

RFID News Roundup

Peer-to-peer RFID software; DOD clarifies RFID deadline concerns; new product for controlling computer access; RFID-wristband maker PDC buys Euro distributor; R. Moroz offers RFID portal.

Nov. 19, 2004—The following are news announcements made during the week of Nov. 15.

Peer-to-Peer RFID Software Released

Stockway, a Finnish company that produces software and middleware for RFID and other Auto-ID technologies, has introduced what it says is the world's first and only peer-to-peer RFID software development platform. Called Trackway DP, the software is available from Stockway's Web site and is directed at software developers and integrators. The software is designed to allow companies using RFID to share product data within the World Wide Article Information (WWAI) protocol network, an identification system that Stockway devised (see [Peer-to-Peer: RFID's Killer App?](#)). When an item's tag is read by a WWAI-enabled reader, its information enters the WWAI network and can be accessed immediately by other network members. Peer-to-peer networks allow users to share information directly, without routing it through an intermediary. But unlike peer-to-peer software used widely in music file-sharing programs, Trackway DP is backed by security and authentication features that let companies decide who gets to see information related to a particular item. The Trackway DP product includes a software engine, various APIs, integration tools for any IT system and drivers for most commonly used RFID and bar code readers. It supports several databases such as mySQL, DB2 and Oracle. It can be used with any RFID tag or bar codes. The system will compete with the EPCglobal Network, a non-peer-to-peer system that also aims to use the Internet to enable companies to share data.

DOD Clarifies RFID Deadline Concerns

A news report this week stated that the Department of Defense was planning to push back its Jan. 1, 2005, deadline for its suppliers to start tagging cases and pallets it ships to the DOD, but a department spokesman says that there has been no change to the deadline. However, the language to be used in the supplier's contracts that specifies the RFID mandate has not yet been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (the OMB coordinates development of the federal budget and is working with the DOD on the details of the implementation of the RFID mandate). The effective date for each DOD supplier to tag its shipments is specified on that individual supplier's contract. Should the new language not be approved by Jan. 1, any DOD contract renewed between Jan. 1 and when the language is approved will not include the RFID mandate. That said, a number of DOD suppliers, including Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, GE Transportation, Rolls-Royce and Raytheon are already testing RFID or running pilot projects and are considering using RFID in their shipments to DOD by Jan. 1 even if their individual contracts do not yet mandate its use.

New Product for Controlling Computer Access

SecuriCode, a security and ID management company in the U.K., has released an RFID-based solution that controls access to computers. The system uses RFID tags and readers from an undisclosed manufacturer in the U.K. (its identity is being withheld because its hardware patent is currently under review). The tags are carried (or worn) by people and are read by RFID readers embedded in computers. The tags carry an encrypted ID number that the reader scans to provide access. If used in combination with a Web-based federated identity

system such as [Liberty Alliance](#), the SecuriCode system can make a predetermined group of documents or applications available to each computer user, depending on his or her profile. The tags and readers operate at 2.45 GHz, the same frequency used by Bluetooth devices, but they won't cause radio interference for with Bluetooth devices because the SecuriCode system uses a different coding for the frequency. The reader also comes in a non-embedded form factor that can be plugged into a USB port of an operating computer. This powers the reader at which time it polls the nearest tag to allow access to that computer. SecuriCode says that in addition to providing security, these devices save users time by automatically logging them in and out of the computer network. SecuriCode is taking orders for the product now; delivery will begin in January. Pricing information was not released.

RFID-Wristband Maker PDC Buys Euro Distributor

[Precision Dynamics Corp. \(PDC\)](#) a San Fernando, Calif., maker of automatic wristband identification systems to the healthcare and patron management markets worldwide, announced this week that it acquired its European distributor MFR Europe. Through the acquisition the company will form PDC's first European headquarters, PDC Europe, in Brussels, Belgium. Prior to the acquisition, MFR represented PDC for more than 12 years by managing a network of European and North African distributors selling PDC products. PDC plans to leverage its new European headquarters to expand its RFID wristband products into new markets. PDC makes the Smart Band RFID wristband system, used to identify patients in hospitals, participants in racing events and patrons at amusement parks. The Smart Band product operates at 13.56 MHz and contains either the Philips I-CODE or the Texas Instruments Tag-it transponder chip. Mads Fiig, previous director of MFR, has been appointed managing director of PDC Europe. PDC's vice president of sales and marketing, Nicholas Curtin, will oversee Fiig and the operations of PDC Europe from the company's global headquarters in San Fernando. Last year, PDC opened a manufacturing facility is located in Tijuana, Mexico.

R. Moroz Offers RFID Portal

[R. Moroz Ltd.](#), a Markham, Ontario, product distributor specializing in AIDC (Automatic Identification Data Capture), bar coding and RFID technologies, is offering a new product called RFID-EPC/ISO Gate. The package includes a modular structure that can be assembled on-site and fitted into an 8-foot wide shipping door. The package includes a reader, antennas, installation of the gate, and some support services. Customers can pick any [Texas Instruments RFID](#) or [Feig Electronic](#) HF ISO-complaint readers and antennas that R. Moroz distributes or UHF EPC Gen 2 candidate-compliant readers and antennas. The product is available immediately. Pricing for the package ranges from US\$4,000 to US\$8,000, per package, depending on the type of reader and antennas selected. Because the portal structure is composed of 2- to 4-foot sections, dented or damaged sections can be replaced without having to replace the entire structure.

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