# NCR Prototype Kiosk Kills RFID Tags

The kiosk, which will soon be deployed as part of the Auto-ID Center's ongoing EPC field trial, renders Class 1 EPC tags permanently inoperable.

Sept. 25, 2003 - NCR, a Dayton, Ohio, provider of point-of-sale systems, is working with the Auto-ID Center to test a kiosk that can kill RFID tags based on the center's Electronic Product Code specification. The kiosks could give stores that sell items with RFID tags an effective way to protect consumer privacy.
The kiosk is currently being tested at the Auto-ID Center's lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Mass. NCR originally planned to provide hybrid RFID-bar code readers that could match data about tags removed from smart shelves with items being scanned at the cash registers. But concerns about consumer privacy prompted researchers to focus on a way to kill the tags, according to Chris Herwig, director of technology management for NCR's Retail Solutions Division.

The kiosk is based on NCR's 7401 Web kiosk, which can be used to enable customers to learn more about products or shop for items not displayed in the store. The RFID version can be mounted on a wall or countertop or put on a floor stand. It features a 12-inch touch screen and a chamber, similar to a kitchen cabinet. To deactivate the tags, which must be killed one at a time, the consumer would open the chamber door, put the item in and then use the buttons on the touch screen. "The system will confirm that the tag was deactivated," says Herwig. "You can verify by trying to read the tag again. If the tag has been killed, it will say no tag found."

Herwig says work is underway to improve the kill feature so that consumers can deactivate more than one tag at a time. "It's not very effective if you have to put things in one by one," he says. "Ultimately, we need to get to a point where you can put an assortment of items in and kill the tags in all the items."

The system is expected to be deployed in a retail store as part of the Auto-ID Center's ongoing field trial. No decision has been made on when that will be or which store will test the system.

RFID Journal Home