

# Manugistics Adds RFID Capabilities

The global supply chain software provider offers solutions aimed at suppliers to Wal-Mart and the U.S. Department of Defense.

Nov. 12, 2003—Manugistics Group has added support for RFID to its supply chain management platform. The software maker, based in Rockville, Md., wants to help its customers deploy RFID, especially those that supply goods to Wal-Mart and the U.S. Department of Defense's Logistics Agency (DLA).

"The mandates from Wal-Mart and the DLA have really driven demand for this," says Mike DiGiacomo, vice president of business development at Manugistics. "These RFID capabilities will leverage our existing technology user base, as well as let us go after additional suppliers facing the same RFID requirements," he says.

In June, Wal-Mart announced that its top 100 suppliers must put RFID tags on shipments beginning in January 2005 and that all of its suppliers need to do so by the end of 2006. In early October, the DLA set out a new policy that expands active RFID tracking to all military shipments of sustainment cargo, unit movement equipment and cargo, ammunition shipments, and prepositioned materiel and supplies (see U.S. Military Clarifies RFID Mandate). Manugistics believes that Wal-Mart and the DLA are doing more than any other organizations to drive demand for its software's RFID capabilities.

DiGiacomo says that Manugistics, which counts Wal-Mart and the DLA among its customers, has an inside track to what these two organizations expect from their suppliers. That leaves Manugistics well placed to capitalize on Wal-Mart's requirements to have its suppliers put RFID tags bearing Electronic Product Codes on pallets and cases. "We are learning what Wal-Mart will be requiring of its suppliers so we can help Wal-Mart and help enable its suppliers," says DiGiacomo.

The new RFID capabilities from Manugistics are available immediately and come as additions to its four main secure applications, which cover planning, distribution, transportation and logistics. These applications—new versions of previously released products that have been reworked to utilize and manage data collected from an RFID network—include Manugistics' Collaborate, Monitor and Respond Framework, Order and Delivery Management Framework and Adaptive Planning Solutions

The extensions will enable Manugistics' supply chain software to connect with an RFID system through a customer's warehouse management system (WMS), integrate data collected from RFID readers and enable reader monitoring and alerts within the Manugistics platform.

The company says it will name a number of partners in the next few months that will be responsible for selecting and deploying the RFID networks—including RFID readers and middleware—and integrating them with the WMS. For connecting its supply chain platform with its new RFID-enabled software, Manugistics says it will provide developer tools that are flexible enough to work with any legacy or commercial WMS.

Without RFID technology, Manugistics' customers seeking to track their inventory, orders and shipments need to use various foreign interfaces, such as electronic data interchange (EDI) or bar code readers. By using

RFID-enabled Manugistics supply chain software, companies can now get real-time visibility to inventory, orders and shipments throughout the supply chain. There is also support for event detection, request and receipt of order and delivery information, specified resolution alternatives for unexpected events, and reallocation and optimization for inventory and shipment and pricing.

Manugistics' main supply chain software competitors include [SAP](#), [i2 Technologies](#) and [Decartes Systems Group](#). SAP, one of the earliest software companies to sponsor the Auto-ID center, has announced plans to offer a software platform called Auto-ID Infrastructure, which it says will help companies build adaptive supply networks (see [Takes RFID into the Enterprise](#)).

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