

The AUTHENTICATION Times

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

PATH TO A SECURE FUTURE

AUTHENTICATION & TRACEABILITY FOR ALL

6th Edition



Traceability & Authentication Forum

17th-18th March 2025

Hotel Eros
Nehru Place, New Delhi

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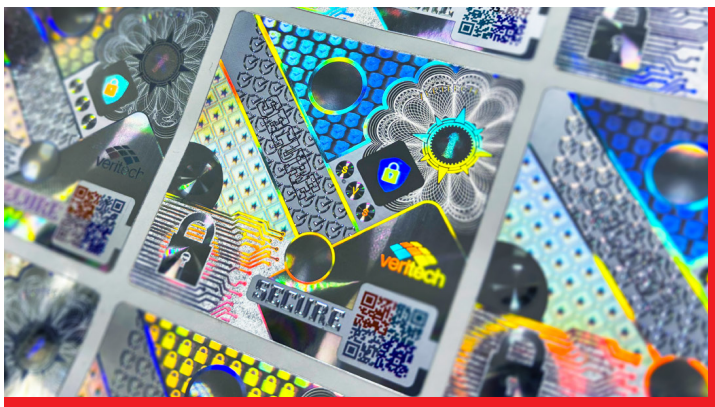
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The AUTHENTICATION Times

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

Editor's Corner



Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 53rd edition of The Authentication Times. This issue delves into our industry's most significant developments and challenges today.

ASPA continues to expand its international presence and promote innovative anti-counterfeiting solutions developed by its members. We are thrilled to announce the 6th edition of our flagship event, the **Traceability and Authentication Forum (TAF) 2025**, in partnership with **Redefine**, scheduled for **March 17-18, 2025**, at **Hotel Eros, Nehru Place, New Delhi**. TAF 2025 will bring together global leaders, industry experts, and solution providers to discuss the latest trends, technologies, and strategies in authentication and traceability.

Our cover story, "**Path to a Secure Future – Authentication & Traceability for All**," delves into the forum's core themes, including **emerging technologies, global best practices, and the role of regulatory frameworks in combating counterfeiting**. With participation from over **200 industry professionals, 35+ expert speakers, and top solution providers**, TAF 2025 promises to be an unmissable event for those committed to **ensuring product authenticity and consumer protection**.

This edition also highlights key industry developments, including the **Union Budget 2025-26's introduction of a Track & Trace Mechanism**—a significant step towards **curbing illicit cigarette trade, enhancing revenue, and strengthening enforcement measures**. Additionally, we cover a major milestone for the **International Hologram Manufacturers Association (IHMA)**, which has rebranded as the **International Optical Technologies Association (IOTA)**, reflecting its evolving focus on **advanced optical security solutions**.

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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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.

For further information, subscriptions, contributions and advertisement, please email your submission at pradeep@aspaglobal.com or call at +91 7835814389.

Counterfeiting Alert

Union Budget 2025-26: Track & Trace Mechanism Set to Combat Illicit Cigarette Trade, Boost Revenue & Security



The Indian tobacco industry has welcomed the government's decision to introduce a Track & Trace mechanism for certain goods, a move announced in the Union Budget 2025-26 that is expected to curb illicit trade, especially in cigarettes. This initiative will not only help the industry regain lost market share but also assist enforcement agencies in cracking down on tax evasion and organized crime linked to smuggled cigarettes.

A Game-Changer Against Illicit Trade

Presenting the Union Budget, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed amendments to the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017, introducing a Track & Trace mechanism aimed at plugging revenue leaks and preventing tax evasion in high-risk sectors. The Tobacco Institute of India (TII), which represents farmers, manufacturers, exporters, and ancillary industries in the tobacco sector, hailed this as a "much-needed initiative" to counter the menace of illicit cigarette trade.

Unique, Secure, and Tamper-Proof Markings

Under the proposed system, cigarette packages will bear a unique, secure, and non-removable identification marking containing critical details—such as manufacturing time, machinery identification, operational capacity, and duration of production. These measures will strengthen surveillance, enabling authorities to track goods at every stage of the supply chain and take swift corrective action against violators.



Counterfeiting Alert



Illicit Trade: A Threat to Economy & National Security

Illicit cigarette trade has been a persistent challenge in India, with one in every four cigarettes sold being illegal, accounting for nearly one-third of the legal market. This widespread smuggling not only causes an estimated ₹ 21,000 crore annual revenue loss to the government but also has far-reaching implications:

- Undermining legitimate businesses and market stability.
- Funding organized crime and terror networks, posing a national security risk.
- Severely impacting Indian tobacco farmers, as smuggled cigarettes bypass local tobacco sourcing, leading to loss of livelihoods in key growing regions.
- Legal Industry to Gain as Smuggling Faces Crackdown

With the insertion of Section 148A in the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017, and additional provisions under Clause 126 and 127 of the Finance Bill, the government aims to strictly regulate cigarette manufacturing and trade. Additionally, a new section, 122B,

has been proposed to introduce stringent penalties for those violating the Track & Trace provisions, ensuring effective enforcement and monitoring.



The tobacco industry views this as a landmark move, set to restore balance in the sector, protect consumer interests, and provide a much-needed boost to the legal industry. With the implementation of this high-tech Track & Trace system, India takes a decisive step towards eliminating illicit trade, safeguarding government revenue, and securing the livelihoods of thousands dependent on the tobacco industry.

Source: Business Standard

IHMA Embraces New Security Features Ecosystem

The International Hologram Manufacturers Association (IHMA) has a new name – the International Optical Technologies Association (IOTA). The change is part of the industry body's strategic plan to broaden its scope to better serve evolving markets and new technology frontiers, particularly in optical security.

The implementation of this plan began in early 2024, with the launch of the Security Image Register (SIR), a replacement to the Hologram Image Register and the only system for the secure document community to safeguard copyright by recording and tracking all designs and manufacturing details for optical security features. New research and development collaborations, leadership changes with the appointment of new board members, and the expansion of membership to all security OVD suppliers have also taken place. The renaming of the industry association itself is the next logical step.

The IHMA was founded in 1993 and, since then, holograms and their derivatives have become one of the most successful and ubiquitous anti-counterfeiting features for banknotes, as well as identity, secure documents and brand protection – both on their own and, increasingly, in combination with other technologies. Many of the current members produce features with these other technologies, and the new name and focus of the association reflects and supports this. Moreover, no other sector of the industry that supplies anti-counterfeiting technologies has its own trade body, and the importance of all optically variable features – and not just holography – to the security and integrity of fiduciary and ID documents is what has prompted the expansion of the association.

IOTA membership now embraces all developers and suppliers of security features based on technologies that, in addition to holography, include micro-lens arrays, micro-mirrors, plasmonics, nano-gratings, colour

change, caustics, polarisation, photonic crystals, special print-generated effects, or a combination of these.



Dr. Mark Deakes, Chairman,
International Optical Technologies Association

Accompanying the relaunch, IOTA will be holding a series of user-focused webinars during 2025 that target key sectors for optical security, and will also be presented at a number of industry conferences.

According to IOTA Chair Mark Deakes, I am honoured to be part of this transformative moment, where we build on our legacy while embracing a modern identity that reflects our vision for the future. This rebranding and expanded focus is a recognition of the importance of the role of all optically variable technologies in advancing the security of documents and products, and it will position the association to better support the needs of our longstanding and new members'.

Source : IOTA

“Path to a Secure Future – Authentication & Traceability for All”



In an era where counterfeiting and illicit trade pose significant challenges to businesses, governments, and consumers, the 6th Edition of the Traceability & Authentication Forum (TAF 2025) stands as a beacon of knowledge, collaboration, and innovation. Organized by the Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA), this prestigious two-day event continues its legacy of fostering dialogue on the most pressing concerns in product authentication, supply chain traceability, and consumer protection.

The Growing Need for Authentication & Traceability

Counterfeiting is a multi-billion-dollar menace that threatens global economies, erodes brand trust, and endangers consumer safety. According to industry reports, counterfeit products make up nearly 25-30% of the Indian market across key sectors, including pharmaceuticals, FMCG, agriculture, and automotive. The digital transformation of commerce, coupled with an increasingly sophisticated counterfeit industry, has made it imperative to adopt robust authentication and traceability mechanisms.

TAF 2025 is built upon this very need—bringing together regulators, industry leaders, technology providers, and consumer advocates to discuss actionable solutions that can mitigate counterfeiting risks while ensuring seamless traceability in supply chains.

Key Focus Areas of TAF 2025

This year's discussions will revolve around the following pivotal themes:

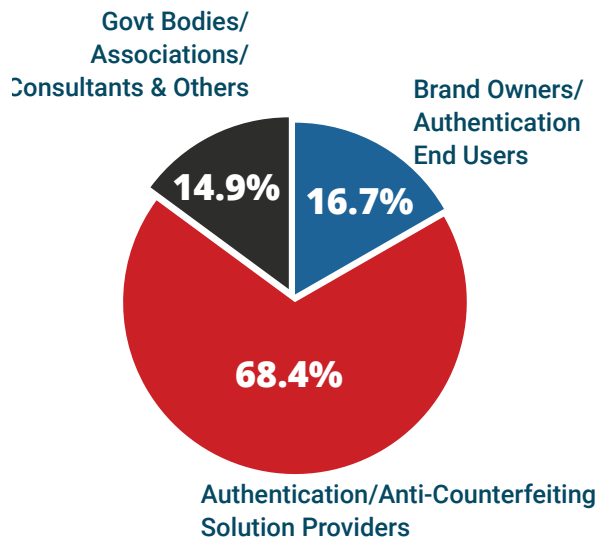
- **Understanding Counterfeiting Risks and Consumer Perception:** Exploring consumer behavior, vulnerabilities, and the impact of counterfeit goods on trust and economic growth.
- **Regulatory Perspectives & Industry Preparedness:** Engaging with policymakers and industry leaders to understand the evolving regulatory landscape for authentication and traceability.
- **Role of Regulatory Bodies, Brands, and Consumers in Combating Illicit Trade:** A comprehensive dialogue on how each stakeholder contributes to strengthening authentication frameworks.
- **Industry Insights on Building a Competitive Anti-Counterfeiting Marketplace:** Showcasing best practices and technological advancements in safeguarding brands and consumers.
- **Best Global Practices in Authentication & Traceability Solutions:** Learning from global success stories and implementing cutting-edge security solutions tailored to India's unique challenges.

Cover Story

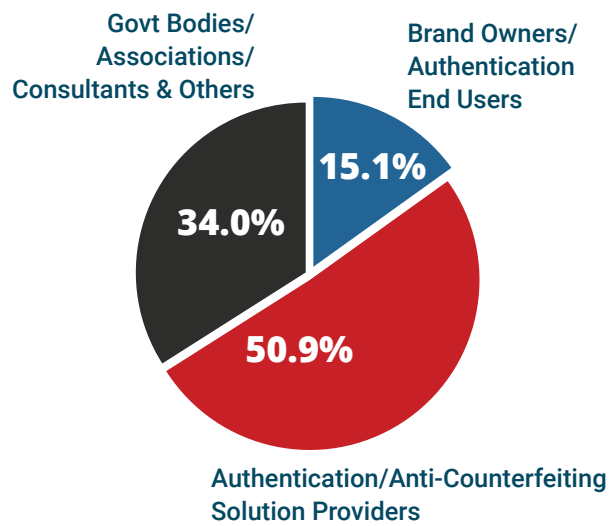
TRACEABILITY & AUTHENTICATION FORUM – A RETROSPECTIVE



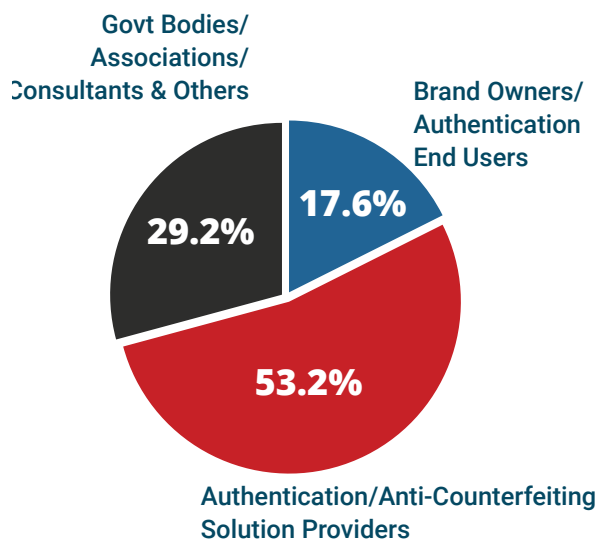
TAF 2017



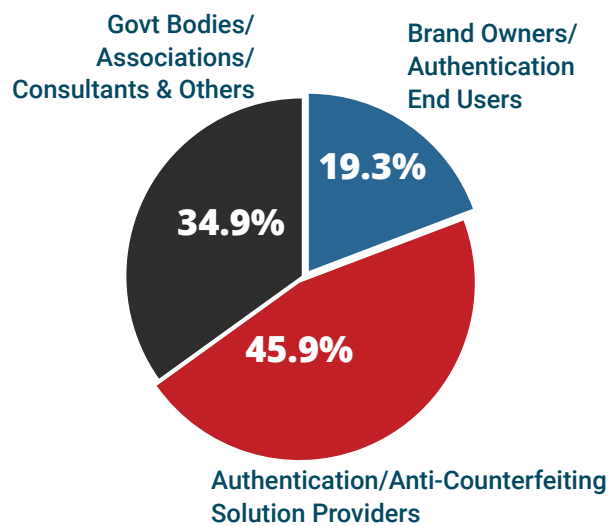
TAF 2018



TAF 2019



TAF 2023



Cover Story



Event Highlights :

TAF 2025 is poised to be one of the most influential platforms in the authentication and traceability space, featuring:

- 35+ distinguished speakers and 200+ delegates from India and across the globe.
- 70+ industry partners and 10+ exhibitors presenting cutting-edge authentication technologies and solutions.
- Dedicated sessions on startups & innovation, emerging technologies, and the role of online marketplaces in tackling counterfeiting.
- Launch of ASPA's latest industry report, offering a data-driven perspective on counterfeiting trends and industry insights.
- U.K. Gupta Excellence Award 2025, recognizing excellence in anti-counterfeiting innovation and implementation.

Key Sessions at TAF 2025

TAF 2025 will feature in-depth sessions that provide insights into key aspects of authentication and traceability, including:

- **Emerging Innovations in Authentication & Traceability:** Exploring AI, Blockchain, and IoT in smart packaging and authentication.
- **Empowering Consumers:** How Government Initiatives Protect Public Safety and Trust: A discussion on policy frameworks and enforcement measures.
- **Physical & Digital Technology:** The Cornerstones of Authenticity: Showcasing advanced security printing, holography, and digital authentication solutions.
- **Strengthening Traceability and Supply Chain Integrity Through Standards:** Industry perspectives on implementing global best practices.
- **Championing Originality:** Industry Leaders on Tackling Counterfeits: A leadership discussion featuring global and Indian brand protection leaders.

Cover Story

Invited Industry Stakeholders

TAF 2025 will bring together key decision-makers and industry stakeholders, including brand owners, technology providers, and government officials from the following industries:

- Pharma Industry
- Agri Industry
- FMCG Industry
- Automotive Industry
- Apparel Industry
- Consumer Durable Industry
- Beverages Industry
- Tobacco Industry
- Nutraceutical Industry
- Beauty & Cosmetics Industry
- Wines & Spirits Industry
- Chemical Industry
- Anti-Counterfeiting Solution Providers
- Government Delegation

Learning from the Past: A Look at TAF's Legacy

Since its inception, TAF has played a pivotal role in driving industry-wide awareness and collaboration. The 2023 edition, themed “A Pledge for Zero Counterfeiting,” successfully convened over 200 industry professionals, including regulatory authorities, policymakers, brand leaders, and technology providers. Discussions revolved around anti-counterfeiting frameworks, AI-driven authentication, and track-and-trace solutions.

Additionally, ASPA's previous collaborations with international organizations have emphasized the need for harmonized global standards in authentication and brand protection. Insights from last year's ASPA-CRISIL Report highlighted the alarming rate of counterfeiting, reinforcing the urgency of such discussions at TAF 2025.

The Road Ahead: Why This Theme Matters

The theme “Path to a Secure Future – Authentication & Traceability for All” encapsulates the collective responsibility of stakeholders in ensuring product authenticity, supply chain transparency, and consumer safety. The global trade landscape is evolving rapidly, with digitization and e-commerce expansion creating new vulnerabilities. It is imperative for brands to not only protect their intellectual property but also uphold consumer trust through secure authentication mechanisms.

By fostering cross-sector collaboration, knowledge sharing, and policy advocacy, TAF 2025 aims to pave the way for a future where counterfeiting is minimized, regulatory frameworks are robust, and every consumer has access to genuine products.

Join us in March 2025 as we embark on this journey toward a more secure and transparent world, where authentication and traceability are not just industry priorities but societal imperatives.

ASPA at PrintPack India 2025

ASPA actively participated in Printpack India 2025 as a Supporting Association, collaborating closely with IPAMA. The event was inaugurated by ASPA Vice President, Mr. Ankit Gupta, alongside other industry leaders. With a legacy spanning 25 years, ASPA has been at the forefront of strengthening authentication ecosystems and combating counterfeiting and illicit trade. At the event, ASPA showcased its key initiatives, including the ASPA-CRISIL Report, which offers in-depth insights into counterfeiting trends affecting multiple industries. ASPA's stand provided a platform for visitors to explore cutting-edge authentication and traceability solutions offered by its member companies, reinforcing the significance of anti-counterfeiting technologies in various sectors.

ASPA envisions a robust authentication framework integrating physical, digital, and Phygital solutions, ensuring a secure supply chain. With counterfeiting posing a major threat to industries like FMCG, electronics, and automotive, ASPA continues to advocate for advanced security technologies, including security holograms, RFID-enabled packaging, AI-driven verification, and blockchain-based traceability. The association remains committed to industry education and collaboration through its webinars, white papers, and publications like The Authentication Times, further strengthening industry knowledge-sharing. Additionally, ASPA introduced its Supplier Directory at PrintPack India 2025, a comprehensive resource detailing authentication and traceability technologies, available for download.

Looking ahead, ASPA is gearing up for the upcoming Traceability & Authentication Forum (TAF) 2025, a premier industry event aimed at addressing counterfeiting and supply chain security. The event will bring together

policymakers, brand owners, and technology experts to discuss evolving regulatory frameworks and technological advancements. With the theme "Path to a Secure Future – Authentication and Traceability for All," TAF 2025 will drive meaningful conversations on securing supply chains, protecting brands, and safeguarding consumer trust. The forum will feature discussions on AI-driven authentication, blockchain-powered traceability, and IoT-enabled security solutions. A key highlight will be the 2nd edition of U.K. Gupta Excellence Awards 2025, recognizing leadership and innovation in anti-counterfeiting efforts.

ASPA sees TAF 2025 as a strategic platform to drive industry-wide action, leveraging collaboration, research, and advocacy to refine anti-counterfeiting strategies. By fostering dialogue between government agencies, brand owners, and enforcement authorities, ASPA aims to generate actionable insights and align industry efforts with global best practices. The event is expected to shape policy recommendations and industry frameworks, ensuring authentication and traceability remain central to India's anti-counterfeiting initiatives.

The future of authentication technologies lies in multi-layered, technology-driven solutions that integrate physical and digital security measures. ASPA anticipates increased adoption of blockchain, AI, and machine learning for real-time threat detection, ensuring transparency and integrity in supply chains. As regulatory frameworks evolve, ASPA remains committed to driving authentication advancements and fostering industry collaborations. With a continued focus on awareness, advocacy, research, and innovation, ASPA is dedicated to securing the future of global trade and brand protection.

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NEWS DETAIL

ASPA To Host 6th Edition Of Traceability And Authentication Forum 2025 On March 17 & 18 (13-01-2025)

Bengaluru, 13 Jan 2025: The Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA), in collaboration with The Rise, will host the 6th edition of the Traceability and Authentication Forum (TAF 2025) on 17-18 March 2025 at Eros Hotel, Nehru Place, New Delhi. This two-day event will focus on addressing counterfeiting issues and advancing product authenticity.

Business News Matters

ASPA to Lead Discussion on Digital Security at Sixth Traceability and Authentication Forum

New Delhi, 08th January 2025. The Authentication Solution Providers' Association (ASPA), in collaboration with The Rise, will host the 6th edition of the Traceability and Authentication Forum (TAF 2025) on 17-18 March 2025 at Eros Hotel, Nehru Place, New Delhi. This two-day event will focus on addressing counterfeiting issues and advancing product authenticity.

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PHARMA INDUSTRIAL INDIA | **farm forum**

ASPA Announces to Host Sixth Edition of TAF 2025

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ET Pharma.com | From The Economic Times

ASPA to host 6th edition of Traceability and Authentication Forum

The forum will showcase innovations such as blockchain, artificial intelligence, digital authentication tools, holograms, NFC/RFID technologies, and track-and-trace systems at removing counterfeits from the markets.

PHARMEDIA EXPRESS

ASPA to Host the Sixth Edition of Traceability and Authentication Forum

8, Jan 2025

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ASPA to Host the Sixth Edition of Traceability and Authentication Forum, Tackling Industry Challenges

January 8, 2025 | Biswaranjan Jena | news | Comments Off

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Traceability and Authentication Forum 2025 to Showcase Blockchain and Authentication Tools

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ASPA TO HOST THE SIXTH EDITION OF TRACEABILITY AND AUTHENTICATION FORUM (TAF 2025)

▲ Naman Bansal | January 8, 2025 | PR

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Mr. Manoj Kochar, President of ASPA, highlighted the significance of the event, stating, "The 6th edition of TAF reaffirms our commitment to tackling counterfeiting through innovative solutions and industry collaboration. This event will serve as a pivotal platform for exchanging ideas and strategies to ensure product authenticity and consumer trust."

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ASPA to host the 6th edition of TAF 2025 in March

This two-day event will focus on addressing counterfeiting issues and advancing product authenticity.
13 Jan 2025 | By PrintWeek Team

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SPEAKERS

SARITH KALLIPURAM
Managing Director
Imprint Services P Ltd
(Bengaluru - South Coast)

SURESH NAIR
Technical Director
Imprint Services P Ltd
(Bengaluru - South Coast)

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ASPA Brings Experts Together for Sixth Traceability and Authentication Forum

BY BISWARANJAN JENA | JANUARY 8, 2025

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HOME PAGE / NEWS / SIXTH EDITION OF ASPA TRACEABILITY AND AUTHENTICATION FORUM SET TO EXPLORE CUTTING-EDGE SOLUTIONS

Sixth Edition of ASPA's Traceability and Authentication Forum Set to Explore Cutting-Edge Solutions

By Biswaranjan Jena | 8 January 2025

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January 27, 2025

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BUSINESS EDUCATION HEALTH NEWS TECHNOLOGY CONTACT

Home / news / ASPA Announces Sixth Edition of Traceability and Authentication Forum Focused on Security and Innovation

ASPA Announces Sixth Edition of Traceability and Authentication Forum Focused on Security and Innovation

By Biswaranjan Jena | January 8, 2025 | 2 min read

Industry News

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:

- **Brand Protection Congress 2025, Singapore**

Brand Protection Congress is scheduled on 9th & 10th April at Voco Orchard Singapore, An IHG Hotel, Singapore. ASPA is the Supporting Association for the event.

- **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.

- **Bharat PacExpo 2025**

The Packaging & Supply Chain event Bharat PacExpo is scheduled from 28th - 30th November at Jaipur Exhibition & Convention Centre (JECC). ASPA is supporting the event as Supporting Association.

- **IntraPac India 2025**

IntraPac India is the latest addition in the long history of IPAMA which will be held

from 10th - 13th December 2025 at India Expo Centre, Greater Noida, NCR Delhi. The event will showcase all packaging solutions, machinery, and allied products inclusive of plastic packaging, metal packaging, glass packaging, paper packaging, filling, capping, filling & sealing, biodegradable packaging, protective packaging, automation and robotics, tube packaging, mono cartons, traceability & tracking, logistics, film, moulding, and many more. ASPA is the Supporting Association for the event.

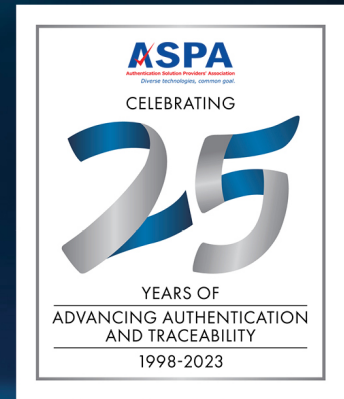
These collaborations exemplify ASPA's proactive approach to fostering innovation, promoting security, and championing cutting-edge solutions in Food and Beverage, Beauty and Cosmetics, Healthcare, Pharmaceuticals, Packaging, Brand Security, Security Services, Logistics, and Technology. ASPA continues 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 member:



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Welcoming all Industry Stakeholders of the Authentication and Traceability Industry from the MEA (Middle East and Africa) Chapter to Join the ASPA Community

Mr. Ranesh Bajaj
Email - Ranesh.bajaj@vinsak.com

For more info:
info@aspaglobal.com, pradeep@aspaglobal.com

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