

Bright spark's solution to a taxing problem

A FORMER Midlands electrician has turned crime-busting bright spark - with an annual turnover of over £500,000.

In just five years Mike Prince from Aldridge has transformed a piece of plastic measuring six by four inches into a phenomenally successful deterrent against car tax crime.

Mike, aged 49, set up Secur-i-Disc on his own in 1993, but now employs over 30 agents around the country and a staff of three at his new home-based premises near Streetly, Sutton Coldfield.

He says the idea came to him in a flash one night in Birmingham.

"About six years ago we were at a concert in Centenary Square, and my wife and I were walking back through the city centre when I saw a brand new vehicle with its window wound

By Jonathan Perks

down and a 12 months tax disc in the windscreen," Mike said.

"I said to my wife 'Anyone could just take that disc and put it on their car' - and that gave me the idea."

After looking into tax disc theft, Mike was astounded to discover it was a £175 million a year business.

A year later he had developed the prototype Secur-i-Disc and sent it to the DVLA for testing so they would approve it for owners to get refunds on their discs.

Mike now supplies 3,000 franchised post offices around the country, has the backing of all major police forces in Britain and Ireland and supplies hundreds of companies from Frizell Insurance to Amnesty International with their own personalised holders.

Amazingly the Secur-i-Disc is still the same price as when it was launched - £1.

Mike has recently been negotiating a deal to supply a Mediterranean government with their own version of the Secur-i-Disc.

The crime is not exclusive to Britain.

The adhesive acetate tax disc holders - which are made in Brierley Hill - prevent thieves stealing tax discs from cars and altering them to be sold on for as little as £25.

With conventional holders thieves can remove the disc and alter the details using fluids, computers and even Blu-tack.

The Secur-i-Disc prevents alteration and destroys the disc if tampered with.

"It's such a simple gadget but an awful lot of testing and time had to go in to it," said Mike.

"It's grown from a small embryo and taken over my life - I gave up my job and gambled all my future on it, but it's really paid off."



CRIMEBUSTER... Mike Prince



GLAM ROCKERS... Noddy (right) with Slade and (below) the Inland Revenue

Taxman earns Noddy's fury over p

By Neil Cavell

SLADE star Noddy Holder is going crazed again... over the taxman. The former glam rock

Don't let a few records spoil your Christmas.

Last night No DJ on Piccadilly Manchester, said the Inland Revenue have done you to ask my perm courtesy.