

# AUTHENTICATION NEWS<sup>®</sup>

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## Document Biometrics Offers New Solution for Security

The French authentication and verification company Neryos, based near Montpellier, has teamed up with technology provider Signoptics to provide an identification and tracking technology for paper documents and plastic cards, based on what it terms 'document biometrics'. The technology, *GeneSign*<sup>™</sup>, has been several years in development, and is now being offered through both companies.

GeneSign exploits the fact that the surface characteristics of every item are unique. It works by scanning the surface of a specified area of items during printing or

production using an optical- electronic scanner to capture their unique surface patterns. The information is captured electronically, stored, and an algorithm is used to convert the information into alphanumeric data which is then recorded to a database. As this pattern is captured and converted into data format, it creates a unique ID or digital fingerprint for each product (from which comes the term document biometrics).

Dominique Martin, director general of Neryos, told **Authentication News**<sup>®</sup>

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### Document Biometrics... cont'd

that one of the main benefits of the technology is that the product or document supplier has no need to add any encoding equipment at the time of printing, nor to make any changes to the manufacturing process. The technology simply reads and records the make-up of each item as it comes off the production or printing line.

GeneSign can be used with various printable media, including paper, cardboard, plastic-coated documents and plastic cards, and is being targeted for use in three market sectors - brand protection,

security printing and access control.

Verification of the product requires a small hand held reader which can be used as a contact or non-contact verifier. This allows inspection to be carried out in the shop or along the supply chain. The suspect item can then be taken away to the brand owner's or producer's facilities for additional examination. As Neryos' software is fully compatible and can be integrated with standard office applications, authentication of the product can either utilise data that has been captured to the buyer's own database, or Neryos' database can be used.

GeneSign, which was officially launched at the recent Pan-European High Security Printing Conference in Budapest, is the latest in a series of technologies that provide intrinsic authentication by using the unique characteristics of the documents or products they are protecting as the method of identification (see AN Vol 12, No 9 for details of other such technologies, as well as page 6). It is currently being tested on a cosmetic product and Neryos hopes to sell the system for use on millions of branded items in future.

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