

ABI Research says NFC on a three-year growth trajectory; compliance promotion from IP Smart Packaging, IDVelocity; T3Ci receives \$8.75M series B funding; CompTIA approves OTA's RFID curriculum; Zebra announces Chinese reseller and agreement with MedAssets; Parelec creates certified printer program.

Nov. 4, 2005—The following are news announcements made during the week of Oct. 31.

ABI Research Says NFC on a Three-Year Growth Trajectory

By 2008, Near Field Communication (NFC) applications—which enable payments and data transfer using mobile devices such as cell phones and PDAs—could transform the way consumers buy goods and share information, according to a new study from [ABI Research](#), based in Oyster Bay, N.Y. "I think we'll see mobile phone manufacturers coming out with a few NFC-enabled models in late 2006, with volume deployments in 2007," says Erik Michielsen, director of RFID and ubiquitous networks. Michielsen notes that the groundwork for NFC deployments are being laid out right now with small-scale field trials of the technology. He adds that the results of these trials will be important to wireless carriers, chipmakers, phone manufacturers, merchants, payments networks and infrastructure developers that need to collaborate to make NFC-based transactions available on a wide scale. These players are currently looking at how closely they'll need to work with each other, he says, in order to benefit from NFC technology. The ABI report is a follow-up to its initial look at the NFC market in mid-2004 (see [Developing RFID-Enabled Phones](#)). It provides details on NFC global business applications, market players, technologies and opportunities, and can be purchased at [ABI's Web site](#).

Compliance Promotion From IP Smart Packaging, IDVelocity

[International Paper Smart Packaging](#) (IPSP) is partnering with [IDVelocity](#) on a compliance solution designed to help customers meet retailer RFID mandates. This solution package includes ComplianceNow software from IDVelocity, which runs on Microsoft's SQL v7 and higher, MySQL and Oracle 10 and higher databases. The software can be configured to work with RFID printer-encoders from printers from [Intermec Technologies](#), [Printronix](#), [Zebra Technologies](#) or [Paxar's Monarch division](#), as well as RFID interrogators (readers) from [Alien Technology](#), [Applied Wireless Identifications](#) (AWID), Intermec, [SAMSys](#), [Sirit](#) and [ThingMagic](#). The package also includes professional services from IPSP, consisting of project management, engineering, configuration, installation and training. Those who purchase the compliance package also receive the Printronix SL5000r RFID printer-encoder (containing the AWID MPR 1510-reader module) and the AWID MPR-3014 RFID interrogator, both of which are [EPCglobal](#) Class 1 Gen 2-certified hardware. This compliance solution is available for \$40,000, now through Dec. 31. Customers who purchase it can attend IPSP's Compliance Workshop, a one-day RFID training course for eight members of the customer's team, SKU testing for one of the customer's products using IPSP's dynamic testing format, high-level explanations of product testing results and a tour of IPSP's world-class Customer Solution Center—a 25,000-square-foot testing and demonstration facility in Memphis, Tenn.—at no additional cost.

T3Ci Receives \$8.75M Series B Funding

[T3Ci](#), a Mountain View, Calif., firm that provides RFID data analytics and applications, says it has

closed an \$8.75 million series B investment round. The investment was led by [Bessemer Venture Partners](#) (BVP), a venture capital practice with offices in California, India, Massachusetts and New York. Other investors include venture firms [Venrock Associates](#), which also has offices in California, Massachusetts and New York; [Red Rock Ventures](#), based in Palo Alto, Calif.; and [SAP Ventures](#), also located in Palo Alto. According to TC3I, a company founder contributed to the funding. T3Ci says it has not yet spent most of its \$9.4 million series A funding, and its cash flow is improving with increasing revenues. The company will use this series B funding to expand. In May, [Procter & Gamble](#) (P&G) signed a five-year agreement with T3Ci to jointly develop new software applications that take advantage of EPC data throughout the supply chain (see [P&G Teams With T3Ci for RFID Apps](#)).

CompTIA Approves OTA's RFID Curriculum

[OTA Training](#), a Dallas-based provider of RFID training services, says the [Computing Technology Industry Association](#) (CompTIA) has named OTA's RFID program as a CompTIA Authorized Quality Curriculum (CAQC) for the soon-to-be-released CompTIA RFID+ certification exam. The CAQC program identifies training materials, including books, self-study guides, classroom training programs, computer-based training and other written and instructor-led programs that have been reviewed and found to map closely to the objectives of the CompTIA RFID+ certification examination. The latter is a vendor-neutral professional credential to validate knowledge and skill in working with RFID technology. OTA will incorporate a CAQC logo to its training materials, and in January 2006 will release a self-study guide book titled *CompTIA RFID+ Exam Cram*, both in print and in an e-learning Web-based training (WBT) format. Alternatively, OTA currently offers its CAQC-endorsed classes in two-, three- or four-day classroom formats. Beginning in early 2006, students may choose to take the CompTIA RFID+ Certification exam on-site after completing the OTA Training course. The beta exam for CompTIA RFID+ certification is available now at any [Thomson Prometric](#) or [Pearson VUE](#) testing center worldwide, located in most major cities.

Zebra Announces Chinese Reseller and Agreement With MedAssets

Vernon Hills, Ill.-based [Zebra Technologies](#) has announced a distribution agreement with Chinese IT products distributor and systems integrator [Digital China Holdings Limited](#). Under the terms of the agreement, Digital China will become Zebra's value-added distributor in China's auto-ID market, providing bar code, wireless and RFID-based solutions to a wide range of customers. These will include retail, manufacturing, health care, government, transportation, logistics and other industries. Currently, Digital China's distribution network accesses more than 6,000 agents throughout China. Zebra calls the deal a milestone for its efforts toward developing distribution channels in China. Zebra has also signed a new three-year agreement with [MedAssets Supply Chain Systems](#), a health-care group-purchasing organization. The agreement covers Zebra's full line of AIDC products for identification, tracking and access control applications—including RFID printers and supplies—and makes these products available to MedAssets' health-care customers.

Parelec Creates Certified Printer Program

[Parelec](#), a Rocky Hill, N.J., manufacturer of inks for electronic printed circuits, launched its Certified Printer Partners program to provide a way for its customers—substrate manufacturers, chip suppliers,

attachment technologies, label makers and custom integrators—to identify Parelec-endorsed printers able to print high-quality, competitively-priced RFID antennas with Parelec's conductive inks. The company says the program promotes cost efficiencies and partnership opportunities that will simplify and speed up RFID project implementation.