

RFID News Roundup

Omron announces three RFID starter kits; Reva offers SLRRP open source code; Microsoft names RFID hardware partners, demos RFID capability; report points to significant five-year growth in Chinese RFID market; Thompson joins VeriChip's board.

July 8, 2005—The following are news announcements made during the week of July 4.

Omron Announces Three RFID Starter Kits

RFID hardware manufacturer [Omron Electronics](#) has introduced three new UHF RFID starter kits to help companies begin RFID labeling on cases and pallets of goods. The basic kit includes Omron's V740 UHF EPC Class 0 and Class 1 reader (interrogator); one antenna; cables; a power supply; and 50 RFID Omron UHF smart labels. The advanced kit also includes these items, as well as a license to install RFID Tag Manager software (supplied to Omron by [epcSolutions](#)) on one RFID interrogator or printer-encoder. The software allows users to write an electronic product code to labels, associate cases to pallets and print a smart label that includes a bar code and human-readable text. The advanced suite kit includes all the elements of the advanced kit, as well as software licenses for nine additional devices. The basic kit costs \$3,495; the advanced kit costs \$5,995; and the advanced suite kit costs \$8,495. All are available now. Customers can purchase [Zebra](#)'s R110xi printer-encoder from Omron instead of the V740 interrogator at any level of Omron starter kits.

Reva Offers SLRRP Open Source Code

[Reva Systems](#), a Chelmsford, Mass.-based startup developing a platform for companies to manage RFID devices and software over a standardized RFID network (see [Reva Announces RFID Network Design](#)), has made its draft Simple Lightweight RFID Reader Protocol (SLRRP) available as open source code at [SourceForge.net](#). The protocol defines how readers convey configuration, control, status and tag information between RFID readers and their network device managers in an IP-based network. Reva Systems has submitted SLRRP to both [EPCglobal](#) and the [Internet Engineering Task Force \(IETF\)](#), which develops standard Internet operating protocols. By making the protocol freely available, Reva hopes developers will be able to aid in the distribution and refinement of the protocol by sharing their experiences and suggesting changes to the source code. SourceForge.net is an open source software development site that hosts more than 100,000 projects and offers a centralized resource for managing projects, issues, communications and code.

Microsoft Names RFID Hardware Partners, Demos RFID Capability

Redmond, Wash.-based software giant [Microsoft](#) has announced strategic partnerships with RFID systems providers [Alien Technology](#), based in Morgan Hill, Calif., and [SAMSys Technologies](#), located in Raleigh-Durham, N.C. Per the agreements, Microsoft says its RFID software products, which it plans to launch next year, will work with Alien and SAMSys RFID hardware. Microsoft says it is developing RFID software based on its .Net development platform and SQL Server database software. The goal is to enable businesses to incorporate an RFID system into their business. Microsoft used Alien tags and its ALR-8780 interrogator to demonstrate its RFID technology at the [Microsoft TechEd EMEA](#) conference this week in Amsterdam. Microsoft also announced a marketing alliance with [Printronix](#), an Irvine, Calif., supply-chain printing solutions manufacturer, and also used Printronix RFID labels in its Tech Ed EMEA 2005 demo.

Report Points to Significant Five-Year Growth in Chinese RFID Market

Analysys International, a technology research firm based in Beijing, has released a report predicting growth in the Chinese RFID market to hit \$616 million by 2009, up from \$146 million in 2004, according to online news publication World Peace Herald. The report, titled "Consumer Electronics—Focus Report on Chinese RFID Market Development 2005," is currently available in Chinese and soon will be available in English from the firm's Web site. Charles Jiang, IT research manager at Analysys International, says the Chinese government, transportation and parts of its manufacturing sector are driving RFID industry growth through large RFID purchases. Jiang adds that Chinese firms including Tsinghua Tongfang, Datang and Huahong Integrated Circuit are placing competitive pressures on Philips and Texas Instruments in regard to RFID tag production.

Thompson Joins VeriChip's Board

Tommy Thompson, onetime secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and governor of Wisconsin, has joined the board of directors of VeriChip, a company based in Delray Beach, Fla., that manufactures RFID tags—including an implantable tag—for tracking people. In his role as board member, Thompson is expected to help VeriChip accelerate adoption of its products for identification systems in the health care and security markets. Thompson is not the first former U.S. cabinet member to join the board of an RFID hardware supplier. In April, Tom Ridge, former Homeland Security secretary and Pennsylvania governor, joined the board of directors of Savi Technology, based in Sunnyvale, Calif. Savi provides supply chain security and tracking services to defense and government organizations, logistics companies and manufacturers.

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