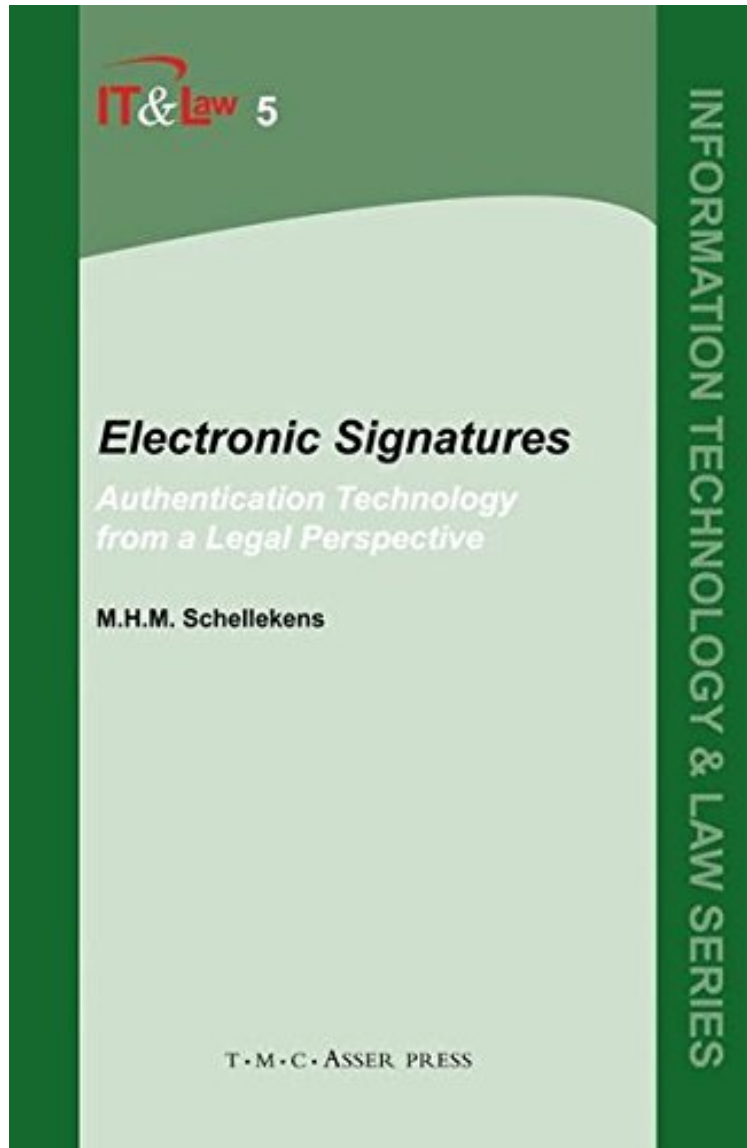


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Electronic Signatures: Authentication Technology from a Legal Perspective (Information Technology and Law Series) (v. 5)

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With these issues the subject of legal usability is not completely covered. Enforcement is perhaps the most obvious issue that is not dealt with. Therefore I will indicate for what reason enforcement has been omitted as a separate issue. This has the following background. A signature may alleviate evidentiary burdens that may arise when enforcing a contract, but enforcing a contract involves much more than evidence of the existence and contents of a contract. E-commerce has opened the possibility to engage in cross border business with a low value per transaction. Even if one has the authenticated identity of one's contracting party, it may still be too complicated or expensive to commence legal proceedings against a party. A signature does not in itself result in compliance with contracts and legal rules. A digital signature may, however, be an important part of a more encompassing enforcement concept. The security dimension of signatures only makes sense if one is really willing to embark upon enforcement (instead of accepting the loss). Enforcement in the Internet environment is not something that can be done on an ad hoc basis. The territorial division of the law hampers enforcement in the borderless Internet environment: each country has its own system for determining and administering law. Furthermore, traditional courts are not as yet tailored to the enforcement needs that originate from the Internet.

"Electronic Signatures is a slim volume, but not one that can be taken up lightly. It is solidly researched and maintains a healthy balance between larger principles and specific applications." *The Law and Politics Book*, Philip A. Dynia, Loyola University New Orleans "In all, *Electronic Signatures* has many informative features. The abbreviations in the beginning of the book offer a quick reference guide for literature in this area. Outlines at the start of each chapter are also quite helpful. The book is divided into clear sections and subsections with appropriate headings. The author uses easily understood language and deals well with the legal issues." *Jurimetrics - the Journal of Law, Science, and Technology* About the Author Senior Researcher, Center for Law, Public Administration and Informatization, Tilburg University.