

New Partnership and Fuel Marking Win for Authentix

Authentix has announced two developments that underline both the expansion of its technology portfolio and its continuing role in government authentication programmes.

The company has signed a partnering agreement with Germany-based m-u-t GmbH to introduce portable authentication systems based on near-infrared (NIR) spectroscopy, enabling the verification of products using their inherent spectral signatures rather than external tags, markers or additives.

Built around m-u-t's NIRONE® platform, the Authentix Portable Intrinsic Properties Analyzer (PIPA™) combines handheld analysers with cloud-based software and mobile applications to authenticate both solid and liquid materials within seconds. The technology is intended for applications in pharmaceuticals, nicotine products, spirits, biologics and fuels.

Two portable, handheld devices are being introduced under the platform: the PSX1500™ for solid materials and the FSX1500™ for liquids. Each device integrates with smartphones through a dedicated mobile application. Rather than detecting an added security marker or other feature, the system analyses the unique spectral responses of multiple ingredients in a material and compares that result against a secure cloud-hosted chemometric reference model. Products

that deviate from the expected profile can be identified as potentially counterfeit, adulterated, contaminated or otherwise outside specification.

The approach effectively turns the unique, inherent makeup of the product itself into the authentication feature. In many cases, near-infrared analysis can be performed non-invasively through transparent packaging such as glass or plastic, allowing inspectors to authenticate unopened products in the field without destroying or contaminating the sample.

'This is a major step forward: a portable, non-additive authentication solution designed for field deployment – it's like having a full laboratory in the palm of your hand,' said Kevin McKenna, President and CEO of Authentix. 'We're already seeing strong demand in markets that have needed this capability for decades.'

Unlike traditional authentication systems based on labels, markers, taggants or serialised codes, intrinsic authentication relies on the chemical composition and physical characteristics of the product itself. As such, it complements rather than replaces existing overt and covert security technologies, providing an additional layer

of verification based on the product's own properties.

Fuel marking for Montenegro

Meanwhile, Authentix has also been selected as part of an international consortium that will implement Montenegro's new fuel marking programme. The consortium, which includes Sarajevo-based Inspekt RGH and three Montenegrin companies – Labex Analytics, Institut za Transport and Institut za Crnu Metalurgiju – was chosen by the Montenegrin government following an international tender launched in September last year.

The five-year project will introduce mandatory marking of liquid fuels and biofuels distributed on the domestic market. Under the tender requirements, a single marker will be used throughout Montenegro, with separate variants for excise-paid and excise-free fuel. The contractor will also establish an information system accessible to all competent authorities to provide full oversight of fuel distribution and strengthen consumer protection.

Montenegro's 2024-2027 fiscal strategy estimates that the programme will generate approximately €14 million in additional annual revenue through improved fiscal compliance and reduced illicit trade.

The award reinforces Authentix' long-established position as a market leader in fuel integrity and government excise enforcement systems.

Portuguese Handkerchief Secures EU GI Protection

The traditional Lenços de Namorados do Minho (Love Handkerchiefs of Minho) has become the first Portuguese craft product to be registered under the European Union's new system for craft and industrial geographical indications (GIs).

A GI is an intellectual property right that protects the name of a product whose quality, reputation or other distinctive characteristics are intrinsically linked to a specific geographical area and the traditional skills of the people who produce it. While the EU has long protected agricultural products such as wines, cheeses and spirits through GIs, the new scheme extends similar protection to craft and industrial products.

The registration of the embroidered handkerchiefs recognises the close connection between the product, northern Portugal and the centuries-old embroidery techniques used to make them. Traditionally exchanged as tokens of affection during courtship, the handkerchiefs remain an important symbol of Portuguese folk culture and artisanal heritage. The registration protects the name across all EU member states

against misuse, imitation and unauthorised commercial exploitation.

Portugal has emerged as the most active participant in the new system, submitting 39 applications. Other filings were received from France, Slovakia, Sweden, Czechia and Slovenia. Overall, the EU Intellectual Property Office received 74 applications during the first six months after the scheme became operational.

Lenços de Namorados do Minho is the third craft and industrial geographical indication to be registered under the new regime, following Porcelaine de Limoges and Granit de Bretagne, both from France.

The system is open to a broad range of craft and industrial products, including textiles, ceramics, glass, natural stone, woodwork and other traditional products whose identity and reputation are closely linked to their place of origin.

PGI logo but no new security label

Under the system, registered producers are entitled to display the familiar EU Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) logo on their products, packaging and promotional material. While the EU GI logo is mandatory on agricultural products, its use for craft and industrial products is voluntary.

The system does not, however, introduce a new security label or authentication feature, and the logo itself is not presented as a security feature. Instead, the registration establishes the legal right to use the protected product name, with enforcement relying on intellectual property law and market surveillance rather than secure labels.

From an authentication perspective, the new regime illustrates the distinction between legal and physical authenticity. Unlike tax stamps or dedicated authentication labels, the GI logo is primarily a legal and informational mark rather than a physical security device. The protection derives from the legal exclusivity of the registered GI and enforcement against misuse, not from security features incorporated into the logo itself.