

The AUTHENTICATION

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



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AUTHENTIC APPAREL**

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The AUTHENTICATION Times

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

Editor's Corner



Dear Readers

Welcome to this milestone 50th edition of The Authentication Times. In this issue, we delve into some of our industry's most significant developments and challenges today.

Our coverage begins with a critical update on the robust anti-counterfeiting measures taken by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in the recently concluded Paris 2024 Olympics. As the Games approached, the IOC implemented stringent safeguards to protect consumers and maintain the integrity of athlete support, ensuring that only genuine merchandise reached the public.

In our anti-counterfeiting segment, we spotlight recent enforcement actions in the US targeting counterfeit luxury goods. If you're carrying fake Nike, Adidas, or Gucci items into the country, be warned—these could be confiscated or destroyed. This underscores the increasing vigilance and enforcement efforts to curb the counterfeit market.

Our cover story, "Counterfeit Couture: The Global Threat to Authentic Apparel," explores the growing menace of counterfeit fashion. This feature highlights how counterfeit goods undermine brands and pose consumer risks, offering insights into global efforts to combat this issue.

We also look forward to the upcoming ASPA AGM 2024 and our exciting webinar series, which promise valuable discussions and updates on the latest anti-counterfeiting strategies and innovations. While you enjoy our regular sections, 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

Contents

Description	Page
COUNTERFEITING	4
IOC puts robust anti-counterfeiting efforts in place to protect consumers and maintain athlete support ahead of Paris 2024	
ANTI – COUNTERFEITING	5-6
Carrying fake Nikes, Adidas or Gucci to the US? Your item could be confiscated or destroyed.	
COVER STORY	7&10
"Counterfeit Couture: The Global Threat to Authentic Apparel"	
ASPA AGM 2024	11-12
ASPA WEBINAR SERIES	13
INDUSTRY NEWS	14-15

EDITORIAL BOARD

Issue Editor: Puneet Maithani

Publication Committee: Manoj Kochar, Nakul Pasricha, Luv D Shriram, Ankit Gupta, Vikas Jain

Issue Designer: SR Films / Gajender Singh

Published by: Corporate Communication, Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA) 521, 5th Floor, Ansal Tower 38, Nehru Place, New Delhi – 110019, India

Email: info@aspaglobal.com

Website: www.aspaglobal.com

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.

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IOC puts robust anti-counterfeiting efforts in place to protect consumers and maintain athlete support ahead of Paris 2024

With the support of the relevant authorities and key actors, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Paris 2024 Organising Committee are taking decisive action to combat intellectual property (IP) infringements, including counterfeit Olympic-branded merchandise. These efforts are vital for protecting consumers and ensuring that the revenues generated from official merchandise sales can continue to support the development of sports and athletes worldwide. The financial impact of counterfeit merchandise on athletes and sports development is significant, making these efforts all the more urgent.

Counterfeit items, especially those featuring the official mascots of the Games, not only devalue official merchandise but also violate the rights of commercial partners. More importantly, these products pose significant safety risks to consumers due to their use of substandard materials and manufacturing processes. This underscores the urgent need for anti-counterfeiting efforts to protect consumers from potential harm.

The IOC's anti-counterfeiting programme is not just about preventing the sale of fake merchandise: it's about ensuring that every purchase of Olympic and Paralympic-branded merchandise directly supports athletes and upholds the high standards of the Olympic Movement. These measures are designed to be consumer-friendly, allowing buyers to easily verify the authenticity of their purchases and feel confident in their support of the Olympic cause.

Our aim is to support consumers to ensure they are protected and have the reassurance they are accessing high-quality, official merchandise. Importantly, through our solidarity funding model, the revenue generated through the sale of official licensed products supports our efforts in giving back 90 per cent of our revenues to athletes and sports development worldwide. This amounts to USD 4.2 million daily. This contribution is particularly important in regions that solely depend on solidarity funding from the IOC: By Anne-Sophie Voumard (Managing Director, IOC Television and Marketing Services)

Collaborating closely with international law enforcement agencies and anti-counterfeiting associations, the IOC has strengthened its efforts to detect and intercept counterfeit goods before they reach the market. For example, in 2023, the IOC enhanced its partnership with the World Customs Organisation and joined the European Commission's Memorandum of Understanding on the Sale of Counterfeit Goods on the Internet, significantly bolstering its ability to combat online sales of fake merchandise. Additionally, as part of its activities, the IOC provides regular training to law enforcement authorities worldwide to facilitate the detection of Olympic counterfeit products. In preparation for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, more than 20,000 law enforcement officials have been trained.

The revenues generated from sale of official merchandise provide important funding for the IOC's various athlete support programmes and the development of sports globally. These include Olympic Solidarity Scholarships, which help athletes train and compete at the highest levels, and initiatives like Olympism365 and Athlete365, which provide continuous support and development opportunities for athletes globally. Purchases of unofficial merchandise deprive these programmes of crucial funding.

Just days before the start of the Olympic Games Paris 2024, the IOC and the Paris 2024 Organising Committee are executing a multifaceted plan to protect the Olympic and Paralympic properties and the rights of partners and licensees. The plan aims also to prevent the unlawful resale of tickets and hospitality packages, ensuring that fans enjoy a safe and genuine Olympic experience. With these measures, the IOC and the Paris 2024 Organising Committee reaffirm their commitment to protecting consumers and safeguarding the rights of their commercial partners.

Source: <https://olympics.com/ioc/news/ioc-puts-robust-anti-counterfeiting-efforts-in-place-to-protect-consumers-and-maintain-athlete-support-ahead-of-paris-2024>

Carrying fake Nikes, Adidas or Gucci to the US? Your item could be confiscated or destroyed

With the US stepping up its surveillance of counterfeit product smuggling, travelling to the nation with fake Adidas, Nike, or Gucci products might get you into trouble. In recent months, the US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) has intensified efforts to intercept counterfeit goods, confiscating numerous fake luxury items from Indian travellers, reported TOI.

Many students and visitors arriving in the United States have reported having their counterfeit Puma, Adidas, or Nike items seized at ports of entry. Under CBP regulations, individuals can carry one counterfeit item of each type for personal use, such as one shirt, handbag, or pair of shoes. Any quantity exceeding this limit is prohibited. A schoolteacher from Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, shared her experience with TOI, "I traveled to the US to meet my son in Texas, carrying eight shirts, four trousers, socks, and a pair of shoes. Officials checked my bags, questioned me about the goods, and confiscated everything, claiming they were counterfeit. They even threatened me with criminal charges."

The teacher described how some of her clothing was destroyed in front of her. "I lost

goods worth at least Rs 30,000," she lamented, urging authorities to prominently display these rules for the benefit of travelers.

"It is very common in India to buy copies of big brands. I had no idea it was a serious offense to carry them in my luggage," TOI quoted a 27-year-old student from Hyderabad, who faced a similar situation. The student, studying in California, had multiple items discarded by customs officials. CBP's heightened scrutiny follows the seizure of 23 million counterfeit goods from nearly 20,000 shipments in 2023. A CBP representative explained, "This violates Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). If these goods were genuine, their value would be \$2.7 billion. Counterfeit goods threaten economic vitality, national security, and public safety. Bringing them into the United States may result in civil or criminal penalties and purchasing them often supports criminal activities such as forced labour or human trafficking."

Travelers have been advised to be cautious and aware of these regulations to avoid severe penalties and the potential loss of valuable belongings.

Source: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com>

DCGI introduces new traceability rules to address fake medicines issue

India's leading drug regulator, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), has established standard operating procedures and guidelines to enhance product traceability across the supply chain. This move, reported Livemint, is in response to the increasing threat posed by counterfeit and substandard medicines.

The DCGI has formulated these new good-distribution practices to address the critical challenge of ensuring product traceability, which has been hindered by insufficient documentation throughout the distribution

network, the report said. The ability to trace products seamlessly could prove vital in identifying the exact point in the supply chain where adulteration occurred, or counterfeit drugs were introduced.

This initiative gains importance as the Indian pharmaceutical sector has come under international scrutiny following accusations linking fake cough syrups produced in India to the deaths of children in Gambia, Cameroon, and Uzbekistan. During the DCGI's drugs consultative committee meeting in June, it was resolved to integrate "Good Distribution

Anti-Counterfeiting - Initiatives

Practices” into the Drugs and Cosmetic Rules, 1945, as a formal Schedule. The discussion highlighted that due to the non-mandatory nature of existing guidelines, manufacturers have not been assured of maintaining proper drug storage conditions during transit to wholesale and retail levels.

The draft guidelines on good distribution practices have been aligned with World Health Organization standards, and stakeholders have been given 30 days to provide their feedback and suggestions before these rules are finalised. The Drugs & Cosmetics Act of 1940, along with the Drugs & Cosmetic Rules

of 1945, sets out the conditions necessary for selling, stocking, exhibiting, or offering for sale or distribution of drugs throughout India.

According to the draft guidelines, individuals involved in the handling, storage, and distribution of pharmaceutical products — such as manufacturers, wholesalers, brokers, suppliers, distributors, logistics providers, traders, transport companies, forwarding agents, and their employees — are typically responsible for maintaining the original quality of these products. To ensure this, all parties involved in the distribution chain must adhere to the standards of good distribution practice.

Addressing the issue of counterfeit and substandard drugs

The guidelines emphasise procedures to ensure a safe, transparent, and secure distribution system, including product traceability throughout the supply chain.

They mandate procedures to ensure document traceability of received and distributed products to facilitate product recall.

Everyone involved in the drug supply chain must ensure that all pharmaceutical products are accompanied by documentation that allows for tracing throughout distribution channels, from the manufacturer to the importer, and ultimately to the entity responsible for selling or supplying the product to the patient or their agent.

Maintaining records to prevent the spread of spurious drugs

Records, including expiry dates and batch numbers, must be part of a secure distribution documentation system that enables traceability. Dispatches must contain sufficient information to allow for the traceability of pharmaceutical products.

“Such records shall enable the recall of a batch of a product, if necessary, as well as the investigation of spurious or potentially spurious pharmaceutical products. The assigned batch number and expiry date of pharmaceutical products must be recorded at the point of receipt to facilitate traceability,” the guidelines state. Additionally, the guidelines require

that senior management of each entity be responsible for establishing, resourcing, implementing, and maintaining an effective quality system, with periodic meetings to review progress.

According to government data, India is home to approximately 3,000 drug companies and 10,500 manufacturing units. The country's drug manufacturing industry is expected to grow from its current value of \$50 billion to \$65 billion by the end of 2024 and is projected to reach \$130 billion by 2030.

Source: Business-Standard.com

Counterfeit Couture: The Global Threat to Authentic Apparel

Counterfeiting in the apparel industry has reached alarming levels, with recent findings indicating that it constitutes for a substantial portion of the counterfeit market. The industry faces billions of dollars in annual losses due to the infiltration of fake products into online and offline markets. According to CRISIL's consumer survey, the level of counterfeiting in this segment is expected to be between 30% and 40%.

One of the significant findings from the ASPA CRISIL report highlights the critical role of e-commerce in exacerbating the counterfeit problem. Online platforms, particularly those with less stringent verification processes, have become hotbeds for selling counterfeit goods. The report underscores that a considerable percentage of consumers have unknowingly purchased counterfeit apparel online, mistaking it for authentic products due to the high level of sophistication in counterfeit manufacturing.

Stakeholder/reports for counterfeit expectations-Apparel

Stakeholders		Counterfeit expectation
Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (Luxury apparel)		~5%
Industry experts/ brands: FICCI MASCRATE report 2019		50-60% in apparels and 40% in sporting goods by volume
Manufacturers/ retailers/ distributors		25-35%
Survey: Consumer's perception		30-40%
Associations/ Industry experts		20-30%
Consumers	Many customers do not mind buying first copies of luxury or apparel products. Customers aged 20-30 largely prefer buying counterfeits on account of price sensitivity, more options at a similar price, and latest fashion trends.	
Retailers and distributors	Retailers and distributors have a long association with brands and believe counterfeit apparels are sold by the unorganised segment. The unorganised segment contributes to nearly 60% of the Ready Made Garments market in value terms and is a major contributor to counterfeits. The market has cheap replicas of the well-known brands as well as good first copies of branded products that are difficult to identify.	
Industry players - manufacturers/ industry experts	<p>Apparels are among the most counterfeit products, and counterfeiters have copied many famous and costly brands.</p> <p>The unorganised segment, e-commerce and reseller platforms make it easy for counterfeiters to sell fake products. Many consumers knowingly purchase fake branded items, especially luxury items such as watches, purses, shoes and apparel. Consumers are aware that the utility of the particular product may not be long-lasting as the original one, but they want the society to believe they are consuming quality material. Consumers think that counterfeiting is acceptable as long as it does not have any adverse impact on their health or well-being.</p>	

Source: CR/SIL MI&A



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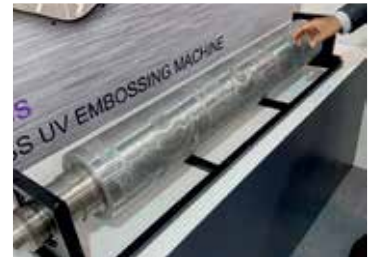
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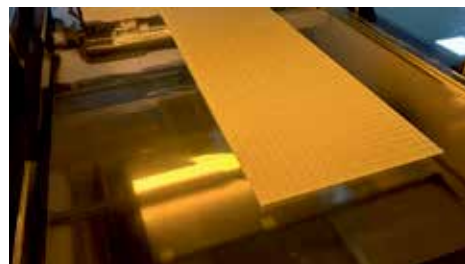
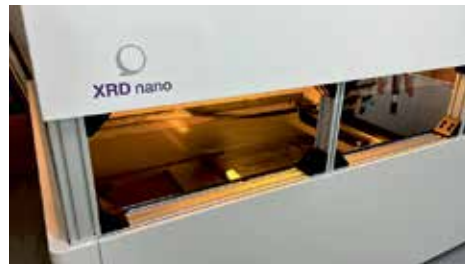
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Ridham Jangira
M. +91 98213 99968
E. ridham@xrdsnano.com



Guri Dhillon
M. +44 7562 987952
E. guri@xrdsnano.com

XRD Nano Limited, - A-6 & A-8, Spithead Business Centre, Newport Road, Sandown, PO36 9PH, United Kingdom

Moreover, the environmental impact of counterfeiting is substantial, as counterfeit operations often disregard environmental regulations. The ASPA CRISIL report further reveals that counterfeit goods contribute to a shadow economy, resulting in significant

government revenue losses due to evaded taxes and duties. This environmental negligence has increased pollution and waste, further compounding the adverse effects of the counterfeit apparel industry.

City wise extent of counterfeits-Apparel

DELHI NCR	AGRA	JALANDHAR	MUMBAI	AHMEDABAD	JAIPUR
23%	13%	17%	12%	50%	14%
INDORE	KOLKATA	PATNA	CHENNAI	BANGALORE	HYDERABAD
89%	47%	29%	42%	15%	35%

Source: Consumer survey, CR/SIL MI&A

Advanced technologies such as blockchain for traceability and RFID for authentication are recommended to combat these issues. These technologies can help ensure the authenticity of products throughout the supply chain. The ASPA CRISIL report also advocates for increasing consumer awareness about the

broader implications of purchasing counterfeit goods, including their potential support of illicit activities. Additionally, the findings suggest that more robust legal measures and enhanced international collaboration are essential to effectively curb the spread of counterfeit apparel globally.

Instances of counterfeit apparel seizures in India

Deceptive counterfeiting	Non-deceptive
Consumers unknowingly purchase counterfeit apparel at the price of an original product	Consumers knowingly/willingly purchase counterfeit products at very low price
Lack of awareness/ fake brand websites are key reasons for this type of counterfeiting	Attempt to possess something that is not widely available and affordability are major drivers that lead consumers to willingly purchase counterfeits
Upper middle and high income groups are targets	Young consumers and middle income group have turned to fakes
Appar such as wedding costumes, occasion wear, branded luxury western apparel, and sportswear are mostly counterfeit	Consumers are aware of markets where these products can be found

Source: ASPA



The Annual General Meeting of the Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA) was held on July 20, 2024, at the prestigious Taj Palace Hotel in New Delhi. This significant event marked the association's 25th anniversary, bringing together 46 distinguished companies from the authentication & traceability industry, all committed to advancing the authentication

solutions industry. The meeting was a testament to ASPA's enduring legacy and its continuous efforts to combat counterfeiting and ensure product integrity across the globe. Avery Dennison served as the networking partner of the ASPA AGM 2024.

Mr. Manoj Kochar, President of ASPA, delivered a compelling address, underscoring the importance of collaboration and innovation within the industry. He spoke passionately about the need for collective efforts among members to tackle the ever-evolving challenges in the market. The President's call for collective efforts was a powerful reminder of the importance of unity in addressing industry challenges. He highlighted several key initiatives that the association plans to undertake, emphasizing that collaboration is essential to developing cutting-edge solutions that can effectively address the rising threats of counterfeiting. He urged all members to contribute their expertise and resources towards a common goal, ensuring that ASPA remains at the forefront of the global authentication landscape.

A major highlight of the President's speech was the announcement of the opening of a new chapter in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) region. This strategic move is a significant milestone in ASPA's history, as it represents the association's commitment to expanding its global footprint. The MEA chapter will





serve as a platform for fostering collaboration among members in the region and enable ASPA to address specific challenges and opportunities unique to the Middle East and Africa. The President expressed unwavering confidence in this expansion, anticipating that it will strengthen ASPA's global presence and enhance its ability to influence policy and industry standards in these rapidly growing markets.

The meeting also featured the introduction of ASPA's new members, who were warmly welcomed by the existing members. This introduction not only celebrated the association's growth but also highlighted its ability to attract new talent and expertise.

The new members bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas that are crucial for the association's continued success. The President encouraged them to actively participate in the association's activities and contribute to its mission of promoting a secure and trustworthy marketplace.

In recognition of ASPA's 25 years of dedicated service, a special token of appreciation was presented to all members. This gesture was a heartfelt acknowledgement of their unwavering commitment to the association and its goals. The tokens, carefully crafted to symbolise ASPA's journey over the past quarter-century, served as a reminder to the members of their collective achievements and their positive impact on the industry.

Overall, the Annual Meeting at the Taj Palace Hotel was a resounding success, not only because of the significant announcements and initiatives discussed but also because of the strong sense of unity and collaboration among ASPA's members. As the association moves forward, the commitments made during this meeting will undoubtedly pave the way for new achievements and innovations in the authentication and traceability solutions industry.

Webinar Success: ASPA and Industry Leaders Tackle the Growing Threat of FMCG Counterfeiting

The virtual event, “Authenticity Matters: Protecting FMCG & Nutraceuticals from Counterfeits,” held on August 1, 2024, in collaboration with TechSci Research, was a resounding success. The webinar brought together industry stakeholders to develop effective strategies against the growing threat of counterfeiting in the FMCG and nutraceutical sectors. The event emphasized the importance of cutting-edge authentication technologies, the need for stringent regulatory standards, and the sharing of best practices to secure the FMCG supply chain.

The event provided a crucial platform for manufacturers, retailers, policymakers, and technology providers to collaborate in the fight against counterfeiting, which poses significant risks to consumer safety and industry growth. Attendees had the opportunity to engage with leading experts and explore innovative solutions aimed at protecting the authenticity of FMCG products.

“This webinar was a critical step in our ongoing fight against the authenticity crisis in the FMCG industry,” said Manoj Kochar, President of ASPA. “By fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing, we have strengthened our unified front against counterfeiting, safeguarding both consumers and legitimate businesses.”

The discussions focused on innovative solutions, such as blockchain-based systems, smart packaging with NFC chips, and QR codes. Participants gained valuable insights into the effective implementation of these technologies and the importance of enhancing consumer awareness about product authenticity.

A distinguished panel of experts led the discussions, including Mr. Raj Kamal Gilra, VP Marketing, Tata Salt at Tata Consumer Products, Mr. Manoj Kochar, President of ASPA, and Mr. Micaal Sidorov, General Secretary of the International Hologram Manufacturers Association (IHMA). Their insights from both the FMCG and authentication technology sectors were particularly enlightening, offering practical strategies to combat counterfeiting.

Recent data from the ASPA and CRISIL report underscores the urgency of these initiatives. It reveals that an estimated 25-30% of FMCG

products in the market could be counterfeit, with 42% of consumers admitting to knowingly purchasing fake goods. These alarming figures highlight the critical need for industry-wide efforts to combat counterfeiting.

As the FMCG sector faces increasingly sophisticated counterfeiting techniques, collaborative platforms like this webinar play a crucial role in equipping industry professionals with the knowledge and tools necessary to ensure product authenticity and consumer safety. ASPA, alongside its partners, remains committed to leading the charge against counterfeiting and protecting the integrity of the FMCG and nutraceutical sectors.

ASPA Delivers Keynote at ASIA Security Conference & Exhibition on Anti-Counterfeiting and Brand Protection.

New Delhi, India – July 24, 2024 – Puneet Maithani, Associate Director of Industry Affairs at the Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA), delivered a compelling keynote address titled 'ASPA: Leading the Fight Against Counterfeiting and Ensuring Product Authenticity' at the ASIA Security Conference & Exhibition | Anti-Counterfeiting, Trademark & Brand Protection.

In his keynote, Puneet emphasized the urgency of the counterfeiting problem and highlighted ASPA's mission to combat it through innovative authentication solutions. He detailed ASPA's recent achievements, including the launch of its Middle East and Africa (MEA) chapters, and outlined the association's four key focus areas: Awareness, Advocacy, Research, and Innovation.

Puneet discussed ASPA's initiatives to raise awareness about counterfeiting, emphasizing the need to educate stakeholders and the public. ASPA's programs have been crucial in spreading knowledge and fostering a proactive approach to combating counterfeit goods.

Advocacy and industry partnerships are essential components of ASPA's strategy. Puneet spoke about collaborations with industry leaders to develop best practices for anti-counterfeiting. He mentioned ASPA's initiatives, including panel discussions and sector-specific webinars, which engage key stakeholders and address industry issues. These webinars have been vital in reaching a wider audience. Puneet also highlighted

ASPA's flagship event, the Traceability & Authentication Forum, and the Counterfeit News Repository, a resource tracking media-reported counterfeiting incidents.

Research is another cornerstone of ASPA's efforts. Puneet showcased studies and reports produced by ASPA, including the ASPA-CRISIL State of Counterfeiting report in India, which provide valuable insights to inform strategies against counterfeiting.

Innovation in anti-counterfeiting technologies was a focal point of the keynote. Puneet highlighted the advanced solutions ASPA members offer, such as security design, holograms, security inks, track and trace systems, NFC/RFID, and blockchain technologies, protecting over 15,000 brands worldwide.



In a related keynote, Mr. Manoj Kochar, ASPA President and IHMA Board Member, presented on the newly launched Security Image Register. The presentation, titled 'Security Image Register – The Next Frontier for OVD Copyright,' introduced this innovative tool designed to enhance the protection of Optical Variable Devices (OVDs) through advanced image registration technology.

In closing, Puneet emphasized the benefits of ASPA membership, which provides access to the latest technologies, research, and a



robust network of industry experts—resources that are invaluable for companies in the fight against counterfeiting.

The ASIA Security Conference & Exhibition is a premier event that brings together experts,

brand owners, and policymakers to discuss strategies for protecting trademarks and brands from counterfeiting. Puneet's keynote underscored the critical role of awareness and the indispensable support of brand owners in the ongoing battle against counterfeit goods.

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

- **PackPlus India 2024:** India's biggest Packaging, Converting, and Supply Chain event was held from 22nd to 24th August at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. ASPA supported the event as a Supporting Association.
- **Anuga FoodTec India 2024:** ASPA's collaboration extended to the 18th edition of Anuga FoodTec India 2024, which took place from August 28 to 30, 2024, in the vibrant city of Mumbai. Organized by Koelnmesse Pvt. Ltd., this event showcased the latest advancements in food technology, aligning with ASPA's commitment to ensuring the integrity and security of the food supply chain
- **GS1 India Healthcare Conference:** ASPA is the supporting partner for GS1 India's upcoming Healthcare conference – 'Navigating the Future of Healthcare: From Vision to Reality', held at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, on Thursday, September 19th, 2024.
- **CII Beauty & Cosmetics India event 2024:** Leading event for Beauty, Cosmetics & Hygiene & Personal care to be schedule on 21-23 November 2024, Yashobhoomi, New Delhi. ASPA is supporting the event as a Supporting Partner
- **16th PrintPack India 2025:** The Indian Printing Packaging & AlliedMachinery

Manufacturers' 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 up-stair hall, to accommodate additional participants. ASPA is supporting the event as a Supporting Partner.

- **Intralogistics & Warehousing Expo 2024:** Invites you to maximise your opportunities at the Intralogistics & Warehousing Expo in Bengaluru. Taking place from December 19-21, 2024, at the KTPO Convention Centre in Whitefield, Bengaluru, this premier event is the perfect platform for businesses in the logistics and supply chain sectors to connect with the growing demand from last-mile delivery (LMD) companies. ASPA is Supporting the event as Supporting Association.

These collaborations exemplify ASPA's proactive approach to fostering innovation, promoting security, and championing cutting-edge solutions in Food & Beverage, Beauty & Cosmetics, Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals, Packaging, brand Security, Security Services, Logistics and Technology. ASPA continues to be a driving force, navigating the industry towards 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.



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Holistik India Limited

+91-9905-124-124

marcom@holostik.com

www.holostik.com

F-9, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-1, New Delhi-110020

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