

# CARY YOUR BAG LIGHTLY:

Celine's Mission to Dismantle Counterfeiters and Provide Authentication with Secure Digital Technology

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The counterfeit goods industry generates \$600 billion per year. The Global Brand Counterfeiting Report mentioned Celine, among 18 luxury brands, to be one of the foremost victims of counterfeiting. Not only does Celine face the dilution of brand image and revenue losses, but the production and sale of counterfeit goods poses ethical issues, such as child labor and sex trafficking. Counterfeit has become so advanced that it can be impossible to decipher between real and fake. Celine needed a solution that is simple, yet 100% secure. Celine will partner with Swiss anti-counterfeiting company, AlpVision, to implement digital authentication into its products.

The AlpVision Fingerprint® technology is proven to be counterfeit-proof. It has been entrusted by companies for years, protecting over 30 billion products worldwide. AlpVision was the first digital authentication solution in the World to be used by customs officers. The technology is also simple to apply to existing and new products without additional manufacturing. It can then be scanned by a mobile application to reveal product information. It is user-friendly for the brand, as well as the customer. Since it is used by customs officers, any product with the Celine logo that is not verified with AlpVision technology can be seized.

Celine's competitors are hopping onto the metaverse trend with NFT launches, just as they jumped into TikTok years back, while Celine hid behind the scenes. Phoebe Philo, former Celine creative director, famously stated, "The chicest thing is when you don't exist on Google." While the luxury environment has changed and Celine is now active on social media, the brand stays the same: understated and timeless. Celine needed a digital strategy to keep its relevancy in the industry, while staying true to the brand. This method of digital integration will prevent Celine from losing its core identity, while delighting the customer and enhancing its reputation.

### AlpVision® Invisible Fingerprint

#### <u>Advantages</u>

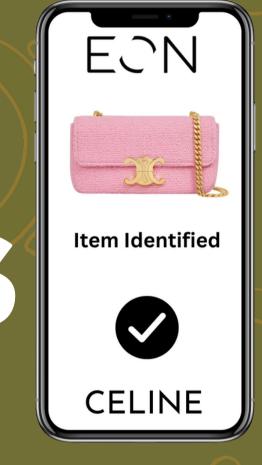
- Invisible (covert) code, so it is secure against counterfeiting
- Can be scanned with a mobile app
- Low cost and no change to the manufacturing process
- Supply chain information can be integrated
- Can be added to existing items

#### **Disadvantages**

- Difficult to market due to invisibility
- Not yet used in the fashion industry, as it is used mostly for tobacco, so the app's design is not the most aesthetically pleasing



### EON Digital Cloud QR/ NFC Tags



#### **Advantages**

- Visible (overt) code, so it is easy to market
- Already used in the fashion industry
- No need for a mobile app
- Brands can enter supply chain information directly into Eon's system

#### **Disadvantages**

- QR and NFC are highly expensive
- Visible codes lead to counterfeiting and do not fit Celine's brand image in general [See Appendix A, D]
- If Celine decided to change technologies, customers would be confused about which products were authentic



#### **Current Digital Strategy**

- Hedi Slimane has attempted to increase Celine's digital presence by using Generation Z influencers in campaigns
- Celine has an online store, WeChat, and Instagram, which were launched fashionably late in 2017
- WeChat is the main social platform Celine uses to engage with its customers, as products can be sold in other countries without special licensing



#### Authentication

- Celine has no digital strategy for authentication, instead an interior tag with an engraved, factory-date code
- The factory code, where the bag was produced, is the first 3 digits and the date code, the week and year in which the bag was produced, is the last 4 digits
- LVMH, Celine's parent company, launched a blockchain authentication strategy in April, Aura, which has yet to be implemented

#### Analysis of Strategies

- Celine's interior tag design, and social media presence, is consistent with its minimalistic, low-profile branding
- The code is not a serial number, as it is not unique to an individual product, so it can be easily replicated by counterfeiters
- The code cannot be scanned or searched in a database, which further enables counterfeiters
- Aura is not the solution because it is printed on a paper certificate, so the technology is not connected to the physical product
- Celine needs an invisible code on each product to verify the authenticity
- This method for creating a new digital strategy is a way to attract and retain customers without compromising its traditions and overall brand image

# THE ALPVISION® INVISIBLE FINGERPRINT IS CELINE'S NEW POWERTOOL'



# 'CELINE IS A PIONEER FOR ANTI-COUNTERFEIT IN THE LUXURY GOODS INDUSTRY'

#### What

- Celine to implement AlpVision's technology into new, as well as existing Celine products
- There is no authentication technology more secure and user-friendly than AlpVision's invisible fingerprint

#### How

- Celine provides AlpVision® with a few scanned images of each product style
- AlpVision's technology detects unique micro characteristics within the product to create the Fingerprint® [See Appendix B]
- The technology is instantly implemented on all units of each style and can be detected by the AlpVision® mobile app
- Then tells the user where and when the product was made
- Celine will not have to change its manufacturing processes

# COMPETITION WE ANALYSIS

#### **Yves Saint Laurent**

- No digital authentication, uses serial numbers, not batch numbers like Celine
- Recent trademark filings indicate YSL's intentions to implement authentication technology



• 'Gucci Tag' is an NFC tag only available on select goods from



#### Prada

• No digital authentication, uses factory numbers



- NFT drops every Thursday that include a physical product
- Ownership in LVMH's Aura, so Prada is one to look out for

#### **Situation**

- Celine's top competitors right now are Prada, Yves Saint Laurent, and Gucci
- A Washington Post study on counterfeit products found Celine, along with Prada and Gucci, to be in the top 10 most counterfeited brands on Instagram
- The study found ~ 8.1 million posts featuring counterfeit Celine products

#### **Market Opportunity**

- Luxury brands are aware that technology can be used to solve this issue, such as LVMH's Aura
- Within the next five years, all luxury brands will be in a race to collaborate with technology companies to authenticate their products
- Celine's use of the AlpVision® fingerprint will exponentially surpass other brands in this race
- It will boost Celine's relevancy as a future-oriented brand

# BRAND INTEGRATION

<u> Fechnology</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Benefit</u>	<u>Integration</u>	<u>Department</u>	<u>Usage</u>
AlpVision® Fingerprint	The technology will initially exist in all new Celine handbags. This concept will be used in marketing to relay the authenticity of Celine.	Less counterfeit circulation and higher customer satisfaction	Celine will educate its employees on the technology, create a campaign, then announce via social media and press.	(1) Upper Management (2) Sales (3) Marketing/ PR	(1) Ensuring partnership is managed (2) Knowledge of technology (3) Advertising and press
AlpVision® Brand Monitoring System	The backend system for tracking products. The system is customizable and can provide the location and other statistics about the product	Gain consumer insights for future product line development and marketing	Celine will chose which informational tools to provide to the customer. For example, Celine can enter supply chain details in the system for the customer to see in the app.	(1) Upper Management (2) Production (3) Marketing (4) Design	(1 & 2) Input supply chain information at UM's discression (3) & (4) Use information for future planning
AlpVision®  Mobile  Application  for iOS and  Android	Products are scanned with the app to reveal whether it is authentic. Customers will be able to view information about the product.	Convenience and customer engagement	Celine will use this app as part of its campaign for the fingerprint.	(1) Sales (2) Marketing/PR	(1) Show customer how to use (2) Advertising and press

# CUSTOMER JOB IMPACT

#### Target Market

• Luxury consumer values of Celine's top regions, according to consumer research studies

• Asia: Materialism, exclusivity, & service

• US: Authenticity, sustainability, & transparency

 France: Quality, gifting, & feeling of well-being

• The new digital strategy will impress the customer, as is shows Celine aligns with their values

#### **Generation Z**

- Generation Z to obtain 55% of the luxury market by 2025
- Gen Z has yet to take a liking to Celine, due to the exclusive nature of the brand and lack of social media presence
- Celine's website traffic reveals 26% of its visitors are between 18 and 24, so Gen Z is paying attention to the brand
  - This strategy is necessary in targeting Gen Z, as they look for luxury brands that provide authenticity and transparency

#### Product (Re)Positioning

- Celine's iconic bags under Phoebe Philo: Nano, Trapeze, Phantom, Box, Trio, & Belt
- Celine's new bags under Hedi Slimane: 16,
   Triomphe, & Ava
- Along with new bags, Hedi Slimane changed the logos
- This drastic transition has changed Celine's image and caused confusion regarding authenticity among customers
- The new digital strategy will help Celine assure ownership of its products
- Celine's old, new, and resale customers will see Celine's brand as one again







# STAKEHOLDER AGENDA

	<u>(1) Planning</u>	(2) Execution	<u>(3) Marketing</u>	<u>(4) Maintenance</u>
Department	Upper Management, Legal, & Finance	Production, Imaging	Marketing, PR, & Creative	Upper Management, Legal, & Finance
Tasks	Discuss Celine's goals with AlpVision and provide inventory sizes to make partnership decisions.	Provide scans of each product for AlpVision to analyze and integrate with the products.	Build and execute initial press release strategies by building creative campaigns.	Continue relationship with AlpVision and make decisions about future integration with other products.
Partnering Departments	Production, Merchandising, and E-Commerce	Upper Management, IT	Sales, E-Commerce	Imaging, PR, and Production
Partnership Collaboration	Partnering departments can provide the metrics for inventories, sales, and future production scaling.	Upper management will decide what information to enter in Brand Monitoring System, IT will assist	E-Commerce will update Celine's website with the campaigns. Sales team will use the new technology to assist customers.	Provide scans of new products to AlpVision, input new product information in the BMS, and release updates to public
Timeframe	3-6 months ideally, could be longer if facing legal issues	3-6 months for first phase on the most popular bags	3-6 months	On-going

# STAKEHOLDER IMPACT

		Marketing/PR	Sales/E-Commerce	Production/Imaging	<u>Upper Management</u>
Imp	act	New content for advertising and press, especially during launch. New insights from Brand Management System.	New leverage for making sales and responsible for educating the customer about the technology.	No change to production or general product imaging, but need to send the right information to AlpVision.	This is the first introduction of a major technology for Celine, so it is their responsibility to make the right decisions.
Timef	frame	3-6 Months, On-going	3-6 Months, On-going	3-6 Months, On-going	6-12 months, On-going
Growth Op	portunity	Marketing team can create future product campaigns based on Brand Monitoring System information.	Increased interest in Celine's products due to its revolutionary technology, which in- turn means increased revenue.	It will not affect their workload too much, but will be a part of the growth of Celine with AlpVision.	Will receive global recognition for pioneering pharmaceutical technology in the fashion industry.
	C				COUNT



#### <u>Technology</u>

- AlpVision's North American Sales Manager, Stephen Decker, provided that, for 300,000 units, the cost would be 15 cents per unit, or \$45,000
- There is an initial cost of \$50,000
- This cost includes AlpVision's technology, and there is no manufacturing or production involved

#### <u>Imaging</u>

- Reference imaging can be done with standard office scanners
- The imaging budget covers approximate hourly payment, as it will add extra responsibilities for employees

#### Website Updates

 Celine to pay its web developer, Cloudflare, to add the AlpVision page and update product descriptions

#### **Marketing**

- The marketing budget includes campaign development and execution, such as research, photography, and videography
- Budget also includes advertising the campaigns through print and social media
- The budget is based on average costs, spending by large brands, and .01% of Celine's yearly revenue of \$1 billion
- Celine's yearly marketing budget is approximately \$75 million, based on the 7-8% marketing rule of thumb

Technology	\$95,000
Imaging	\$10,000
Website Updates	\$10,000
Marketing	\$1,000,000

# KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

		<u>App Usage (1)</u>	Online Conversion (2)	<u>In-Store Conversion (3)</u>
	Description	AlpVision app downloads and usage will reveal how many customers know and care about the technology	Sales to AlpVision page and/or advertisement clicks ratio	How often customers make a purchase because of AlpVision (door greeters, surveillance footage etc.)
	Measurement Application	App downloads and usage frequency	Website purchases to page visits from search or Celine's AlpVision- related advertising	In-store sales to in-store customer inquiries/ app scans
	Rationale	Gain insight on value of app and its features to customers, statistics on counterfeit bags, customer geographic regions, etc.	Gain insight into Celine sales growth due to AlpVision technology	Most customers shop in-person, so will show how sales associates are driving purchases from new technology
	6 Month Goal	250,000 app downloads and 750,000 scans (multiple scans per user)	.25% (.5% overall, Celine's current approx. conversion rate is .3%)	.4% (.8% overall, Celine's current approx. conversion rate is .6%)
	3- Year Goal	1,000,000 app downloads and 3,000,000 scans	1% (2% overall, average luxury brand conversion rate is ~1%)	.8% (1.6% overall)

# RISKS TREWARDS

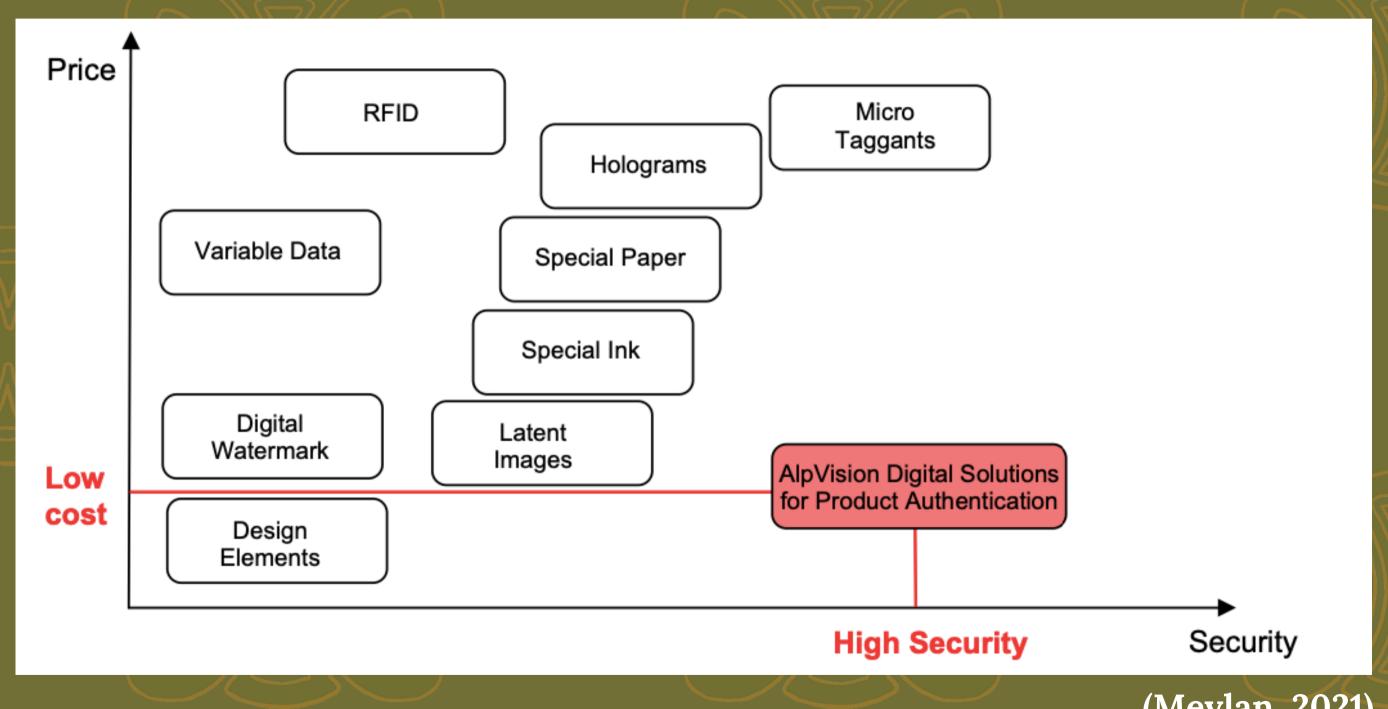
#### **Risks**

- Overall low risk, as the technology is inexpensive and invisible
- Difficulty marketing because the technology is invisible
- If Celine decides to reveal its supply chain, customers may be unhappy
  - Celine does mention their products are sustainable or market themselves as so



- Less counterfeit, more sales for them
- More website and foot traffic to discover the new technology
- Increase in resale circulation, due to ease of authentication
- New customers from resale sites, as well as returning customers looking for new items
- Global recognition for bringing a secure digital authentication method to the fashion industry
- Celine will be respected for bringing a unique digital strategy, rather than following the metaverse hype
- The brand image becomes one with the technology implemented in old and new bags

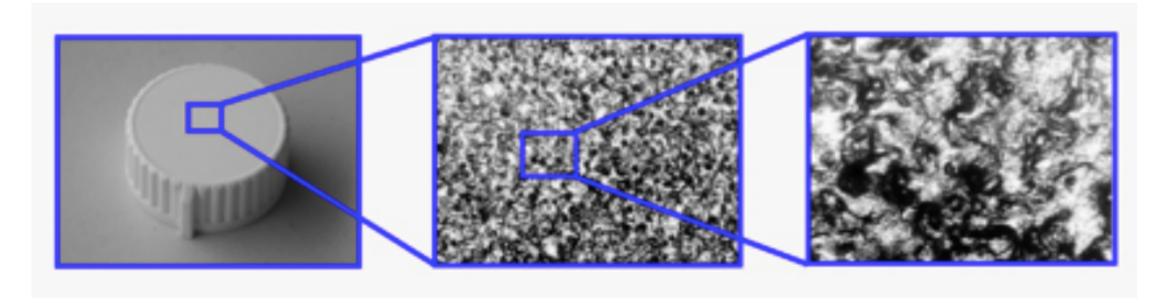
# APPENDIX A: ANTI-COUNTERFEIT COMPARISON



(Meylan, 2021).

# APPENDIX B: FINGERPRINT TECHNOLOGY

Fig. 5: Microscopic details of a medicine bottle closure; all parts produced with the same mold cavity contain the same "Fingerprint". The Fingerprint serves as a security feature which will stay during the whole life of the part.



"The Fingerprint process detects and records the unique 'fingerprint' of microscopic surface irregularities created by the tooling or mould cavities used for producing the parts. The process only requires the recording of a digital reference image or 'template' of each mould cavity used in the production of the moulded parts. It follows that only a limited number of templates are necessary to authenticate the entire production of moulded containers or other plastic parts" (Meylan, 2021).

# APPENDIX C: ISSUES WITH BLOCKCHAIN

There is no user-friendly platform to access blockchain data, so companies have to use third-party consultants. There are no government standards or regulations for blockchain because it is reaching relevance slowly. There is also a misconception that blockchain itself creates a sustainable supply chain. However, the company has to first implement sustainable practices at each step of the supply chain in order to confidently be transparent through blockchain (Caldarelli G., et al., 2021). There are high financial costs and energy usage, so although there is no physical, real-world production, there is substantial carbon usage. While there is not sufficient evidence that a blockchain could be hacked, those with access to the ledger could enter false information, such as a factory lying about its production processes. It is almost irreversible once information is entered. The brand has to trust everyone in its supply chain that they are not going to lie (Joy A., et al, 2022).

# APPENDIX D: ISSUES WITH RFID & NFC

A lot of trust is put into RFID and NFC, as they are used to protect luxury cars, banks, and government offices. Security researchers and hackers have found insecurities in these technologies. There have been thieves who have stolen luxury cars by hacking smart chips. Technology experts at these luxury car companies are continuously trying the fix security issues. Security researcher, Dennis Maldonao, debunked RFID technology and created a usable app for people to clone RFID codes. This data can be accessed by scanning an RFID code as far as 30 feet away. In 2012, security researchers discovered the weaknesses in Radio-Frequency Identification. Car companies attempted to sue them to not publish their research. A few years later, millions of Chryslers, BMWs, and other cars were recalled due to vehicle theft (Moogz, 2021).

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