computer in their shops or to information which is often confidential and protected.

The existence of a "grey market", of alternative routing of spare parts and consumer goods, are likewise just as much holes in the distribution networks and represent large sums of lost money for all the players in this network.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Embodiments of the present invention seek to provide a system of certification of origin of consumer goods which may be efficient and may be easy to use for the merchants who sell these consumer goods. In particular, embodiments of the present invention seek to provide such a system which may be operational on the international level and which does not limit the number of merchants able to use it.

According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a system of certification of origin of a product, the system comprising a bank payment network, a point of entry terminal, an element of the bank payment network and a verification element, wherein

- the element of the bank payment network is configured to issue a testimony card being used once prior to the dispatch of consumer goods with each electronic payment terminal of said point of entry terminal, in order validate the point of entry terminal, as well as an authentication medium to be sent to the point of entry terminal, the authentication medium containing an identification number, the format of which is compatible with that accepted by the bank payment network;

- the point of entry terminal is configured to extract or capture the identification number from the authentication medium at the time of a request for certification of origin of a product, and to transmit the request for certification of origin with the identification number to the bank payment network;

- the verification element is configured to keep in a memory the identification number issued by the element of the bank payment network or a reference to this identification number, to receive the identification number or a reference to this identification number linked to the request for certification of origin, and to verify the origin of the product the certification of origin of which has been requested by verifying whether the identification number or the reference to this identification number received, which is linked to the request for certification of origin, is located in the memory~~,~~ ~~wherein no information connected to the verification element can be learned from the identification number or from other data circulating in the bank payment network relating to the request for the certification of origin, the identity of the verification element being known only from the element of the bank payment network~~.

According to embodiments of the present invention, an efficient and relatively simple system can be obtained for carrying out a certification of origin of a consumer good by using a banking network. The first element can in fact be a single physical element or it can be made up of at least two physical elements. As all the authentication documents are identified, upon their use, and owing to the data received from the banking network, the information exchanged makes it possible to locate very precisely the exact place of the sale.

According to a second aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method for certifying the origin of a product in a system comprising a bank payment network, a point of entry terminal, an element of the bank payment network and a verification element, comprising

- issuing a testimony card, for one-time use, to be sent to the merchant prior to the dispatch of consumer goods in order to validate said point of entry terminal;
- the issuing by the element of the bank payment network of an authentication medium to be sent to the point of entry terminal, the authentication medium containing an identification number the format of which is compatible with that accepted by the bank payment network;
- the extraction or capturing by the point of entry terminal of the identification number from the authentication medium at the time of a request for certification of origin of a product;

- the transmission of the request for certification of origin with the identification number to the bank payment network;

- the keeping by the verification element, in a memory, of the identification number issued by the element of the bank payment network or a reference to this identification number;

- the receiving by the verification element of the identification number or a reference to this identification number connected to the request for certification of origin; and

- the verification of the origin of the product, for which the certification of origin has been requested, by verifying whether the received identification number or the received reference to this identification number, which is connected to the request for certification of origin, is located in the memory,

~~wherein no information connected to the verification element can be learned from the identification number or from other data circulating in the bank payment network relating to the request for the certification of origin, the identity of the verification element being known only from the element of the bank payment network.~~

There is also provided a device for the certification of origin of a product, the device having means to connect itself to a bank payment network, the device having means for:

- issuing an authentication medium to be sent to a point of entry terminal, the authentication medium containing an identification number, the format of which is compatible with that accepted by the bank payment network;

- keeping in a memory the identification number created in the previous step;

- receiving from the point of entry terminal via the bank payment network the identification number extracted or captured by the point of entry terminal at the time of a request for certification of origin; and

Claims

1. A system of certification of origin of a product, the system comprising a bank payment network, a point of entry terminal, an element of the bank payment network and a verification element, wherein

- the element of the bank payment network is configured to issue a testimony card being used once prior to the dispatch of consumer goods with each electronic payment terminal of said point of entry terminal, in order validate the point of entry terminal, as well as an authentication medium to be sent to the point of entry terminal, the authentication medium containing an identification number, the format of which is compatible with that accepted by the bank payment network;
- the point of entry terminal is configured to extract or capture the identification number from the authentication medium at the time of a request for certification of origin of a product, and to transmit the request for certification of origin with the identification number to the bank payment network;
- the verification element is configured to keep in a memory the identification number issued by the element of the bank payment network or a reference to this identification number, to receive the identification number or a reference to this identification number linked to the request for certification of origin, and to verify the origin of the product the certification of origin of which has been requested by verifying whether the identification number or the reference to this identification number received, which is linked to the request for certification of origin, is located in the memory,

~~wherein no information connected to the verification element can be learned from the identification number or from other data circulating in the bank payment network relating to the request for the certification of origin, the identity of the verification element being known only from the element of the bank payment network.~~

2. The system according to claim 1, wherein the element of the bank payment network is furthermore configured to receive from the point of entry terminal the identification number extracted or captured at the time of the request for certification of origin and is configured to communicate to the verification element the identification number received, or, for a received identification number, a reference to this identification number.

10. The system according to claim 9, wherein, in the case where the request for authorization of the certification of origin of the product concerned has been prohibited, the element of the bank payment network or the verification element is furthermore configured to inform the point of entry about this.

11. The system according to claim 1, wherein no information connected to the verification element can be learned from the identification number or from other data circulating in the bank payment network relating to the request for the certification of origin, the identity of the verification element being known only from the element of the bank payment network.

~~11~~12. The system according to claim 1, wherein the authentication medium is made up of a card of banking type.

~~12~~13. The system according to claim 1, wherein the identification number is printed on this authentication medium, but is hidden by a "scratch-off" process.

~~13~~14. The system according to claim 1, wherein the authentication medium has a magnetic strip in which the identification number is recorded and/or an electronic unit in which the identification number is recorded.

~~14~~15. The system according to claim 1, wherein the point of entry is an electronic payment terminal installed at the requester and adapted for reading the authentication medium.

~~15~~16. The system according to claim 1, wherein the element of the bank payment network comprises the verification element.

~~16~~17. A method for certifying the origin of a product in a system comprising a bank payment network, a point of entry terminal, an element of the bank payment network and a verification element, comprising

- issuing a testimony card, for one-time use, to be sent to the merchant prior to the dispatch of consumer goods in order to validate said point of entry terminal;

- the issuing by the element of the bank payment network of an authentication medium to be sent to the point of entry terminal, the authentication medium containing an identification number, the format of which is compatible with that accepted by the bank payment network;

- the extraction or capturing by the point of entry terminal of the identification number from the authentication medium at the time of a request for certification of origin of a product;

- the transmission of the request for certification of origin with the identification number to the bank payment network;

- the keeping by the verification element, in a memory, of the identification number issued by the element of the bank payment network or a reference to this identification number;

- the receiving by the verification element of the identification number or a reference to this identification number connected to the request for certification of origin; and

- the verification of the origin of the product, for which the certification of origin has been requested, by verifying whether the received identification number or the received reference to this identification number, which is connected to the request for certification of origin, is located in the memory,

~~wherein no information connected to the verification element can be learned from the identification number or from other data circulating in the bank payment network relating to the request for the certification of origin, the identity of the verification element being known only from the element of the bank payment network.~~