GUIDELINE

Seven Steps to Counterfeit Protection
SEVEN STEPS TO COUNTERFEIT PROTECTION

Your check list for implementing security concepts

To many manufacturers of brand-name products, the journey from the search for an effective security concept to its development and, ultimately, its implementation, seems time-consuming and expensive. But it only takes a few steps to achieve effective protection for both your brand(s) and your products. With our expertise gained from nearly 20 years’ experience in counterfeit protection, we’ll work with you to oust counterfeits from the market.

Step 1

Identifying the problem at hand

Ideally, you want preventative measures to protect your products from counterfeiters. However, manufacturers of brand-name products often do not realise there is a counterfeiting problem until fakes appear on the market. It then becomes important to identify the extent of the problem: by checking the manufacturer’s own markets, usually through employees in sales and distribution and in retail stores; by conducting research on online sales platforms such as ebay, wish and alibaba, but also on social media channels and messenger services such as Facebook, Whatsapp, Yupoo and WeChat; and by checking returned products.

What problems are you facing? Are there counterfeit products in circulation? Are grey-market goods being traded? Is there any tampering and theft in the logistics chain? Is warranty fraud being committed? Answering these questions often isn’t easy. We are happy to help you with this early stage of the project.
Choosing the solution provider

When choosing your provider for product protection solutions, the following criteria should be taken into consideration:

➔ **The security technology is not readily available:** The provider has developed the solution in-house and produces the security markings using technology found nowhere else in the world. This results in a particularly high level of protection against counterfeiting.  
**Note:** Generally speaking, this does not apply to embossed holograms, which are readily available on the market from a wide range of providers and can also be used by counterfeiters.

➔ **The security marking on each individual product is unique and can be checked to ensure it is authentic:** Each individual security label for a product carries a unique, customised piece of information. This gives each product an unambiguous, traceable identity.  
**Note:** This is not the case with simple embossed holograms, as they are produced using one motif which is reproduced identically multiple times.

➔ **The provider has global distribution:** As a result, your production sites can all be supplied with the security markings and provided with advice in their own local language.

➔ **The security feature can be communicated to various target groups:** Consumers must be able to check the security feature with the naked eye or with a smartphone in order to authenticate original products. Retailers, customs officials and your company’s own experts can also read other security levels and details using simple devices such as a magnifying glass or special reading devices.

➔ **The security feature can be integrated into existing labels:** The fewer changes to your production processes, the less time-consuming and expensive the process will be. This is especially true if the security features can be applied to existing labels using label-on-label technology or printed directly onto packaging.

➔ **Overt and covert security features are used in combination with one another:** This combination makes the security markings particularly secure.

➔ **The security feature is protected against tampering and removal:** There is a risk that product packaging will be collected and reused by counterfeiters after their first use. To protect against this, a seal is applied, which leaves behind a permanent visual mark (Tamper-Evident Effect) when the product is first opened. The packaging can then no longer be reused. This is particularly important for manufacturers of products in packaging that is disposed of in large quantities, such as wine bottles, for example.
Choosing the product to be protected

As the brand owner, you decide what is to be protected. Should only selected products be provided with the security feature, or the entire range? Security and cost are important factors when making this decision, of course. But market communication should also be considered, even at this stage. Because it is easiest to communicate in the market if all products are protected using a consistent security feature.

Defining and creating the security solution

Using a few basic questions as the starting point, we work with you to shape your security concept:

- What problem do you wish to tackle? Do product counterfeiting, grey-market trade, warranty fraud and/or theft in the logistics chain need to be combated?

- Who will be checking the security feature in the market? Is the security solution aimed at end consumers, retailers, customs officials and/or experts? Or should the security feature be concealed so that only experts can carry out verification?

- Should it be linked with existing marking standards? Is the security feature intended to be combined with industry-wide identification standards? Is the security feature required to meet statutory marking specifications, for example those of the pharmaceutical regulations in the EU and the United States?

- Is interaction with customers and/or Track & Trace also required? Should users receive detailed information about the product after the authenticity verification? This is done by integrating QR codes in the security label, for example, which users can scan on a smartphone. Should it be possible to trace the product using track & trace systems? Are CRM (customer relationship management) options such as loyalty schemes and competitions required?
What effect should the security feature have on the market? Should it be eye-catching and attract attention with its design? Or would you prefer it to be integrated discreetly in the product design?

Based on this information, we will develop a customised protection concept for you. It is also important that the security feature is tailored precisely to the surface texture and material of the product to be protected. In usage tests, we test the security solution for its resistance to specific temperatures, moisture and UV radiation and for its tamper-proof properties.

Step 5
Implementing the security feature in existing production processes

We work closely with you during technical implementation of the security solution in your product processes. This can be accomplished particularly efficiently when the security feature is added to an existing product label. As there is no need for any additional labelling steps.

The implementation stage includes not just the production processes but also your logistics processes. We can also supply to your external suppliers, subject of course to strict control of quantities and recipients of the security features (allocations).
Introducing the security feature on the market and actively communicating it

One crucial step is communication of the security solution to the market. Only when all those involved (experts, customs officials, retailers and/or consumers) are informed is it possible to achieve maximum protection. We are happy to use our experience and concrete examples of best practice to provide support with developing your communication strategy. The communication concept focuses on factors such as the target group, product type and industry. Appropriate methods may include landing pages on the manufacturer’s website, videos, leaflets, posters and/or email and newsletter campaigns.

Validating the protection concept

Once the new protection concept has been introduced on the market, the ongoing security measures must be documented and evaluated: Are production and logistics processes running smoothly? Is the security concept being embraced by target groups or does it need to be communicated even better? Is it possible to report a decline in the problems to be overcome (counterfeiting, grey-market trade, theft, warranty fraud, etc.)?

We work closely with you to continually carry out adjustments and updates (such as system updates or new product generations of security features) in order to ensure the best possible performance at all times.

Our short guide has given you an initial idea of how a counterfeit-protection concept can be implemented. Global brands from a range of industries put their trust in us, such as Peugeot, Bosch, Castel, Danone and Chloé. We are happy to answer all your questions about counterfeit protection without any obligation. Get in touch!

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LET YOUR PRODUCTS TALK
New Benefits from Digitalization

From the first discovery that tesa® products can be used for data storage, to unique marking technologies and digital tools – since our founding in 2001, we have developed into a leading solution provider for digital transformation at the product level.

For brands that want to go digital, we connect their products with the digital world. By creating unique markings and digital tools, we let your products communicate with consumers, exchange data, and interact with track & trace systems. Together, we analyse your needs, develop your customized solution, and manage everything from idea to implementation – and beyond.

In short, we LET YOUR PRODUCTS TALK and offer new benefits from digitalization.

As a full subsidiary of tesa®, we are part of tesa SE within the Beiersdorf Group. The profound experience of Beiersdorf in international brand management with its own global brands such as Nivea and Eucerin, as well as the expertise of tesa® with market-leading adhesive solutions, is merged with the pioneering digital competence of tesa scribos®. This exceptional combination enables us to design unique solutions for our international customers from all kinds of industries. Based on extensive consultations, we develop, customize and implement solutions – all from one source. Our clients include world-leading companies such as Peugeot, Bosch, Castel, Danone and Chloé.

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