

RFID News Roundup

Flagmaker to weave RFID data into SAP platform; IP Smart Packaging, Cascade offer RFID-enabled clamp attachments; Blue Vector, RFID4U offering RFID training; Alien names two label converter partners; Indala, CoreStreet combining products; IBM to add Gen 2 capability to printer.

Sept. 16, 2005—The following are news announcements made during the week of Sept. 12.

Flagmaker to Weave RFID Data Into SAP Platform

SAP reports that Annin & Co., a flag manufacturer based in Roseland, N.J., is integrating its RFID tagging program—which it initiated to comply with Wal-Mart's RFID mandate—with the SAP NetWeaver platform. Working in conjunction with the SAP Auto-ID Infrastructure, SAP NetWeaver collects, filters and integrates RFID data with SAP enterprise applications. Annin & Co. expects SAP NetWeaver to increase the accuracy of its shipments and lead to a 50 percent reduction in costs related to chargebacks levied by retailers due to shipment inaccuracies. With the help of implementation partner Ciber, Annin anticipates it will become compliant with the Wal-Mart mandate by January 2006.

IP Smart Packaging, Cascade Offer RFID-enabled Clamp Attachments

International Paper Smart Packaging, an RFID products and services provider and systems integrator—part of the paper products company International Paper (IP)—is partnering with Cascade, a Portland, Ore., manufacturer of material handling equipment. The companies have codeveloped clamp attachments with integrated RFID interrogators, antennas and respective cabling. When the clamp is attached to a truck, its integrated interrogator transmits RFID tag data wirelessly to the user's network so operators can track tagged products transported within their facilities. IP Smart Packaging says it is partnering with a number of RFID interrogator manufacturers, including Applied Wireless Identifications Group (AWID) and Symbol Technologies. IP started working with Cascade to integrate RFID hardware into its clamp attachments three years ago, in conjunction with IP's initiative to use RFID to identify and locate paper rolls within IP's Texarkana, Texas, paper mill. Scott Andersen, technical director for IP Smart Packaging, says the RFID-enabled clamp attachment has proven very successful in IP's operations. In March, IP Smart Packaging began selling RFID-enabled forklifts (see Smart Packaging Sells Forklift Readers).

Blue Vector, RFID4U Offering RFID Training

Blue Vector Systems, a Mountain View, Calif., provider of network-based sensor and RFID infrastructure solutions, is partnering with Sunnyvale, Calif.-based RFID4U, a company that offers RFID technology training courses. The firms will put together a two-day program to help companies plan and implement an enterprise-wide RFID infrastructure. With a focus on tying RFID applications into an organization's internal processes, the training course is targeted toward end users that have started or completed a basic RFID pilot project and are ready to focus on building an RFID infrastructure throughout their enterprise. The course will take place Nov. 3 and 4 in Palo Alto, Calif., consisting of classroom and technical training. Operations managers, IT personnel and cross-functional teams developed to deploy RFID within organizations are encouraged to attend. The fee for a single attendee is \$1,995 before Sept. 30, \$2,195 after that date. Two people from the same organization pay \$1,895 each before Sept. 30, \$2,095 thereafter. For three or more people from the same organization, it will cost \$1,795 apiece before Sept. 30, then rise to \$1,995.

Alien Names Two Label Converter Partners

Alien Technology has named Innotech Resources, a label manufacturer and converter that markets labels online through its Worldlabel.com Web site, as a qualified Alien smart label converter. The company has also named label manufacturer and marketer Nashua a certified preferred Alien smart label converter partner. In May, Alien named Nashua a qualified Alien smart label converter partner. Qualified partners that convert a predetermined number of smart labels per year with Alien tags are granted the certified preferred status. Certification allows Innotech, based in Singapore, and Nashua, located in Nashua, N.H., to sell smart labels with Alien RFID inlays directly to end users, without first having to send them to Alien for quality tests. Before awarding its converter certification to a company, Alien spot-tests that company's labels against a set of performance specifications.

Indala, CoreStreet Combining Products

San Jose, Calif.-based Indala, a provider of RFID interrogators, reader modules, cards and tags for physical and computer access control, and CoreStreet, a Cambridge, Mass.-based provider of infrastructure and applications for security card programs, have initiated a strategic relationship to develop an access card and reader solution. Through the agreement, Indala is incorporating licensed CoreStreet Card-Connected technology in its FlexSmart range of 13.56 MHz readers, which work with DESFire smart cards and are compliant with ISO 14443A and the U.S. Government Smart Card (GSC) interoperability standards. The readers will be included in packaged infrastructure solutions, available through CoreStreet partners and systems integrators, that use CoreStreet's Card-Connected platform. Indala's reader modules will also be available to OEMs that want to build products with CoreStreet's Card-Connected platform. CoreStreet says its products and services comply with government regulations, including the recent Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD 12), which mandates that all federal employees be issued a fraud-resistant identification credential that can be electronically authenticated. HSPD 12 affects nearly all federal employees and contractors, and could be adopted by state and local governments and private enterprise. Indala has also joined the CoreStreet Partner Program, which provides members access to partners' software development kits and technical support, as well as support for market development.

IBM to Add Gen 2 Capability to Printer

IBM says its Infoprint 6700 R40 RFID label printer-encoder will soon be able to read and write to Gen 2 RFID tags and interoperate with other Gen 2-compatible equipment. The R40's Gen 2 capability is scheduled for availability on Nov. 18. IBM launched Infoprint 6700 R40—its only RFID label printer-encoder—in June (see IBM Announces RFID Privacy Consulting). This device can print traditional bar codes and also encode and verify 4-inch smart labels with EPC Class 0, 0+ or 1 RFID inlays. Pricing for the new Gen 2-capable version remains the same at \$5,525. Customers who have already purchased the Infoprint 6700 R40 will be able to upgrade to Gen 2, using a free software upgrade available on Nov. 18.

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