

## LABELS - TINY INVESTMENT, BIG RETURN!

Continuing our commentary about asset management, let's go back to the beginning. If your property isn't tagged with a unique number you can't defend it or prove ownership or track it or link it to inspections, so it's important to fix a label that at least has an eye readable unique number. Unless you're a supermarket, printing in house is not worth the bother as even the largest secondary school won't need much more than 5000 labels for existing assets and a few extra for new purchases. Get the printing company to include a barcode, it won't cost any extra, so that you can scan much more quickly with a machine, if not now then for later on.

Barcode Labels- Some considerations.....

a) **Materials** -Tamper resistant labels made from ultra destruct vinyl are popular because once pressed firmly in place and allowing some 'curing time' they cannot be removed in one piece. The theory is that the pupil will give up once the corner starts to shred into very small pieces! Laminated pvc, laser etched, and aluminium are good for more hostile environments such as outdoors, but the metal tags are more expensive as are plastic tags that need a separate epoxy adhesive.

Etching labels allowing a compound to be painted through punched holes are effective where a post code is required on the asset surface for extra theft deterrence. Sticky paper labels are not recommended

b) **Content**- The message can be generic ie 'Asset Registered' and a barcode with the sequential number underneath, (don't start with a zero, XL drops them unless you're careful) or 'Property of...' with name, post code, phone, and even a full colour school logo if you want extra branding.

c) **Size**- Larger for easy scanning and warning, smaller so that it can be applied to smaller objects like tablets, radios, and cameras. 50mm x 25 mm is large enough for easy viewing or scanning, but small enough for fixing to most of your inventory. Smaller sizes are available for digital cameras and small profile IT equipment.

d) **Fixing** - The optimum position is a compromise between easy to see or scan and discreet enough to not to attract unwanted attention. For example the side or back of a monitor is recommended rather than the front. Care should be taken with anything that has any artistic quality or danger of being scratched by contact with another surface.



*Generic label*

***"You can't manage what you don't measure!"***

Stephen Laing  
Managing Director, ASSETtrac Ltd