

ROI Is Important—Even When Choosing Events

RFID Journal LIVE! 2008 promises to be a great investment because companies will learn how to use RFID to increase sales or cut costs.

By Mark Roberti

March 31, 2008—For much of my career, I worked at business and technology magazines that hired young reporters (at low salaries) who knew nothing about business or technology. I used to wonder how these magazines survived when they created little or no value for their readers, other than aggregating press releases. When I launched RFID Journal, it was in the belief that the best way to make money in publishing was to deliver a lot more value to readers than just the cost of a subscription. There's no doubt in my mind that we've done that. Some of our case studies are such good blueprints for deploying RFID, in fact, that they alone are worth far more than \$189.

When we first launched RFID Journal LIVE!, it was in the belief that we could deliver a great deal of value over a three-day event by providing the highest quality content, access to the top technology providers and the opportunity to network with peers. Clearly, that vision has proven to be the right one as well.

This year, RFID Journal LIVE! will be our largest in terms of the program and exhibition, and the best attended (see our list of attendees). And I think it will also deliver a greater return on investment for those attending, as well as for exhibitors, than any event we—or anyone has—have done before.

There are several reasons why I say this. First, the program is better than ever. We have more end-user case studies showcasing how companies are using RFID to improve efficiencies. And we've added new preconference seminars aimed at helping those in government agencies and in the auto, airline, chemical, food and health-care industries use RFID to cut costs.

We're also hosting three co-located events: the EPCglobal Joint Action Group meeting, a Sam's Club supplier meeting and IEEE RFID 2008. By hosting these events, attendees can reduce their travel costs and kill two birds with one stone.

What's more, we've expanded the education within our exhibit hall. Alien Technology will host the RFID Momentum Pavilion, showcasing the latest real-world applications. Alien has brought in partners and customers to discuss how RFID is delivering value today.

We've been working with EPCglobal North America on a live demonstration of three EPC Information Services (EPCIS) applications: track and trace, e-pedigree and electronic proof of delivery. These will be run out of our RFID@Work Demonstration Center, and will involve other exhibitors running separate EPCIS applications that will interact live on the show floor. Those deploying EPC systems can see how they can deliver real benefits by making it easy to share data securely with supply-chain partners.

And we've been working with IBM and Ubisense on The Ultimate Scavenger Hunt, which will involve teams competing to track down objects in the hall. While the game is designed to be fun, it will also demonstrate

how Ubisense's ultra-wideband (UWB) technology and IBM's software could be employed for a variety of applications, such as tracking employees evacuating a facility in an emergency. If you would like to sign up or join a team, visit the IBM booth during exhibit hours.

Another big benefit for attendees this year is the sheer number and quality of new products that will be exhibited (view a [partial list of new products](#) that will be introduced at the event). Vendors have made great strides in improving performance and making deployments easier. We've created stickers that will be placed in front of many booths where exhibitors will show off their new or enhanced products.

RELATED_ARTICLES In addition, there will be stickers for those vendors whose products have been nominated for our first Best in Show Award. The quality of all the products nominated as finalists is impressive. Here's what Bill Hardgrave, director of the [University of Arkansas' RFID Research Lab](#) and one of our judges for the awards, said: "Some of the technologies entered for this year's Best In Show award are truly game-changing and will allow us to do things heretofore impossible with RFID technology" (see [RFID Journal Announces Winners of Second Annual RFID Journal Awards](#)).

The bottom line: Those attending RFID Journal LIVE! 2008 will come away with at least half a dozen ideas about how to use the technology to improve the way they do business, and they will meet the vendors able to provide the technology that is most appropriate for their application. And that means attendees will, indeed, get an ROI from attending the event.

Mark Roberti is the founder and editor of RFID Journal. If you would like to comment on this article, click on the link below. To read more of Mark's opinions, visit the [RFID Journal Blog](#) or click [here](#).

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