



WHITE PAPER

PROTECT YOUR BRAND
9 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR
AUTHENTICATION PARTNER



Introduction

The global impact of counterfeiting and piracy is expected to reach US\$42 trillion by 2022¹. With this increasing volume of counterfeit goods across the globe, it is important to establish a brand protection strategy that protects what matters most- your customers, your brand and your revenue.

To determine the best strategy to meet your business needs, you need the right authentication partner by your side. This partner will work with you to develop a proactive strategy that will detect, identify and deter counterfeiters allowing you to protect your valuable assets. The following are nine questions to ask when selecting an authentication partner.

1. Do they have industry knowledge, expertise and experience?

Choose an authentication partner that offers consultative services—it's critical that your partner has experience with your products and understands your industry inside and out. Your partner should fully understand your challenges, articulate your exact problems and work with you to set goals for your program. In this way, a trusted relationship can be established that will provide:

- Common vision for the goals, resources and time management of your authentication plan
- Knowledge transfer on key topics such as global regulations and advanced technologies
- Development of a realistic risk assessment matrix
- Proactive approach to managing your supply chain and preventing problems

2. Do they have brand protection solutions that can be customized to meet specific needs?

Select an authentication partner who can fully customize a solution to fit not only the unique challenges of your industry, but also the needs of your specific organization. Your partner should have the necessary expertise on what types of security features are needed for different types of product packaging, such as tamper-evident seals, foils, labels, etc. This will allow you to take a proactive approach in combating counterfeit products. Look for a partner who offers:

- State-of-the-art color marking systems
- Multilayered security features
- Monitoring and enforcement plan
- Ability to function properly in a multi-channel distribution environment



3. Do they have a risk assessment plan that determines the level of security required for high-value products?

Determining the appropriate level of security required for a given product requires a thorough risk assessment strategy. The strategy provides insight into the risks facing the brand owner, the nature of product distribution, partners in the supply chain and the goals for the branded product. Certain luxury items and pharmaceuticals may warrant a high-level security solution (such as a security taggant ink and reader systems). In contrast, more common consumer items might warrant a lower cost, lower level security solution. The appropriate security level depends on the yearly amount being lost to counterfeiting and the value of the product to the brand owner. Determining the appropriate level of security to mitigate a counterfeiting issue needs to be based on thorough assessment and discussions with your authentication partner.

4. Do they have the capability to utilize a multilayered approach?

Decades of experience have proven that there is not a simple "silver bullet" technology that can be applied to all products for perfect brand protection security. Rather, a multilayered approach in which overt, covert and forensic features are applied in various ways is the most effective long-term solution against counterfeiting. These features can be incorporated into labels, closure seals, storage cartons and plastic, metal or glass packaging. Each type of feature serves a unique purpose, from overt holograms that allow end-users to quickly identify a branded product as genuine to covert markings that enable an inspector to identify the source of authenticity.



5. Are they able to integrate into my complex supply chain?

More than likely, your current supply chain is complicated and has lots of moving parts. A good authentication partner should be able to instantly integrate within that chain. In addition, the partner should be a “third-party agnostic” solution integrator without any prejudice towards other links in your supply chain. This partner will be able to objectively analyze your supply chain, identify where potential problems lie, and make recommendations on correcting them. Look for the following attributes:

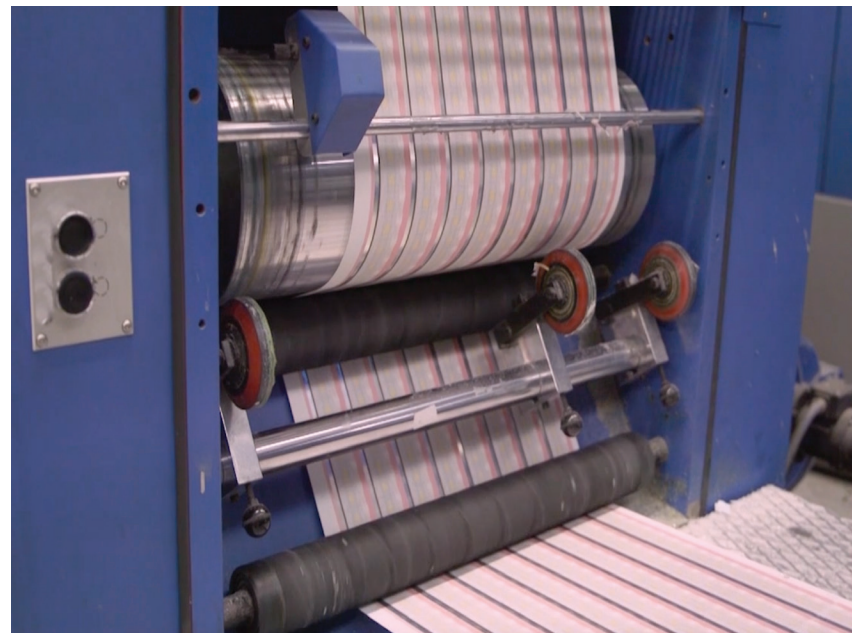
- Third-party printer, logistic partner certification and support
- Integration with existing systems and manufacturers
- Trial runs that provide actual samples for testing purposes/quality assurance

6. Do they provide printer certification, print trials and customer support?

An experience authentication partner should have the capability to certify and conduct print trials with your manufacturing printers. All manufacturing of security materials need to be produced in a secure facility under full chain-of-custody. A security audit is the best way to determine this. The brand owner must be confident that appropriate physical security and auditing procedures are maintained in the potential partner’s facility. It is important to only work with a partner that has quality accreditations that are appropriate for the subject matter and technologies involved.

7. Do they offer educational training to your staff?

Your authentication partner should have technical and commercial teams available to provide the appropriate level of expertise required to authoritatively advise on the features of their technology and its implementation to your product. They should be stable, reliable, referenceable, and knowledgeable of your market. In the case of a global brand, your authentication provider should have a global footprint including reach and experience in numerous countries. This includes global reach for delivery, servicing, technical support, dealing with customs and regulatory expertise to deal with regional and country-based compliance issues.



8. Do they have an implementation strategy?

Some potential partners might be great at strategy and planning and not-so-great at implementing those plans. It's important that the partner provides extensive documentation of their experience in implementing a strategy including a resume consisting of several multi-year customer relationships. In addition, your partner must understand your business inside out, become an integrated part of your team and extend that support to your third-party vendors. You need a partner who is flexible enough to adapt to your culture, your challenges and processes. A good implementation strategy should encompass:

- Execution across your entire global supply chain
- Training and enablement for all involved parties
- Flexibility to expand and grow with your changing needs

9. Are they willing to be a lifetime partner?

An authentication partner must be willing to see you through the good times as well as challenging ones. You need an ongoing relationship with your partner to stay one step ahead of the counterfeit issues. It's absolutely critical to work with a partner who offers ongoing customer support after the initial deal is done. An established, trusted customer support strategy is the only way for your program to succeed long-term. It should include:

- Dedicated project manager to handle programs
- Security features testing
- Ability to retain sample programs to ensure consistency
- Ongoing reports and result interpretation that provide actionable insights
- Regular auditing of third-party vendors for proper use of security materials

Conclusion

Regardless of who you select as your authentication partner, remember to discuss the important details up front. To help you do that, we have developed a [downloadable checklist](#) that will help you select the most compatible authentication partner for your brand.

Reducing the availability of counterfeit products is not easy—but it is necessary. The only way to get a grip on the counterfeiting problem is for all

the stakeholders involved— those within your company, third-party supply chain vendors, and of course your authentication partner—to cooperate fully in designing and implementing effective authentication methods.

Protect what matters most. Customer. Brand. Revenue.

About Authentix

As the authority in authentication solutions, Authentix helps customers thrive in supply and distribution chain complexity. We provide advanced authentication solutions for governments, central banks and commercial products, ensuring local economies grow, banknote security remains intact and commercial products have robust market opportunities. Our partnership approach and proven sector expertise inspires proactive innovation, helping customers mitigate risks to promote revenue growth and gain competitive advantage.



CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS

4355 Excel Parkway, Suite 100
Addison, TX 75001

www.authentix.com

NORTH AMERICA | EUROPE | MIDDLE EAST | AFRICA