FINDING THE RIGHT SUBSTRATE MATCHING YOUR REQUIREMENTS

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Successful projects are often defined in the first few months, during the specification phase. Knowing what your use-cases are, identifying the success-factors and knowing your options is key. While the question of formfactor and substrate seemed very easy for many years, the options have grown offering new possibilities and cost optimizations. This article will highlight some aspects of this subject.

Credit card brands, loyalty schemes and the international civil aviation organization endorse ISO 7810 using a card format of 8.55 x 5.54mm, also called ID1 for travel-documents. This is a very practical size, fitting into the wallet nicely and facilitating electronic machine readability for magstripes and contact chips [ICAO].

For use-cases not bound to this formfactor the possibilities to reflect on workflows, materials, security are broader, and full of options. Such documents are birth certificates, emergency documents, property deeds, refugee IDs, diplomas etc.. In fact, the options might be more than you might be aware of.

Paper based documents are likely either printed on office paper (non-secure, non durable), security paper (better security, better durability), sometimes on plastic sheets (non-secure, durable). For use-cases that needed to be both secure and very robust, the most popular is moving onto a card. This has an impact on most of your workflow, starting with a multitude of consumables (i.e. cards, print ribbons, Holo-Patches), and the issuance infrastructure. Various such cases have been seen in the last years where the system requirements and the budgets involved were underestimated. We will withhold naming the projects concerned explicitly. However, both goals of longevity and security are often missed when the budget is to limited to do it right.

New and still proven alternative

A new option to be seriously considered consists of various forms of synthetic papers. The banknote industry has commenced on applying this new technology, where robustness, cleanliness and security are believed to have been successfully united. While the pure foils, or compounds are new with short track-record, a method of polymeric fibers being processed on actual security paper machines has been proven for over 50 years – and experiencing in the last months a renaissance. Innovative companies and governments are just rediscovering the immense advantages. Security features as you would expect from secure document paper combined with robustness in most severe conditions (camp-situations, exposure to the elements) are serious characteristics. For the printing you most likely can rely on your current infrastructure like toner-laser or inkjet. However, an in-depth analysis in the specific case for its tamper resistance resp. visualization is best practice.

Should this new possibility be of interest to you, too, don't hesitate to speak to the team of SECOIA to learn more how it could help be a game-changer for you.

In the next mailing we will discuss the securing of the issuance process.