

Combination Coding

New system solution for product security

Product security and traceability can now be combined into a single system solution. With product piracy being the cause of widespread losses and risks for producers and consumers, both the protection and the traceability of products are matters that cannot be ignored.

One of the smallest counterfeit-proof micro colour-coding systems available today is provided as forensically identified particles in a product known as SECUTAG®.

The product consists of microscopic colour coded particles that can be identified with the help of various levels of magnification. The particles contain their own unique combination of colours and are randomly distributed in inks and other materials that are used to create packaging components.

Users can check the authenticity of products by identifying and confirming that the correct code is present and carried within an ink or varnish on a security label for instance.

Barcodes, RFID or data-matrix codes have also established themselves in the area of product traceability. Now, the German company 3S Simons Security Systems GmbH has launched a new system solution that combines the counterfeit-proof micro colour-code system SECUTAG® with the logistical and traceability benefits of such well-tried automated tracking systems.

3S combines the benefits of both types of codes providing an ideal security system for authentication of products at primary, secondary and tertiary levels on packaging, labels or seals. Additionally, the system is seen as user-friendly as far as product authentication is concerned as producers, suppliers and consumers alike are able to trace their products and test them for originality.

The data-matrix-code, for example, can be user-defined and contain information such as product code, EAN-code, producer initials, manufacturing date, batch number and serial number. The product-ID is scanned and its content checked and matched with the information provided in a user database.

If the data and the information on the packing and in the database coincide, the originality of the product is established, although in cases where interrogation shows that the product has already been verified, it will be necessary to establish authenticity by checking for the presence of marking with SECUTAG®. This provides a double check that the micro colour-code particles are present when viewed under a simple microscope or automatic reader.

If this check fails then a counterfeit will have been detected and the necessary procedures need to be put in place to deal with such an attack.

The identification of a product as an original is seen as absolutely secure, since each producer has their own unique colour-coded



By combining all three levels of authentication, in this instance holograms, 2D barcodes and taggants, SECUTAG® provides an original track and trace mechanism by which authenticity can be established throughout the supply chain.

tag which can be accepted as evidence by international courts, serving global defence of industrial property rights and supporting the fight against unjustified damage claims.

SECUTAG® has remained forgery-proof for more than a decade and the cost-efficient integration into any kind of production line is easily accomplished. The combination of the colour-code with different traceability systems also covers the entire distribution channel as well as handling material logistics. "Now the customer has a very consistent instrument that integrates, records and verifies all data from production through to sales", says Rolf Simons from 3S.

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