RFID News Roundup

Sirit updates Gen 2 reader firmware; Feig introduces two new UHF readers; CAEN RFID adding Intel processors to Easy2Read line; Lockheed Martin forms Savi Group; Queralt offers RFID asset-tracking service; Lowry Computer opens West Coast RFID center.

Dec. 1, 2006—The following are news announcements made during the week of Nov. 27.

Sirit Updates Gen 2 Reader Firmware
RFID hardware provider Sirit has updated its firmware for the INfinity 510 UHF fixed-position reader. According to a statement from Sirit, the upgraded firmware, version 1.2, includes settings for compliance with RF spectrum regulations set by Australia, Brazil, Hong Kong, India, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand and Korea (in addition to the European and North American regulations it already supported). The upgrade offers enhanced digital input-output support, enabling users to link the reader to sensors and actuators such as lights, which can be used to indicate successful and unsuccessful reads, and motion detectors, which can activate the reader to interrogate only when objects move in front of it. Sirit has also included enhanced support for Reva Systems' Tag Acquisition Processor (TAP) device, designed to act as a centralized controller for multiple readers or multiple networks of readers. The TAP plugs into networks of interrogators and the user's local area network (LAN), and filters and aggregates tag reads before sending the tag data to enterprise software. Sirit customers can get the INfinity 510 V1.2 firmware update by contacting the company. The Infinity 510 supports EPCglobal UHF Gen 2 (ISO 18000-6C) tags, as well as ISO 18000-6B and Ucode 1.19 tags. It does not read EPC Gen 1 tags.

Feig Introduces Two New UHF Readers
German reader manufacturer Feig Electronic says it has added two new UHF RFID readers to its product line of OBID i-scan readers: the Long Range Reader ID ISC.LRU2000 and the Long Range Reader Unit ID ISC.LRMU2000. The company says these new model replace versions ID ISC.LRU1000 and ID ISC.LRMU1000. The newer versions offer improved product features over their earlier counterparts, including a Linux operating system application connectivity controller with 32 MB of flash memory and 16 MB RAM. The new readers also include a memory-management unit designed to improve the reader's data-filtering and buffering capabilities. In addition, the readers support all parts of the EPCglobal Gen 2 Dense Reader Mode specification. They operate in concert with ISO 18000-6-B transponders, as well as EPC class1 Gen 1 and EPC class 1 Gen 2 tags, and are available in either ETSI-complaint or FCC-compliant versions for use in Europe or the United States.

CAEN RFID Adding Intel Processors to Easy2Read Line
Italian RFID hardware provider CAEN RFID reports that it is integrating the Intel network processor IntelIXP455 into its range of passive UHF RFID Easy2Read interrogators. These readers meet European ETSI standards (ETSI EN 300 220 and ETSI EN 302 208) and EPCglobal standards (EPC Class 1 Gen 2) and can read tags from up to 8 meters away. Through the processor's high data-processing capabilities, CAEN will be able to install more functions on the readers and run RFID middleware (or edgeware) on them. This places some of the basic functions of an RFID system, such as data aggregation and filtering, directly onto the reader rather than on a separate computer—thereby reducing project complexity and possibly cost, as well as optimizing data-acquisition times. The readers will be available during the first quarter of 2007.

Lockheed Martin Forms Savi Group

Lockheed Martin has established the Savi Group, a new business division that will provide integrated real-time information solutions and services for securing and managing global supply chains. The group plans to accomplish this by aligning experts within Lockheed Martin's support system for large government In-Transit Visibility (ITV), cargo security and asset-management projects with Savi Technology's RFID-based data-collection and management capabilities for supply chains. This new entity is charged with developing supply-chain solutions for government and commercial customers, designed to increase supply-chain efficiencies, mobile asset management and security. Vic Verma, formerly chief executive officer of Savi Technology—which Lockheed Martin acquired in June (see Lockheed Martin Buys Savi)—will head the Savi Group. Among the customers it expects to serve are the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), U.S. Department of Defense (including the U.S. Transportation Command and the Defense Logistics Agency), and other government agencies, port and terminal operators and commercial customers. In a statement, Verma says the infusion of Lockheed Martin resources, technical expertise and leadership in managing large complex systems-integration projects will "turbocharge" the Savi Group.

Queralt Offers RFID Asset-Tracking Service

Queralt, a Wallingford, Conn. -based provider of asset-management systems utilizing RFID, Wi-Fi, biometrics and digital document-security technologies, says it has develop a proprietary RFID Software as a Service (SaaS) solution designed for companies that want to deploy a closed-loop asset-management solution in short order. The company says it works with a group of business partners, including Cisco, HP and RF Code, to deploy an RFID asset-tracking system for its customers. This system incorporates a chain of custody function enabled by capturing the digital signature of personnel checking assets in and out. Queralt's managing director, Michael Queralt, says his company's focus is on minimizing the complexity of RFID technology to enable faster acceptance by the customer, by delivering an all-encompassing solution including hardware, consulting, implementation and operational support.

Lowry Computer Opens West Coast RFID Center

Lowry Computer Products, a Brighton, Mich.-based provider of RFID and other automatic data-collection technologies, has opened an RFID center in Orange County, Calif. This company designed the West Coast center after an RFID center it operates at its Brighton headquarters. The new 2,000-square-foot RFID center offers professional services to assist companies that need to deploy RFID technology—specifically, those looking to comply with mandates issued by retailers or the Department of Defense. As part of the center's services, Lowry engineers will recommend to visiting companies the hardware (readers and tags) and RFID software required for their deployment. They will also assist in designing customers' implementations, through services such as tag- and antenna-placement testing. Hardware and software used at the center include products from Lowry's technology partners, such as Avery Dennison, Alien Technology, EPCsolutions, Impinj, Insync Software, Intelleflex, Intermec, OMRON, Lockheed Martin, LXE, Printronix, Reva Systems, Stratum Global and Zebra. The center is also offering RFID training to help companies deploy and maintain passive RFID tagging systems for supply-chain applications, through RFID education firm OTA Training.