

PBS Video Spotlights RFID

A six-minute video explaining the technology and its uses will soon be broadcast nationally on public television.

By Jonathan Collins

Apr. 27, 2006—An educational video about radio frequency identification and its uses is set to air on [U.S. Public Broadcast Service](#) (PBS) channels across the country starting next week. The six-minute video will be broadcast as part of the *Spotlight On* series of industry and business educational programs that has been broadcasting nationally on public television for the past 17 years.

Spotlight On is produced by [Trivue Entertainment](#), based in Watchung, N.J. PBS initially approached [AIM Global](#) about potentially creating a program on RFID. AIM, a trade association dedicated to accelerating the growth and use of RFID and other automatic-identification technologies and services around the world, has 900 members in 43 countries. The organization saw the documentary as a way to extend its advocacy role further.

"There is a lot of misinformation out there about RFID, and folks are generally unaware when RFID is being used already," says Dan Mullen, president of AIM Global. "After seeing the program, when they hear the term RFID, hopefully they'll think, 'OK, I use this in my car and paying for some things, and it's really useful.'"

AIM, the facilitator for the video, invited members to sponsor the program. AIM Global members [Feig Electronic](#), [Intermec Technologies](#), [Markem](#), [PSC](#) and [Symbol Technologies](#) helped finance the film, which cost between \$25,000 and \$30,000 to complete. AIM Global and the member sponsors participated in the script development, identified interview candidates and assigned content. Once filming was completed, AIM examined the raw footage to determine which parts fit the message and tone of the script, and the sponsors and AIM then participated in the final editing of the video. Some of the footage was supplied by the video's sponsors, as well as by [Boeing](#) and American Express

The documentary features presentations from Bill Hardgrave, director of the [University of Arkansas RFID Research Center](#), and Ken Porad, associate technical fellow for Boeing. These gentlemen described the current and potential uses of RFID in retail and aviation supply chains, road toll collection, contactless credit card payments and baggage handling.

Aimed at both businesses and consumers, the video does not explore the privacy concerns that have been raised about the use of RFID, focusing instead on the basics of the technology and its current and future applications. "There isn't time to look at privacy in the context of a six-minute video," says Mullen. "Privacy would require a program in itself, and would have to address more than RFID to look at data privacy and security as well."

The video is being uploaded to PBS affiliate stations across the United States on Saturday, Apr. 29, and will be ready to air soon thereafter. Broadcast schedules, as well as the video itself, will be available next week on both [AIM Global's main Web site](#) and its [RFID site](#).

