

# RFID News Roundup

Impinj's item-tagging evaluation kit; Nashua to make tags with fractal antennas; Magellan announces new Euro reseller, U.S. manufacturer; European project organizes RFID guideline workshop; DOD continues Unisys contract for tracking program.

June 15, 2007—The following are news announcements made during the week of June 11.

## **Impinj Item-Tagging Evaluation Kit**

Seattle-based RFID hardware provider Impinj has announced an evaluation kit designed to enable potential end users, vendors (including systems integrators and value-added resellers) and laboratories to evaluate Impinj's UHF Gen 2 products. The GrandPrix Evaluation Kit includes one Impinj Speedway UHF Gen 2 interrogator, two reader antennas tuned to taking long-range tag readings, one reader antenna designed for short-range (near-field) tag readings and a sample pack of passive Gen 2 UHF tags, in small form factors designed for application to single consumer items. The kit also comes with a collection of suggested use-case applications for item-level tagging and tracking of products. In addition, those who purchase the kit will receive the MultiReader host application software, designed to configure and control one or two Speedway readers. This software can also be used to analyze the read performance of tags interrogated by the reader. The kit comes with supporting documentation, including the Speedway Quick Start Guide and the Speedway User Guide. Impinj sells the GrandPrix Evaluation Kit for \$3,250 to potential partners, such as VARs or system integrators, or to retailers, manufacturers, test laboratories or other end users developing or testing RFID solutions in North America or Europe. More information on the kit is available [here](#).

## **Nashua to Make Tags With Fractal Antennas**

Fractal Antenna Systems, a Bedford, Mass. supplier of high-gain, low-profile printed antennas based on the use of repeated shapes inherent to fractal geometry, has partnered with Nashua Corp., a manufacturer and marketer of label products, paper transaction supplies and converted RFID tags. Under the terms of the licensing agreement, Nashua has secured the exclusive rights to manufacture and distribute passive RFID labels and tags using fractal antennas developed by Fractal Antenna Systems. According to the companies, the new tags demonstrated improved performance and greater read-range compared with passive tags containing non-fractal antennas—and they do so in a smaller form-factor tag. The companies are targeting their products at users of RFID in the retail supply chain, for use in tracking cases and pallets of goods.

## **Magellan Announces New Euro Reseller, U.S. Manufacturer**

Scanology, a European AIDC solutions provider based in the Netherlands, has launched an RFID label encoding service for users of RFID tags made by Magellan Technology. These tags use Magellan's phase-jitter modulation (PJM) technology and are compliant with the ISO 18000-3 mode 2 standard. The agreement is designed to provide adopters of PJM technology with a qualified supply of encoded and printed PJM labels. Scanology says it has already been selling Magellan's PJM labels to a key customer for several months. Scanology also reports that it can encode up to 2,000 tags per hour using one encoding printer. The company uses a specially modified R110XiIIIplus encoding printer containing a PJM read-write module supplied by Zebra Technologies. In other news, Magellan says it has forged a manufacturing agreement with Creative Electronics and Software (CES), based in Illinois. Under the terms of that agreement, CES will manufacture all of Magellan's reader products and also produce its custom antennas. CES will primarily

service the U.S. and North American markets.

### **European Project Organizes RFID Guideline Workshop**

German retailer METRO Group is organizing a workshop sponsored by a working group within Coordinating European Efforts for Promoting the European RFID Value Chain (CE RFID), an organization consisting of European end users of RFID (see CE RFID Holds Its First Meeting). The meeting will take place Wednesday, June 27, 2007, from 9:00 to 18:00 at Pleon GmbH, Hausvogteiplatz 2, 10117 Berlin, Germany, and is open to all interested parties. During the workshop, participants will discuss the current state of RFID guidelines in Europe, concerning different application fields (for example, logistical applications and the tracking and tracing of goods). METRO says it hopes experts in RFID matters will attend, to provide insights on the quality and scope of existing guidelines, to identify open points and to draft suggestions for additional or supplemental guidelines, should existing guidelines be perceived as insufficient to meet the various demands of user companies. Further information can be found at the CE RFID Web site.

### **DOD Continues Unisys Contract for Tracking Program**

Systems integrator Unisys announced this week that its contract with the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) to develop, maintain and enhance an in-transit visibility system utilizing active RFID technology, has been extended in the form of a one-year contract with three one-year options, exercisable at the discretion of the government. The contract is worth approximately \$28 million in the first year, if the government continues to order time and materials work at the current level. Should the DOD exercise three one-year options on the deal, the total value would be approximately \$112 million. In addition, the contract provides for the award of additional fees if performance metrics are exceeded, and for the imposition of penalties if those metrics are not met. Unisys currently operates the U.S. military's global network for tracking goods with active RFID tags, and tracks approximately 125,000 RFID-tagged shipments each week. These include ammunition, rations and water, medical supplies, vehicles, vehicle parts and aircraft sent across all modes of transportation—truck, rail, ship and air—to their final destinations in combatant commands worldwide.

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