

LEGAL/PRIVACY

Zenith combats counterfeiting with security technology

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Luxury Swiss watch manufacturer Zenith is fighting to protect its brand from counterfeiting with ProofTag's Bubble Tag technology.

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Bubble Tag ensures security, traceability and durability of all its endorsed products. The Bubble card that comes with each watch allows Zenith customers to verify the authenticity of the piece before or after purchase.

"Bubble Tag is a way to secure products and documents around the world," said Frank Bourrières, marketing and sales director at ProofTag, Montauban, France. "It is really regarded as a very secure technology.

"Each Bubble Tag is different, it's like a human fingerprint," Mr. Bourrières said. "The products are recorded through a database to create a link between the consumer and the brand."

ProofTag develops security and traceability solutions for use in brand protection and the certification of documents.

Bubble Tag has been instrumental in numerous cases of brand protection for watchmakers and jewelers.

Every watch produced by **Zenith** since June 2010 has come with a Bubble card.

Unforgettable imprint

The Bubble Tag is a transparent layer of polymer that is impossible to replicate. It is associated with a unique identifier, like a bar code.

Self-generated bubbles appear, which essentially form a constellation is the basis of the identity given to the product or document.



Bubble tag

All watches produced by Zenith have a Bubble Card, which provides consumers with the identification numbers exclusively for the watch.

After the watch is purchased, the Bubble Tag is recorded in an authentication database.



Bubble Tag flow chart

The recording becomes accessible over the Internet after the owner enters a description of the product.

Consumers can verify the authenticity of the watch and give their contact information to establish a direct relationship with Zenith.

“When the consumer wants to control the tag visually, they can go online,” Mr. Bourrières said. “This way, we create a unique link between the brand owner and the consumer.

“It is very different from anything on the market,” he said.

Spot a fake

Counterfeiting has become a significant problem for luxury brands. For companies, it means a loss of revenue, damage to the image of the counterfeited products and the reputation of the brand.

The luxury industry is fighting back to protect its brands and guarantee product authenticity to its customers.

Louis Vuitton, Tiffany & Co. and Fendi are just a few of the brands in wars against those selling – or permitting the sale of – knock-off items that look like luxury goods ([see story](#)).

According to estimates by the Swiss Customs Service, there are about 30 to 40 million counterfeit watches put into circulation each year. Rolex is the No. 1 counterfeited watch.

“Consumers are more aware about counterfeiting and they are looking to be reassured when they buy something,” Mr. Bourrières said. “The Bubble Tag is a way for consumers

to get in touch with the brand.

“It is a piece of technology that is highly secure but also a powerful marketing tool,” she said. “It is about the trust of the brand, and this system reassures consumers.”

Final take

Proof tag fighting counterfeiting

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