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Article: SaaS launch product introduction

What is a digital virtual office? Remote communication and collaboration made easy

CollabNow's Digital Virtual Office (DVO) is your individual space on the cloud. It's a single place where you can communicate and collaborate and keep in touch with your contacts or colleagues in real-time or async. It's more than a link to your calendar; more than a video conferencing tool or a messaging app.

It's the answer to the question, "Where can I find you?" for professionals who want the flexibility to work from anywhere.

How is our Digital Virtual Office different from other remote and hybrid work enablement tools?

Come with me and I'll tell you all about it.

The tools fueling contact, communication and collaboration among distributed teams

Prior to the pandemic, just 7% of US workers whose jobs could be performed from home worked fully remote. In March 2023, 35% of workers with remote-capable jobs were [working outside the office full time](#) and another 41% had hybrid settings.

How did so many companies and their workforces make the shift to working from home or other remote locations so rapidly?

Digital communication and collaboration tools were there to support the transition. From video conferencing to e-signature apps, we had the tools to work together online. But those tools weren't always perfect.

With huge swathes of the population suddenly relying on these tools as must haves instead of nice to haves, each application's strengths and weaknesses quickly came to light.

Businesses and their workers experienced security breaches, awkward moments caught on video and losses in productivity as everyone adjusted to new ways of communicating and collaborating.

Now, however, those new ways have become the new normal.

Even among workers occupying the same campus or same building, digital communication and collaboration tools are often their first choice for managing workplace contacts.

Our workplaces have become digital-first and organizations have the tools to prove it.

Gartner estimates that by 2027, business's end-user [spending on social and collaboration software](#) will reach \$24.7 billion, up more than \$10 billion from 2023's \$14.5 billion budget.

Despite the emergence of clear frontrunners in the remote and hybrid work enablement market, though, Gartner reports that the market remains dynamic with no clear leader. Which is to say, there are a lot of apps out there. Some perform a single task well, while others combine multiple functions into a single product.

Products such as Zoom and Slack launched with limited features but expanded their features and functionality throughout the pandemic. Users and developers continue to test and innovate in search of the right tools to support productivity and collaboration.

CollabNow is part of the result of one such pursuit. It is a remote-first tool bringing together synchronous and async communications, scheduling and analytics functions to support individuals and teams working from anywhere.

So what makes CollabNow and its Digital Virtual Office different from the tools individuals and teams relied on throughout the pandemic?

CollabNow is a user-centric communication hub employing innovative technologies to support work from anywhere

CollabNow enables large teams to work together in a virtual collaboration environment. Its video conferencing technology can facilitate one-to-one interviews, multi-party courses and webinars or global corporate town halls.

But CollabNow's point of origin is the individual.

Unlike a meta verse-like virtual workplace where workers are asked to be present in a digital environment made for and managed by their organization, CollabNow's digital virtual offices are Individual and individually assigned space.

A single business owner, job seeker or student can claim their personal digital virtual office and customizable URL. Organization's can reserve a block of digital virtual offices to assign to their staff, contractors or consultants.

The web address for each CollabNow DVO serves as a permanent virtual location that the owner or assignee can provide to co-workers, colleagues, customers, clients or prospects.

Connect with contacts wherever you are with just one link

Your DVO is a virtual representation of a personal, professional office. Because it exists online, anyone you share the link with can get in touch with you wherever you are from wherever they are.

Unlike scheduling apps such as Calendly, direct messages sent via social media, or email or text messages, you aren't limited to just one way to communicate.

When someone clicks through your DVO link, they are brought to a virtual lobby where they can choose from several options including checking your calendar to schedule a meeting. You and your guests get to choose how to continue the conversation.

Someone visiting your DVO can "knock" or send you a text message to let you know they've arrived for a scheduled meeting or to see if you're available for an impromptu conversation.

If you or your guests prefer asynchronous communications, they can send you a text message or record a video message to be delivered through your CollabNow dashboard from your DVO lobby.

You can send video responses through your CollabNow dashboard, too.

This unified communications portal means your contacts don't have to contact you using one channel then switch to another to follow up or access a separate app to find a mutually agreeable time to meet.

It also means that when someone contacts you, their message won't get lost in your email spam folder. You no longer need to provide a long list of links and app handles in response to the question, "Where can I find you?"

CollabNow's technology elevates video conferencing experiences

CollabNow's video conferencing tools were built to support distributed teams and participants with different streaming capacities. Each person entering your virtual office video conference room can adjust their settings to accommodate their bandwidth.

CollabNow's video meeting tool incorporates many other features designed to improve attendees' experiences.

Better than Zooming

During the pandemic, one video conferencing tool emerged with such force that its name became synonymous with video meetings. Yes, I'm talking about Zoom. The application's freemium model made it the go-to choice for individuals and companies thrust into work from home conditions and in need of a quick fix.

But this tool has limits—including a time limit for free users and the inability for multiple users to simultaneously share their screens.

If you've ever endured a meeting in which everyone has to take turns showing their document, you know how screen sharing permissions and toggling between tabs can disrupt the free flow of ideas.

Other applications built for presentations and webinars have similar limitations.

CollabNow doesn't.

When you host a video conference in CollabNow, participants can fully participate by sharing their screens—and not just one at a time! This capability supports complete collaboration.

Design team can show their sketches and renderings next to the marketing team's copy. Developers can view code, QA reports and roadmaps. Everyone can see the big picture and zoom in on the details.

CollabNow's multi-party, multi-screen sharing feature is a step beyond the multi-screen sharing feature other tools offer, by the way. Other tools require awkward workarounds such as dual screens or force users to toggle between multiple available views.

CollabNow's technology allows meeting attendees to view different screen views shared by different contributors side-by-side.

Is true multi-party, multi-screen sharing better than the alternatives?

See for yourself. Give it a test drive!

A digital video made for presentation, engagement and participation

CollabNow's video tool has other features that support team communication and collaboration as well. There's a virtual whiteboard where people can sketch their ideas and create diagrams together. Tools to create polls and quizzes allow meeting hosts to gather feedback and maintain attendees' engagement.

Not every discussion that takes place during a collaboration session needs to be heard by everyone—in real-world or virtual meetings.

Sometimes you need to pull one or two contributors aside for a huddle. Your DVO video conferencing features include breakout rooms and private chat. These virtually connected spaces allow you to “step outside the room” without leaving your meeting space.

You can also take a moment to share and review documents and discuss the details one on one before returning to the group session.

CollabNow’s recording and analytics tools gives individuals one-of-a-kind data and insights

Every department within thriving organizations uses data to set strategy and evaluate effectiveness. If those departments don’t have access to all the facts, you may lose valuable opportunities and not realize just how far off course a chosen path has taken you.

We all like hard facts—numbers with a definite source and meaning. But much of the world’s data isn’t quite so clear. Unstructured data is the key to mining deeper insights about your workforce, processes, customers and prospects.

CollabNow’s suite of intelligence tools enables you to gather and analyze this critical data from your DVO interactions.

Using CollabNow you can see when someone has engaged with your video messages. You no longer have to rely on unreliable email engagement metrics to find out if your communications are reaching their target.

But the real power to gain insights is fueled by our proprietary algorithms that analyze your meetings and video recordings to assess word frequency, tone of voice and other factors to identify topical significance and sentiment.

You can actively deploy these tools to be on the lookout for specific words or phrases. Through your CollabNow dashboard, you can define a series of topics then use our tools to analyze recordings to identify the conversations that mention those topics.

CollabNow’s analytics set includes a sorting feature that will organize recording according to the topics you choose, too. Automate this process and maximize the benefits of the unstructured data your team collects in every conversation.

Employ an automated keyword search to identify compliance-related conversations to confirm they took place or discover which competitors your prospects are mentioning during sales calls.

Use insights gained from CollabNow to improve performance and productivity

Your team can track async and synchronous engagements using CollabNow’s analytics tools. Plus, use our AI-powered systems to extract and organize key data. These capabilities speed your ability to make changes or respond to staff or customer needs.

They can also accelerate your content production and eliminate unnecessary communications.

Using our conversational search function combined with the video editing feature, one team member can parse a lengthy meeting into segments and send others only the relevant portions.

This search and snip capability also makes it quick and easy to pull video testimonials, new feature or product demos, and unscripted insights from your subject matter experts. Those snippets can then be incorporated into longer videos, shared via social media or added to training series.

Next level project management boost: After you send customized meeting segments to team members, you'll be able to track who viewed them. This helps busy managers ensure that everyone has the latest information about ongoing projects.

Prepare the next stage of your success today

The future of work and commerce are distributed. Everything from building great things to closing the next deal will involve a mix of in-person and virtual communications. Having the right infrastructure to support communications from anywhere and at any time will be critical. Being able to use the data you gather effectively will be too.

CollabNow is your one place in the cloud where people can find you and you can gain the insights you need to succeed.

Claim your digital virtual office today and start exploring the possibilities.

Article: [Mobility intelligence and reducing emissions](#)

Can AI help save our cities from themselves?

Modern cities are a study in contrasts. Urban areas are hubs of innovation, economic growth, personal development and wealth creation, and social and cultural exchanges. Yet, cities are also centers of pollution, traffic congestion, poor health and inequity.

Can AI help us find ways to keep the benefits of city living while reducing the costs?

Companies promoting mobility intelligence solutions say the answer is "yes."

Global urban populations are growing and so are the consequences

Today's cities are economic powerhouses, responsible for generating 80% of global gross domestic product (GDP), reports the World Bank Group in its latest [Urban Development update](#).

Fueling future growth, centralized resources such as education, equipment and workspaces empower technological advancement and innovation. Cities are also home for 56% of the world's population. That's over 4.4 billion people.

Despite this contraction of people and resources, though, cities aren't models of efficiency. Instead, urban areas are greedy energy consumers and a disproportionate source of greenhouse gas emissions.

The World Bank Group's report reveals that cities account for two-thirds of global energy use and more than 70% of the world's [greenhouse gas emissions](#).

Urban sprawl is partly to blame. As cities draw more people and businesses, they expand. But urban land use is outpacing urban population growth. This expansion forces development of areas less suited for urbanization. Green zones are overtaken and structures built in floodplains.

Access to public transportation and public and private services sometimes get overlooked in the rush to grow.

Rapid growth paired with poor planning results in the inequitable distribution of resources and increased commute times. City dwellers and commuters are exposed to more noise and air pollution and overall quality of life declines.

Is there a way to avoid these negative consequences and reverse the mistakes of the past?

Yes.

AI-guided urban mobility solutions are part of the solution.

Making smarter transportation decisions improves urban quality of life and support global sustainability

When individuals can't reach their desired destination efficiently and affordably, they are cut off from the benefits their city provides. Added minutes spent finding or waiting for transportation solutions costs individuals time and businesses productivity. Extra kilometers traveled using gas-fueled vehicles increases carbon emissions.

In contrast, when individuals have access to multimodal transportation, including active (human powered) transport, such as walking or cycling, population health improves and emissions go down.

But good mobility planning and management is complicated. The efforts of city planners, community members and transportation providers are hindered by the simultaneous effects of information overload and a lack of information.

A city's mobility network is one of several complex systems and structures that must operate together to ensure the city's economy, environment, culture and residents' quality of life.

The sheer size of the modern city, the rapid changes in transportation demand and use patterns, and the number of available transportation options make parsing available data a difficult and sometimes time-consuming process. Meanwhile, difficulties integrating data across various city systems and a lack of real-time, contextualized information limits decision-makers ability to maximize outcomes.

"Planning for a resilient urban future requires tackling challenges and creating solutions in a place-based, integrated, inclusive, risk-aware and forward-looking manner," write representatives of the Resilient City Network.

In other words, to make better decisions, leaders need access to complete, accurate and up-to-date information.

This is where AI technology can help.

AI-powered software collects and processes information in time for it to matter

AI applications are capable of processing huge amounts of data amazingly fast. This added computing power complements AI's pattern recognition and multimodal data analytics capabilities to produce in-depth insights, sometimes instantly.

Using models built from real-world data, planners can test multiple scenarios and evaluate potential solutions and get results in minutes rather than weeks or months.

Today's smart mobility intelligence combines real-time behavior information with up-to-date geographic and point of interest (POI) data and empowers cities to deliver transportation solutions that serve their populations efficiently, effectively and equitably; systems that are agile and flexible, anticipating population needs and pivoting to meet those needs.

Using mobility intelligence to guide design, cities will be able to encourage sustainable practices such as reducing the use of private vehicles and embracing human-powered transport, mobility on demand, ride sharing and public transport by strategically designing multimodal transport systems.

Getting smart about the future of cities

Mobility intelligence to inform city planning and real-time transportation decisions is one of several ways human beings can use the power of artificial intelligence to build smarter cities and a more sustainable world. Learn more about what you can do to support sustainability in your neighborhood and around the world in our [guide to supporting eco-friendly initiatives](#).

Excerpt: AI-related concepts explainer

The following content was part of a broader explainer article aimed at non-tech readers.

Not all AI machines can learn.

Artificial intelligence is the branch of computer science concerned with creating machines and systems that can perform tasks that “normally require human intelligence.”

The simplest of AI systems employ rules sets, expert systems, knowledge graphs and symbolic AI or “[Good Old Fashioned AI](#),” explains Pathmind’s *Beginner’s Guide to Important Topics in AI, Machine Learning and Deep Learning*.

Machine learning is a subset of AI that goes beyond being told what to do and can learn from exposure to inputs.

ML models use computer algorithms to process structured data. Structured data is information that is predefined and stored in a standardized format. This standardization makes it easy to sort and categorize the data.

ML algorithms can process historical data (including immediate real-time input) to generate insights.

Deep learning is ML that can learn (almost) independently.

Deep learning models are a type of ML but [can do more than traditional ML models](#). Deep learning models process huge quantities of unstructured data and can derive connections between multiple large data sets.

Unstructured data is any data that isn’t uniform in its format or other characteristics. It isn’t organized for machine reading or processing.

If a consumer reviews a product by giving it a numeric score or star-rating, that information can be stored as structured data. A written review by the same customer explaining their likes and dislikes about the product would be unstructured data. A deep learning model can mine this type of data to extract sentiment or other qualitative insights.

This ability to process unstructured data without depending on humans to first tag and categorize is a significant advantage in terms of speed and efficiency and one of the capabilities making generative AI possible.

Deep (machine) learning AI systems can analyze the transcripts of your business's customer service calls to identify recurring words that may point to a problem with your product or with your customer support delivery.

A conversational analytics tool using deep learning can help you surface frequently asked questions by parsing incoming customer service requests and inquiries across multiple channels.

Some conversational analytics tools use deep learning to evaluate audio input. These tools can offer businesses insights into the effectiveness of their sales pitches or customer support. Just how angry was that customer?

Small AI training models are used to develop limited-purpose AI tools but can't support gen AI applications.

Not every AI learning system is a foundation system.

Narrow or specific task AI systems may be trained using a smaller data set than a general purpose system intended to handle multiple tasks.

As you can imagine, smaller data sets are more manageable but more limited in the insights you can gain from them.

Using a limited data set enables businesses to maintain control over their inputs and focus their resources on acquiring the insights most relevant to their organization's objectives.

Training a general-purpose AI system requires lots of data.

Foundation models are used to create systems with broad applications. These models consist of large collections of data, often unlabeled or unstructured, from which the algorithms can learn.

Foundation models' need for input is so massive that it is nearly impossible to obtain without drawing data from the whole of the internet.

Foundation models are also called [transformer or base models](#) because their neural network architecture allows them to transform one type of input into another type. The machine does its own tagging and classifying.

All LLMs are foundation models, but not all foundation models are LLMs.

That's because most foundation models are language-based. These models are called "large" language models (LLMs) because their data and parameters are large compared to foundation datasets used to train single-purpose or narrow AI systems.

Bard, ChatGPT, and the generative AI image tools DALL-E and Midjourney (both of which use [text-based descriptions](#) to generate images) all use LLMs.

Tools such as Runway's "Magic Tools" and Aug X's "Augie," which can create full videos, clone voices, and audio content get their guidance from text-based data as well.

While today's most popular foundation models are language-based, that doesn't mean all foundation models *must* be language-based.

Google DeepMind's [generalist agent](#) called Gato was built to reach "beyond the realm of text outputs" and perform tasks such as playing video games or controlling robotic arms.

According to Gato's advocates and critics, non-language based models are limited by the unavailability of data from which to learn. As we learn to gather and access data in different formats, you can expect to see more non-LLM AI advances.

Computer systems use natural language processing (NLP) to learn from LLMs.

How do machines turn words into sounds and images or copy or evaluate them to detect emotion and sentiment?

NLP is a type of AI system focused on the evaluation of [human language patterns](#).

NLP is a core component of conversational AI, the type of AI used to drive interactive voice and chat tools that respond to human queries.

NLP's natural language understanding (NLU) branch enables computers to evaluate human language to detect sentiment and meaning.

NLP's natural language generation (NLG) branch tries to reproduce human language. NLG is the process that fuels text-based generative AI tools, a.k.a. AI content writers.

Excerpt: Customer data integration

What is customer data integration?

Customer data integration is the process that brings together everything your organization knows about its customers in a way that ensures the data's timeliness, accuracy and accessibility. Customer data integration is part of a broader data governance system that's designed to manage and maintain your organization's data.

customer data integration enables strategizers, decision-makers, individual contributors, and automation tools to locate and activate customer knowledge whether it's stored in a single-purpose application or a data lake or warehouse

Organizations collect more data about their customers every year but the people who need it to deliver results can't get to it.

Customer data integration overcomes the limitations of divergent customer data sources curing their lack of interoperability, inaccessibility and the risk of inaccuracies.

When your customer data is separated by function, or format or department, you lose the benefits of a big-picture view. Each customer's complete, persistent personality is there but you can't see it.

And, if you don't fully understand your customers, you can't create seamless journeys that meet them with the right message at the right moment and strengthen their relationships with your brand.

Fragmented data also discourages effective data use at a time when marketers are being asked to leverage every resource to do more with less and demonstrate ROI.

Teams that can't find and use information when they need it or can't rely on the accuracy of the information they can access will eventually stop making data-driven decisions.

As your data intake volume increases, data management problems magnify. That's not something high-volume email marketers (or any enterprise marketing program) can afford.

Businesses using customer data integration to manage their customer-related information achieve gains in their data's accuracy and accessibility. They are better able to produce customized, contextualized messages for their audiences, respond quickly to new opportunities and challenges, and continually improve their performance.

How customer data integration delivers results for marketing teams

Marketers use data integration technologies to consolidate, distribute and visualize the customer information available to them from diverse data streams.

But before your organization can use data integration technology effectively, it needs a framework for handling the data that will pass through that technology, also known as data governance.

Once you have a solid foundation of governance in place, your organization can use a variety of data integration methods to bring your customer data together, normalize it so that it's available in easily shareable formats, and distribute it when and where it's needed.

What is data governance?

Data governance is the [framework](#) through which organizations manage their data.

Businesses run on information and all that information has to be collected, stored, assigned value, made accessible and protected.

Defining where information is stored, when information gets updated and which direction those updates flow between datasets is a job for your organization's data governance guidelines.

Even choosing what information your organization collects and which information it retains is a data governance decision because storing and processing data isn't cheap.

Of course, the data you decide to keep can't deliver value if it's not accurate and the people or machines that need to access that data can't get to it.

Data governance resolves these issues by addressing everything from how incoming data is formatted to who has access and to what degree.

Defining how you'll keep your customer and other data secure is another job for data governance.

Organizations want to protect their data for commercial and compliance reasons. So ensuring that every bit of information can be tracked, protected and removed or redacted is part of the governance process.

Customer data integrations are most effective when they are built on a foundation of clear data governance so that when you integrate your data it's compatible, secure, and error-free.

Three types of customer data integration for marketing

We often talk about customer data integration in the context of establishing a single source of truth or a unified customer view. But not all customer data integration systems are built around housing all your customer data in a single location.

Data integration actually occurs through a variety of methods, some of which deliver a unified customer view by pulling data from multiple sources. Ensuring that there's a consistently

accessible and accurate representation of each piece of information for each customer is the primary objective of customer data integration.

Depending on the methods of integration your system employs, your customer data integration may serve as a single source of truth or synced sources of truth for your customer-related information.

Customer data integration tools break down the barriers that keep your organization from fully leveraging its customer knowledge and develop unified customer views using three primary methods:

- ☒ Consolidation,
- ☒ Propagation, and
- ☒ Federation.

I'll explain each of these methods separately below. But none of these integration methods are mutually exclusive.

Today's data integration solutions often combine data transformation and processing methods. Plus, fresh AI-powered analytics and generative tools are giving marketers completely new ways to store and manipulate customer data. Use the following descriptions as a starting point as you imagine the possibilities that we can expect in the future.

How does customer data integration through consolidation work?

Data integration through consolidation involves delivering all the relevant data to a central repository. Other systems send data to this central source of truth where it is cleaned and normalized and pull information from the consolidated set to perform their functions.

Customer data platforms (CDPs) such as those offered by Bloomreach and mParticle are examples of a consolidated customer data integration source.

CDPs function similarly to data warehouses, lakes and other 'big data' systems but with a narrower scope. Instead of housing all the data related to your organization, a CDP's data is related to your customers and prospective customers.

CDPs collect, transform and store data that arrives in diverse formats from diverse sources. This data may be structured or unstructured and include information about your customers' interactions with your brand on social media, their online purchase or browsing history, and their offline interactions.

When another system such as a chatbot or email marketing platform needs to use information about a customer, it draws the necessary data from this central source.

CDPs have greater flexibility and can operate more efficiently than traditional CRMs that use structured fields to store information.

By placing all customer information from every source, including internal departmental data and external inputs, your organization can eliminate duplicative data storage and maintain a true single source of truth about every customer.

Your CDP may use algorithms and AI-powered analytics to improve your data's integrity and develop persistent customer identities. These features can help you eliminate overlapping or conflicting contact information and gain a more accurate picture of each customer.

However, setting up a CDP is a feat of coordination and collaboration as your underlying data governance policy has to accommodate multiple departments and stakeholders and their distinct priorities.

Building a consolidated data integration system requires careful planning to avoid data bloat and preserve data integrity.

Traditional CDPs are made to develop persistent profiles of each customer. They aren't typically used to store anonymized data like the type obtained through third-party data exchanges. This non-individualized information is more likely to be stored in a [data management platform](#) (DMP).

As more brands realize the value to be gained from breaking down silos and integration technology advances, I expect we'll see more hybrid solutions that bring a greater variety of data types together under one digital roof.

What is propagation-style customer data integration?

Data propagation integration methods distribute and unify information by sending a *copy* of the primary source's data to the receiving system.

The information shared between systems is delivered in batches, through API calls, or in a continuous stream and be one- or two-way exchanges. Automated integrations ensure that your customer data gets pushed out and matched up across systems consistently.

Customer relationship management (CRMs) systems and other internal and third-party relational databases are often integrated using data propagation methods.

Unlike data consolidation, data propagation doesn't designate a single, unified source of truth for all the data related to your customers. Instead, each propagating database system has a job to do and your data governance infrastructure map defines which dataset is the primary source for information related to its designated job.

For example, a contact's email address for marketing communications might be stored in a list on your email marketing platform. The contact might have a separate email address stored in a CRM or store database for transactional or customer service interactions.

If your subscriber is also a customer who participates in your brand's loyalty program, the loyalty program's database may be the origination point for key information about their purchases and preference.

Synchronizing data is stored in multiple systems requires careful choreography and real-time analytics and actioning require a robust infrastructure. But you can get started with basics like CRM to email or SMS integrations.

How does customer data integration through federation work?

Data federation is a third method of bringing diverse datasets together. Except it doesn't bring the data together, not physically, anyway.

Data federation is a type of [data virtualization](#) (but there are other kinds, too). Data federation integration works by unifying data from multiple sources into a "data consumption layer" that makes it easier for users (like you and me) to access.

Data federation is like a virtual meeting space where you can see data from other places without that information ever having to leave its home base.

When you view, manipulate or analyze data through a federation integration system, it isn't copied into that system as it would be if it were propagated. It's also not like a consolidated system where all the data comes from a single, massive source.

Data federation is more like a dashboard where you can designate which dataset and sources you want to view.

But unlike a dashboard that just combines data from various sources, federated data integration lets you do stuff with the data. It's not a collection of information displays but a unified, interactive set of data points.

Federation-style integration systems sometimes deliver data faster than consolidation-based systems. This is because data in a consolidation system has to be processed before it can be accessed. Data federation skips the interim processing step. Information comes straight from the originating source such as a campaign management platform or sales tracking systems.

Article: last-mile delivery app proof of delivery feature

The importance of proof of delivery in the last mile

Providing visibility, accountability, and security in the last mile with electronic proof of delivery

Last-mile delivery demand is on the rise. In response to changing consumer behavior, retailers and other vendors have rapidly shifted to delivery models placing a strain on logistics and profitability. Third-party logistics providers are feeling the strain as well. For everyone in the supply chain, maintaining profitability while meeting customers' delivery expectations is an ongoing challenge.

Achieving efficiency in the last mile is particularly critical because last-mile delivery costs account for [41% of all supply chain costs](#). Additionally, today's delivery customers are savvy consumers who expect reliability in exchange for the trust they place in merchants.

When a package goes missing, your customers and delivery partners want answers.

- Was the package mistakenly marked as delivered but still sitting in a depot somewhere?
- Was it delivered to the wrong address and kept or discarded by that recipient?
- Was it stolen after the drop-off?
- Was it delivered to the wrong on-site location?
- Is there fraud involved on the part of someone in the chain of custody?


An electronic proof of delivery (e-POD) system gives you the tools you need to provide those answers. Implementing e-POD reduces your delivery costs while increasing your efficiency and providing your customers a [positive post-purchase experience](#).

Why proof of delivery matters

Proof of delivery isn't a new concept. Senders and receivers have used proof of delivery as a means to verify the completion of a delivery for centuries. Traditional proof of delivery methods included requesting that an authorized representative of the receiver sign an acknowledgement when they took possession of a package or shipment.

This receipt from 1975 memorializes the receipt of 2 boxes of custom Christmas cards, delivered to Rice University.

A complete graphic arts center / printing • advertising • art • sales promotion



WETMORE & COMPANY
P. O. BOX 13026
1015 S. SHEPHERD DRIVE
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77019
AC 713 - 529-9126

DELIVERY RECEIPT

NOT AN INVOICE

DELIVER TO: RICE UNIVERSITY
ADDRESS: OFFICER OF THE PRESIDENT
ATTENTION: #203 Lovett Hall
RUSS PITTMAN

SALESMAN: JW YOUR PURCHASE ORDER NO.: 92184 OUR JOB NO.: 92184 DATE: 12-3-75

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION
1,600-	" CHRISTMAS CARDS." for Rice University. 2 Boxes O.T.

46221

RECEIVED: Wendy McInerney
DATE: 12-3-75

CUSTOMERS COPY

Often these proofs would include additional information such as the number of units received or their condition. This signed document could then be used as proof of performance by couriers requesting payment or to respond to a delivery failure claim or dispute.

Senders use proof of delivery to verify a delivery's completion and the transfer of responsibility for the package to the recipient. Recipients benefit from proof of delivery documentation as well. A signed receipt establishes a chain of custody within the organization and allows them to track when and in what condition an item arrived.

Signature-required proof of delivery helps prevent misdeliveries and theft

When the shipped items are expensive, easily damaged in transit, or the delivery is time-sensitive, requiring a signed handoff to an authorized recipient helps prevent expensive problems.

Senders or receivers may request that couriers collect a signature at the stop to ensure that packages are delivered to the correct location and protected from theft or damage. Signature-required proof of delivery is a necessity when important documents must be delivered by a specific date or to an authorized recipient.

No one wants their expensive audio equipment or certified check delivered to the wrong address or left sitting outside overnight!

What are the costs of failed deliveries?

- 38% of consumers who have a negative delivery experience with a brand [will stop purchasing](#) from them
- 11% or more of US shipments are lost, [stolen or misdelivered](#) annually
- \$7.4 billion is the estimated [total value of packages stolen](#) from US delivery customers in 2020
- \$136 represents the [average loss per package theft](#)

Other forms of proof facilitate visibility and accountability

Of course, not every delivery gets a signature. Sometimes, a recipient doesn't want to or cannot be present to sign for a parcel. In those instances, a driver may sign a form indicating that delivery was completed or take a picture of the package at the delivery location.

These types of proofs may not have the same weight as an authorized signature. But, they can help you track down when and where a problem occurred in the last mile.

In a 2020 survey, more than 50% of consumers said they prefer to shop with retailers who offer [safe delivery practices](#) such as contactless delivery. Photographic proof of delivery facilitates more secure contactless drop-offs. Plus, when it comes to disputes over a package's condition on arrival, a picture can lead to a quick resolution.

Traditional proof of delivery measures ensure end-to-end accountability for delivery providers and their customers and helps prevent theft and fraud. Electronic proof of delivery does even more.

Electronic proof of delivery does it better

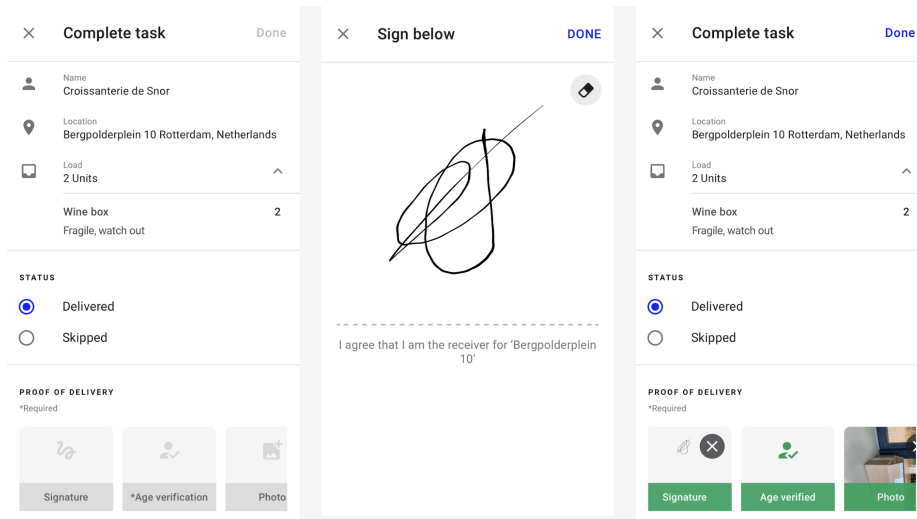
E-POD provides the same protections as traditional methods while also allowing greater flexibility and access to information. Using electronic proof of delivery methods you can improve customers' last-mile experience and your efficiency.

5 ways your delivery partners and customers benefit when you take your proof of delivery digital

1. **Electronic documentation provides a secure way to collect and maintain documents.** Unlike paper receipts that can be damaged or misplaced, your electronic documents are stored and backed up digitally. Drivers benefit from being able to use a single device to access all the necessary documentation to complete their deliveries instead of having to shuffle through a stack of documents at each stop.
2. **Drivers can collect and distribute updates in real-time.** Delivery managers don't have to wait for couriers to check in or bring paperwork back to the office to find out the status of a delivery. Information becomes available to all parties as soon as it is collected.
3. **Staff no longer waste time entering data into multiple systems.** When your proof of delivery is manual, someone has to enter it into your delivery management system. This process not only takes time but also increases your risk of human error. Delivery dates, unit numbers and other data can be corrupted with just one wrong keystroke. Avoid mistakes by entering the data once and let automation handle its distribution.
4. **Everyone is kept in the loop with automatic, real-time notifications.** Enhance your customer service for shipping partners and end customers by enabling automatic notifications triggered by the e-POD entry. Over 70% of consumers want to be able to [track their parcels in real time](#). By automating your processes, including delivery confirmation, you'll save time by fielding less "Where is my package?" phone calls and deliver a superior customer experience.
5. **E-POD delivers scalability and flexibility that traditional systems can't match.** Implementing an on-demand, digital proof of delivery system enables you to expand your fleet and share data across your organization without burdening back-office staff with extra paperwork. Instant updates enable you to send new instructions to drivers en route, reducing failed connections and send-agains.

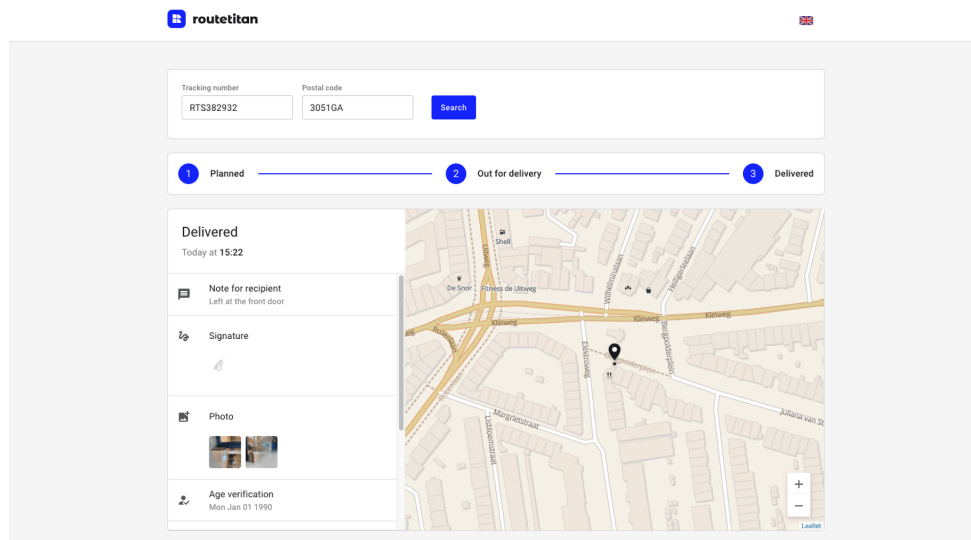
Implementing e-POD is easy with Routetitan

Routetitan's app comes with a built-in electronic delivery proof. Each stop gets customized instructions. Drivers can use their mobile devices to collect the recipient's signature and validate the recipient's identification or age. Signed signatures are immediately available in your delivery management dashboard and visible to recipients and senders.

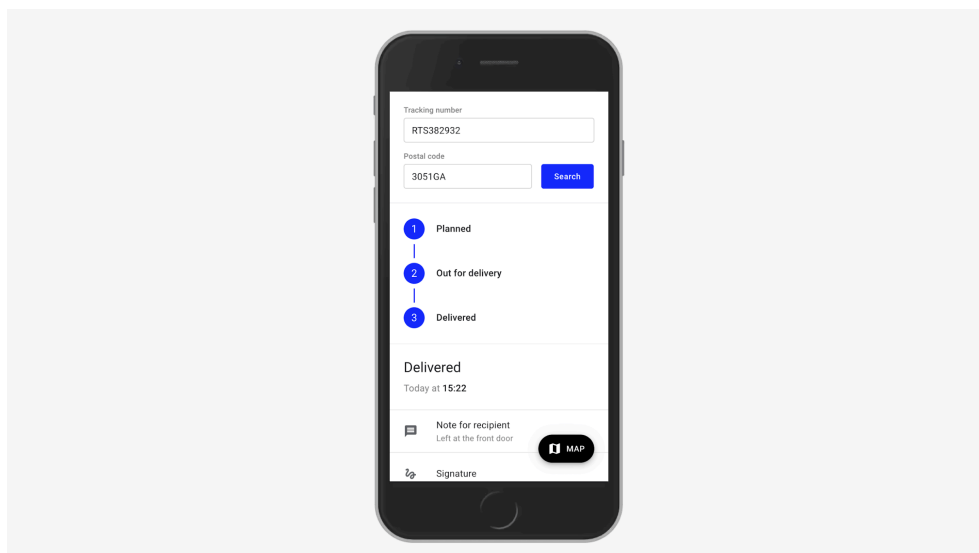


You can also have your drivers upload an image of a package on the spot when a delivery is completed to confirm that the item is delivered and to show its location. This feature can be especially helpful in situations when the receiver has requested the package be concealed or placed in a specific area.

If a recipient can't locate their package, customers can look at the picture to make sure the drop off was made at their address. If the photo shows that the package was delivered to the correct location, you'll both know that further investigation is needed!



The delivery coordinates and timestamps are automatically attached to both signature and photo proofs for complete, automated record-keeping.



Everyone is assured of their delivered products and services thanks to electronic proof of delivery. By using Routetitan's delivery management and routing app, you can deliver above and beyond your customers' expectations while saving time and money. [Contact us](#) to get started today!