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The annual listing of 10 companies that are at the forefront of providing Supply Chain solutions and transforming businesses

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Digital Fingerprints for Foolproof Product Traceability

Remember the time you were enthralled with the latest version of an iPhone, only to find out that it was a counterfeited product sourced from an electronic shop around the corner? This is precisely why consumers across each and every sector want to know exactly what they're buying, where it is sourced from, or whether it is an original product or not. Taking note of this growing trend, even regulators have introduced a line of stringent consumer protection policies and regulations to help consumers obtain unbiased information about the products and services they purchase. As a domino effect, companies are realizing that even though 'tags' in the form of printed physical labels pasted on an item have been used for traceability and authentication all these years, they just aren't enough anymore.

The primary reason being most of the traditionally used tags are pasted on the package and not the article itself as physical labels like traditional D2D (draft-to-digital) barcodes, or RFID identifications are difficult to apply on minuscule items. Now, consider the example of a company dealing with millions of screws used in implantable medical devices. During the implantation process, there are frequent product recalls where the surgeons often decline a medical device due to the discovery of faulty screw settings that might endanger the patient. However, the package is already thrown into the bin by the time the product defect is identified. And subsequently, the screw manufacturer is left with no way to keep track of any information about those micro-parts anymore. Responding to this growing need to eliminate the drawbacks of traditional identification methods, California-based Covisus is setting up a new frontier in product identification through vTag®.

Bidding Farewell to Legacy Identification Methods

Just like a human fingerprint or iris scan, a vTag® is a virtual tag that analyzes intrinsic surface features of an item to uniquely identify it. The intrinsic features of an item are micrometre-scale roughness, formed



Naresh Menon



randomly during its fabrication. These features are acknowledged across the scientific literature to be unique and impossible to replicate. Due to this distinction, the vTag® is unique, unforgeable and covert that enables true item-level traceability and authentication with no added manufacturing or packaging cost. “Through vTag®, we have created a physical, intrinsic, and immutable link between an article and its data to assure traceability, security, and authenticity,” says Naresh Menon, Founder of Covisus.

Leveraging its expertise in designing vTag®, Covisus caters to the unique operational needs of numerous customers across a surfeit of business sectors such as aerospace, biomedical, or pharmaceuticals industry. Customers across all sectors can now rest assured of any product tampering by applying vTag® on products—all while advocating optimum brand traceability and authenticity. Pharmaceutical companies are making the most of vTag® to validate and even optimize serialization requirements so that they can always stay compliant with the regulatory requirements of the Drug Supply Chain Security Act at the pill level.

A Harmonious Approach to Client Engagement

Other than all the core functionalities of its revolutionary offering, Covisus’ proactive stance on client engagement is definitely one of its prime competitive advantages. Upon onboarding a client, the company captures all the specifications of the article that needs to be tracked. Based on this, the Covisus team quickly evaluates the article to create a business case, followed by a brief phase of pilot development, before initiating the actual installation.

Having elucidated on the company’s technological prowess and collaborative business approach, it is also

worth calling attention to the fact that Covisus’ prestigious intellectual property is developed through peer-reviewed funding—vetted by some of the best minds across the scientific community in the DoD. “vTag® is on its way to being implemented by the DoD for tracking and tracing key inventory parts across the entire supply chain to protect many of the nation’s valuable and confidential assets,” extols Menon, with a glint of pride.

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As industries start to bounce back from the blow of the pandemic that brought supply chains across the globe to a screeching halt, Menon believes companies will adopt a more data-driven business stance to optimize growth sustainably. And inevitably, the focus on product traceability will be more than ever before—an arena where Covisus can make a huge difference. The company already has many exciting pilot developments in the pipeline, with actual installations scheduled next year. “We are excited to grow at a steady pace because it is not an ordinary technology that we are offering. It is set to transform the way manufacturers will interact between themselves in the near future,” concludes Menon. **LT**