



GETTING YOUR FIRM'S WEB BALANCE RIGHT



Michael Conway, director at Renaissance Contingency Services: 'Our clients' greatest concern is productivity'

Commercial Profile: Zetes

Fake goods double in Europe due to internet

"Most brands do not regard imitation as a form of flattery and face a constant battle against counterfeiters," said James Hannay, senior vice-president at supply chain traceability expert Zetes. "With a total market value of around €490 billion, this has always been problematic for the luxury goods sector but is now widespread in pharmaceutical, food and component manufacturing.

"And the problem is growing fast. Last year, European customs officials seized double their previous year's haul of counterfeit goods, according to reports in the Economist. Experts put this down to the rise of e-commerce, an increasingly globalised supply chain and the economic downturn, which makes cheaper, fake alternatives more appealing."

Internationally, the pharmaceutical industry is responding quickly to counter this problem and from 2011, any manufacturer supplying France or Turkey will be required to incorporate a 2D (Datamatrix) barcode on all product packaging.

"We welcome this move by industry, and Zetes has already worked with leading manufacturers including Sanofi and Bristol-Myers Squibb (BMS) to incorporate a serialised barcode into all their unit packaging," Hannay said. "Drug manufacturers cannot afford to take risks be-



cause product counterfeiting can be a matter of life or death. Applying a unique barcode identifier to products as they come off the production line gives the ability to authenticate batches and combat counterfeiting or theft."

Incoming 'CIP13' legislation in France requires a unique 2D barcode to include detailed information such as product code, expiry date and batch code. Barcode serialisation is also being piloted by the European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations (EFPIA) prior to discussion by the EU later in the summer.

To help manufacturers comply with existing and future legislation, Zetes has developed a high speed marking solution that ensures manufacturers are compliant. This system can cope with volumes of up to 500 units per minute as they leave the production line and works in three stages.

Firstly, it assigns the product unit with a randomly generated, serialised number. Secondly this number is printed directly onto the packaging as a 2D barcode label and a tamper evident seal is applied. Finally, the system uses a camera to verify that the number generated matches that printed onto the barcode.

This information is then transferred directly to the manufacturer's central IT systems, enabling the individual item to be tracked and verified for authenticity at any stage in the supply chain.

"Most pharmaceutical manufacturers operating internationally will be distributing their products in France and quite possibly Turkey – they'll need to improve their existing product labelling process, and Zetes can offer a solution which is both affordable and highly effective," Hannay said.

For more information on Zetes, visit www.zetes.ie

By Dermot Corrigan

Most staff in Irish companies now have regular access to the internet during their working day. E-mail and the worldwide web are key business tools in many companies, and new developments such as social media and mobile communication technologies can improve communication with colleagues, customers and clients, bringing significant business benefits.

However, this regular and easy access to the web and e-mail can pose significant challenges for businesses. Managers will want to ensure that the internet is a positive thing for the company and that staff do not take advantage of their connectivity to imperil company resources.

Web-use monitoring technology can ensure that a company's staff are using the internet in positive ways, according to Michael Conway, director at Renaissance Contingency Services.

"There are three elements to why organisations are looking at their staff's internet usage," said Conway. "One is produc-

tivity, the second is security and the third is inappropriate or illegal activity. Companies have obligations in relation to all these, but our clients have the greatest concern with the productivity part. They are looking at how much time their staff are spending browsing the web, and how much business benefit the company is getting from that time."

Paul Ryan, senior security consultant of Integrity Solutions, said that workers using the internet in an unprofessional manner could be a significant drain on company resources.

"Two hours a day is the average productivity lost per employee on personal online activity," said Ryan.

"Internet bandwidth can become saturated, preventing delivery of business-critical applications or services. Cases of inappropriate usage can range from defamation and copyright infringement to harassment and discrimination claims."

Urban Schrott, IT security and cybercrime analyst at Eset Ireland, said staff browsing online in an unprotected environment could put the company's systems and even business success in danger.

"Workers accessing social networking sites can be bad for productivity," said Schrott. "However, a much bigger

threat is people visiting certain websites, downloading pirated software or accidentally installing spyware onto their PC. Companies can lose their own company data, confidential customer information or financial data such as credit card details. There can be serious direct costs involved."

Organisations with web-use monitoring solutions in place tend to find that the mere existence of the system removes most of these problems before they happen, according to Jim Lehane, sales director of Espion Distribution.

"There is invariably an initial level of inappropriate activity highlighted, but this alerts staff that new technologies are now in place and that their behaviour might need to be modified," said Lehane. "This information can also be used to develop a company web-use policy."

The return on investment involved in implementing a web-use monitoring technology can be generally be calculated quite easily, according to Damien Foley, chief executive of CMGi.

"We get the managers of each department to estimate how much time they think is being wasted per month on non-business related internet activity," said Foley. "Then you can very easily work out per year what that is costing the business."

Monitor mobile usage to stay safe

By Dermot Corrigan

Once upon a time it was relatively easy to monitor an organisation's internet use. Staff might be sending personal e-mails on work time, or perhaps reading sports results at their desk. These are not unimportant issues, but are relatively easily manageable with a simple solution.

The explosion of social media and mobile communications technologies has made things more complex, however. Face-

book and Twitter are great ways to waste time, as well as valuable business tools. iPhones and BlackBerries allow staff to work flexibly, but represent potentially dangerous gaps in company networks.

Managing staff's use of mobile devices to access e-mail, internet and company networks was a challenge, said Michael Conway, director of Renaissance Contingency Services.

"The proliferation of the iPhone is a challenge, with people using it for e-mail and internet, and also staff synching it with their company laptop,

which can lead to data leakage issues," said Conway. "People using a company's wireless networks to go online can also lead to issues."

Foley said that the latest web-use monitoring solutions were up to this challenge, however.

"The most recent versions allow you to lock down things like the phone's camera or Bluetooth capabilities, or to remotely wipe data from the phone if needs be," he said. "Pretty soon all the policies you can apply to a desktop or laptop computer will also be applied to a mobile phone."