

# Nokia Uses RFID-Enabled Phones to Police Its Security Guards

The communications equipment manufacturer is using its RFID-enabled mobile phones to track guards as they patrol the company's facilities.

By Beth Bacheldor

Dec. 18, 2006—Nokia has enlisted RFID technology to watch the watchers. The communications equipment manufacturer is using its RFID-enabled mobile phones to track its security guards as they patrol buildings, parking areas and common grounds. The goal? To make sure each guard checks the facilities thoroughly.

Every guard at the company carries a mobile phone, which looks just like any other Nokia handset but is outfitted with a 13.56 MHz RFID tag in the handset and an RFID reader in its outer shell. Both the tag and reader use the near-field communication (NFC) RFID protocol and comply with the ISO 14443 standard. To log into their shifts, the guards wave their phones over their RFID-enabled employee badges; as they make their rounds, the officers open the handsets to read NFC RFID tags installed at various points within the facility. Once a handset is closed, the reader captures the phone's tag. Then, via the cellular network, it transmits that number, along with any other numbers it has recently read, to a Web-based software package called Service Manager.

Shift supervisors can query Service Manager to find out what time a particular guard began and ended the shift, and whether that officer checked all required locations. "For example, we've used it to track where a guard is in the building, such as what time he touched a tag in a particular lab, and we can make sure the guard walks through certain areas within a parking garage," says Joel Buys, a Nokia director of sales, who heads up the company's RFID activities in the Americas region. In addition, supervisors can text-message instructions back to a guard's phone—asking, for example, that the guard double-check an area that may have been recently compromised.

**RELATED\_ARTICLES** The RFID system has been in use for just four months at Nokia's U.S. facilities in Atlanta, Dallas, New York and Seattle. Thus far, Buys reports, it has collected well over 5,000 reads on the guards' activities.

Nokia is considering expanding the system to other regions, and the system also serves as a proving ground for Nokia's RFID research and development efforts, as well as for future RFID applications. For example, Nokia is working with JCDecaux Finland, a provider of billboard advertising, information displays and other media, to extend the company's inventory-tracking system using Nokia RFID-enabled phones. JCDecaux now wants to use the phones to track the installation and removal of billboards, posters and similar displays at movie theaters, bus stops and other public locations.

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