

U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO)

U.S. GPO saves millions of dollars and tons of paper annually while safeguarding official government documents with Adobe® LiveCycle® and Acrobat® software

U.S. Government Printing Office

www.gpo.gov



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4Point

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Industry

Government

Challenges

- Provide free, open public access to documents
- Handle millions of documents annually
- Ensure that documents are secure and validated

Solution

- Document generation, authentication, and dissemination
- The U.S. Government Printing Office is using Adobe LiveCycle solutions and Acrobat Professional to generate, disseminate, and authenticate millions of official government documents.

Results

- Saved 20 tons of paper and \$1 million over five years by delivering budget digitally
- Ensured easy access to documents for a range of audiences
- Safeguarded official documents
- Protected documents that travel inside and outside the GPO firewall

Systems At A Glance

- Adobe Acrobat Professional
- Adobe LiveCycle Digital Signatures ES
- Adobe Reader
- Verisign (GeoTrust)
- SafeNet SA Luna HSM

A critical government service

With the tagline “Keeping America Informed,” the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) has been the official national disseminator of government documents for nearly 150 years. The agency serves as a centralized resource for gathering, cataloging, producing, providing, and preserving published government information in all forms—all while guaranteeing its authenticity.

The GPO supports crucial U.S. Federal Government operations, producing documents for legislative bodies like the U.S. Congress, security agencies like the U.S. State Department, and 130 federal departments and agencies in total. Among its many projects, the GPO disseminates digitally and in print the Daily Digest of the Congressional Record, The Federal Register, and the annual Budget of the U.S. Government. GPO also provides free, open public access to documents through the Federal Depository Library Program.

As a result, the agency must handle high volumes of documents, while complying with the demands of the Presidential E-Gov initiative and meeting the requirements of the Document Security Alliance (DSA), a public/private partnership of more than 75 companies and 15 government agencies.

The complications of digital technology

The increasing use of electronic documents poses special challenges for the GPO. “Digital technology makes documents easy to alter or copy, which can lead to multiple non-identical versions that can be used in unauthorized ways. In fact, there have been several instances when commercial documents have been fraudulently altered,” explains chief technology officer Reynold Schweickhardt.

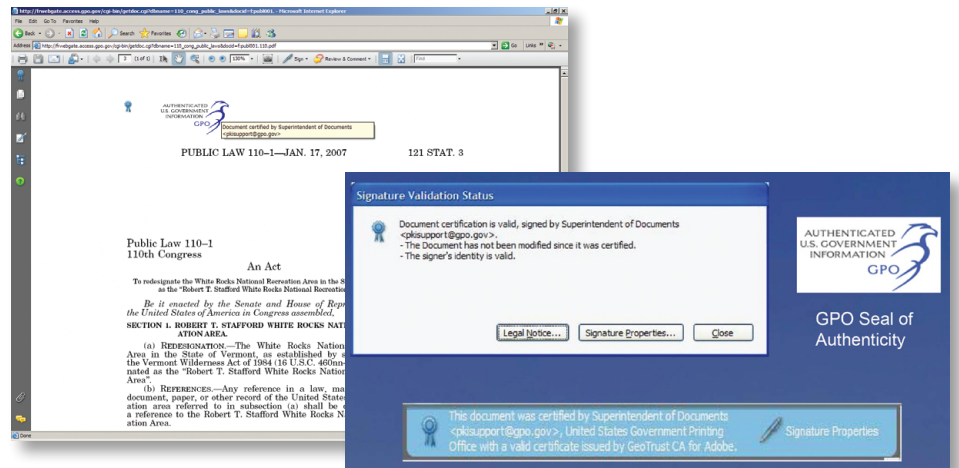
To add to the challenge, requests for digital documents have increased tremendously and the GPO no longer prints documents centrally as often as it used to. This means that documents are less frequently authenticated through delivery in sealed, stamped government envelopes. Despite these issues, the GPO must ensure that its materials are secure and validated, including verifying authenticity, ensuring that users cannot alter documents from their original format, and preventing illegitimate or unauthorized use of documents.

The GPO faces other pressures as well, including the need to make documents accessible to all citizens and to offer more choices in how citizens can consume information. Above all, the agency must maintain its reputation as a trusted information provider.

Persistent authentication on an industrial scale

To overcome these challenges, the GPO began evaluating solutions for electronic document distribution, with several key criteria in mind. The solution needed to be easy to use and available to all users at no charge. GPO wanted to ensure that users would not need to download any specialized software onto their computers to validate digital signatures on documents. The system had to support document authentication on an industrial scale of millions of documents per year.

Using Adobe LiveCycle Digital Signatures ES and Acrobat Professional, GPO generates, disseminates, and authenticates millions of official government documents. When a document is requested it is converted to PDF and LiveCycle Digital Signatures ES places an electronic seal on it to ensure authenticity. Built in document controls ensure the file has not been modified since certification.



“Adobe and 4Point enabled us to implement a high-quality solution capable of meeting the large-scale production requirements of GPO. Together with Adobe, we’re finding more valuable, money- and tree-saving ways to bring official government documents more fully and securely into the digital world.”

Reynold Schweickhardt,
Chief technology officer,
U.S. Government Printing Office

Robust security attributes were a must, including support for hardware security modules that would enable cryptographic digital signatures. Furthermore, the system had to maintain persistent authentication that would travel along with documents regardless of their destination.

After evaluating several options, GPO worked with 4Point to implement a solution based on Adobe LiveCycle Digital Signatures ES and Adobe Acrobat Professional to generate, authenticate, and disseminate documents electronically.

The Adobe solutions give GPO a secure means of distributing essential materials. The GPO has a planned roll-out of the solution over the next several months. When a member of Congress, a citizen, or another constituent requests a reprint of a document, the GPO will convert the document to Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) and uses LiveCycle Digital Signatures ES to place an electronic seal on it to ensure its authenticity. Upon delivery, the built-in document controls ensure that the document has not been modified since certification. Due to the rich functionality of Adobe software any user on any platform can access, view, and read documents in Adobe PDF using only free Adobe Reader® software.

“The ease of use of the LiveCycle solution is phenomenal, and it doesn’t require users to download specialized software or plug-ins,” says Schweickhardt, adding that there is an equally important benefit to using an Adobe solution. “We can give everyone access to documents in the long term by using the ubiquitous and internationally recognized ISO PDF standard,” he says.

The endurance of hard-copy, the cost of digital

One of the most recent successful and visible signs of the GPO’s embrace of the LiveCycle solution came in the form of an initiative by The Office of Management and Budget. The agency announced that for the fiscal year 2009, the United States Budget would be posted online at www.budget.gov. Instead, the E-Budget—which will be stamped with a digital seal of authenticity—will be uploaded as a fully searchable Adobe PDF file.

The E-Budget initiative alone is saving the government 20 tons of paper and nearly \$1 million over the next five years. Schweickhardt describes the monetary savings and reduced environmental impact from moving away from tangible documents as being phenomenal. Next, GPO is expanding its LiveCycle solution to encompass delivering documents through its Federal Digital System (FDsys), which manages government information from all three branches of the U.S. Government in digital form, and is even evaluating using the solution to scan, authenticate, and archive historical documents from as early as the 1800s.

“Adobe and 4Point enabled us to implement a high-quality solution capable of meeting the large-scale production requirements of GPO,” says Schweickhardt. “Together with Adobe, we’re finding more valuable, money- and tree-saving ways to bring official government documents more fully and securely into the digital world.”



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