

RFID News Roundup

New alliance to serve as resource on RFID privacy, security; IDTronic intros active RFID system with controllers, antennas and tags; Confidex debuts new on-metal RFID tag for IT asset tracking; Precision Dynamics Corp. and FreedomPay partner on cashless RFID; Schober USA offers new RFID tag inserter; Sokymat Automotive adds new LF transponder to product lineup.

Sept. 4, 2008—The following are news announcements made during the past week.

New Alliance to Serve as Resource on RFID Privacy, Security

A group of RFID companies have teamed up to form the RFID Security Alliance (RFIDSA), and is hoping to spur education and discussion regarding security and privacy issues surrounding the use of RFID technologies, solutions and applications. The organization's founding members are GraniteKey, Advanced Wireless Identification Group (AWID), Mikoh, NeoCatena Networks, QLM Consulting, SecureRF, Sensitel, Sybase, Veratag and Verayo. The group's goals include educating its members, potential users, analysts, educational institutions, media and others about security and privacy issues as they relate to RFID, in order to develop metrics that may be used to establish common terminology involving security robustness within the industry; foster an open, two-way dialog within the RFID community; provide information and support to stakeholders involved in RFID development and implementation; inspire all RFIDSA members to become involved in, and monitor, social and legislative initiatives with respect to RFID security and privacy; demonstrate RFIDSA concepts and initiatives, including the development of RFID security threat-assessment models; and foster an environment leading to the sensible and rapid adoption of secure RFID technologies and solutions. RFIDSA is currently seeking additional members, including companies with a substantial business in providing RFID or security hardware, software or services, as well as law, consulting and accounting firms, and educational institutions interested in RFID security issues.

IDTronic Intros Active RFID System with Controllers, Antennas and Tags

IDTronic, an RFID hardware provider based in Germany, has introduced Active Now, a new active 2.4 GHz RFID system that the company says provides a range of applications that are easy to integrate into existing networks. The Active Now system includes a Wi-Fi Controller that utilizes existing Wi-Fi networks as a backbone and includes a configuration utility enabling companies to set a permanent IP address, and to connect the controller to any brand of infrastructure networks. IDTronic also offers the Range Expander Active Now, an add-on extension unit for the controller to expand the reading distance of the tags by up to 700 meters (2297 feet) and in open areas, or over an area of 125 acres. There is also a 2.45 GHz Active Now Tag Controller, available in both Wi-Fi and serial versions, that includes an antenna providing a communications range of up to 60 meters (197 feet) and provides an anti-collision rate of 80 to 100 tags per second. The tag controller's reader sensitivity is software-controllable, and the read zones can be segmented using the circular polarized Active NOW directional antennas. The antennas work with all Active Now Controllers and come with a mounting kit and 1 meter (3.3 feet) of coaxial cable. The Active Now System also includes three versions of the 2.45 GHz active tags: the Active Now Read Only, the Motion Sensor Tag and the Temperature Sensor Tag. Each is built around 0.18 μm low-power CMOS integrated circuits. For applications with multiple controllers, the company says, IDTronic offers middleware dubbed Active Now EdgeWare, designed to help ease the integration of multiple units with a single centralized database.

Confidex Debuts New On-Metal RFID Tag for IT Asset Tracking

Finnish RFID tag maker [Confidex](#) has announced a new passive ultrahigh-frequency (UHF) RFID tag known as the Confidex Steelwave Micro, designed to track IT assets—including servers, routers, storage devices, desktop computers and portable devices such as removable hard drives and laptops—and to improve inventory management. The EPC Class 1 Gen 2 tag measures 0.5 by 1.5 inches (13 by 38 millimeters), and has a read range of 8.2 to 9.8 feet (2.5 to 3.0 meters) and characteristics enabling attachment to metal and non-metal devices. The tag operates in the 865-869 MHz, 902-928 MHz and 952-955 MHz frequencies and contains an [Impinj Monza 3](#) integrated circuit. Steelwave Micro has an adhesive backing for mounting and can operate in temperatures ranging from -20 to 85 degrees Celsius (-4 to 185 degrees Fahrenheit).

Precision Dynamics Corporation and FreedomPay Partner on Cashless RFID

[Precision Dynamics Corp.](#) (PDC), a San Fernando, Calif., manufacturer of RFID wristbands, has teamed with [FreedomPay](#), a Wayne, Pa. provider of cashless payment solutions using RFID interrogators and cards. Together, the duo plans to offer multi-purpose cashless solutions to water parks, hotels and resorts utilizing RFID technology. As part of the joint venture, FreedomPay intends to operate patrons' stored value accounts, which will be linked to PDC's Smart Band lineup of wristbands that contain 13.56 MHz passive RFID inlays and support the ISO 15693 and/or ISO/IEC 14443 standards. FreedomPay has been deploying its RFID-enabled cashless payment systems for several years, working with a variety of corporate customers, government facilities, hospitals and universities (see [RFID Serves Up Cafeteria Food](#)). Its solutions range from point-of-sale (POS) hardware to cashless, electronic payments services to processing, and provide an integrated, hosted infrastructure for managing payments. PDC's wristbands are currently employed in a number of venues, including water parks and resorts (see [Illinois Water Resort Becomes RFID-Activated](#)).

Schober USA Offers New RFID Tag Inserter

Cincinnati, Ohio-based [Schober USA](#), the North American representative of [Schober GmbH](#) that provides custom-built rotary equipment, has announced a new RFID tag inserter that places ultrahigh-frequency (UHF) and high-frequency (HF) inlays under die-cut blank or preprinted labels and validates the finished product. According to the company, the RFID-CP is designed for medium and small label runs using pre-printed heavy label stock. It includes a tag dispenser, strategically placed start/stop buttons and optional static discharge protection that can help eliminate electrostatic discharge (ESD). ESD can change the electrical characteristics of a functional component or semiconductor device, which can negatively impact the device's RF performance, or cause it to no longer function. The RFID-CP works with transponders in accordance with [ISO](#) specifications, in widths ranging from 20 to 80 millimeters (0.8 to 3.1 inches), with lengths of 20 to 180 millimeters (0.8 to 7.1 inches). Preprinted labels with widths ranging from 101.6 to 203.6 millimeters (4 to 8 inches) can be applied at rates from 5,000 to 20,000 labels per hour. An on-board RFID interrogator checks the readability of each RFID tag after integration.

Sokymat Automotive Adds New LF Transponder to Product Lineup

German transponder manufacturer [Sokymat Automotive](#) has released a new low-frequency (LF) disc transponder, the Tough Operation Performance (T.O.P.), which the company says is ideal for tracing and tracking pallets, kegs, containers and vehicles, as well as for identifying tools, controlling processes and managing waste in heavy industrial and outdoor situations. Operating at frequencies of 125 kHz and supporting ISO 18000 Part 3, the T.O.P. disc transponder has a diameter of 34 millimeters (1.3 inches) and a reduced thickness of 6 millimeters (0.2 inches). According to Sokymat Automotive, the device is suited for industrial applications where resistance to chemicals, shock, vibrations and temperature change is necessary. It can operate in temperatures ranging from -40 degrees Celsius (-40 degrees Fahrenheit) to 90 degrees Celsius (194 degrees Fahrenheit), for instance, and is rated IP 68—which means it is protected against the effects of permanent submersion in water. The T.O.P. comes with a universal hole, enabling it to be utilized with both countersunk and pan-head screws for use in metal applications.