Globalized markets – an easy job for forgers

Microscopic sized code – versatile and forgery-proof

Product piracy is a lucrative business. Counterfeiters economize costs for research and development. Brand owners suffer billion dollar deficits. On the other hand, people's lives and health are at stake. Political action and legal regulation will never be a substitute for effective product protection.

Producers and consumers can't afford to rest with brand piracy booming. Almost every industry is affected by counterfeiting. Products developed after long-term processes of high-priced technical research are the ones most attractive to counterfeiters. "This offers to forgers the cheapest R&D department worldwide", confirms Rolf Simons, security systems specialist at Simons. The result: Financial losses, damage to the original manufacturer's reputation, as well as cost-intensive product liability trials that can jeopardize a company's very existence. Furthermore, product piracy constitutes a real danger to consumers' lives and health. Trafficking counterfeit spare parts for cars and aircraft, forged pharmaceuticals or textiles for example, is considered part of organized crime.

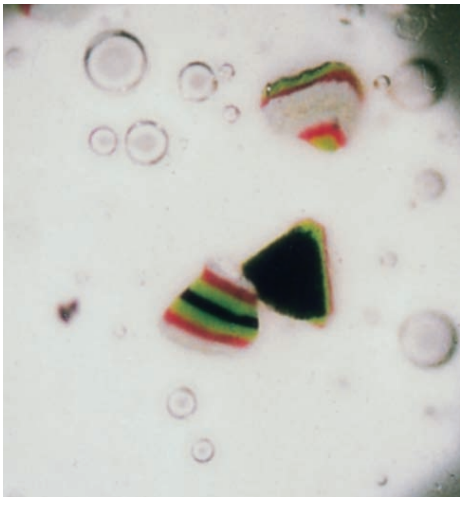
Colour-codes guarantee reliable product protection

Although the combat against trading counterfeit goods has become an issue in politics, custom procedures and courts, brand owners feel the growing need to find new approaches for protecting their products reliably and effectively. Since the 1970s, Simons has been doing research in product protection and security labelling. For more than ten years, the company has been offering SECUTAG® – a product protection system that has proven to be forgery-proof and has even been admitted in court as evidence in many cases. The system is based on micro colour-code particles providing authentication of products. The size of the codes varies between 5 and 45 micrometers (µm) depending on their application. Between 4 and 11 resistant melamine alkyd colour coatings are layered one upon another to form a customer-specific colour-code with an individual selection and sequence of colours. The code is invisible to the naked eye, but a standard pen microscope with about 100x magnification is sufficient for its identification. Like a genetic fingerprint, the colour-code identifies the product as genuine or counterfeit.

Forgery-proof code goes into action

The colour-codes are suited for miscellaneous applications due to their microscopic size and flexibility. They can be applied on almost every substrate. The melamine alkyd polymers can even be mixed with powders and liquids or added to bulk cargo. The code is printed via offset, gravure, letterpress, flexo, silkscreen or pad printing. Application with dispenser, paint-brush or varnishing units, as well as by spraying is also possible. Colour-code protection is suitable for all types of products: industrial goods like machines, spare parts and tools, as well as documents, packaging and textiles. Furthermore, micro colour-code particles can be used for identifying dangerous goods and explosives. Importantly, the system is easily integrated in the production line, while the actual cost per product amounts to a fraction of a cent.

Reliable identification 'on the spot '



Anti-counterfeit colour code under the microscope

Logistic efficiency and legal certainty

A product can be identified 'on the spot' provided that it has previously been equipped with a colour-code. "By tagging transport units like documents or pallets, distribution channels can be traced back from manufacturer via wholesaler and retailer", declares Nicole Golomb, Marketing Management at Simons. Seizing products at the border following the application from a brand owner is an effective weapon in the custom authorities' ongoing fight against the import and circulation of counterfeits. Detailed information on the genuine product must necessarily be made available by the brand owner in order to verify a product's authenticity. Product verification with colour-codes allows fast and target-oriented action by customs authorities. Public authorities, brand owners, company commissioners, and final consumers are also able to detect the code which makes it easy to identify whether a product is genuine or fake. Effective intervention against faked products is increasingly important as counterfeiting has developed into something of a boom industry. The solution lies in individual, versatile and low-price product protection.

For further information on product protection and SECUTAG® please contact - **Nicole.Golomb@secutag.com**