

Retail Security Systems for Esselte Meto

Revitalising core business for Europe's
leading supplier of retail price labels



In the early 1990s, Esselte Meto's market dominance was significantly threatened by the rapid growth of bar code labelling. In order to survive and compete, Esselte had to create a new and sustainable business, compatible with and complementary to its existing core competencies and market position.

Esselte saw the potential of an existing retail security product – a novel security label. We were asked to assess the underlying technology and intellectual property rights, and identify ways to develop unique selling points which could deliver real competitive advantage.

A new concept in retail security ↪

We began by helping Esselte acquire the rights to the technologies which lay behind the new security label, and also identified the supermarket checkout as the best potential application.

We then went on to exploit our own technology portfolio and patented a new concept in retail security, the thin film label, further developing the process to enable volume manufacture. Drawing upon our business contacts, we identified a suitable manufacturing partner for Esselte and helped establish a new company and purpose-built manufacturing facility based in Belgium.

Integrating seamlessly with Esselte's core business, the new label proved highly attractive to retailers as it was both small and compatible with existing Esselte label delivery systems. Developing the system further, we also developed cost-effective detectors which used compact antennae and electronics. Designed initially for supermarket checkouts, the detector antennae were later adapted to suit different types of merchandise and store design. Manufacturing for the detector system was established in the Middle East.

Market leader ↪

The resulting system – Esselte Meto Electronic Article Surveillance (EAS) – is the European market leader in terms of performance and ease of use. And we're still taking advantage of new technologies to enhance and improve Esselte EAS. Radically different processing technology has replaced that created for the original system, and the detection range has been extended, allowing the system to be used in more and more applications. Esselte now has a strong, independent patent portfolio as a result of the ongoing development work.

Long and close relationship ↪

Esselte identified Sagentia as offering the extensive technology and business innovation expertise necessary for such a complex project. We could also supply a team capable of meeting the needs of a major multinational organisation. As a result, we have been working with Esselte for more than 15 years and, not surprisingly, a close relationship has developed between our two companies, with new and emerging technologies continually identified and exploited for Esselte's benefit.