

# RFID News Roundup

RFID adds extra security to hotel safes; Confidex introduces new UHF RFID label for returnable plastic containers; California RFID bill takes another legislative step; Brooks Automation launches mobile RFID reader; IDTronic unveils new rugged, lightweight handheld RFID terminal.

June 19, 2008—The following are news announcements made during the past week.

## **Confidex Introduces New UHF RFID Label for Returnable Plastic Containers**

Confidex, a Finnish tag maker, has announced a new ultrahigh-frequency (UHF) RFID label, known as the Confidex Carrier, designed to adhere to plastic transit items, such as totes, crates, trays and other returnable containers used to transport goods and items in manufacturing and supply chain applications. The Confidex Carrier is EPC Class 1 Gen 2-compliant and employs an acrylic adhesive. According to the company, it has been tested in industrial applications to ensure it can withstand the daily use of plastic transit items for several years. Confidex offers a variety of other RFID tags, including the UHF EPC Gen 2 Ironside and Steelwave tags, intended for use on and around metal, and the Survivor reusable EPC Gen 2 tag. Confidex is headquartered in Tampere, Finland, with offices in Europe, North America and China.

## **RFID Adds Extra Security To Hotel Safes**

Elsafe, a provider of electronic in-room safes and part of the ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Group, has unveiled a new type of safe that can be opened with a combination entered on a digital keypad, or by a guest's RFID room key or cell phone equipped with Near Field Communication (NFC), which enables RF communication between mobile electronic devices. The new Sentinel II is compatible with all major ISO RFID standards, including ISO 14443-A, ISO 14443-B and ISO 15693, as well as Mifare, NXP Semiconductors' proprietary technology based on ISO 14443-A. Sentinel II is also built for compatibility with the VisionLine ZigBee-compatible RF electronic locking system from VingCard, which offers electronic locking systems and hotel door locks. VingCard is Elsafe's sister company, and is also part of the ASSA ABLOY Hospitality Group, which makes security solutions for the hospitality industry. Sentinel II safes can hold up to a 17-inch laptop computer, with an optional internal power outlet available on the inside of the safe door for guest convenience. In addition, the safe has been designed to accommodate external battery changes, so internal contents are not disturbed if a battery must be replaced.

## **California RFID Bill Takes Another Legislative Step**

The California's SB 31 RFID Bill has unanimously passed the Assembly Judiciary Committee by a vote of 10-0, and re-referred it to the Assembly's Committee on Appropriations. The bill, introduced by California State Senator Joe Simitian, makes it illegal for a person to intentionally read or attempt to read an RFID tag in another individual's identification document without their knowledge and prior consent. The bill is particularly aimed at protecting private information that may be stored on drivers' licenses and other forms of identification. SB 31 is one of several RFID laws the senator has introduced, which were derived from a larger bill he introduced in 2006. That bill, SB 768, passed both state legislative houses before being vetoed by California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger (see Calif. Gov Terminates RFID ID Bill). The revamped bills include SB 31; SB 30, which calls for privacy and security safeguards on RFID-enabled, government-issued identification documents; and SB 29, which places a three-year moratorium on the use of government-issued RFID devices for the purpose of tracking, monitoring or recording the presence of students in public schools.

### **Brooks Automation Launches Mobile RFID Reader**

Brooks Automation has announced a new mobile RFID interrogator that it says is easy to use and is designed for customers beginning to switch from bar codes to RFID. The RFID Reader THR, designed to interrogate tags operating at low frequency (125 kHz or 134.2 kHz) or high frequency (13.56 MHz), comes with a USB 2.0 or PS2 interface. To initiate a tag read, the company explains, a user pushes one button, and a successful identification is indicated by a signal or a flashing LED. Depending on the frequency used and the type of transponder, the device's read range is from 3 to 20 centimeters (1.2 to 7.9 inches). The new reader is available now.

### **IDTronic Unveils New Rugged, Lightweight Handheld RFID Terminal**

IDTronic, an RFID hardware provider based in Germany, has introduced its Handheld Terminal Ezit II, a mobile system that can capture a range of data, from RFID tags and bar codes to images. The terminal contains an integrated CompactFlash 2 slot, making it possible to integrate various RFID readers, such as UHF, ISO 14443-A and -B, ISO 15693 and 125kHz, which are protected in a special extension cap. The Ezit II UHF version is capable of reading and writing tags conforming to the EPC Gen 2 and ISO 18000-6 B and C standards. The ISO 14443 A and B version supports NXP's Mifare and DESFire transponders, while the ISO 15693 version supports such transponders as NXP's I-Code SLI and Texas Instruments' TI Tag-it HF-I. Rated at IP54, the terminal exceeds military specifications for resistance to drops, dust, vibration, and high and low temperatures. It is protected against dirt and water sprayed from all directions, for instance, and can withstand multiple drops from 1.5 meters (4.9 feet) to polished concrete, according to IDTronic. The terminal includes a graphic color display with LED backlight, a 16-key numeric pad and an integrated 3000mAh battery pack able to provide 12 hours of operating time. Standard communications include both integrated RS232 and USB interfaces, with optional Bluetooth and wireless LAN interfaces available as well. What's more, a variety of accessories are also available, including bar-code readers and a large alphanumeric keyboard. The Microsoft Windows CE 5.0 operating system provides the mobile operating system. The Ezit II is available now.

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