

# RFID News Roundup

ClearCount's RFID-enabled surgical sponges now available; Radianse adds Wi-Fi to its RTLS receivers; Omnitrol Networks, Texas Instruments team up on system for tracking circuit boards; Sirit's RFID reader certified for Chinese market; Magellan Technology inks agreement with Data Systems International.

April 3, 2008—The following are news announcements made during the past week.

## **ClearCount's RFID-Enabled Surgical Sponges Now Available**

ClearCount Medical Solutions, a Pittsburgh-based company focused on improving surgical safety, has announced the availability of SmartSponge. The system incorporates RFID tags into surgical sponges to help prevent medical teams from inadvertently leaving sponges inside surgical patients. First unveiled in mid-2006, the system leverages passive 13.56 MHz RFID tags from Texas Instruments' Tag-it HF-I tags, which are smaller than a dime and support the ISO 15693 and 18000-3 standards. SmartSponge received market clearance from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in June 2007 (see RFID-enabled Surgical Sponges a Step Closer to OR). ClearCount will officially launch the SmartSponge system at the Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) annual congress, being held this week in Anaheim, Calif. The SmartSponge system includes a tray with a built-in RFID interrogator that records the number of tagged sponges in pre-packs as workers set them on the tray at the start of an operation. After a procedure is completed, used sponges are discarded into a SmartBucket, a receptacle with its own RFID interrogator that records the tags in the discarded sponges. A small LCD screen displays the counts, confirming whether there's a match. The system also incorporates an RFID interrogator, known as a SmartWand, enabling surgical teams to scan a patient during postoperative safety checks, and to locate any sponges mistakenly left behind. In addition to the system's availability, ClearCount has also announced a distribution agreement with Cardinal Health, a provider of health-care products and services. Under the terms of this deal, Cardinal Health will become the primary distributor for ClearCount's SmartSponge system to hospitals, surgery centers and other health-care distributors in the United States. Cardinal Health will offer the SmartSponge system as part of its Presource surgical kits, and as a stand-alone offering.

## **Radianse Adds Wi-Fi to Its RTLS Receivers**

Real-time location systems (RTLS) provider Radianse has integrated Wi-Fi networking directly into its RFID receivers, providing hospitals and other organizations an RTLS that can automatically leverage an existing wireless LAN for transmitting data collected by that RTLS. Radianse's RTLS employs active RFID tags that operate at 433 MHz and communicate via a proprietary air-interface protocol. Radianse RFID interrogators receive the tag data and can use their new Wi-Fi capability to relay this information to a Radianse server. Previously, the receivers had no built-in Wi-Fi network card and transmitted tag data via either a cable connection to a wired local area network, or to a separate Wi-Fi network bridge that communicated wirelessly with a Wi-Fi access point. The receivers can read a tag from up to 50 or 60 feet away, and can pinpoint its location with an accuracy of up to 3 feet. Radianse's software determines the tag's location based on the strength of the signal picked up by three or more receivers. Radianse has also announced enhancements to its location software that the company says enable greater flexibility in the placement and number of receivers required to achieve room-level location precision.

### **Omnitrol Networks, Texas Instruments Team Up on System for Tracking Circuit Boards**

Omnitrol Networks, a Mountain View, Calif., provider of RFID and auto-ID device networking appliances, and RFID transponder and reader maker Texas Instruments (TI) have announced an alliance to deliver an RFID-enabled real-time traceability solution for printed circuit board (PCB) manufacturing applications. The new offering integrates Omnitrol Networks' Work-in-Process visibility software, a sensor integration appliance, Gen 2 RFID interrogators, and TI's EPC Gen 2 UHF chips. This solution is designed to provide electronic and contract manufacturers with an automated method for simultaneously identifying and tracking PCBs from the manufacturing floor to customer delivery. According to the two companies, an RFID chip's small size can be used effectively on increasingly scarce board real estate, and its programmable memory allows PCB manufacturers real-time work-in-process visibility into parts, labor and finished goods throughout their manufacturing operations. What's more, RFID solutions provide a highly accurate and comprehensive view of manufacturing data throughout the product lifecycle, which can help reduce warranty, safety and liability costs. Omnitrol and TI claim their combined solution provides manufacturers with a complete electronic pedigree (e-pedigree) for traceability on parts and WIP. The manufacturing pedigree information is automatically programmed into the RFID tag for quick and easy access to critical data without the need to be connected to a back-end database. The new PCB tracking solution is currently being tested in pilots with several electronic manufacturers—including TQ Components, a technology service provider for advanced electronic subsystems and systems in Germany—and will be demonstrated at RFID Journal LIVE! 2008, being held in Las Vegas, April 16-18.

### **Sirit's RFID Reader Certified for Chinese Market**

Canadian RFID provider Sirit has announced that its Infinity 510 UHF (IN510) interrogator has been certified to operate in China by the country's State Radio Regulation Committee (SRRC), part of China's Ministry of Information Industry (MII). In 2007, China officially designated the 840.25 to 844.75 MHz and 920.25 to 924.75 MHz bands for use by ultrahigh-frequency (UHF) RFID tags and interrogators in that country (see China Approves Requirements for UHF Bandwidth). The SRRC certification verifies that the IN510 readers conform to China's RFID regulations. Sirit's distribution partners in China include Sense Technology Co., headquartered in Shenzhen, Systron Systems, based in Beijing, and ID Tech, headquartered in Hong Kong. In other news, Sirit reports that it has completed its acquisition of RSI ID Technologies, a manufacturer of antennas, inlays and tags for specialized, passive RFID applications, headquartered in Chula Vista, Calif. In accordance with the terms of the agreement announced on March 4, the deal has been structured as an all-stock transaction, with an initial payment of 10 million Sirit common shares, plus additional shares to be issued over a 21-month period based on the achievement of specific financial targets. The transaction has received all requisite regulatory approvals, including that of the Toronto Stock Exchange. Wolf Bielas will remain as CEO of RSI.

### **Magellan Technology Inks Agreement With Data Systems International**

Magellan Technology, a Sydney, Australia-based developer, manufacturer and licensor of 13.56 MHz RFID systems, has announced an agreement with Data Systems International (DSI), a data collection solutions provider based in Overland Park, Kan. DSI will provide Magellan's clients with its dcLINK data collection software, which integrates the data collected by Magellan's RFID technology with a variety of enterprise applications, including those from Oracle, SAP and Lawson. Magellan's StackTag technology, which complies with the ISO 18000 Part 3 Mode 2 standard, enables tags to be encoded at a data rate of up to 424 kilobits per second, and read at a rate of 106 kilobits per second.

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