

Metalcraft offers three tag form factors; 3M Library Systems rolls out RFID workstation improvements; Inside Contactless announces new payment card inlay; Syscan sells RFID readers to Australian livestock market; IGPS adopts auto-replenish service for pallets.

Jan. 26, 2007—The following are news announcements made during the week of Jan. 22.

Metalcraft Offers Three Tag Form Factors

Rugged RFID tag maker [Metalcraft](#), a Mason City, IA, provider of custom, rugged RFID tags, says it has developed three stock tag constructions. This will allow it to speed production and lower costs for its customers that seek durable RFID products but do not require completely customized tags. The three form factors are an adhesive label, a hangtag and a metal-mount label. Customers can choose the protocol and frequency of the passive inlay. The adhesive label can be made with substrates manufactured from different materials, including polyester, polypropylene or polycarbonate, at thicknesses ranging from .002 inch to .010 inch. The hangtag is a double-faced, semi-rigid product secured by a zip tie or other non-adhesive fastener. Customers can choose a substrate best suited to their needs. The metal-mount label construction uses 3/16-inch closed-cell foam, low-density polyethylene or an [Emerson & Cuming](#) material with an acrylic adhesive to mount to a metal surface. The foam ensures that RF energy directed to the tag by an RFID interrogator is successfully transmitted back to the reader without being reflected by the metal object to which the tag is mounted. All three standard tags are available immediately. Metalcraft says it can ship orders for stock products within 15 working days of the date of order, though custom inlays require up to 10 weeks of lead time. Pricing for the adhesive label starts at 33 cents for orders of 25,000, falling to 24 cents for orders of 1 million or more. The metal-mount tag begins at 40 cents per 25,000 and drops to 30 cents for 1 million or more. The hangtag starts at 80 cents apiece for orders of 25,000 and goes as low as 67 cents for 1 million or more.

3M Library Systems Rolling Out RFID Workstation Improvements

[3M Library Systems](#) has developed two new RFID workstations for libraries. The 3M Staff Workstation Model 946 system links directly to the library's existing databases, eliminating the need to install a separate computer station to link each 946 workstation to a back-end database. The 946 performs checkout or return in one step, combining RFID item identification and deactivation of the magnetic security strip in each RFID-tagged piece of media checked out—book, CD and so forth. The workstation can be used to encode RFID tags newly applied to items, and also to confirm that the tagged disk inside a CD or DVD case matches the bar-coded or tagged case in which it is held. In addition, 3M has released the Conversion Station Model 812, a self-contained portable system for rapidly scanning bar codes and converting the data for RFID tag commissioning. Compared with its predecessor model, the company says, it contains a larger touch-sensitive screen, an easier-to-load 3M RFID tag dispenser and the capability of converting all 3M RFID tag formats. Since it does not require a constant connection to a library's automated circulation system, the Model 812 workstation can be moved on its cart for use in the stacks. The station can also reprogram RFID tags as the item numbers assigned to them change.

Inside Contactless Announces New Payment Card Inlay

French RFID chip and inlay manufacturer [Inside Contactless](#) has released the next generation of its inlays designed for payment cards (credit or debit). The MicroPass L4-2G is compliant with the [ISO 14443/B](#) standard protocol. Inside Contactless says the new inlay supports all major U.S. credit card brands, enabling card manufacturers to service a longer list of card issuers than they could with older Inside Contactless inlays. The MicroPass L4-2G also supports a new, open software development environment that card manufacturers, integrators and other third parties can use to develop applications running alongside the core payment application used by the issuer. The MicroPass L4-2G is faster than earlier Inside payment inlays, allows for transaction times of less than 100 milliseconds and consumes less power.

Syscan Sells RFID Readers to Australian Live Stock Market

Montreal-based active RFID systems provider [Syscan International](#) says it has begun shipping its LiveTrack RFID Reader—a handheld 134.5 kHz interrogator compliant with the [ISO 11784](#) and [11785](#) standards—to the Australian agricultural market. The orders follow the recent certification of LiveTrack by the [Australian Communications Authority](#), the company says. Syscan is working with [Gallagher Australia](#), an Australian agricultural supplier, to distribute its LiveTrack product. According to Syscan, Australia has a large domestic animal market, with more than 26 million cattle and 120 million sheep. The country's National Livestock Identification System has approved the use of RFID as part of its mandatory livestock-tracking program. Designed for use in outdoor environments, LiveTrack can withstand shock and water exposure, has a range of up to 30 centimeters and can communicate with back-end systems through a serial port or wireless Bluetooth communication.

IGPS Adopts Auto-Replenish Service for Pallets

[Intelligent Global Pooling Systems](#) (IGPS), an Orlando, Fla., startup, has developed an RFID-enabled plastic pallet and pallet renting pool for manufacturers, distributors and retailers. The company says it worked with RFID systems integrator [Xterprise](#) to create custom software for IGPS and its clients, which it calls Intelligent Stock Use and Movements (ISUM) software. ISUM, built on Xterprise's TraX Asset Management software, provides inventory tracking of pallets by monitoring their movements into and out of rental facilities, and it can also automatically generate replenishment orders so IGPS customers always have an adequate number of pallets on hand. In addition, IGPS is using Xterprise's XARM software to sequence, create and encode unique serial numbers for each pallet's RFID tag during the pallet-manufacturing process (see [IGPS Rolls Out RFID-Enabled Plastic Pallets](#)).