

CASE STUDY

Santander Portugal

Sealing deals quickly with trusted and secure electronic signatures



Santander Portugal now has a great number of digital signatures, which has allowed us to meet our environmental goals and improve the efficiency of our processes, ultimately increasing customer satisfaction.

Ricardo Castanheira

Intelligent Automation CoE at Santander Portugal

CELFOCUS

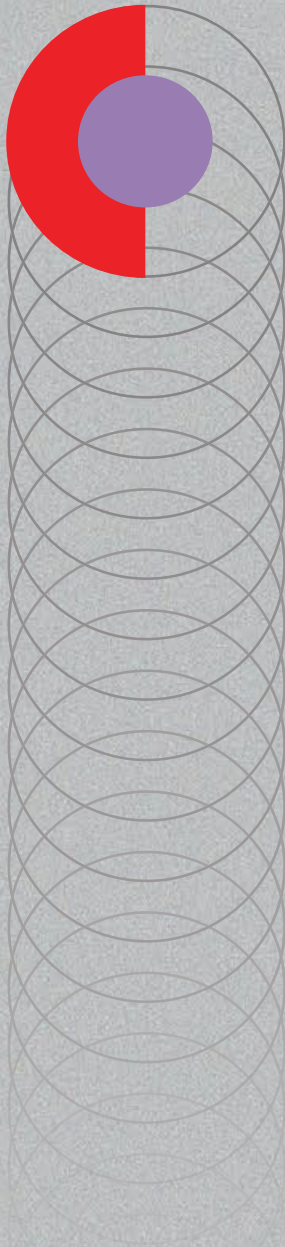
Digital business knows no boundaries

For any industry, digital transformation is a top priority and has gained resonance with the COVID-19 pandemic, further transforming how customers interact and engage with a company. The so-called “new normal” has led most to accept, and even prefer, a digital means to access products and services, leaving a “phygital” paradigm behind, which used to be effective before the health crisis.

For banking customers, managing their financial life from home has become a non-issue, making use of mobile and desktop apps regularly. However, banking products are wrapped in rigid administrative processes to ensure customers’ accountability.

And so, the challenge emerges:
how to seal banking deals in a quick, trustful,
and secure way in the digital era?





Replacing a **handwritten signature**

Either in a B2C or a B2B context, it's unreasonable nowadays to require the physical presence of customers in a branch to sign a contract for a product or service that they probably subscribed to online. However, neither can banks afford to have contractual frictions, lose a deal or risk the authenticity of a signature – which is guaranteed by a wet-ink pen.

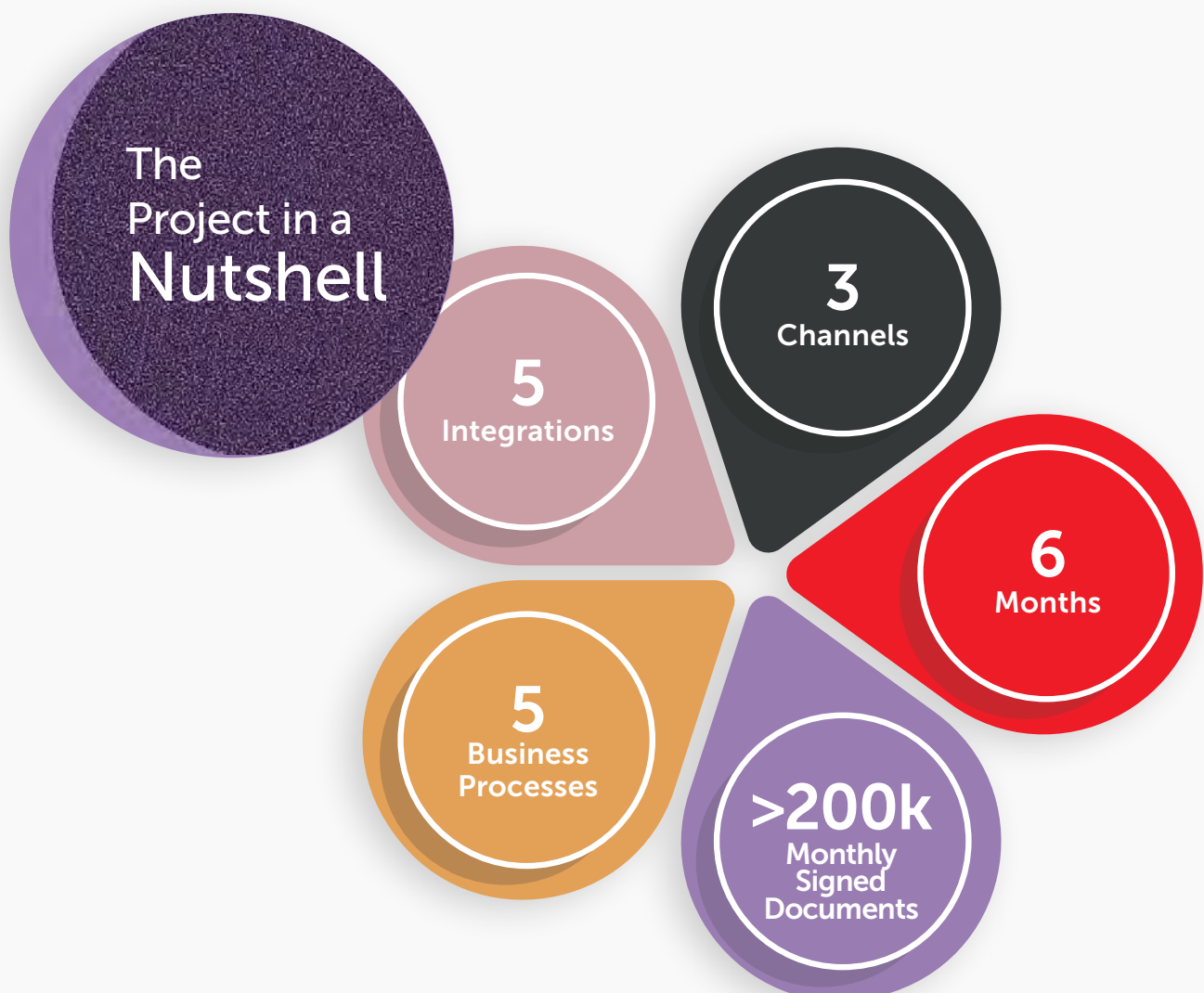
An **electronic signature** (eSignature or eSign) is a legal way to get consent or approval on electronic documents. It can replace a handwritten signature in virtually any process, allowing to close deals in seconds from anywhere and on any device. eSignatures are becoming industry-agnostic and widely used for remote document signing for all kinds of businesses.

For **Santander Portugal**, digital transformation is a fundamental pillar of its strategic development, having driven the bank to a new positioning with a focus on digitalisation (namely through channel transformation and new digital payment solutions), translating a digital way of living life, without losing sight of proximity.

Furthermore, being a **pioneer in Santander Group**, Santander Portugal is embarking on a **paperless journey**, seeking to simplify and dematerialise banking processes. **A paperless bank is also a smart bank**, being more agile in launching new business propositions due to a shorter time-to-market, improving operational efficiency, cutting paper handling costs, and ultimately reducing environmental footprint – to name a few of the benefits.

About Santander Portugal

Founded in 1988, Santander Portugal is a subsidiary of the Spanish Santander Group that offers retail, private, corporate and investment banking products and services. As of December 2023, the bank has achieved a net profit of € 894.6 million, and continues to increase its customer base, by an additional 70 thousand, and digital customers by over 63 thousand, leveraged by the ongoing commercial and digital transformation process.

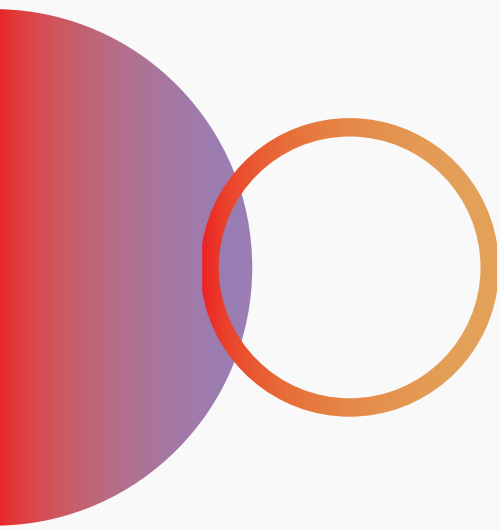


The Challenge

Santander Portugal wanted to change its traditional way of thinking operations, starting by dematerialising the way documents were signed and validated. Acknowledging the importance of increasing operational efficiency to enhance customer digital experience and to become more proficient in addressing their needs and requirements, being better tuned with an “always-on” lifestyle, the bank challenged Celfocus to deliver an eSign solution.

After a 6-month period of solution licensing for 200 thousand documents, Santander Portugal upped the ante to incorporate Celfocus’s solution in their technological infrastructure for 15 million documents.





The Solution

Getting work done faster, easier, and remotely

Celfocus eSign is a digital eSignature suite that centralises all the signature options on a single platform, providing the **toolset for all digital signing needs** and allowing the collection of signatures in real-time. It's a unique solution to implement and manage a fully digital document signing process, aimed at being time and cost-effective while improving document traceability and security. Furthermore, its seamless integration with existing systems ensures a smooth transition and continued operational efficiency.

Compliant with European legislation, Celfocus eSign is a web-based, cross-browser user interface that is **secure by design** and provides **multiple signature options**, ensuring the application of all the necessary rules for this type of operation – namely customer authentication. The signature options include biometric, One-Time-Password, Citizen Card, Mobile Digital Key, USB Tokens and PKI, among others.

With the adoption of this solution, Santander Portugal dematerialised the document signing procedure, making the whole process more agile, efficient, delocalised, and sustainable. Consequently, time and costs were reduced, resulting in process simplification and optimisation.

By offering adaptive and user-specific journeys, Celfocus eSign embodies a transformative approach to customer interaction, aligning with customers' evolving needs, thus ensuring a **personalised and responsive experience for Santander's clients**. At the same time, the optimisation of workflows through the solution represents a significant leap towards **increasing efficiency, reducing operational redundancies, and improving process agility**. Scalability is also at its core, allowing Santander to expand its digital signature and support high volumes of signatures when campaigns or events are underway.

Celfocus's collaboration with Santander marks a significant leap in the bank's digital transformation journey, showcasing innovative technology and user-centric design in the eSignature software.



Compliance with European Regulation: Celfocus eSign is compliant with **eIDAS** (the European regulation for electronic identification and trust services for electronic transactions in the European Single Market), as well as with the **Mobile Digital Key** (the Portuguese solution for electronic identification in most public and some private company's websites).

Benefits

Electronic signatures streamline the signing process for complex deals with custom, secure and legally binding signatures, resulting in the improvement of time effectiveness, an increase in deal close rate and a decrease in document creation time.

Bearing in mind Santander Portugal's specific needs and business logic, Celfocus eSign delivered the following benefits:

Time and cost-effectiveness: printing and handling costs are saved, and the time taken to complete agreements is reduced.

Improved business processes: Celfocus eSign manages documents online, allowing for signatures to be instantly made and processes to be fully digital, dismissing paperwork and simplifying processes.

Multiple signing options: the Celfocus eSign Suite provides multiple digital signature methods to support different customer preferences, risks and processes.

Real-time signing: signatures can be made instantly on any channel and be seen in real-time on any other channel, providing a truly omnichannel experience for the signing process.

Scalability: Celfocus eSign can be extended to support a full range of customisation requirements, from UI to integrations with external providers.

Full audit: document creation, access, changes and signatures are fully traceable and auditable, providing a complete vision of the process.

Seamless integration: Celfocus eSign seamlessly integrates with existing systems and channels, new and old, to provide the best experience for both customer and user.

A man with a beard, wearing a white button-down shirt, is shown from the chest up, leaning over a desk and signing a document with a pen. The background is dark, and the scene is lit with a warm, orange glow. In the bottom left corner, there are three overlapping circles in shades of orange, red, and purple.

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Next Steps

Celfocus eSign was successfully implemented in Santander Portugal, improving process efficiency, increasing customer satisfaction, and meeting environmental objectives. The future holds the implementation of more features of the solution in Santander Portugal, as well as its adoption in other Santander Group subsidiaries.

Why Celfocus?

Celfocus's track record and experience in Financial Services made it the right partner to deliver a digital eSignature suite, which represented a key component in the success of Santander's digital transformation process.

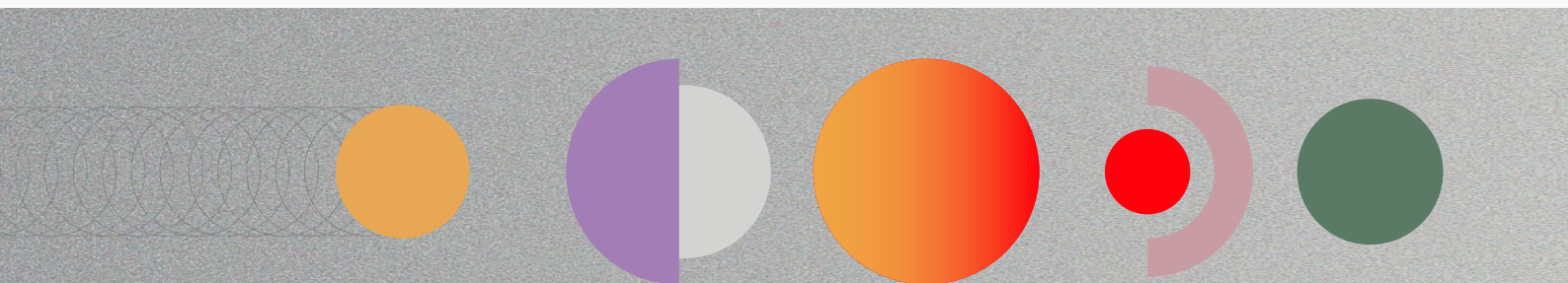
With an intuitive design and secure infrastructure, Celfocus eSign offers a simplified, customer-centric approach, perfectly aligning with Santander's vision of a **digital banking experience** and its mission to **revolutionise banking through technology**.

Furthermore, Celfocus's in-depth knowledge of this dynamic sector has enabled the company to tailor a solution that not only matches but also **anticipates the evolving needs of modern banking**, solidifying Celfocus's role as a key facilitator in Santander's journey towards digital excellence.

This has been a great experience, with some challenging situations that the Celfocus team was capable of dealing with, coupled with a set of tools using the latest technology available and a set of professionals that always found a way to address our challenges.

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CELFOCUS, S.A..
Avenida D. João II, Lote 34
Parque das Nações
1998-031 Lisboa, Portugal
Tel. +351 213 836 300 . Fax +351 213 836 301
www.celfocus.com