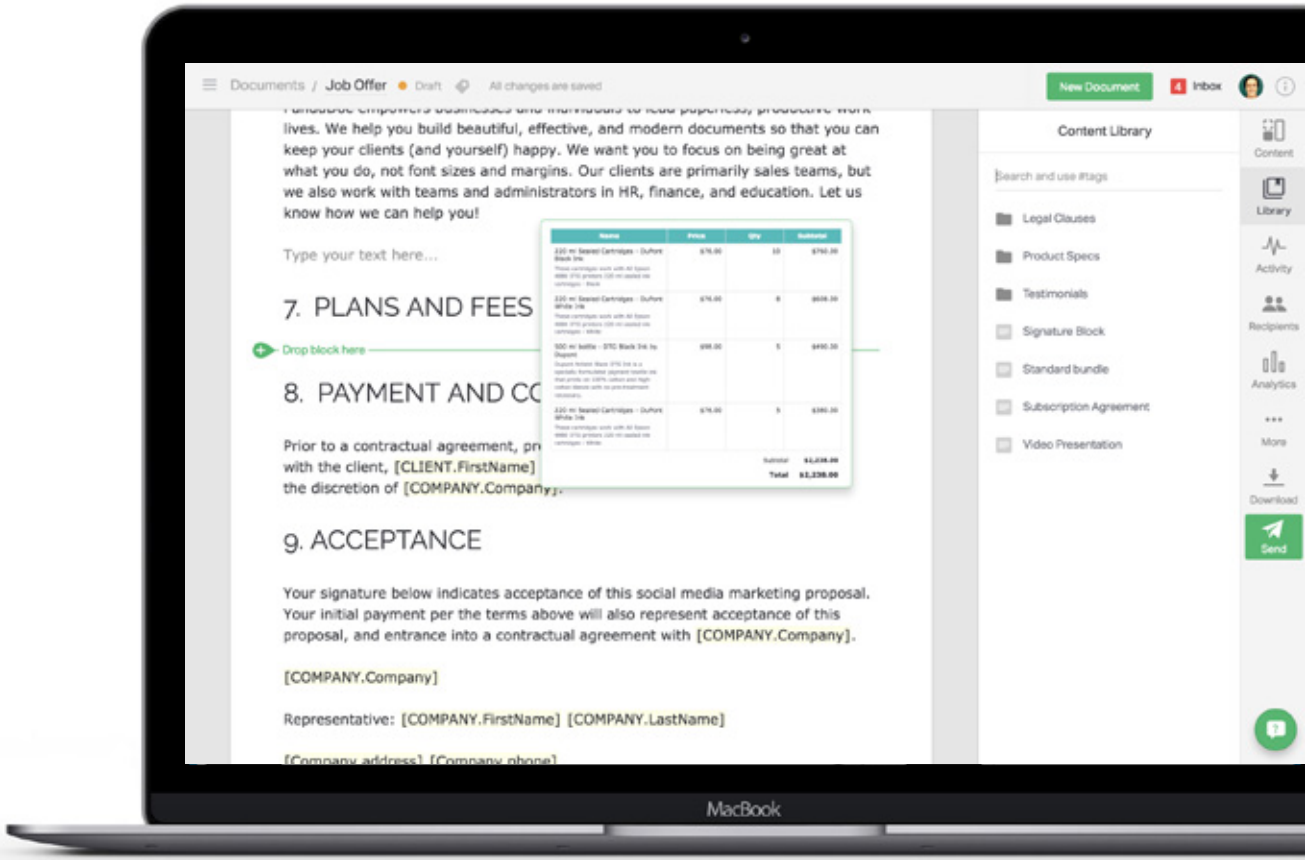
Content library

In sales, tailoring your message to specific client's needs is a must. Personalizing your proposals with relevant content is one of the simplest ways to stand out from the competition. With PandaDoc, you can save smaller pieces of content in the Content Library.

Here are some examples of the content snippets, that could be stored in the Content Library:

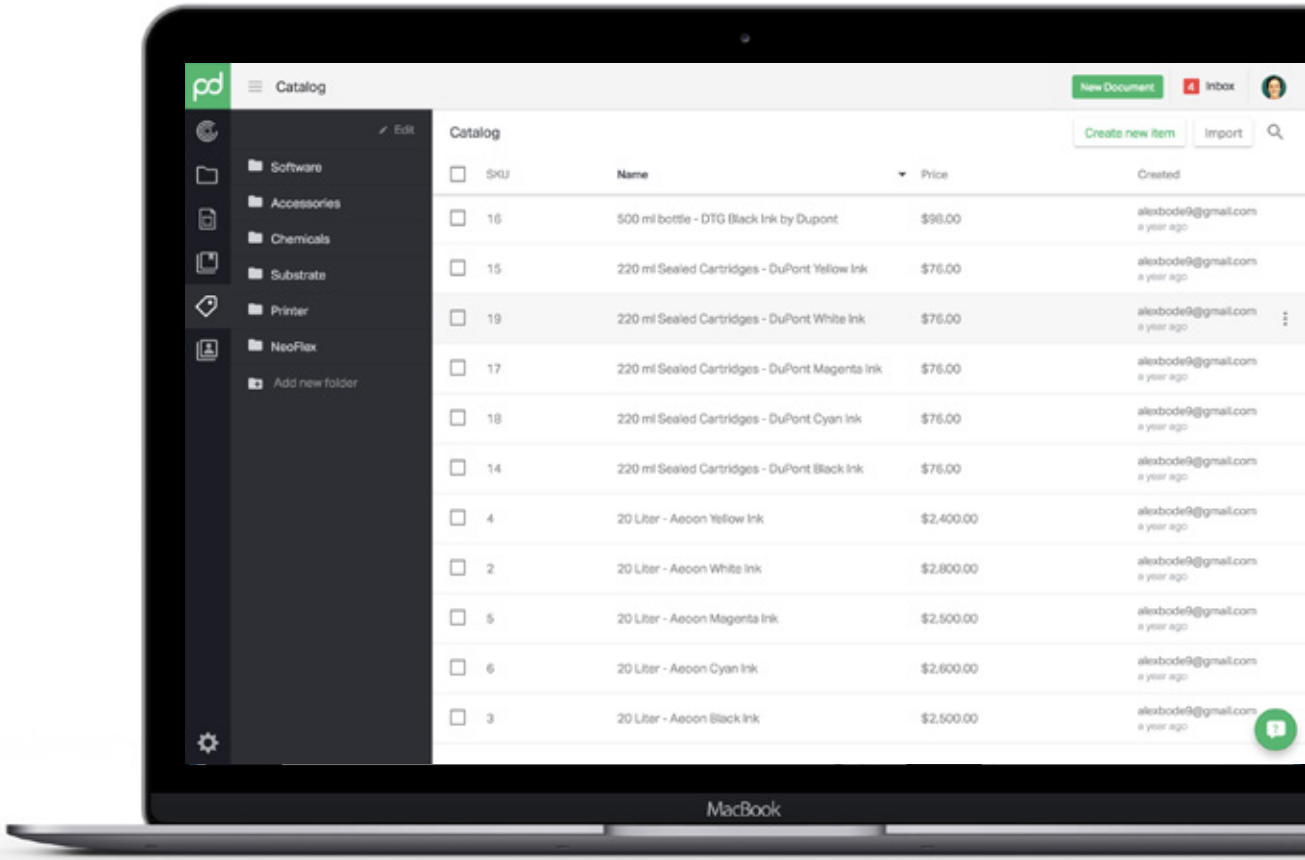
— Client quotes
— Legal clauses
— Expanded product or service information
— Popular pricing configurations
— Terms & conditions

By leveraging the efficiency of templates and the power of a content library, creating winning sales proposals is a simple drag-and-drop exercise. Just pick the best content and...Boom! A professional, dynamic, winning sales proposal is ready to send!



Dynamic catalog and product search

PandaDoc is the only CPQ and Quote-to-Cash product on the market that allows seamless editing of electronic price quotes. Never worry about adjusting a product or price again!

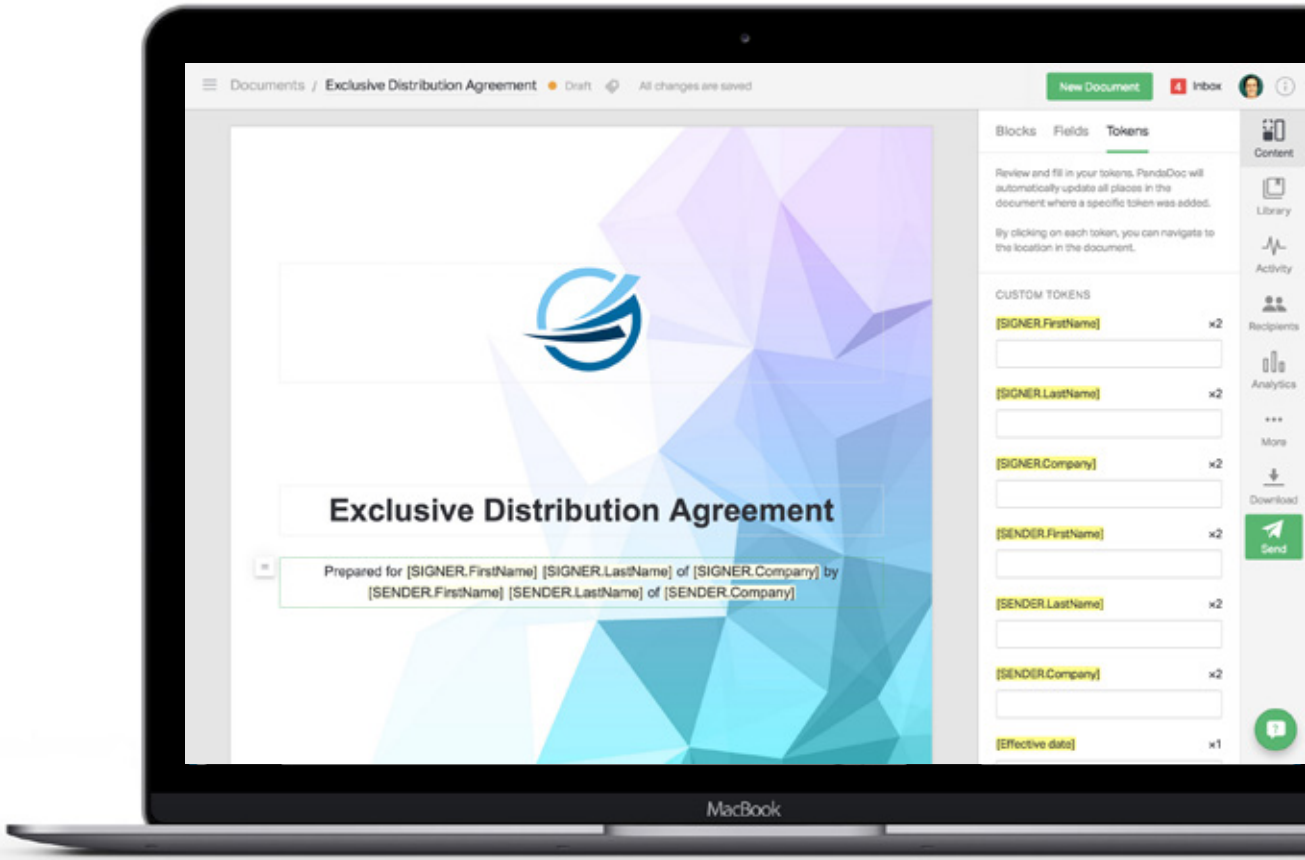


Hayes Nelson
Director of Sales at
Agency Revolution

Making a change to an existing proposal used to take hours, with PandaDoc it takes about 30 seconds.

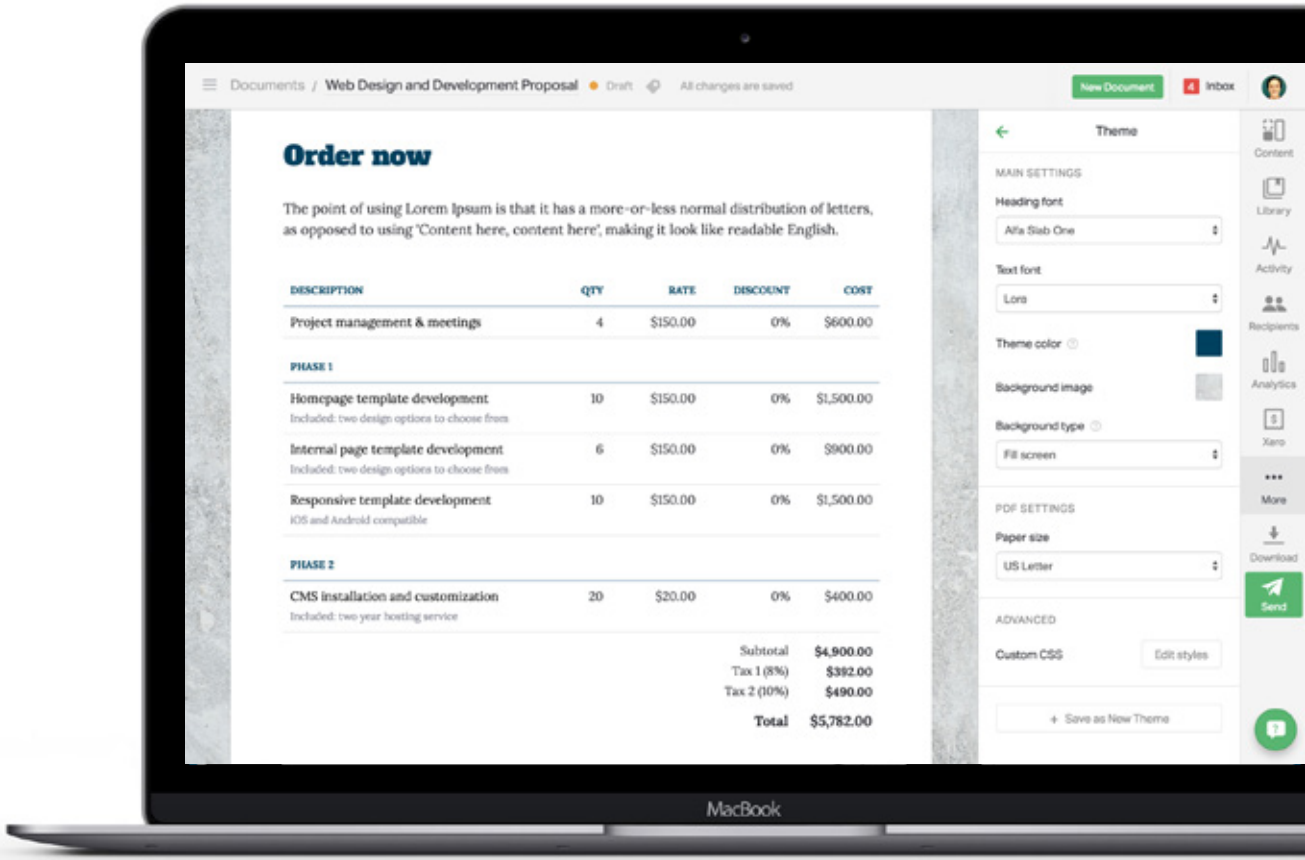
Seamless editing

We believe that making each and every proposal unique is incredibly important, that's why we created the content library. Moreover, proposals can make a bigger impact when they can be personalized, customized, and easily edited.



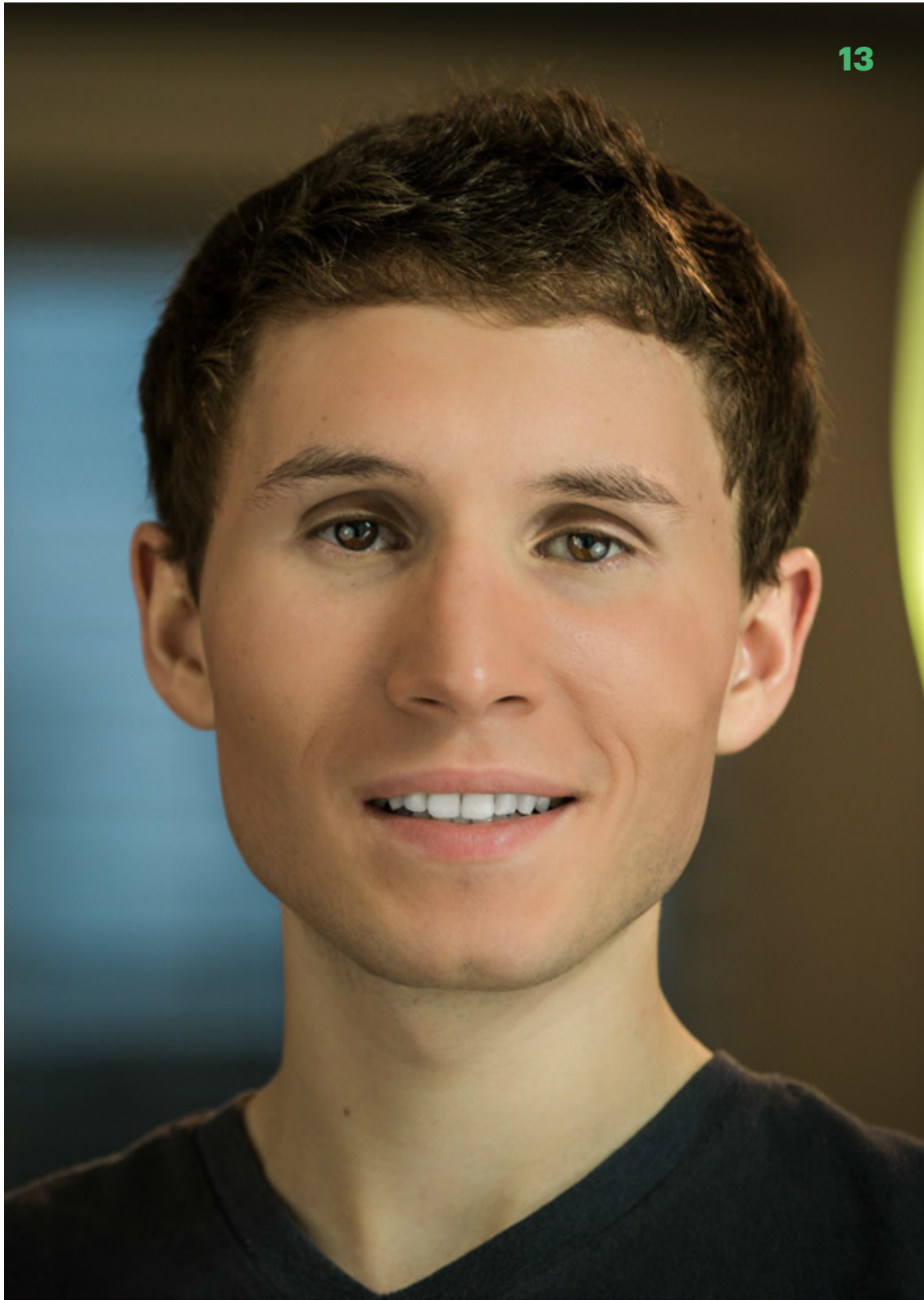
Personalization

Seamless editing is what sets PandaDoc apart from other proposal tools on the market. Adding custom content (like a personalized letter, tailored for a prospect) is easier than ever.



Cody McLain
CEO at Support Ninja

We have seen an increase in our close rate by about 20%. Our customers love the interactive elements such as the images and videos.

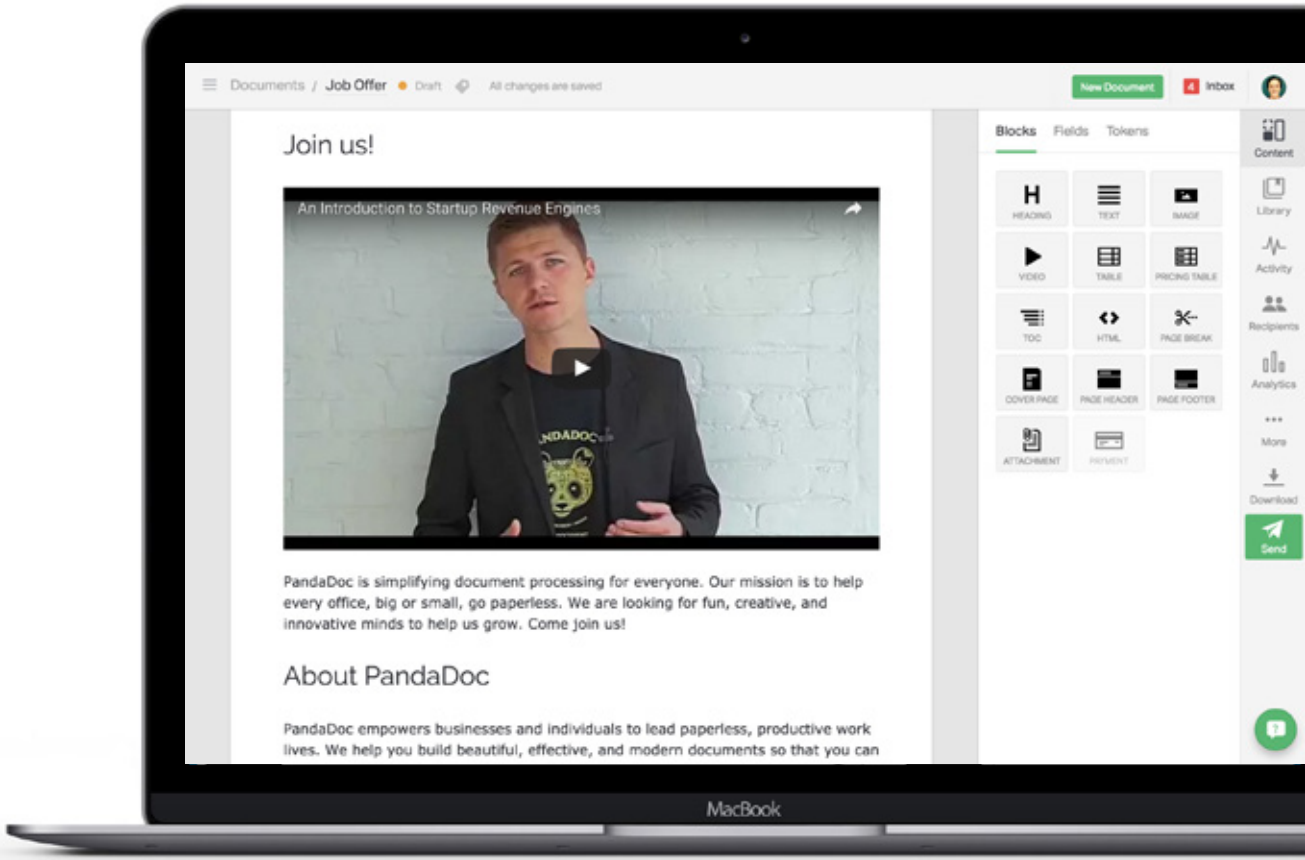


Videos

PandaDoc makes it easy to customize and personalize your proposal for every prospect you're targeting. It's very important to make a strong first impression — that's where interactive documents can help.

According to a research piece by Cisco, in the next three years 80% of all online consumer traffic will be video-based. It's much more effective to actually see how a product or service works, rather than read about it. The same applies to client testimonials and team introductions. Prospects are more likely to favor interactive proposals.

With PandaDoc you can add videos to your proposals. Clients can play the video right within the document.



Sending the proposal

Sending proposals is a complicated process that involves various team interactions along with managerial and legal approvals — all happening through email and side conversations.

The logistics of getting a deal completed tends to create delays, wasted time, missed opportunities, less revenue, etc. Moreover, there's always more chance for mistakes. PandaDoc allows you to simplify this process, whether it's communicating with team members about a specific proposal or automating manager approval to minimize delays and get that proposal to the prospect ASAP.

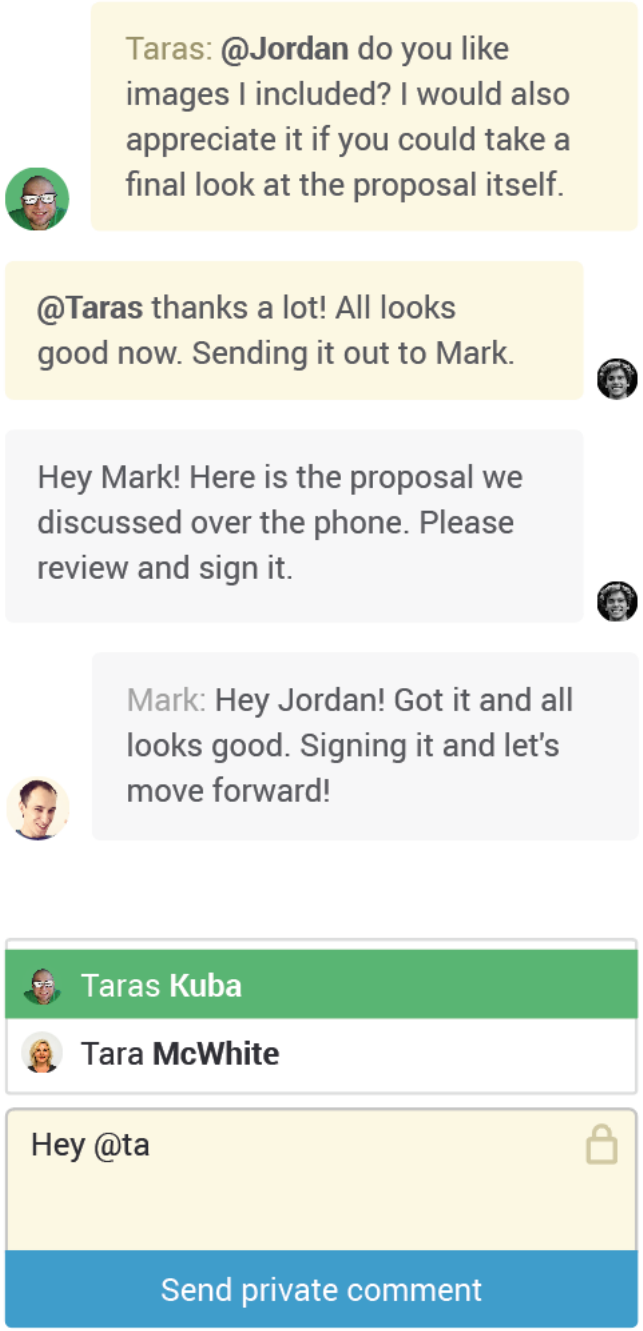
Jon Hearty
COO at Datanyze

Datanyze needed a solution that would allow manage-ment to approve outgoing proposals and ensure that sales reps were giving accurate documents. The lack of an appropriate document approval process often lead to longer sales cycles.

In-App messaging

What if you could collaborate and ask questions directly on the proposal? Not only would it keep all of that communication centralized for easy reference, but it would also speed up the communication among parties. That's why PandaDoc offers in-app messaging right within the proposal.

Have a question? Need to get a quick discount approval? Want to verify that certain information is correct? Simply tag your co-workers and they'll be notified. And since the conversation happens inside the document, there will be no miscommunication about what sections are being referenced

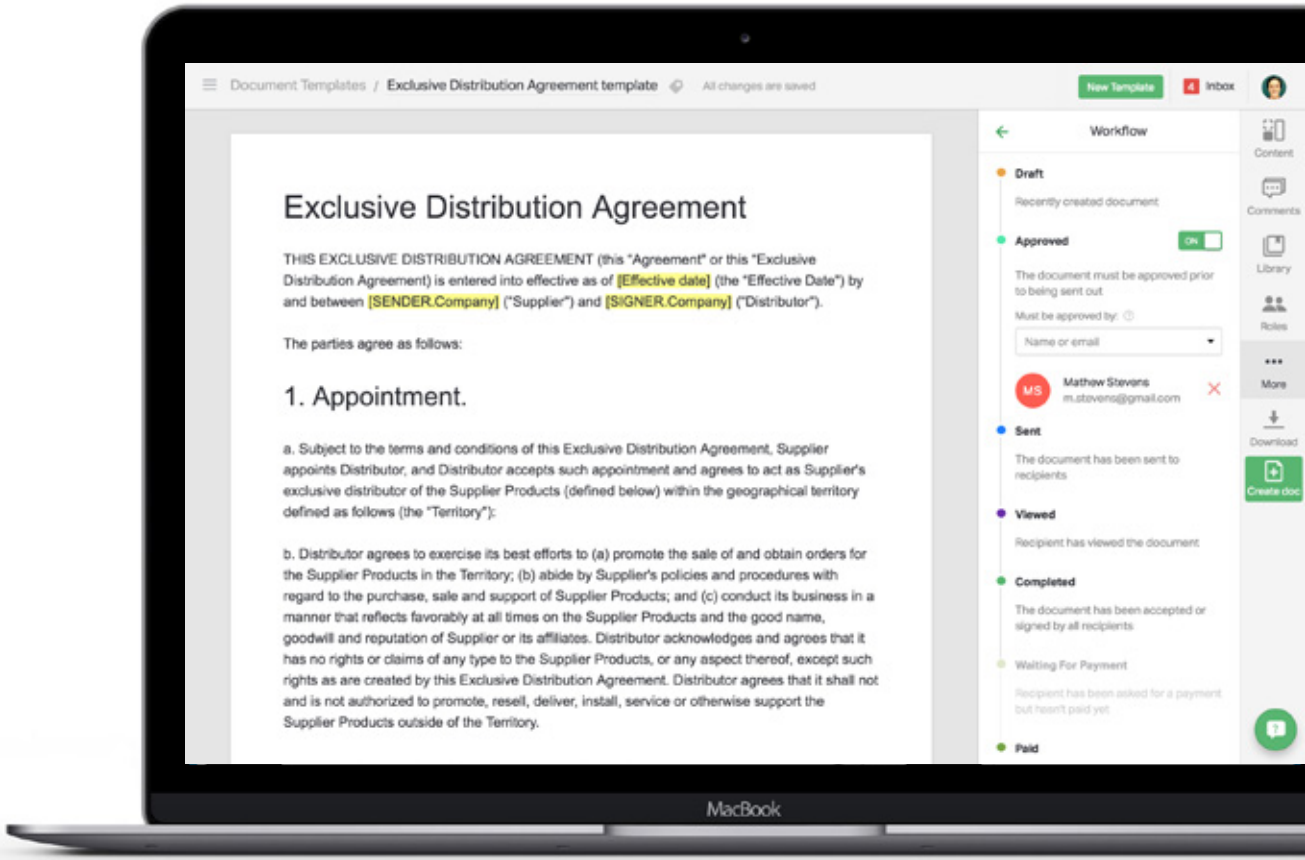


Automated approvals

Many proposals, especially those containing larger, discounted or more sensitive deals, need a manager's approval before being sent out. Team collaboration is a great way to catch any errors, but it's up to the manager to ensure that the outgoing proposal is error-free.

PandaDoc allows you to set up an automated workflow so that the proposal is automatically sent to a manager or legal team for approval before it's sent to the prospect.

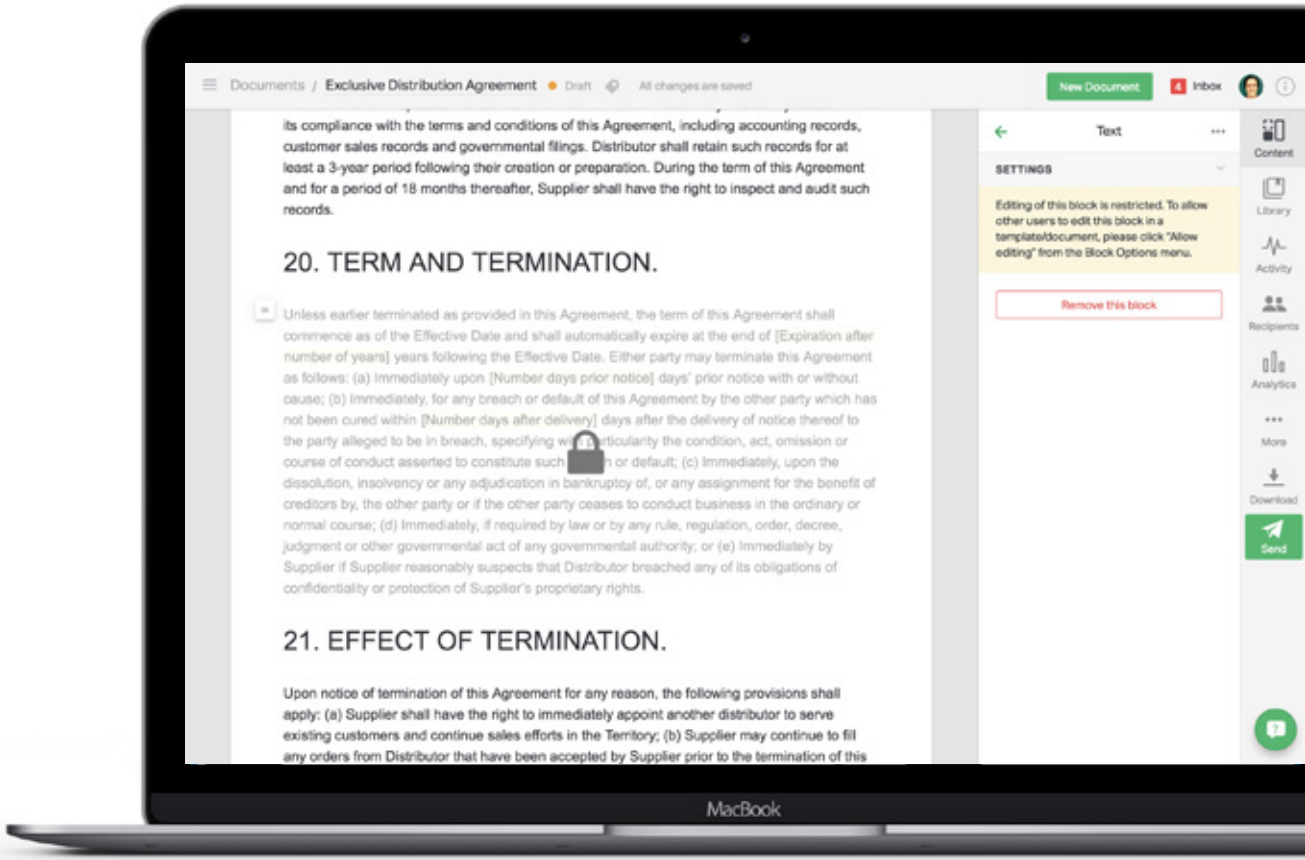
By enabling this feature, managers can have peace of mind that a proposal isn't accidentally sent to the prospect. They can even review and approve outgoing proposals using their phones through PandaDoc's mobile apps. And sales reps won't be worried that their proposals will get lost in their manager's email inboxes. It's a win-win.



Content locking

Automated approvals are great, but PandaDoc also allows you to stop errors before they even happen. Your proposals probably have standard language, like legal or billing terms, that should remain static. That's why we created content locking.

PandaDoc allows you to lock specific sections of your proposals that only certain members of your team can edit. This way you know that your reps aren't altering anything they shouldn't, like legal or billing terms. No more headaches and sleepless nights worrying about what's happening in the background.



Closing the proposal

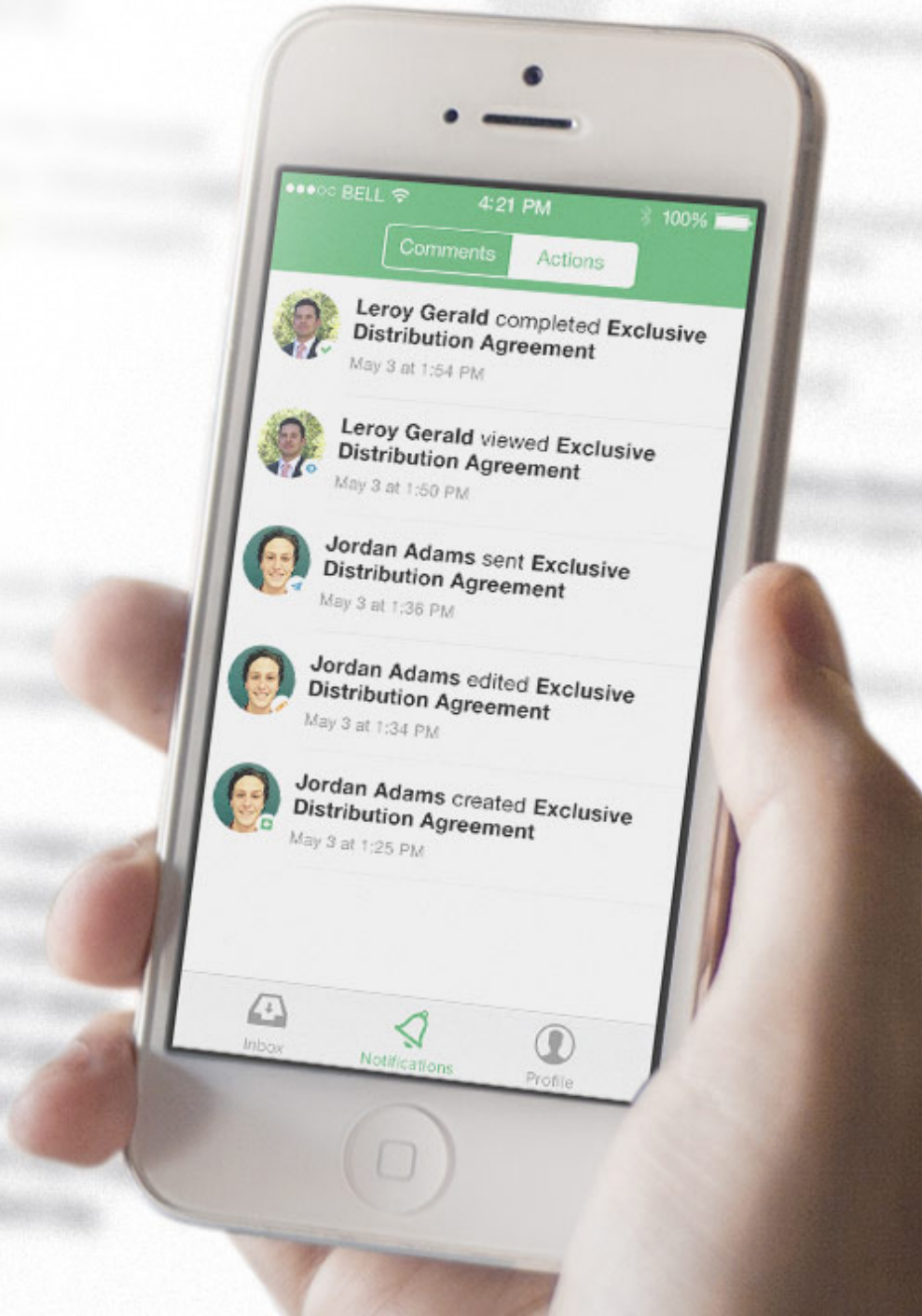
So you've sent out that proposal, now what? That high potential prospect might never call you back. If they do call you back, next come the negotiations. Even if an agreement has been reached, it needs to be signed. That's just another inconvenient process involving printers, scanners and fax machines.

PandaDoc gives you direct insight into when exactly that proposal has been opened to properly nurture that prospect and follow up in a timely manner. Even better, you can see exactly what parts of the proposal they're spending the most time on. Negotiations and conversations happen directly on the proposal, which minimizes miscommunication and speeds up the deal closing. Once everyone's ready to sign, electronic signatures help avoid delays.

Status Notifications

With PandaDoc, you'll always know the status of your proposal. You'll get an automated notification via email each time your prospect takes action on your proposal, like opening it, forwarding it, or signing it.

Stop sending your proposals into the dark. Nurturing the deal is very important and you want to make sure you are following up at the right time. The right time is when they're still thinking about your proposal.



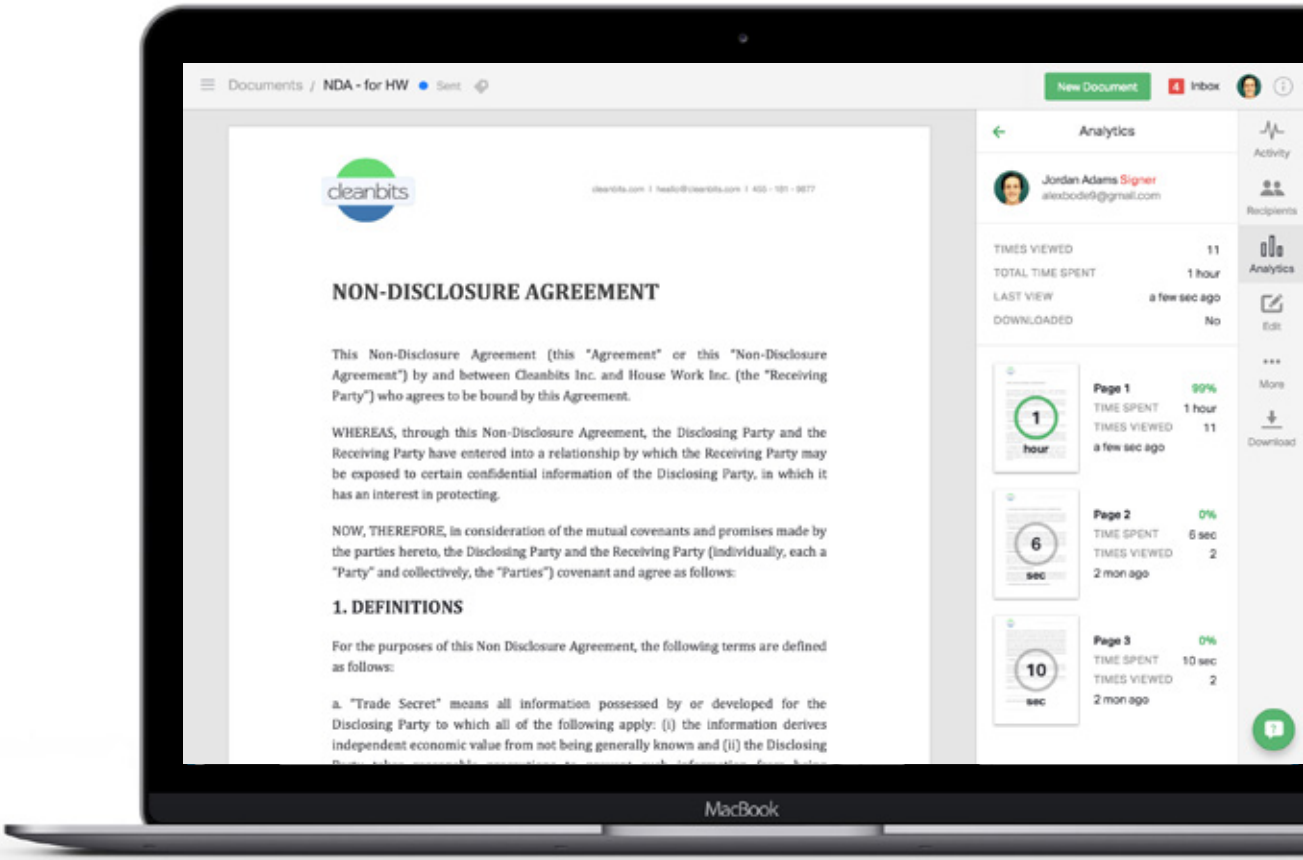
Download on the App Store

Get it on Google play

In-Depth Analytics

Getting notified when people open up your proposal is great, but what if you could actually see how they're interacting with it? That's why we built the in-document analytics.

With PandaDoc's analytics feature you get actionable insights into how prospects are actually interacting with your proposals. You can see if they viewed it, how many times, and for how long. You can even see which sections they're paying attention to the most, so you can tailor your follow up, armed with those insights.

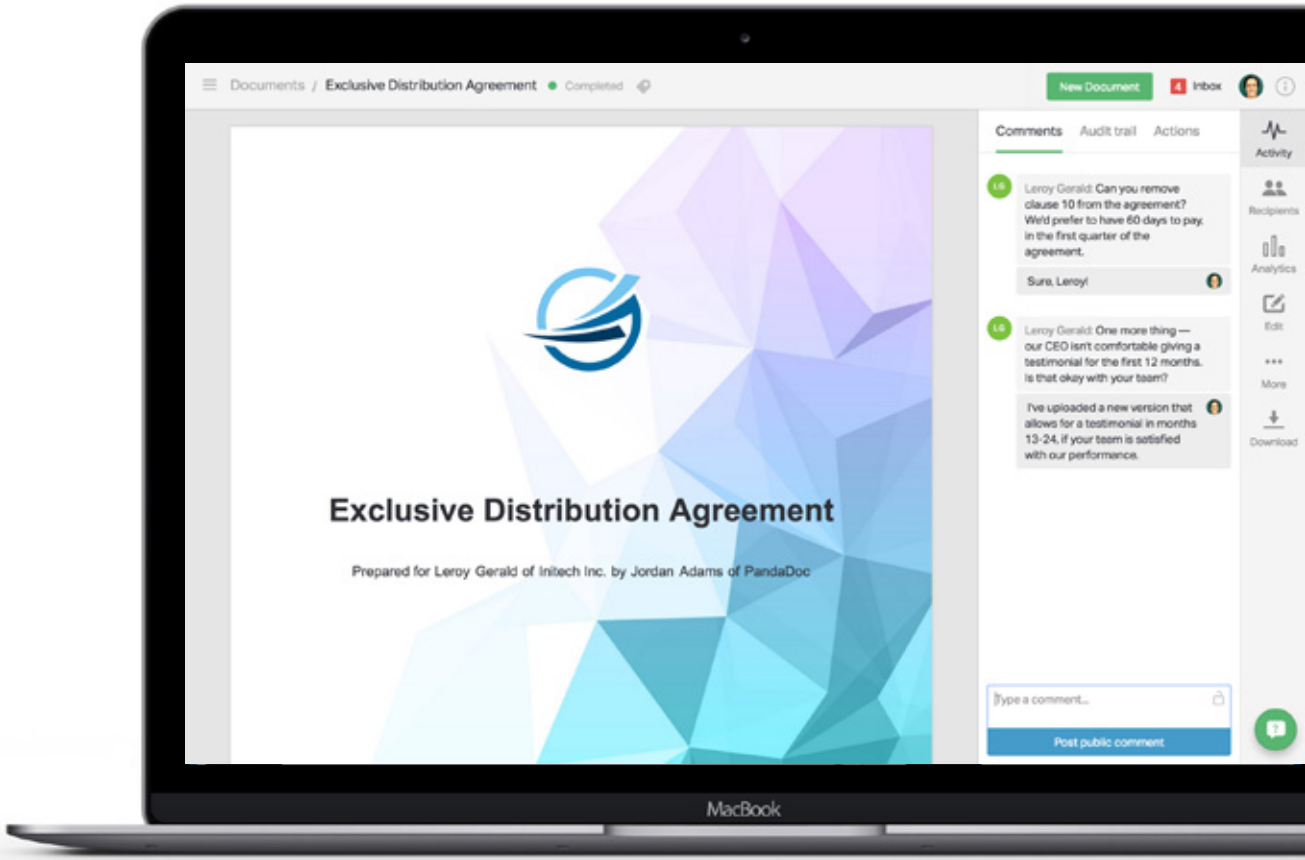


Brian Myers
Owner, Anchor Films

Typically we'd print a contract and have it signed in person or we'd email it to a client, but then we would have no way to track it.

In-App Commenting

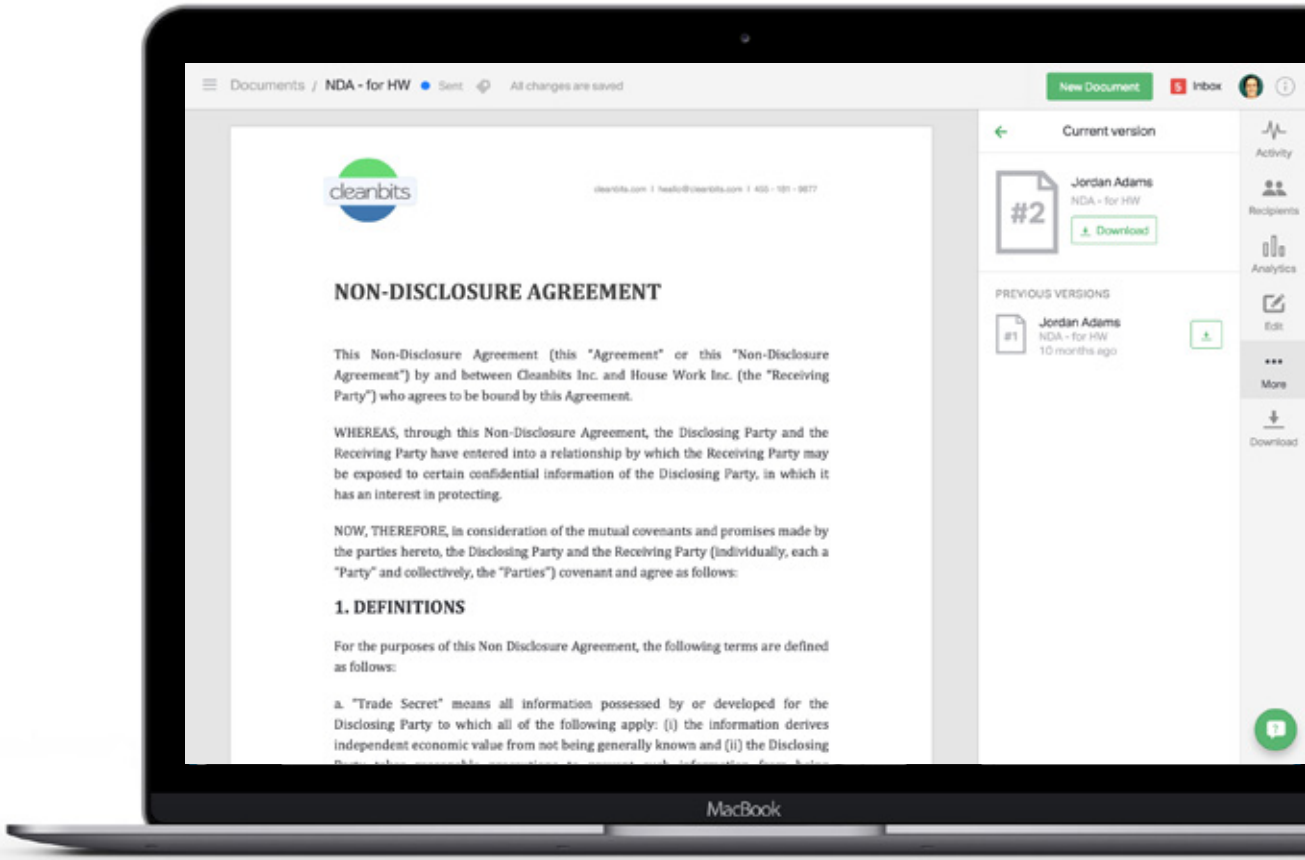
PandaDoc's in-app commenting allows you to negotiate and collaborate easily with your prospects and clients. It's much easier to discuss or negotiate specific parts of a contract or proposal when it's directly in front of both parties. Not only that, it makes the whole process much more streamlined.



Version Control

During the negotiation process it's common to create new versions of the document, to reflect the updated terms. If negotiations are done over email, it's easy to lose track of all the updates and new document versions. That's why we've made sure to include version control in PandaDoc.

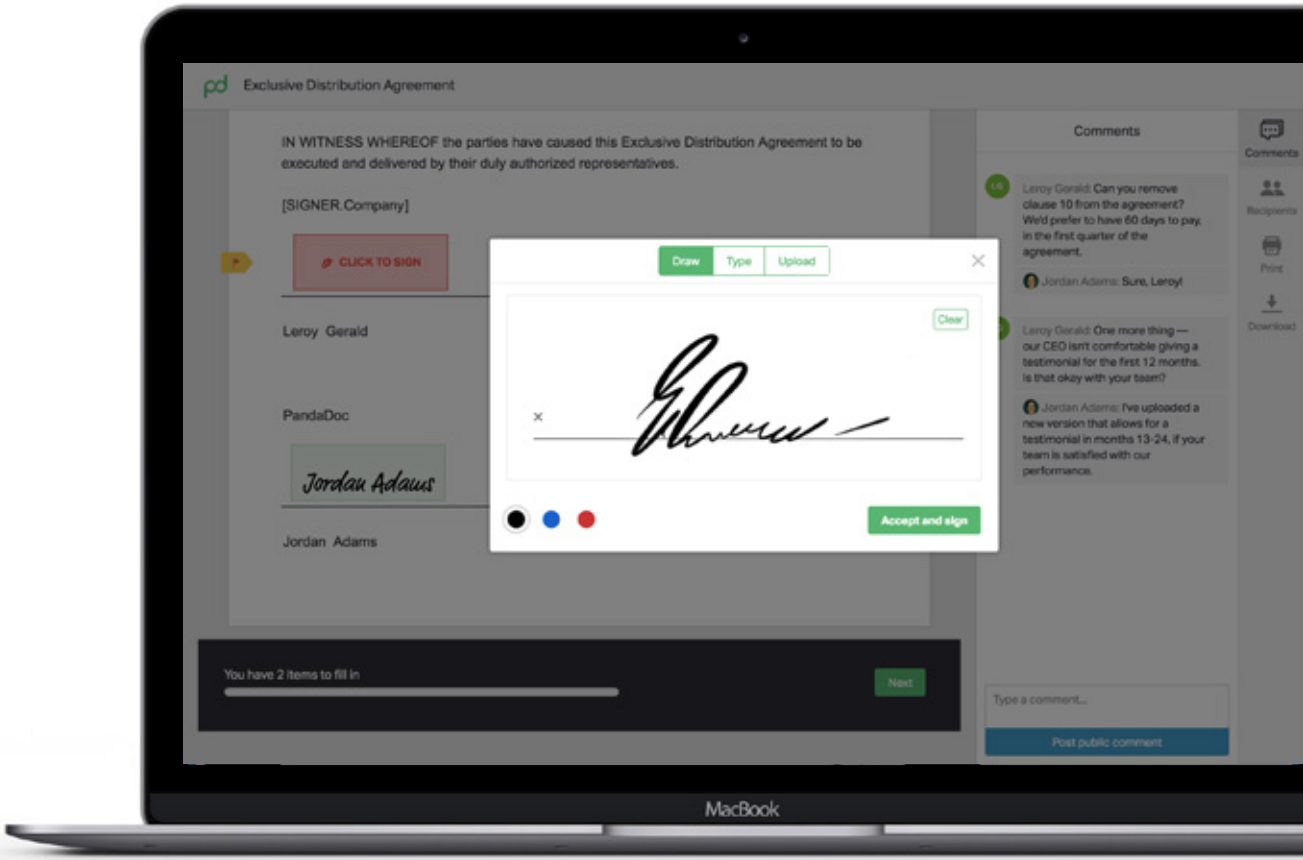
PandaDoc not only shows you the latest version, but it also includes all the previous ones. This way you can rest assured that everyone is referencing the latest version, and it's easy to track the document's updates throughout the negotiation process.



eSignatures

Now that your prospect is ready to sign, you don't want to slow down the deal with printers, scanners, snail mail, or even faxes. You want to make it as easy as possible for them to sign your proposal. PandaDoc wouldn't be an effective document solution, if we didn't offer legally binding eSignatures.

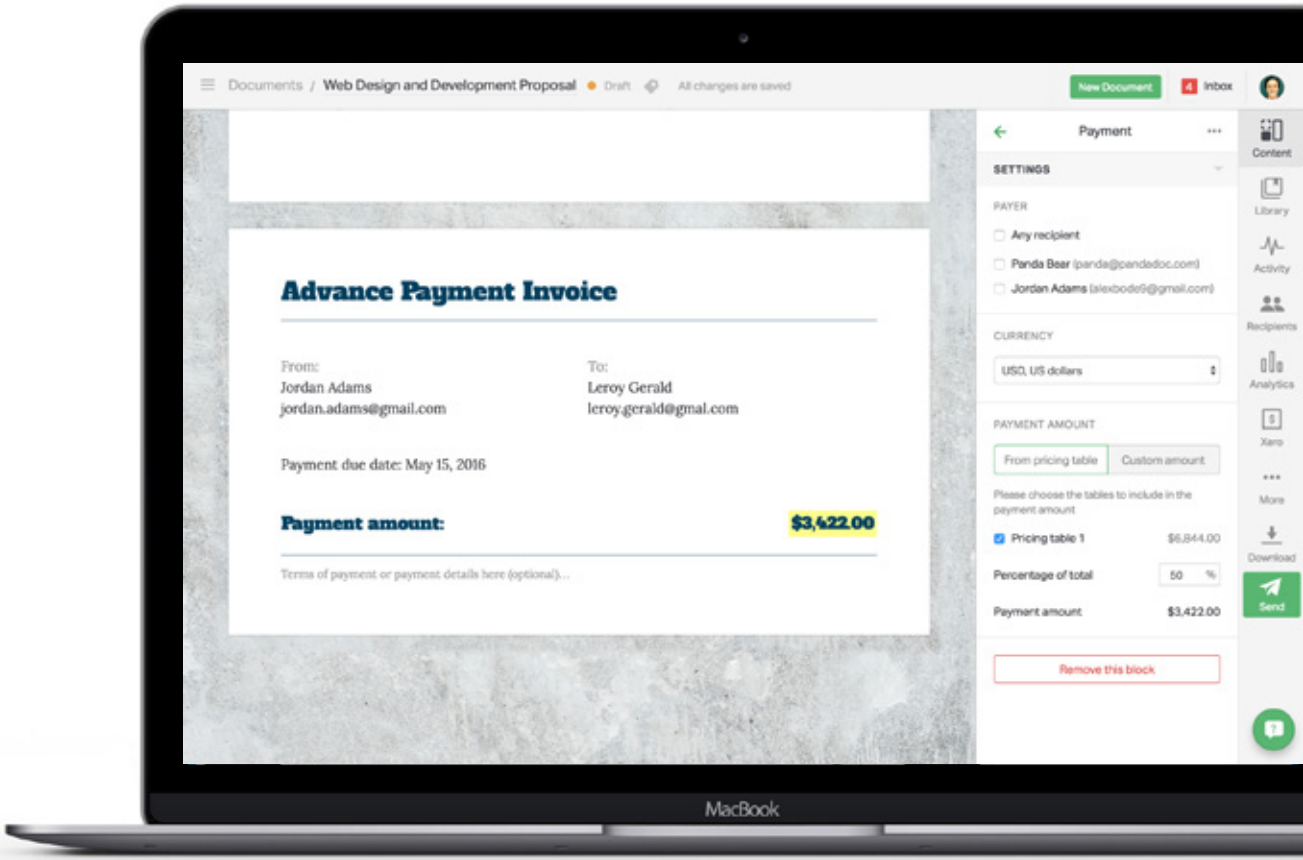
Get that deal closed faster by making it easy for your prospects. No printers, no scanners, no hassle, no fuss.



Payments

PandaDoc's integrations with all major payment providers makes it easier than ever to collect payment the moment the document is signed.

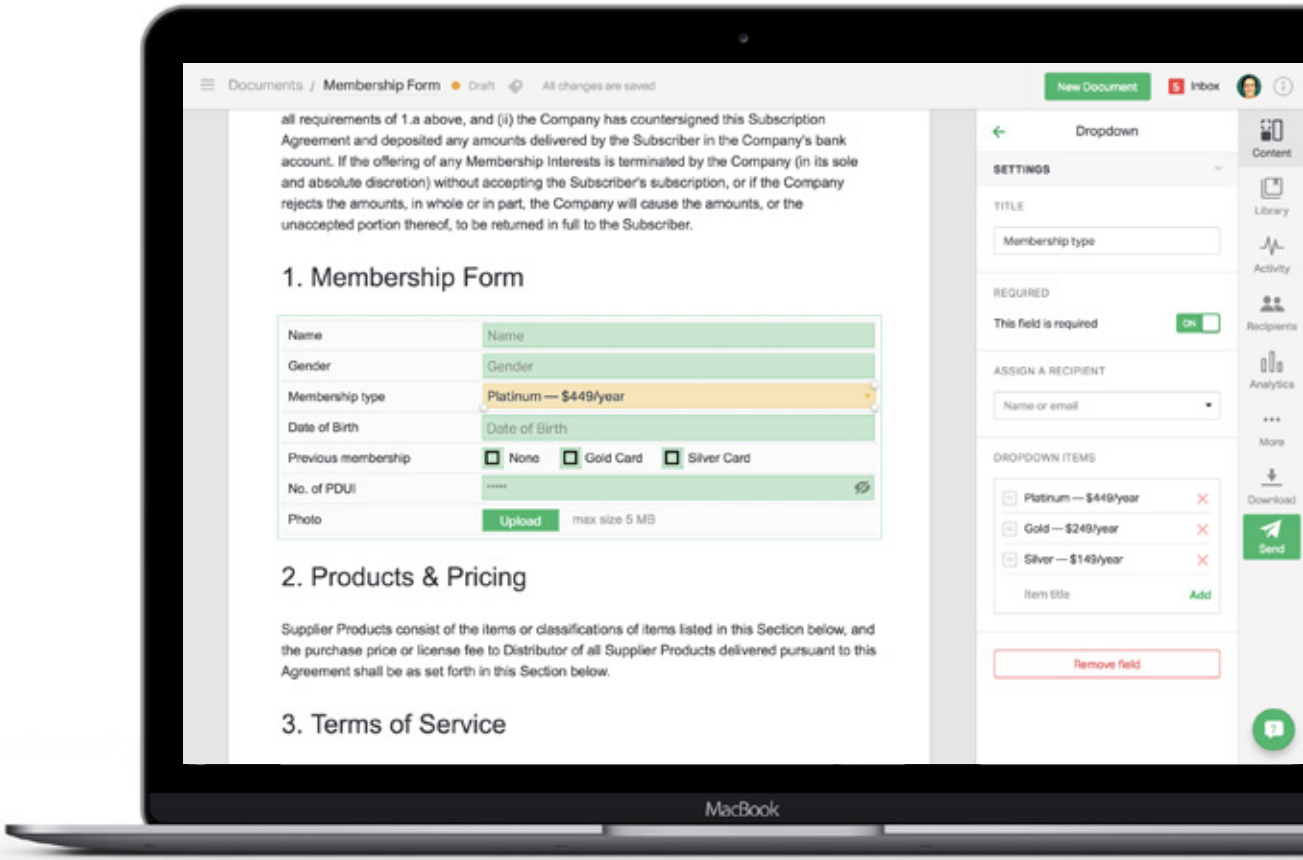
By making it simple and straightforward for your customers to pay for your products or services right after the deal is done, you'll get more sales.



Contact Details

Maybe you need to get someone's address or you need your customers to fill out a questionnaire? No problem! Easily include text fields, dropdowns, and more to get the information you need.

PandaDoc also lets you export data straight into your CRM.



The future of proposals

PandaDoc isn't just solving the pieces of the document lifecycle — creation, sending and signing — it's redefining the process itself to deliver better results.

That's why the common thread here is that the current process is messy, particularly because it involves too many tools. Too many tools makes the process all of the above: painful, costly, and ineffective. PandaDoc is a single tool that allows you to make creating documents easier, send them more efficiently, and close more business faster. Moreover, it works as an extension of what you're already doing everyday. Easily integrate with all major CRMs and store everything in the cloud.

Tim Hebel
Founder & Owner,
Beanstalk Web Solutions

Before we created proposals in Word, essentially starting from scratch every time. I used to spend 20 minutes to an hour on a proposal, and now with PandaDoc I spend 5 to 10 minutes tops.

CRM Integrations

We understand that you're most likely using a CRM platform, so that's why we've made sure to integrate your favorites with PandaDoc.

We also understand that you're probably used to finding the right contact or pricing information in your CRM and manually copy and pasting it into your documents. What a nuisance!

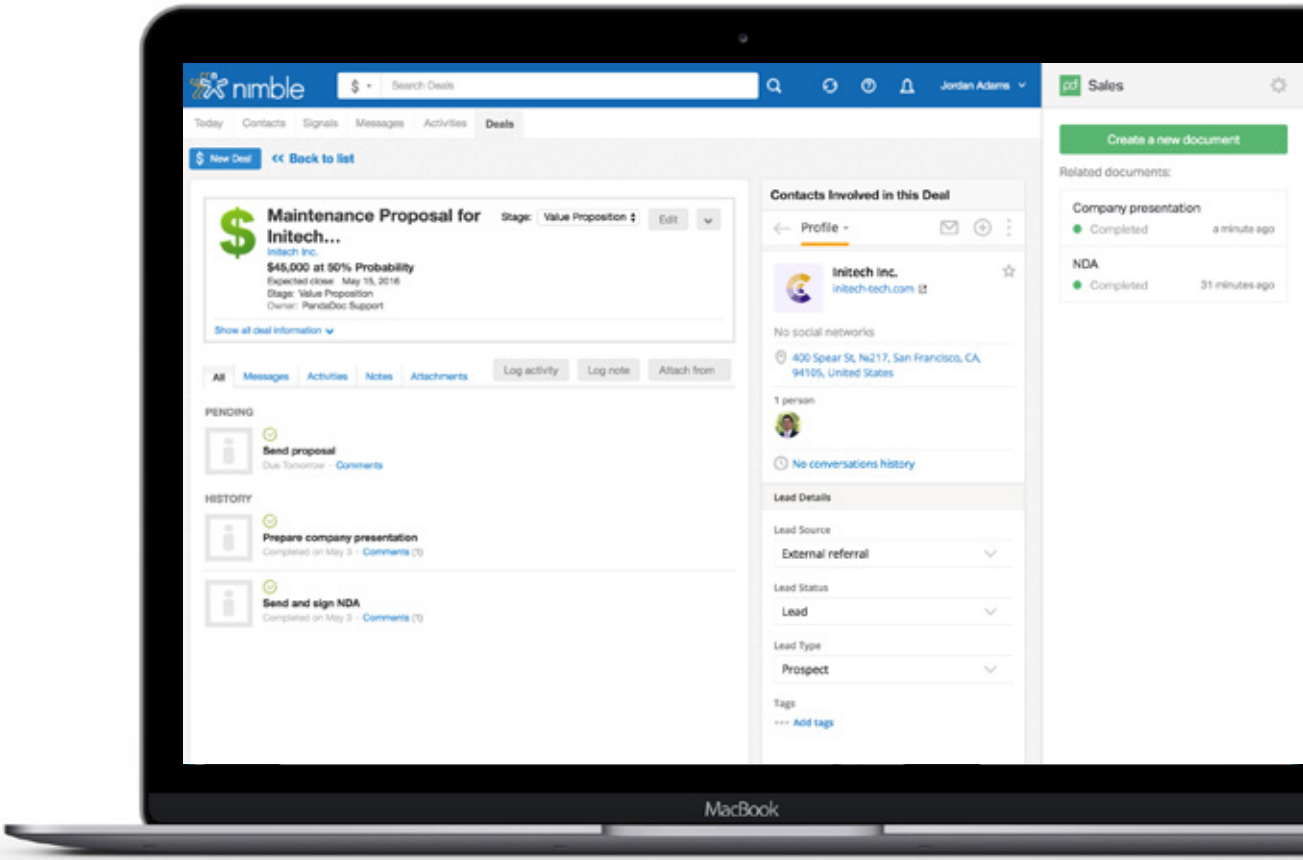
With our CRM integrations, all of that information is automatically merged into your documents. Never worry about costly mistakes or time lost moving between tools again.

Brian Minick
Ops Manager at SproutLoud

We interviewed a few potential partners and out of all of them, PandaDoc seemed the most interested in helping us with an integration... The PandaDoc team has been great to work with and we couldn't be happier with our decision.

In the cloud

Want to know the best part of using PandaDoc? Every contract, quote, or proposal sent from your CRM is automatically attached to your CRM records. You may have gotten that signature and filed the document away, but what if you need to refer to it later? PandaDoc is easily accessible online, from any desktop or mobile device, so you always have easy access to all of your documents.



Conclusion

Don’t settle for the old way. Embrace the future. PandaDoc automates and shortens your sales cycle. Create proposals easily and keep an eye on your deals. Close them like a champ and bring more business through the door.

Ready to try PandaDoc? Request a demo today to learn more about automation of your proposals workflow.

Find more useful content
at PandaDoc Academy

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