

RFID News Roundup

N.D. bans RFID implants, Calif. senate approves school ID bill; MachineTalker offers sensor networking kit; PINC raises \$4.5 million in funding; Sirit AVI reader ready for Europe; Midwest stadiums score RFID payment terminals; Gemalto ID card certified for government ID use.

April 20, 2007—The following are news announcements made during the week of April 16.

N.D. Bans RFID Implants; Calif. Senate Approves School ID Bill

North Dakota Governor John Hoeven last week signed a law banning forced chip implants on humans. N.D. Senator Randel Christmann introduced the bill earlier this year (see [North Dakota RFID-Implant Bill Sent to Governor](#)). Wisconsin passed a similar law last year (see [Wisconsin Governor Signs 'Chip Implant' Bill](#)), and the California legislature is currently considering the same ban. Additionally, the California Senate approved Senate Bill 29 this week, which would prohibit California public schools, school districts and county education offices from issuing any device to a pupil that uses radio waves to transmit personal information, or to enable personal information to be viewed remotely to track attendance. The ban would remain in effect until Jan. 1, 2011. The state's assembly has not yet voted on the bill. Simitian introduced four other RFID-related bills this year: SB 28, which would prohibit the California department of motor vehicles from embedding RFID inlays in driver's licenses; SB 30, which would place restrictions on how the technology could be deployed in identification cards issued by California state, county or municipal governmental entities; and SB 31, which would make the collection of data encoded to an RFID-enabled ID, without the knowledge and consent of its owner, illegal and punishable by up to one year in county jail, a fine of up to \$5,000 or both. Various committees within the Senate are set to vote on the four bills in the coming weeks.

MachineTalker Offers Sensor Networking Kit

[MachineTalker](#), a manufacturer of active RFID tags designed to serve as wireless network nodes, has developed an evaluation kit for companies interested in experimenting with various sensor configurations. The package includes three MachineTalker iRFID (Intelligent Radio Frequency Identification) active tags, which operate at 900 MHz and communicate via a proprietary air-interface protocol. Built into each MachineTalker tag is a temperature sensor, a light sensor and a three-axis accelerometer for tracking vibration. A terminal strip on the tag contains inputs (four analog and one digital) to allow the addition of up to five more sensors. A Java-based application program interface (API) is also provided. This device is used to establish communication with and program the iRFID tags (one of the three must be hardwired to a PC) to form a mesh sensor network wherein the sensors can communicate with each other. The API is also used to set the parameters for each sensor attached to the MachineTalker. For example, a temperature sensor might be set to report temperatures only if they fall below or rise above a set range. Available now, the kit costs \$1,500.

PINC Raises \$4.5 Million in Funding

[PINC Solutions](#) a provider of RFID yard management solutions based in Berkeley, Calif., has raised \$4.5 million in funding. [Horizon Ventures](#) led the funding round—PINC's third—and past PINC investor [Sutter Hill Ventures](#) also contributed. PINC offers Yard Hound, an asset-tracking and yard-management platform that utilizes rugged EPC Gen 2 RFID tags and networks of readers to locate such assets as trucks and trailers inside a transportation yard. PINC's CEO, Aleks Göllü, says the company will put the \$4.5 million toward increasing its sales and marketing force, as well as expanding its customer base.

Sirit AVI Reader Ready for Europe

RFID technology provider Sirit says it has completed work on a European version of its IDentity MaX UHF RFID reader. IDentity MaX is designed for use in secure parking and vehicle access-control deployments. The new version complies with ETSI's RF spectrum usage requirements. Designed for easy installation at entry and exit gates used to secure parking lots, the interrogator is encased in a weatherproof enclosure, weighs approximately 5.5 kilograms and measures 31 by 25 centimeters. It is powered and links to a user's local area network through a power-over-Ethernet cable. The European version uses an integrated antenna design operating at the 865-868 MHz band. IDentity MaX can read Sirit's IDentity MaXpass active tags from up to 10 feet away, allowing drivers who mount the tag on or near their windshield to enter or exit a parking facility without first coming to a complete stop. Early production units of the ETSI reader are available now through Sirit's global distribution network of parking and access control integrators and service providers.

Midwest Stadiums Score RFID Payment Terminals

Visitors to the American Airlines Center in Dallas, the United Center in Chicago and the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul, Minn., can now pay for concessions with RFID-enabled payment cards from MasterCard, Visa or American Express. In American Airlines Center, all sales terminals used by food, beverage and merchandise vendors are now equipped with the ISO 14443-compliant readers required to process payments with the RFID cards. All food and beverage sales terminals in the Xcel Energy and United Centers have been thus equipped as well. Consumers can transact payments by waving cards in front of the readers, with no need to sign for purchases under \$25. The stadiums installed the readers to speed up the purchase process, allowing spectators more time to watch events. The American Airlines Center is home to the Dallas Stars and Mavericks, the Chicago Blackhawks and Bulls play at the United Center, and the Minnesota Wild play at the Xcel Energy Center. Twenty-two other professional baseball and football stadiums across the country have also installed the RFID payment terminals, as have 14 golf courses that hosted PGA Tour events during the 2006 season.

Gemalto ID Card Certified for Government ID Use

Gemalto, a provider of RFID-based identification cards and readers, says it has received government approval for its new RFID-enabled card designed for U.S. federal employees and contractors. The card complies with the Personal Identity Verification (PIV) format required by a presidential directive. The PIV, Federal Information Processing Standard 201 (FIPS 201), is included on the approved product list of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), which specifies the products and services government agencies may purchase. The PIV lays out a common card technology platform, as well as the process for card personalization—both graphical and electronic—and dictates how smart cards and biometrics are to be used across the federal government. The card also works with access-control readers from HID. The card's RFID inlay complies with the ISO 14443 standard for high-frequency (HF) tags.

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