

A Different View on Document Systems for Extra-Normal Use

by Stephan D Hofstetter, SECOIA Executive Consultants

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 form factor and substrate seemed very easy for many years, the options have grown offering new possibilities and cost optimisations. Proven technologies combined with digital elements are being rediscovered.

Identity and travel documents are, depending on where you operate, issued in clean, well connected offices. And the document bearers will be able to take care of them during the regulated service life.

However, as many readers are also aware, that this often isn't the case. A vast number of issuing bodies and their depending population cannot rely on such ideal circumstances. When it comes to forced migrants and disaster management, the time and supply component become even more challenging. Conventional approaches are highly reputable, but often are not truly suitable.

Credit card brands, loyalty schemes and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) endorse ISO/IEC 7810 using a card format of 8.55mm 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 magnetic stripes and contact chips.

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

Paper based documents are, in most cases, either printed on office paper (non-secure, non-durable), security paper (better security, better durability), and sometimes on plastic sheets (non-secure, durable). For use-cases that need to be both secure and very robust, the most popular choice is moving onto a card.

This has an impact on most of your workflow, starting with a multitude of consumables (ie. cards, print ribbons, holo patches etc.), and the infrastructure for issuance. In the last few years, various cases have emerged where the system requirements and the budget involved were underestimated. As a result, both goals of longevity and security are often missed when the budget is too limited to do it right.

New and proven alternative

A new option to be seriously considered consists of various forms of polymeric papers. The banknote industry is 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 still a relatively short track-record, a method of mixing synthetic fibres with pulp and then processing them on actual paper machines by adding embedded security features has been proven for over 50 years – and is experiencing in the last months a renaissance. Innovative companies and governments are just rediscovering the immense advantages of these truly synthetic papers.

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.

Specific inkjet printers are now available, capable of deeply linking with the substrate. The data ranges from the typical visual data to machine readable encrypted QR codes. Select solutions offer to print the data additionally in UV fluorescent ink, adding additional layers of security. Where needed, the issuance infrastructure is complemented by buffering power supplies, allowing for continued production during a power failure of several hours.

Logistical security

An important aspect to consider is the logistical security: how can stocks be secured and how can the issuance process be protected from single points of infiltration. Avoiding having blank documents already carrying most security features, these should be spread out into various phases of issuance, both physically and by authorisation to access and use.

Thus, only the combination of multi-component physical and digital elements will finally constitute a rightful document. Replacing the widespread chops or stamps by highly secured and trackable security seals rounds off such a concept.

A piece of advice

For compiling the specifications of a new project, the author advises every agency to make sure to diligently describe the environment and mission critical boundaries.

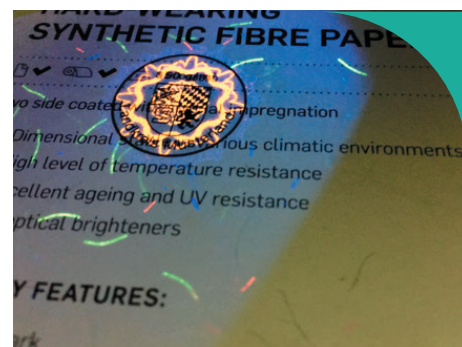
Circumvent the temptation of jumping quickly to conclusions based on glossy marketing documentations or impressive reference installations, as your success factors might diverge from these projects. Getting an independent advisor to your team might reveal additional options for implementation, just as it potentially did for you.



Emergency travel document (ETD) with colour inkjet print, machine readable elements, multi-coloured fibres and watermarks.



Critical data repeated in UV with biodata and portrait printed in UV blue and red. Embedded UV fluorescent fibres in multiple colours.



Security seal added to the document, observed under UV light. Each seal is individually numbered and trackable.

Seamless Travel to be Implemented across Latin America

Montevideo Carrasco International Airport has become the first fully digital airport in Latin America, with a kerb-to-gate biometric journey in full operation using Vision-Box technology.

For the first time in Latin America, airline passengers can board planes without having to show their passport or boarding pass. A simple face scan is enough to have them securely boarded in just a few seconds.

Since 2016, the Carrasco International Airport's Easy Airport program has been successfully offering passengers biometric border control. Carrasco International is now extending the use of biometric technology to all remaining passenger interaction stages.

The goal is to accelerate traveller flow processing and offer a frictionless journey to the airport guests, where presenting travel documents is a thing of the past.

16 biometric self-boarding gates are just an additional piece of the expansion planned for Easy Airport. The program has been devised to transform the airport into a fully end-to-end contactless experience, where the face is the individual's passport. Once all the phases of the Easy Airport program are completed, Carrasco Airport will be one of the most advanced terminals in the region in the use of self-service and biometric technology.

The inauguration marks the onset of a strategic modernisation plan that will span over 50 airports operated by Corporación America.

The company has announced that it has signed an exclusive partnership agreement with Vision-Box to bring seamless travel technologies to other commercial airports of the network.

Vision-Box CEO Miguel Leitmann stated: 'Our joint vision now materialises through the implementation of our common-use orchestration platform, which fuels the biometric passenger touch-points at multiple steps of the traveller's journey.'

'The alliance we celebrated today marks the beginning of a transformational wave that will extend seamless travel technologies to more airports, more stakeholders and more people around the world. It'll have a memorable impact on travel and build the foundations to transform the passenger lifestyle.'

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