COUNTERFEIT PROTECTION

New collaboration to counteract pharmaceutical fraud

The use of new technical solutions makes pharmaceutical fraud more difficult.

Counterfeit pharmaceuticals generate a turnover of hundreds of billions of dollars each year, and can also cause a lot of suffering in the form of absent results or undesirable side effects.

To make life even harder for pharmaceutical counterfeiters, Nolato Medical and Swiss company AlpVision, which specialises in counterfeit protection, have now embarked on a close collaboration.

Ensuring authenticity

Major efforts are already in place to ensure that pharmaceutical packaging is as safe as possible. Nobody should be able to open the packaging, switch or alter its contents, then close it again without this being immediately obvious.

“People to whom medicine has been prescribed have to be sure that the medicine in the container is authentic and nothing else,” says Glenn Svedberg, head of Nolato Medical Pharma Packaging.

However, the amounts of money involved are so huge that not only is the pharmaceutical product itself counterfeited today – the packaging too might be copied down to the slightest detail. Therefore, even seemingly authentic packaging that is unopened and undamaged might in actual fact be as fake as its contents.

This is where the collaboration between AlpVision and Nolato Medical comes in. AlpVision has developed a method that makes it simple to determine packaging authenticity.

“Microscopic irregularities in the injection mould used to make a cap, for instance, are reflected as a pattern that is invisible to the naked eye on the cap’s surface,” says Glenn Svedberg. “This pattern is the same on all caps made by that particular mould, and because it is so randomly complex, it can’t be copied by anybody attempting to make counterfeit packaging.”

AlpVision’s method is based on taking a digital image of these microscopic irregularities in the mould. The image is then used as a reference to authenticate the produced packaging.

Simple determination

By simply positioning an iPhone with AlpVision’s authentication application over the cap, users such as brand owners can quickly and simply determine if the packaging is an original or a fake.

“Nolato Medical already has a wide range of tamper-proof caps. Together with AlpVision’s easy-to-use authentication software, we can create even safer solutions to prevent counterfeit pharmaceuticals entering the market,” continues Glenn.

Nolato Silikonteknik recently developed a type of multi-functional extruded gasket that fastens without tape, CompaShield Press Fit, enabling quick and simple application. “Base stations today are smaller and fitted up on the masts. They have to be sealed so that their electronics can withstand the elements without getting damaged,” says Roberth.

“The establishment of our EMC Production Center in Beijing is an important step in our growth in the shielding area.”

BACKGROUND: EMI and EMC?

Everywhere around us, pretty much no matter where we are, is teeming with electronic equipment. This involves an increasing amount of electromagnetic radiation which in turn leads to greater demands on the equipment (for instance transmitters in mobile phone networks) in terms of both interference prevention and protection.

Technicians speak of EMC and EMI. When everything works as it should and pieces of equipment can be close to each other without interference, there is a state of electromagnetic compatibility – EMC. However, if a piece of electronic equipment interferes with another, there is the opposite state, that is of electromagnetic interference – EMI.

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