

COMMERCE

WISeKey technology offers full-circle protection against counterfeits

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WISeKey is introducing new technology that will help brands,

consumers and retailers protect themselves against the counterfeit market at every level of production and distribution.

The WISeKey technology travels with items from the production stages to consumer's hands, providing a way for every person involved in the process to check that the product is authentic. This is the first time product authentication will be available for products purchased on the Web.

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"Counterfeiting an object the equivalent of identity theft, and from this analogy the idea of WISeAuthentic was born," said Carlos Moreno, vice president of brand protection,

Geneva, Switzerland.

WISeKey is an information security management company that provides specialized security technologies for data protection, identification and authentication of people and objects.

Chipping away at counterfeiters

WISeAuthentic is a smartcard that is inserted into a luxury product at the time it is manufactured.

When a consumer purchases a luxury item protected by WISeAuthentic they should check that the digital chip and reader are intact.

The purchaser can then use the reader and identification code to check the credentials of the luxury item.

The WISeAuthentic uses public key interface (PKI) to track the items.

"PKI is a solid platform," Mr. Moreno said. "its ability to authenticate humans has been proven for years."

"We applied this technology to authenticate objects, allowing WISeKey make a huge leap forward, further securing the new world of the Internet of things," he said.

The technology has already been used in Hublot Bing Bang, Classic Fusion and King Power watches, and is in the process of being implemented in Dior watches in boutiques world-wide.

The brand showcased the technology at this week's FT Business of Luxury Summit in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Making a WISe decision

WISeAuthentic is currently the only company that can authenticate luxury items via the Internet, making it possible for consumers to purchase items over the Web free of risk.

"Luxury products are investments, and the cost for brands to implement WISeAuthentic is very small," said Eileen Weisberg, communications manager at WISeKey, Geneva, Switzerland.

"And the value it gives to a consumer to at once guarantee the authenticity of their product is huge," she said.

The PKI technology also comes with added sales and marketing value besides the obvious value of certification.

Since the chip is active in the luxury item forever, it can provide useful product and market insights to the producer, eliminating the dependency for a retailer to provide sales data.

WISeKey has already seen the technology be used to distinguish grey markets.

The authentication code can also be used by consumers to access a VIP club through the luxury brand, which the brand can then use at its discretion.

“I truly believe that WISeAuthentic will soon be the new standard of brand protection in the luxury world,” Ms. Weinberg said.

“With technology existing that can certify the authenticity of a product, it is only a matter of time before it becomes a mandate,” she said.

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