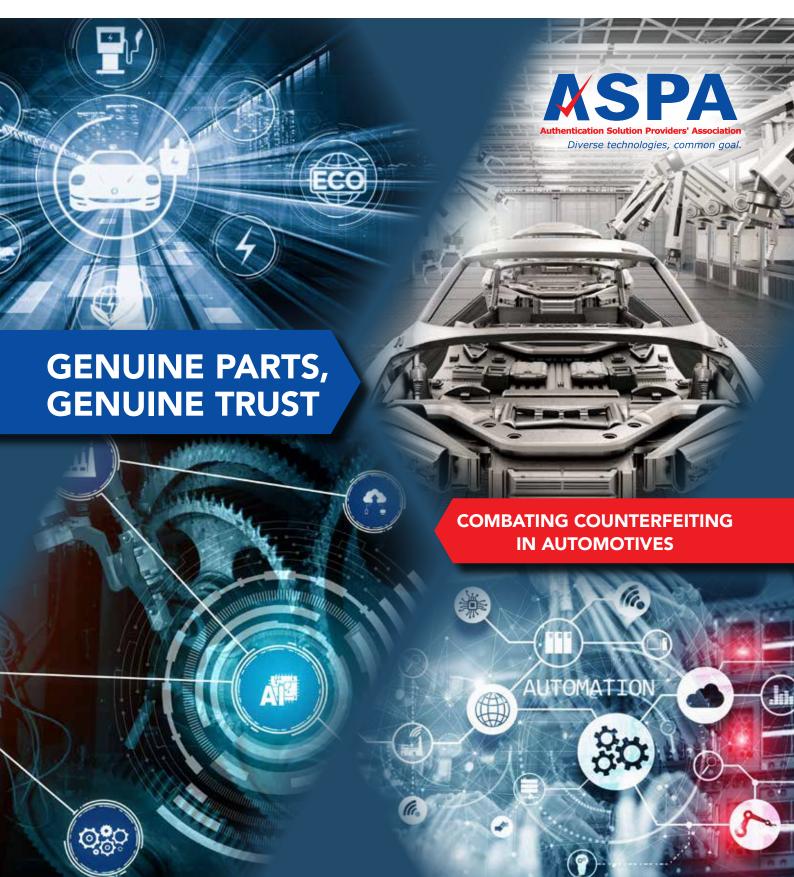
The UTHENTICATION

The Official magazine of The Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA)







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Protecting Brands, safeguarding Trust



ANTI-COUNTERFEITING

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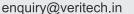
Veritech+, the comprehensive digital solution, secures every link in the supply chain throughout the entire product journey, from production to sale and even post-sales. It integrates robust physical and digital features, streamlining processes, enabling real-time visibility, and enhancing security against theft and counterfeiting.















The AUTHENTICATION Times

The official magazine of the Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA)

Editor's Corner



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 52nd edition of *The Authentication Times*. This issue delves into our industry's most significant developments and challenges today.

Our cover story, "Genuine Parts, Genuine Trust: Combating Counterfeiting in Automotives," explores the growing menace of counterfeiting in the Automotive Industry. This feature highlights how counterfeit automotive parts undermine brands and pose consumer risks, offering insights into global efforts to combat this issue.

We are excited to present an engaging conversation between ASPA and Mr. Sahil. Director. Helios Shoe Care. As counterfeit threats continue to rise, brand owners are at the forefront of the battle to protect their products and maintain consumer trust. While you enjoy our regular sections, please welcome newly joined ASPA members and check out the ASPA initiatives and collaboration.

Thank you for being part of this enriching journey. Enjoy the read!

I hope you find this issue informative and exciting. As always, I look forward to your feedback.

Yours Sincerely,

Puneet Maithani Editor. The Authentication Times

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About the Authentication Times

The Authentication Times is the official magazine published by Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA). The publication offers in-depth analysis, news, research, article, and expert opinion on the latest developments on Anti-counterfeiting, Brand Protection, Serialization and Traceability in and out of India. The editorial team welcomes news, contributions, and comments.

For further information, subscriptions, contributions and advertisement, please email your submission at vikram@aspaglobal.com or call at +91 7838208944

Counterfeiting Alert

Importance of Traceability in the Automotive Industry

When we think of the automotive industry, we often picture sleek designs, powerful engines, and state-of-the-art technology. Yet, behind the scenes, traceability is a vital component that often escapes attention, but it is essential for maintaining quality, safety, and efficiency. This article explores the critical role of traceability in the automotive sector, highlighting its importance, advantages, and practical applications.

Before delving deeper into its significance, let's demystify the term "traceability" in the automotive sector. In essence, traceability refers to the ability to systematically track and record the entire history, location, or usage of a product or component throughout its lifecycle.

Here's a closer examination of why traceability plays such a pivotal role:

Ensuring Quality and Safety

• **Defect Reduction:** Traceability systems are instrumental in swiftly identifying the source of defects, facilitating root cause analysis, and implementing corrective measures. Remarkably, a study by the Automotive Industry Action Group (AIAG) suggests that traceability systems can lead to a substantial 35% reduction in defect occurrences. [Source: AIAG]

Recall Management: When recalls become necessary due to safety concerns or manufacturing defects, traceability enables automakers to promptly pinpoint the affected vehicles or components.

Enhancing Efficiency and Cost Savings

Supply Chain Optimization: Traceability encompasses supply chain monitoring beyond the production line. Transparent supply chain tracking allows automotive identify bottlenecks, companies to streamline processes, minimize wastage, and achieve cost savings.

Efficient Maintenance: These records play a vital role in tracking the maintenance history of vehicles.

Regulatory Compliance

The automotive industry operates within a complex web of regulations and quality

standards. Traceability manufacturers in adhering to these stringent requirements, providing a comprehensive record of compliance that facilitates audits and inspections.

Enhancing Sustainability

Traceability can also contribute sustainability efforts. By accurately tracking the materials and components used in manufacturing, automakers can make informed decisions to reduce the environmental impact of their products

Improving Customer Satisfaction

Traceability fosters transparent communication between manufacturers and consumers. When customers can access information about the origin, quality, and maintenance history of their vehicles, they gain confidence in the brand. This trust translates into increased customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Statistics Highlighting the Impact

To solidify the importance of traceability in the automotive industry, let's delve into some impactful statistics:

- According to research published in the International Journal of Engineering Science Technology Research, traceability systems can lead to a remarkable 30% reduction in production defects, resulting in substantial cost savings.
- The Automotive Industry Action Group (AIAG) reports that traceability has contributed to an impressive 20% reduction in warranty claims for major automotive manufacturers.
- An **Accenture** study reveals that 87% of automotive executives deem traceability critical to ensuring vehicle quality and safety.
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) explicitly states that tracing vehicle parts and components is indispensable in promptly and effectively addressing safety recalls.

Source: https://www.aeologic.com/blog

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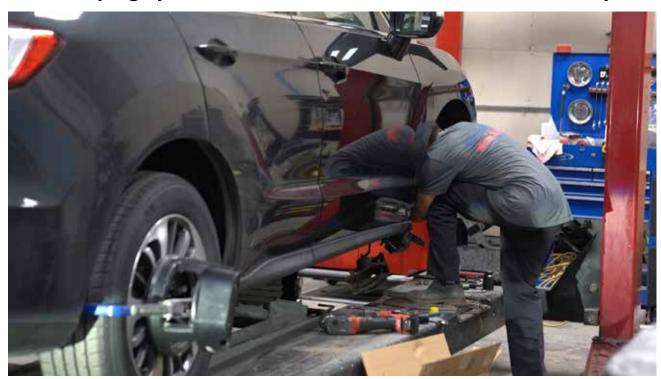




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Anti-Counterfeiting - Initiatives

New campaign puts the 'Brakes on Fakes' for counterfeit auto parts



More than 2,11,000 counterfeit auto parts were seized in 2024, almost doubling the number from the previous year; fake airbags increased tenfold

Washington, D.C.—A new campaign by the National Intellectual Property Rights Coordination Center (IPR Center) — "Put the Brakes on Fakes" — was launched this week to warn consumers about counterfeit airbags and the potentially deadly consequences of fake auto parts.

Auto professionals are also urged to take note and beware of obtaining airbags and auto parts at prices that are "too good to be true."

The campaign was launched with the support of Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the Automotive Anti-Counterfeiting Council (A2C2) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The campaign follows their recent consumer airbag alert urging used car buyers and owners to beware of cheap, substandard replacement airbag inflators that can cause death or serious injury in a crash.

"The rise in counterfeit automotive parts and equipment continues to be an alarming

upward trend," said IPR Center Director Ivan Arvelo. "This campaign, which is not just an initiative or routine consumer safety alert, is a movement to save lives, prevent the use of counterfeit parts, and ensure consumers and auto repair professionals are informed about critical risks associated with counterfeit and substandard auto parts."

CBP has seized more than 211,000 counterfeit automotive parts in fiscal year 2024, almost doubling the number of counterfeit automotive parts seized the previous year. Of those, CBP has seized more than 490 counterfeit airbags — more than 10 times the number of counterfeit airbags seized in fiscal year 2023.

also has approximately 40 open investigations into counterfeit automotive parts. It is also an international problem that HSI is helping to combat. In a report just this week from The Standard, a tip from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security led to the arrest of three men in London after a raid for

Anti-Counterfeiting - Initiatives

counterfeit airbags believed to be imported from China to the UK. And here in the U.S., a Memphis man recently pleaded guilty to trafficking counterfeit airbags from China and selling them to repair shops.

"CBP is working with its government and industry partners to keep hazardous counterfeit airbags out of supply chains and out of your vehicle. Consumers can stay safe by purchasing airbags from reputable retailers and repair shops. If a deal is too good to be true, it probably is, with potentially dangerous consequences," said IPR Center Deputy Director Brandon Lord, who also serves as the executive director of CBP's Trade Policy and Programs Directorate.

CBP officers on the front lines at U.S. ports of entry are monitoring imports—particularly those from China—for shipments suspected of containing counterfeit automotive parts.

In fiscal year 2023, CBP and HSI seized about 20.000 shipments containing goods that Intellectual violated **Property** Rights, equating to nearly 23 million counterfeit

items. The total estimated manufacturer's suggested retail price of the seized goods would have amounted to over \$2.75 billion had they been genuine parts. Out of those shipments, almost 100,000 items were counterfeit automotive goods, with an MSRP of over \$10 million.

"Dangerous, substandard aftermarket airbags can, and have, injured and killed people in otherwise survivable crashes. You could be at risk if you own a used vehicle and are unfamiliar with its crash history. NHTSA encourages everyone to learn about their vehicle's history, and, if the vehicle has been in a crash, to arrange for an airbag inspection by a reputable mechanic. Taking this important step could save your life or that of someone you love," NHTSA Deputy Administrator Sophie Shulman said.

"As consumers, we trust that our vehicles are equipped with safety features that will protect us in critical moments," said Automotive Anti-Counterfeiting Council President Robert Stewart. "Counterfeit airbags and other replacement parts undermine this trust, posing severe risks to lives by failing in critical situations."

An Automotive Anti-Counterfeiting Council study, The Online Sale of Counterfeit Automotive Parts, revealed a dangerous discovery during an airbag inspection. Instead



of the mechanisms that allow proper airbag deployment, a rag covered with silicone putty was discovered inside the counterfeit airbag assembly.

While HSI, CBP and partners work around the clock to stop the illicit flow of unsafe auto parts into the United States, consumers can help protect themselves and others by arming themselves with information.

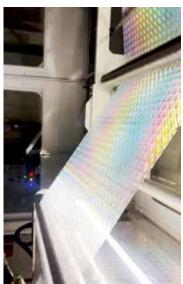
If consumers—and auto repair professionals suspect they have purchased a counterfeit automotive part, they can consult an original equipment manufacturer for advice on identifying and replacing the counterfeit part.

Source: https://www.aftermarketmatters.com/



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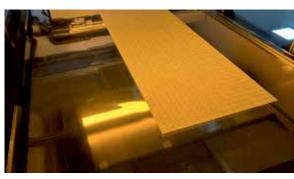
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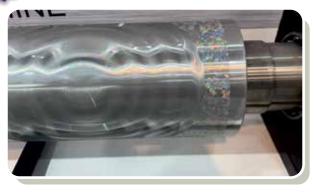
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"Genuine Parts, Genuine Trust: Combating Counterfeiting in Automotives"

The Indian automobile industry has historically been a good indicator of the economy's health, as the automobile sector plays a key role in both macroeconomic expansion and technological advancement. India enjoys a strong position in the global heavy vehicles market as it is the largest tractor producer, second-largest bus manufacturer, and third-largest heavy truck manufacturer globally. India's annual production of automobiles in FY23 was 25.9 million vehicles. India has a strong market in terms of domestic demand and exports. In April 2024, the total production of passenger

vehicles*, three-wheelers, two-wheelers, and quadricycles was 23,58,041 units. In FY23, total automobile exports from India stood at 47,61,487. This sector's share of the national GDP increased from

2.77% in 1992-1993 to around 7.1% currently. It employs about 19

million people directly and indirectly.

Counterfeiting is highly prevalent not only in cars but also in two-wheelers, buses, and trucks. It is also highly prevalent in lubricant oil and all other auto spare parts; according to a service centre survey, counterfeit mechanical parts are the most common, followed by electrical and interior parts.

Industry experts and service centers estimate the extent of counterfeiting in the automotive segment to be 20-25%. A study by FICCI, the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association, and Industry sourcing indicated that nearly 30% of automobile components in the aftermarket in India were counterfeit.

Counterfeit parts pose enormous safety risks.

According to a report by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MORTH) and the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers Association (SIAM), 20% of road accidents in

India were because of mechanical failure of auto components, with several of these accidents on account of faulty and counterfeit parts. Yet, India lacks mandated safety standards for aftermarket products, which means that the import of counterfeit products cannot be checked, nor is it possible to gauge the unorganized sectors' production and trading of counterfeit parts. Additionally, genuine parts are not readily available, especially for older vehicle variants, which results in the purchase of counterfeits.

> About 90% of service centers surveyed felt that using counterfeit auto parts was moderately harmful. And 40% of these stated that they could identify fake products by looking at the branding and design of the product.

In the automotive segment, end-users are usually not directly involved in purchasing auto components. These are mostly purchased by mechanics, garage owners, and service centres on behalf of the end-users. The lower cost of counterfeit products is a major driver for the purchase of counterfeit products. Still, according to consumer survey, 36% of customers willingly purchased counterfeit auto parts, of which 41% bought them due to lower cost or lack of product availability.

Essentially, counterfeit auto parts have the following issues:

- *Pitman arms with misspelled names and do not meet the minimum requirements of OEM fatigue test.
- *Brake pads are made of poor-quality steel backing plates, with weak or no shim bonding to the back plate. Additionally, brake pads are made of inferior materials, such as compressed wood chips and sawdust.



*Counterfeit windshields fit poorly, causing wind noise, leakage, and appearance issues. They are often not made of shatterproof glass. Furthermore, untested fuel filters are sold in attractive packaging.

*High-Security MRP Labels: Most brands have a high-security MRP label on spare part products for easy identification. These labels comply with stringent quality norms and meet the brand's standards.

Types of Counterfeiting:

Duplicates	The products are completely fake and are often used in the after-sale market because of their low costs and visual similarity.
Defective original parts	In cases where manufacturers outsource production of components, certain production overruns of legitimate parts find their way to the grey market, being sold alongside counterfeit, recycled or stolen goods. The mixed sale of unauthorized 'legitimate' goods and counterfeits makes it difficult to control the market, and differentiate legal from illegal items.
Tampering/ Re-packaging	Counterfeit automotive components entering the supply chain through local manufacturing. import from China in the form of fake packaging, or in original packaging sourced from mechanics or service stations.

Most commonly counterfeit parts and accessories

Engine and exhaust	Suspension and braking	Body and structural	Electrical components
Oil filters, air filters, distributor caps, fuel filters, coolant and transmission fluids, bearings, oil pumps, water pumps, spark plugs, piston an piston rings, lubricants, sealing rings	tie rods, barkers, brake linings	Sheet metals, bumpers, windshields	Alternators spares, head lamps, tail lamps, wipers, starter motor spares

Source: ASPA-CRISEL Report

Methods Adopted by the Industry to **Combat Counterfeiting**

OEMs conduct regular raids against traders and manufacturers dealing in counterfeit products. The companies have in-house intellectual property rights enforcement teams, which work with local police to prevent counterfeiting.

Companies in the automotive segment are also selling auto parts directly to end-users and using anti-counterfeiting measures, such as holograms on products, security MRP labels with holograms, bar codes, and QR codes on packaging. The brand protection team can quickly identify these during distributor audits, as well as by incentivizing mechanics, garage owners, and service providers to use genuine parts by providing them cashback/monetary benefits for each genuine product used.

*Laser-Marking Serialization: Laser-marking the data matrix for traceability and security purposes is an essential aspect of the Automotive Industry. Industrial Laser markers and marking systems are ideal for marking legible alphanumeric serial codes, 1D barcodes, and 2D data matrix codes on nearly all materials, including gears and bearings.

*Creation of a Separate Brand: To address counterfeiting in auto parts, Maruti Suzuki has created a separate brand, Maruti Genuine Parts, or MGP. There are more than 480 MGP retail outlets that supply parts to Maruti Suzuki workshops and local garages. There are also over 80 MGP distributors that store parts and accessories, such as brake pads, coolants, bumpers, and clutches. These can be ordered online in 100+ cities across India through the Maruti Suzuki Genuine Accessories website.

Brand Insights

"Insights Exchange: ASPA in conversation with Mr. Sahil Gupta, Director, Helios India on Safeguarding Authenticity"

How are you leveraging anti-counterfeiting technologies to safeguard shoe care products from counterfeiters? Why is this critical for consumer safety and brand reputation in the FMCG sector?

At Helios, we prioritize consumer safety and brand integrity by implementing effective anti-counterfeiting technologies. To protect our shoe care products, we use unique product serialization and tamper-evident packaging, ensuring that every item can be easily authenticated by consumers. We also embed QR codes on our packaging, allowing customers to verify product authenticity and access official information directly.

These measures are critical in safeguarding consumer trust and ensuring safety, as counterfeit products can harm users and tarnish our brand reputation, especially in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, where product traceability is essential.

What innovative methods can be adopted to help customers and retailers verify the authenticity of shoe care products, such as polishes, sprays, and protectors, at the point of purchase?

Adding unique QR codes to packaging allows instant authentication through a quick scan using a smartphone. Tamper-evident labels or holographic seals provide a clear visual indicator of product authenticity. Additionally, a mobile app where users can verify products by scanning barcodes or entering unique codes provides convenience. These innovative methods can be implemented.

How can consumer education and awareness campaigns contribute to combating counterfeiting in the shoe care product



Mr. Sahil Gupta. Director, Helios India

industry, ensuring customers only purchase genuine and safe products?

Consumer education and awareness campaigns can play a vital role in combating counterfeiting in any industry. By educating customers on how to identify genuine products, such as checking for QR codes, tamper-evident seals, authentic and packaging, we can help them make informed choices. Awareness initiatives, including online tutorials, social media campaigns, and instore demonstrations, highlights the risks of counterfeit products, such as poor quality and potential harm to shoes or health. These efforts not only discourage counterfeit sales but also strengthen trust in the brand, ensuring customers consistently choose genuine, safe products.

Industry News

ASPA Expands International Presence



New Delhi, India - November 29, 2024-Puneet Maithani, Associate Director of Industry Affairs at the Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA), delivered an insightful keynote titled 'ASPA: Leading the Fight Against Counterfeiting and Ensuring Product Authenticity' at the ASIA Security Conference & Exhibition in Singapore. The event is a prestigious event focused on anti-counterfeiting, trademark, and brand protection.

In his address, Puneet highlighted ASPA's growing global presence and its strategic efforts to fight counterfeiting by promoting the innovative anti-counterfeiting solutions offered by its members internationally. He emphasized ASPA's ongoing work to facilitate collaboration with international delegations, helping to align anti-counterfeiting initiatives globally and expand the reach of ASPA members' advanced technologies.

Puneet elaborated on ASPA's core objectives, focusing on global collaboration stakeholders to share best practices and foster awareness about the issue of counterfeiting. He also discussed how ASPA's members actively contribute to the fight against counterfeiting with cutting-edge technologies such as security design, holograms, NFC/RFID, track-and-trace solutions, and blockchain, collectively safeguarding over 15,000 brands worldwide.

During his keynote, Puneet emphasized ASPA's commitment to its four primary pillars: Awareness, Advocacy, Research, and

Industry News



Innovation. He spoke of the association's successful efforts to raise awareness and educate stakeholders and the public, stressing the importance of proactive measures in tackling counterfeit goods. He highlighted ASPA's panel discussions, webinars, and sector-specific forums, such as the Traceability & Authentication Forum, which facilitate direct collaboration with international delegations and strengthen global anti-counterfeiting efforts.

In addition, Puneet showcased ASPA's significant research contributions, including the ASPA-CRISIL State of Counterfeiting Report, which provides valuable data and insights that inform strategies for combating counterfeiting, benefiting the Indian market and international communities.

Concluding his keynote, Puneet emphasized the invaluable benefits of ASPA membership, which provides organizations with access to the latest technologies, research, and a robust global network of experts. He reinforced that ASPA's initiatives are helping to open up new international opportunities for companies to expand their reach and stay ahead of emerging counterfeiting threats.

The ASIA Security Conference & Exhibition is a premier platform for experts, brand owners, and policymakers to discuss the latest anti-counterfeiting, trademark protection, and brand security strategies. Puneet's keynote highlighted ASPA's growing international influence and critical role in promoting its members' anti-counterfeiting solutions while fostering collaboration with global delegations to safeguard brands and products worldwide.



In the dynamic realm of innovation and collaboration, ASPA (Authentication Solution Providers Association) has embarked on groundbreaking collaborations, aligning with renowned organizers to fortify the industry and provide immense benefits to ASPA members. Let's delve into these exciting ventures:

CII TG Packcon 2024

Leading packaging conference and exhibition scheduled for 12th & 13th December, 2024 at The Park Hotel, Hyderabad.

• 16th PrintPack India 2025

The Indian Printing Packaging & Allied Manufacturers' Machinery Association (IPAMA) is pleased to announce the expansion of its 16th Printpack India Exhibition, scheduled from February 1-5, 2025, at the India Expo Centre, Greater Noida. Responding to overwhelming demand from exhibitors, IPAMA has opened the 12th Hall, an upstairs hall, to accommodate additional participants. ASPA is supporting the event as a Supporting Partner.

Intralogistics & Warehousing Expo 2024: Opportunities Maximized

The Intralogistics & Warehousing Expo 2024 was successfully held from December 19-21, 2024, at the KTPO Convention Centre in Whitefield, Bengaluru. The event served as an outstanding platform for businesses in the logistics and supply chain sectors, enabling them to connect with the growing demand from last-mile delivery (LMD) companies. ASPA proudly supported the expo as a Supporting Association, contributing to its success by enhancing its credibility and industry outreach.

Packvision 2025 (concurrent: Label **Technology Show)**

Packvision Expo is set to return for its second edition on 16-17-18 May 2025 at the Pune International Exhibition and Convention Centre, promising to further boost Pune's status as an expanding hub for packaging innovation. ASPA is supporting the event as a Supporting Association.

These collaborations exemplify ASPA's proactive approach to fostering innovation, promoting security, and championing cuttingedge solutions in Food and Beverage, Beauty and Cosmetics, Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals, Packaging, Brand Security, Security Services, Logistics, and Technology. ASPA continues to be a driving force, navigating the industry toward a future of enhanced security and technological excellence. Stay tuned for more exciting developments as ASPA continues to shape the landscape of authentication and traceability solutions..

ASPA welcomes our recently joined members:









UNITE THE
PHYSICAL &
DIGITAL WITH
OUR INNOVATIVE
SHIELD AGAINST
COUNTERFEITING



Anti-Counterfeiting Products



Security OVDs (Holograms)



High Security 3D Speciality Labels



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Holographic & UV Packaging Films



Holographic Security Shrink Sleeves

and much more...

Digital Solutions



Supply Chain Management



Product Authentication



Track and Trace



Warranty Management

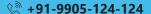


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