

RFID News Roundup

LXE announces new forklift reader; SkyeTek announces new modules, multiplexers; Adasa rolls out PAD3500 pricing; ThingMagic taps M/A-COM as global reseller; RF Shark trolls RF waters, American RFID Solutions offers e-Learning.

Apr. 28, 2006—The following are news announcements made during the week of Apr. 14.

LXE Announces New Forklift Reader

LXE, a manufacturer of rugged wireless computers for RFID and other automatic identification applications, has announced its RX2 interrogator. The device reads UHF tags compliant with the EPC Gen 1, Class 0 and Class 1 and Gen 2 Class 1 standards and contains a Sirit interrogator module. The RX2 is designed for mounting onto the fork lift of a Cascade E series lift truck, and LXE notes that the reader can also be mounted on a number of other manufacturer's lift trucks. The RX2 runs the Windows CE operating and has integrated Wi-Fi capabilities to communicate with the user's network. The unit can run off its own battery or the lift truck's power. It is designed for data collection in applications such as moving pallets of tagged goods within a warehouse. In this scenario, the driver of the forklift does not interact with the reader through a monitor. Rather, the RX2 sends data directly to the user's middleware, which can deduce, based on whatever case tags read on the pallet, or based on the pallet tag itself, what load the driver is carrying. Used in combination with location tags embedded in shelving, the RX2 can be used to locate pallets of tagged goods inside a facility. The RX2 will be demonstrated at the Sirit booth at RFID Journal LIVE next week and will be available in July. Pricing has not yet been determined.

SkyeTek Announces New Modules, Multiplexers

SkyeTek, a Boulder, Colo., designer of RFID modules, has announced three new interrogator modules and two multiplexers. One of these, the MØ reader module, is small and low-cost enough to be used in a disposable or limited-use interrogator. The MØ reads tags compliant with the ISO 15693 high-frequency (13.56 MHz) protocol and has a footprint that is smaller than a postage stamp. SkyeTek is selling the module to integrators for approximately \$15 apiece. A second interrogator, the M2, is a high-frequency module designed for ubiquitous authentication applications, such as payments. It reads tags compliant with the ISO 14443A/B standard and supports a variety of data encryption methods. The third new interrogator module, the EPC Gen 2-compliant M9, is targeted at applications requiring handheld and embedded UHF readers such mobile inventory management, smart shelves, smart containers, and smart shopping carts. The modules also support SkyeTek's ReaderWare reader software, which is designed to provide a flexible platform that third-party developers can use to customize the interrogator's functionality. The two antenna multiplexers, the MXH and MXU, are for HF and UHF interrogators respectively, and available in four- and eight-port models. Using a multiplexer, an end user can increase the footprint of an interrogator's tag-reading zone. SkyeTek will show the new products at its booth at RFID Journal LIVE next week. It has not released pricing for the M2 or M9 interrogators, or for the multiplexers. All the new products are available now.

Adasa Rolls Out PAD3500 Pricing

Earlier this year, RFID solutions provider Adasa announced the PAD3500, a mobile tag encoder that hold a cartridge containing up to 500 1-by-4-inch RFID inlays and includes with a small, battery-powered RFID interrogator made by SkyeTek. The PAD3500 is designed to enable companies to integrate RFID tagging into

any product-picking system they use. It could also be used in the place of smart label printer-encoders for small tagging trials or deployments. Starting in June, Adasa will make the device available for purchase through its Mobile RFID QuickStart program, which packages the device with accessories, extra cartridges, software and training. The packages are available in four hardware configurations and each level includes a site survey and consultation by Adasa staff, the basic PAD3500 software, installation labor, training on device use and basic testing, and travel expenses (limitations apply). The QuickStart Bronze package, priced at \$4,995, includes one PAD3500 and 5,000 EPC Gen 2 UHF tags. QuickStart Silver, for \$20,000, includes two PAD3500 units and 15,000 of the tags; QuickStart Gold, at \$30,000, includes four PAD3500s and 30,000 tags; and the QuickStart Platinum costs \$50,000 and includes eight PAD3500s and 60,000 tags.

ThingMagic Taps M/A-COM as Global Reseller

M/A-COM has been manufacturing ThingMagic readers since 2004 and will now also sell and support ThingMagic's Mercury line of RFID interrogators through a reseller agreement the two firms was finalized. ThingMagic says that as a global reseller, M/A-COM will help ThingMagic meet increasing demand for its products and support businesses adopting RFID for supply chain management and other operational benefits. M/A-COM is a business unit of Tyco Electronics and a manufacturer of RF/microwave components. Its existing RFID services and products include RFID antennas and fixed-position and portable readers, as well as RFID integration services and value-added design, assembly and support services. M/A-COM also designs custom integrated RFID portal systems.

RF Shark Trolls RF Waters, American RFID Solutions Offers e-Learning

American RFID Solutions, a provider of RFID training, test and measurement and professional services, has released the RF Shark Multi-Meter, a handheld radio frequency test instrument that measures and evaluates read zone performance for RFID infrastructures. The RF Shark connects to an RFID interrogator and can be used to measure the readability of up to nine tags inside an interrogation zone simultaneously. Its integrated analysis software shows tag readability via 3-D plots of the radio coverage, histograms of read performance, geodetic plots of read rates and comprehensive statistics on operational performance. Users can also run the unit in "go/no-go" mode, which simplifies the process and tells the user whether a given tag will be readable in the monitored area. The RF Shark can also measure how a tag's orientation to the reader can impact its readability. Pricing information is not yet available. In addition, American RFID Solutions has launched the eLearn Center Web Based Training course curriculum, an online learning tool made up of three courses offered through the ARS web site. Registered users can learn RFID technology fundamentals and use the training course to prepare for the CompTIA RFID+ Certification test.

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