Executive Summary

Execs and managers in sales, HR, procurement, legal, and other departments estimate that fixing the “document disconnect” could lead to:

- **36%** increase in revenue
- **30%** cost reduction
- **23%** risk reduction

Conversely, disconnected document processes have serious consequences, negatively impacting revenue, revenue recognition, and audits.

- **46%** cite impaired ability to plan, forecast, and budget due to lack of visibility
- **36%** of staff time is spent on administrative tasks
- **76%** say document process issues impact revenue recognition or create auditor issues
The Mobile Imperative

Mobility and connectivity have profoundly changed the way we live and work. Organizations must support a mobile, connected customer base and workforce or be left behind.

82% of people in developed economies use the internet today (by 2018, it will be 86%)

81% of internet users in developed economies access the internet using a mobile device (by 2018, that will be 92%)

The document disconnect will only become more apparent as business continues to go digital.

63% of information workers use a mobile device (smartphone or tablet) for work today; almost three-quarters (73%) expect to within 12 months

45% say customers want to interact with their organization using mobile devices

73% spend some part of each week working from a location other than an office at their organization
The Document Disconnect

Despite large investments over many years in ERP, CRM, HCM, SCM, etc., the “last mile” of many critical business processes is still a disconnected, discontinuous experience.

- 52% of business leaders say they have different internal systems/applications that don’t “talk” to each other.
- 50% say people outside of their organization with whom they need to exchange documents use a different system or application.
- 81% cite one or both of these problems.
Hidden Risks of the Document Disconnect

The information needed for business documents is often contained in multiple systems — “digital silos.” The result is disconnected business processes.

Fragile and Error-Prone

- **45%** of business leaders say they get documents back that are missing signatures/approvals and/or dates
- **51%** cite documents that are misfiled or lost
- **46%** aren’t sure they always have copies of all signed agreements
- **36%** cite missing signatures, initials, or dates on agreements (or documents that are signed by the wrong person)

Lacking Visibility and Traceability

- **55%** can’t tell whether documents have been viewed/reviewed/signed by the appropriate people and cite difficulty getting status and visibility into the process
- **38%** cite difficulty relating documents or versions of documents to important context

Labor-Intensive and Slow

- **24%** say getting documents routed, reviewed, and approved takes too long
Hidden Costs of the Document Disconnect

To cope with the document disconnect, teams are left to improvise using a hodgepodge of general-purpose productivity and collaboration tools.

43% SAY THEY MUST USE SEVERAL DISCONNECTED SYSTEMS/APPLICATIONS AND OFTEN COPY/PASTE OR REKEY INFORMATION
Business Benefits of Addressing the Document Disconnect

46% of business leaders say closing gaps in document processes would reduce cycle time and speed time to results.

Organizations that create a connected document environment save and speed revenue, save time and money, lower risk, and improve the customer experience.

- 72% agree that improving document processes would increase customer satisfaction and/or increase brand value.
- 45% say departmental productivity would increase.
- 24% of staff say compliance and business risk would be reduced.
- 23% of staff say business process visibility and agility would increase.
Recommendations

Best Practice #1: Assess

Organizations need to assess both their front-office (customer-facing) and back-office (supporting) document-based business processes

- Interview business leaders and their teams to identify gaps in document processes
  - Every department will have a list of document processes that can benefit

- Create a ranked list of candidate projects by ROI and stakeholder preparedness.
  Good initial candidates include:
  - Revenue-generating and other customer-facing business processes
  - Strategic HR processes such as recruitment and onboarding
  - Procurement
  - Legal
Recommendations

Best Practice #2: **Standardize**

- Standardize on a technology approach. A good solution will have the following characteristics:
  - Integrate with existing process and systems
  - Be intuitive and easy for customers and employees to use
  - Be simple and fast to deploy and manage
  - Adhere to industry-standard security
  - Come from an experienced, trusted provider
Rewards of Taking Action

The importance of document processes to competitive advantage is huge. Organizations must close the gaps in their front-office (customer-facing) and back-office (supporting) business processes.

The rewards of addressing the document disconnect are compelling:

- **36%** increase in revenue
- **30%** cost reduction
- **23%** risk reduction
Conclusion

The Time Is Now

• Savvy competitors will exploit this opportunity — don’t risk falling behind

• The document disconnect will only become more apparent as business continues to go digital

• Technical and cost barriers are relatively low:
  » It’s possible to take a piecemeal approach — i.e., department managers can engage with vendors and consultants to remediate
  » But the full benefit will be realized by organizations that take a standardized approach and make this an organizational competency
  » This is a high-ROI opportunity for the business and IT to partner

The full benefit will be realized by organizations that take a standardized approach and make this an organizational competency.
Methodology

The data presented in this InfoBrief comes from a global, web-based survey, IDC’s *Global Document Processes*, conducted in November 2014 of 1,518 line-of-business leaders, IT leaders, and information workers in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan, and Australia. The sample was evenly split by country and represents a broad range of industries and company sizes (60% of respondents came from companies with 1,000 or more employees).