

Automated vehicle tracking for carmakers; SAMSys offers Class 0 UHF reader; Acsis unveils QuickStart compliance packages; STMicroelectronics launches chip for e-passports; Intellex receives \$11 million in funding.

Aug. 13, 2004—The following are news announcements made during the week of Aug. 9.

Automated Vehicle Tracking for Carmakers

[WhereNet](#), a Santa Clara, Calif.-based provider of real-time locating systems, has introduced a vehicle tracking and management system for automotive manufacturers, distributors, and rental car companies. When each new vehicle rolls off the assembly line or arrives at a vehicle processing center, it is assigned an active RFID transmitter that's associated with the unit's vehicle identification number. The tag remains on the vehicle until it has been processed and is ready to ship to its final destination, providing location data. The software enables carmakers to better manage the process of testing and verifying vehicles coming off the assembly line and tracking them as they go through quality control, containment and shipping zones. WhereNet is also targeting vehicle processing centers and fleet and rental car operators, which can use the software to track the movement of vehicles through distribution hubs and improve customer service. Pricing for the vehicle tracking system, which is available immediately and includes hardware and software, ranges from \$250,000 to \$1 million, depending on the size and scope of the installation.

SAMSys Adds Class 0 To UHF Reader

[SAMSys Technologies](#), a Toronto-based maker of multifrequency RFID readers, says it has added support for EPC Class 0 tags to its MP9320 V2.7 multiprotocol UHF reader, which began shipping last month. Class 0 tags are factory-programmed read-only tags. The reader can also write to the read-write version of the Class 0 tag, known as Class 0+. Wal-Mart and the U.S. Department of Defense have both said they will require suppliers to use either Class 0 or Class 1 tags until the next-generation UHF standard is ready. The MP9320 V2.7 can also read tags that use EPC Class 1, ISO 18000-6A, 18000-6B, Philips UCODE EPC 1.19, EM Marin 4022 and 4222, Intermec Intellitag protocols. It has a list price of \$2,999.

Acsis Unveils QuickStart Compliance Packages

[Acsis](#), a supply-chain systems specialist based in Marlton, N.J., has launched its RFID QuickStart program. The program consists of two packages of hardware and software aimed at helping consumer packaged goods (CPG) and pharmaceutical manufacturers meet trading partners' RFID compliance mandates. Each package consists of a stationary EPC Class 1 or Class 0 reader, smart-label printer-encoder, light stacks for indicating successful or unsuccessful tag readings, services and software based on Acsis' Adaptive Device Integration Platform, a Web services middleware product. The difference between the two packages is the software for the CPG package is geared toward aggregating cases on a pallets, while the pharmaceutical package software deals with aggregating individual units into cases. The packages are available immediately and sell for \$50,000. Acsis is selling Class 1 or Class 0 tags separately.

STMicroelectronics Launches E-passport Chip

[STMicroelectronics](#), a Geneva-based semiconductor company, announced that it has developed a new microchip that can be used for smart carts that can communicate with a reader either through direct contact or via radio waves. The ST19WR66 microchip has 66-Kbytes of nonvolatile memory, so it can store biometric records and personal information. The company says the data can be stored on the chip for more than 10 years, so it can be used as an electronic passport. The chip also has 224-Kbytes of read-only memory for storing an operating system and program code, supports encryption and complies with ISO14443B, an international standard for smart cards. STMicroelectronics says the chip will be ready to ship for passport pilot programs in the fourth quarter and cost \$2.50 to \$3.50 depending on quantity and final packaging.

Intellexflex Receives \$11 Million in Funding

[Intellexflex](#), a San Jose-based supplier of RFID products, announced that it has received \$11.3 million in funding from [Alloy Ventures](#), [Selby Ventures](#) and [Woodside Fund](#). The company says it will use the funding to accelerate product development. Intellexflex is focused on high-end active (battery-powered) RFID tags based on draft EPC specifications. The company says its prototype tag, which will be available in the first quarter of next year, will have a read range of about 250 meters (820 feet). It will also feature encryption capabilities, long battery life and the ability to integrate RFID tags with sensors and displays.