

**The Auto-ID Center has signed Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, the world's largest teleco, as a new technology sponsor.**

Aug. 28, 2002 -- As it prepares to open a new lab in Japan, the Auto-ID Center has signed Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, the world's largest telecommunications company, as a new technology sponsor. Two NTT subsidiaries have been working on their own identification systems for several years.

Most people think of NTT as simply Japan's national phone service provider. In fact, the NTT group is made up of more than 100 companies employing 213,000 people. For the fiscal year ended March 31, 2002, it had revenue of \$87 billion, but lost \$6.3 billion.

NTT offers a lot more than just phone service. The company also provides high-speed data networks, computers and integration services. A system for tracking all of the goods Japan makes would boost revenue for NTT's data services and integration businesses.

NTT DATA Corp. and NTT DATA Technology Corp. co-developed a system for tracking products using DNA, a foolproof identifier that can be precisely digitized. Capturing random DNA sequences on an RFID tag or even mixing organic material into bar code ink would make it possible to establish the authenticity of a high-value product beyond any doubt.

NTT's decision to join the Auto-ID Center is a huge boost for the center in a region of the world where it so far has had little representation. Nippon Telegraph and Telephone isn't just Ma Bell in Japan. It is one of the most important and powerful companies in the country, and other companies in Japan will see its sponsorship as a stamp of approval.

The Auto-ID Center sees Asia as a critical area of growth for a number of reasons. Many of the goods sold in North America and Europe are made there and would need to be tagged there. Asia can also play a critical role in producing low-cost tags and readers. The center has expanded its field test to Asia and expects to open labs in both Japan and China by the end of the year.

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