

RFID News Roundup

Chinese university checking out RFID; Kennedy Group offering Gen 2; FCC, ETSI certify RF Monolithics sensor module; Moteiv module gets FCC, Canadian certifications; Tagsys unveils tunnel readers, Paxar partnership; golf fans can pay with PayPass.

Jan. 27, 2005—The following are news announcements made during the week of Jan. 23.

Chinese University Checking Out RFID

RFID inlay and label manufacturer [UPM Raflatac](#) is working with systems integrator [Shanghai RFID System Technology Co.](#) to deploy an RFID-based tracking system to the main [Jimei University Library](#) in Xiamen, China. In the initial of the deployment, currently underway, Raflatac is delivering 300,000 ISO 15693-compliant RFID tags, which the library plans to use in automating the check-in and checkout process for library items. The library hopes an RFID system will reduce patrons' wait times and deter theft—tagged items not yet checked out will sound an alarm when patrons attempt to exit. Raflatac says the library will also use the RFID system to sort returned items, which will help library workers return them to the shelves more quickly, and to take inventory. During the second and third phases of the deployment, the university will expand the system to other libraries on campus and begin tagging nonprinted items, such as CDs.

Kennedy Group Offering Gen 2

Cleveland-based RFID systems provider [The Kennedy Group](#) says its Smart Therm RFID-enabled labels and cards are available with EPC Class 1 Gen 2 inlays from [Alien Technology](#), [TI-RFid](#) and [Avery Dennison RFID](#). The company will begin offering its Smart Therm products with Gen 2 inlays from other manufacturers as they become available. Pricing is dependent on volume; the company says it can fulfill millions of orders for the Gen 2 labels and cards.

FCC, ETSI Certify RF Monolithics Sensor Module

Dallas-based [RF Monolithics](#) says the [U. S. Federal Communications Commission](#) (FCC) and the [European Telecommunications Standards Institute](#) (ETSI) have certified its DM1800 embedded wireless mesh-networking module, which the company first announced in November and designed for use in wireless sensor networks. The regulatory approval enables the company to sell the module in the United States and Europe. The DM1800 has a 200-meter communication range and follows RF Monolithics' miniMESH networking protocol. The device includes a single fixed-channel RF transceiver operating on the 433.92 or 916.5 MHz unlicensed frequency. It consumes little power and can operate in transmit, receive or sleep mode. RF Monolithics says the module will be available this month. Pricing information has not yet been released.

Moteiv Module Gets FCC, Canadian Certifications

[Moteiv](#), a Berkeley, Calif., manufacturer of wireless sensor networks, says the FCC and [Industry Canada](#) have both certified its mote platform, Tmote Sky. This enables the company to sell the wireless sensor module in the United States and Canada. Due to the agencies' regulatory approval, customers can integrate the platform into their products without needing to have them recertified, says Moteiv. This will reduce customers' costs and accelerate their products' time-to-market. The Tmote Sky module uses the IEEE 802.15.4 protocol for wireless personal area network (WPAN) radio devices. Introduced in January 2005, the modules are self-contained, battery-powered computers designed for use in a mesh network, in which devices

communicate and exchange data independent of human interaction and for extended periods of time. They have an integrated on-board antenna providing up to a 125-meter range.

Tagsys Unveils Tunnel Readers, Paxar Partnership

French RFID systems provider Tagsys is selling a new line of RFID interrogators called UltraScan RFID Tunnel Readers. The readers come in three tunnel configurations—30 by 30 centimeters (11.8 x 11.8 inches), 40 by 40 centimeters (15.7 by 15.7 inches) and 50 by 50 centimeters (19.7 by 19.7 inches)—and can be installed on conveyor belt systems in order to read item-level tagged products as they pass under the tunnel. The tunnels are composed of rugged housing that protects an array of antennas sending tag data to the Tagsys 13.56 MHz Medio L2000 interrogator, which can read the Tagsys C370 tag, as well as most ISO 18000-compliant tags. The tunnels can also accommodate sensors that trigger the reader to search for tags in its interrogation zone. The tunnel interrogators are optimized to read as many as 100 tagged items moving at up to 30 feet per minute. Tagsys says it has already deployed more than 50 of the tunnels for end users tracking item-level-tagged pharmaceuticals, consumer electronics and other goods. The tunnel readers are available now, but pricing has not yet been released. Tagsys also announced a partnership with Paxar, a supplier of Monarch-brand printer-encoders, to integrate Tagsys' RFID tags into Paxar's product labels. Ranging from fabric care and content labels to woven labels and self-adhesive labels, the RFID-enabled labels will be used for identifying goods at the item level or for identifying cases containing multiple items.

Click Commerce Opening RFID Competency Center

Click Commerce, a provider of warehouse and supply chain management software, is opening a demonstration center next week at its Chicago headquarters to highlight its supply chain management solutions. This will include its RFID-enabled Intelligent Supply Chain platform, which is being offered through a partnership with Vue Technology (see Click and Vue Partnering on RFID Warehouse Solution). Click says the Competency Center, as it will be named, will feature EPC Gen 2-capable RFID interrogators from Symbol Technologies. Demonstrations will show sample RFID-tagged products as they move through a simulated supply chain, from the point of manufacture to retail store shelf. Using RFID-enabled shelves and software from Vue together with Click's warehouse management and supply chain execution systems, it will also show how tagged cases and items can be tracked through each point in the supply chain.

Golf Fans Can Pay with PayPass

This year, attendees of 14 PGA and other professional golf tournaments will be able to purchase food and beverages from the Prom Catering concessionaire by using MasterCard PayPass-enabled credit or debit cards or payment fobs embedded with RFID tags complying with the ISO 14443 standard. Prom Catering will use RFID-enabled payment terminals that accept the devices and transmit encrypted credit card information. Such terminals will be located at stands in high-traffic areas near the first, ninth, 10th and 18th holes. The terminals also process transactions using cards with standard magnetic stripes. A pilot test of the devices last year proved successful: Prom increase its credit card revenue at the test event by approximately 75 percent over credit card sales at the same event the previous year, mostly based on PayPass devices. Payments made with the PayPass devices do not require signatures, enabling the concessionaire to process transactions more quickly and reduce patrons' wait times. Among the events at which Prom will accept PayPass are the FBR Open in Scottsdale, Ariz., Feb. 2-5; the U.S. Open in Mamaroneck, N.Y., June 15-18; and the Tour Championship in Atlanta, Nov. 2-5.

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