

# RFID News Roundup

KSW announces semi-active sensor label with upgraded functionality; Savi releases shipping container tag, starter package; JVC tagging discs for customer compliance; RF IDentics ramping up Gen 2 tag production; Siemens unveils HF RFID system for production apps.

March 10, 2006—The following are news announcements made during the week of March 6.

## **KSW Announces Semi-Active Sensor Label With Upgraded Functionality**

German firm KSW Microtec, a maker of semi-active RFID smart label sensors with paper-thin batteries, has announced the VarioSens Basic, a new adhesive smart label with an integrated temperature sensor. The VarioSens platform builds on KSW's TempSens tags, introduced in 2003, and offers expanded temperature data storage and security functions. The VarioSens tags can hold up to 720 temperature values (readings), whereas the TempSens tags hold a maximum of 64. VarioSens users can adjust the types of temperature readings stored in the tag's memory. For instance, they might choose to save only values outside a predetermined range, or they might opt to allocate the 1 kilobyte of tag memory to store both temperature data (pulled from the attached sensor), and other supply chain data on the tag's chip. In addition, the VarioSens offers a more sophisticated data protection architecture than the TempSens' single-password protection. With three levels of tag security, an IT manager can designate who can read tag data; who can read and write to the tag; and who can read, write to and erase data from it. Other upgrades to the VarioSens tags include the ability to interface with an external sensor, and a meter showing the amount of power left on the tag's battery. The VarioSens tag transmits in the 13.56 MHz band and is compliant with the ISO 15693-3 air interface protocol. Samples of the VarioSens label are now available, with production quantities slated to be offered starting in the second quarter of 2006. KSW says a UHF version of the VarioSens tag should be ready in early 2007.

## **Savi Releases Shipping Container Tag, Starter Package**

Savi Technology, a Sunnyvale, Calif.-based RFID and supply chain technology company, has released a new version of its flagship active RFID tag for military and commercial container shipments, the ST-654. The Savi Tag ST-656 is designed so that its electronics—radio transceiver, microprocessor and memory chip—are protected from shock, ice, rain and other extreme conditions to which shipping containers are exposed during shipment. The ST-656 has a U-shaped design, with the electronic components situated inside a shipment container portal door latch, while the tag's antenna, designed into a flat plate, sits on the outside of the container door. The flat external plate also contains a beeper for audio alerts of the tag's location and status. The ST-656 has 128 kilobytes of user memory, can be read from up to 300 feet, complies with the ISO 18000-7 air interface protocol and operates at 433.92 MHz. The company has also released Savi SmartStart, a new package combining software, hardware and services. This package is intended to help companies begin using Savi's active RFID tags to track and monitor assets, parts or inventory in a closed-loop environment. Using Savi software, any tagged asset within a monitored area can be located on preconfigured facility maps, and users can set up real-time alerts via a Web page, e-mail, cell phone or pager, based on the movements of tagged objects. The SmartStart package is priced at approximately \$50,000.

## **JVC Tagging Discs for Customer Compliance**

JVC Disc America, a manufacturer and distributor of compact discs, CD-ROMs and DVDs, has implemented an RFID tagging system to allow customers to meet retail RFID requirements. For the project, JVC Disc

America partnered with HighJump Software, an RFID middleware provider and systems integrator based in Eden Prairie, Minn. JVC used the company's HighJump Compliance Advantage software, designed to help end users test and deploy an RFID tagging system and integrate it with legacy software. At JVC Disc America's Kennesaw, Ga., fulfillment center, all order processing stations are now capable of completing orders with either bar codes or RFID. This allows JVC to apply RFID tags to cases and pallets of goods it ships directly to RFID-enabled retail stores and distribution centers. JVC Disc America uses HighJump Compliance Advantage to incorporate RFID tagging into its distribution operations, avoiding the need for a stand-alone work area and manual separation of shipments requiring RFID. JVC Disc America is evaluating other internal applications for RFID, including tagging inbound and outbound pallets and using RFID tag data to simplify both shipping and inventory management during peak periods. The Kennesaw facility ships more than 4 million units each month, directly to stores or distribution centers, with volume peaking at 17 million monthly units during October and November.

### **RF IDentics Ramping Up Gen 2 Tag Production**

RF IDentics has purchased 25 million Impinj UHF Gen 2 Monza chips for inclusion in RF IDentics' RFID inlay and label products, according to Impinj, a Seattle, Wash.-based semiconductor company. RF IDentics, based in Grand Rapids, Mich., says it placed the order—which Impinj will fulfill throughout 2006—in response to increased demand for its EPC Gen 2 tags. Demand has reportedly been especially high from pharmaceutical companies looking to track and authenticate products, as well as DOD suppliers using RFID for closed-loop tracking applications. RF IDentics' cofounder, Gary Burns, says the company selected Impinj's Monza chip because of its maturity and performance. RF IDentics makes Gen 2 inlays using a number of antennas designed for optimal performance on specific products, such as the RxWing design for application on pharmaceutical bottles.

### **Siemens Unveils HF RFID System for Production Apps**

German industrial systems maker Siemens has announced a new 13.56 MHz interrogator (reader) and tag for its SIMATIC RF300 RFID line of products for high-speed identification in production applications, including assembly and production lines and conveyor systems. The new RF310R interrogator has an integrated antenna can be used in connection with Siemens SIMATIC S7300 programmable logic controllers and PROFIBUS communications network. The new RF350T tag is resistant to shock, temperature and moisture, and available with 8 or 32 kilobytes of memory. The interrogator and tag can support data transfer rates of more than 3,000 bytes per second, which enables short cycle times required for automotive motor manufacturing and other high-speed, high-precision manufacturing processes. Each tag has a unique, unchangeable serial number and features an integrated diagnostic function designed to simplify tag commissioning and maintenance.

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