

RFID News Roundup

Paxar included on GSA schedule; E-Cenit offers RFID for data storage; Zebra merges hardware with SAP's AII; Tagsys has new tag for libraries; RedPrairie, Printronix extend partnership; HID releases GSC-compliant smart card readers; WJ Communications announces merger agreement.

Jan. 21, 2005—The following are news announcements made during the week of Jan. 17.

Paxar Included on GSA Schedule

Paxar, a White Plains, N.Y., provider of Monarch RFID and bar code printing products, has entered into an agreement with IT and professional services company CDO Technologies to list Paxar's Monarch brand printing products, supplies and services on CDO's General Services Administration (GSA) schedule. This agreement will make it possible for government agencies to purchase Paxar's RFID products from CDO Technologies at a predetermined price and without having to seek spending permission or send out requests for quotes for comparable products and services. More than 100 individual Paxar products have been placed on the GSA schedule and are available to government agencies for purchase immediately. CDO, based in Dayton, Ohio, is a systems integrator with experience in RFID deployments. Its customers include a number of groups and offices within the Department of Defense.

E-Cenit Offers RFID for Data Storage

Organizations such as banks or telecommunications companies maintain rooms full of hundreds or thousands of archived data tapes or other removable storage media as part of disaster recovery plans. E-Cenit, a Malaysian IT firm, is selling StorageController, an RFID solution for tracking, tracing and identifying removable media that can be used with StorageTek or Veritas data storage and disaster-recovery applications. The system uses ISO 15693-compliant 13.56 MHz smart labels and readers from Japanese RFID systems provider Omron. The storage media is registered with a unique ID and labeled with a smart label that includes a bar code. Fixed readers, which can be programmed to take periodic inventories, are installed in media storage areas. The StorageController software is used to search for specific items, to establish rules for personnel access rights to the media and to track media movements. The company says it currently has seven undisclosed StorageController customers in Malaysia.

Zebra Merges Hardware with SAP's AII

Vernon Hills, Ill.-based provider of bar code and RFID label printers Zebra Technologies has designed two of its RFID smart label printer-encoders, the R110Xi and the R170Xi, to interoperate with SAP's Auto-ID Infrastructure (AII) v2.1 middleware product. Zebra worked with SAP to define and develop the protocols used for the integration. It says the integration of the printers with the AII platform allows users to quickly begin the process of tagging pallets and cases of goods. Zebra says these are the first RFID printer-encoders with integrated AII middleware and that both printers support for extensible markup language (XML). Zebra says that it was the first printer-encoder manufacturer to develop and market XML-based bar code and RFID smart label printing solutions (see Printer-Encoder Supports XML, which it says reduce the complexity of smart label creation across enterprise-wide supply chain applications.

Tagsys Has New Tag for Libraries

RFID hardware supplier Tagsys has announced the release of its FOLIO 320 tag, designed for use with library applications for theft prevention, inventory control, the check-in/check-out of library materials and sorting returned items. The tag has a 256-bit memory capacity and comes with an adhesive backing for insertion inside books or onto other library items such as CDs. The FOLIO 320 meets ISO/IER DTR 18047-3, the conformance test for the ISO 18000-3 interoperability standard. Tagsys, which has its U.S. headquarters in Doylestown, Pa., recommends the use of its tags and readers with a data management system that fully complies with American Library Association and National Information Standards Organization recommendations for assuring patron privacy. The FOLIO 320 tag is available immediately; pricing information was not released.

RedPrairie, Printronix Extend Partnership

Waukesha, Wis.-based systems integrator RedPrairie has become authorized to resell and provide support for all Printronix RFID products and thermal printing solutions to RedPrairie customers in Europe. RedPrairie and Printronix have had a similar agreement since June for North and South American customers. The partnership, which begins immediately, does not require that Printronix printer products be used in combination with RedPrairie warehouse or supply chain software applications for RFID labeling.

HID Releases GSC-Compliant Smart Card Readers

HID, an Irvine, Calif.-based maker of smart cards and readers for security applications, has announced that its 13.56 MHz iClass product line of smart card readers is now compliant with various United States government smart card (GSC) interoperability specifications. Its iClass reader models R10, R30, R40 and RK40 can read government-compliant smart cards as well as standard HID iClass smart cards. This allows users to transition from iClass smart cards to ones that are fully government-compliant. The key feature of the new reader line is the ability to read and process standardized federal agency smart credential ID numbers on all U.S. government-issued credentials for accessing government facilities. The readers are available now; pricing information was not released.

WJ Communications Announces Merger Agreement

WJ Communications, a San Jose, Calif.-based maker of radio frequency semiconductors and RFID readers, has announced an agreement to acquire privately held Telenexus of Richardson, Texas, for \$10 million in cash and stock. Telenexus develops RFID hardware and software products. WJ says it expects to close in approximately 15 days if the Telenexus operations achieve certain revenue over an 18-month period. Under the agreement, Telenexus shareholders will receive further consideration of up to \$5 million in a combination of stock and cash. According to the Associated Press, shares of WJ Communications rose 9 cents to \$3.29 on the Nasdaq market on the morning of the announcement, Jan. 20.

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