

**Linked to a real-time location system, Sybase's enterprise applications will aggregate and process asset-location data and deliver it to mobile devices.**

By Jonathan Collins

Aug. 23, 2004—Enterprise application vendor [Sybase](#) has taken its first steps into the RFID market by announcing a partnership with RFID real-time location system (RTLS) specialist [AeroScout](#) and promising to release RFID-enabled software later this year.

"Some of our customers are looking into RFID and RTLS, and before we built a solution, we looked at the market. In AeroScout, we saw a technology that would be compatible with our own products and approach," says David Barrack, who heads up the worldwide field solution group at Sybase, in Dublin, Calif.

The partnership with San Mateo, Calif.-based AeroScout (formerly named Bluesoft) will see the two companies combining their technologies and jointly marketing a real-time RFID tracking offering to end user companies as well as selling that offering through systems integrators and resellers.

Sybase's real-time RFID solution will take asset-location data collected by AeroScout's RTLS system and feed that data to Sybase applications, which will aggregate and process the data and deliver it to mobile devices such as smart phones and PDAs.



*Sybase's Barrack*

AeroScout's RTLS can not only track equipment fitted with the company's battery-powered RFID tags, it can also track standard Wi-Fi-enabled clients (802.11b/g), including devices such as laptops, PDAs, barcode scanners and RFID readers. According to AeroScout, the ability of its system to recognize and locate handheld devices using Wi-Fi eases the integration and management of devices into Sybase's RFID system. "If companies had to put RFID tags on their handhelds in order to track them, the system would be far less effective," says Andris Berzins, vice president of business development at AeroScout.

Combining Sybase's enterprise applications with AeroScout's tracking technology will enable companies to collect and deliver location-enabled content to mobile devices so that asset and resource information can be acted on in real time.

According to Sybase, the bulk of its enterprise software customers are in the financial, government and healthcare markets, and it says it sees growing interest in RFID deployments in the latter two of those three markets. "We are seeing interest in RFID from a lot of our customers for specialized types of applications that can track assets or people. Supply chain applications are further out on the horizon," says Barrack.

In addition to its partnership with AeroScout, Sybase also launched its RFID Early Adopter Program in a bid to win over RFID vendors, systems integrators and resellers to work with the company to develop

other joint RFID offerings.

Sybase says it is already developing a suite of RFID-enabled products that is set to ship later this year and will provide the basis for a range of RFID-based applications, such as the tracking of high-value assets, inventory, shipping and receiving.

According to Sybase, its new software will provide multiple applications with concurrent access to an RFID network and include a software interface visual integration environment for developing RFID-enabled business processes in enterprise systems. By the end of the year, Sybase plans to offer management middleware to connect to and control devices so that the company can offer management services for RFID readers, bar code scanners, sensors and controllers (PLCs) and the ability to collect and analyzing streaming RFID data.

"We believe there is a converging of RTLS with passive and active RFID as well as bar codes, and the need to support those mixed environments is central to our efforts," says Barrack.

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