

# Giving Mobility to RFID Data

Defywire's middleware lets a company build applications that link wireless devices to RFID networks and back-end systems.

By Jonathan Collins

Dec. 23, 2003—Wireless middleware provider Defywire has revamped its Mobility Suite software to enable a company's mobile employees and systems to access RFID-derived data in real time.

"RFID is becoming an increasingly important technology within corporate IT systems. Companies are moving beyond point solutions toward platforms that are scalable, flexible and comprehensive. Our customers are requesting RFID support within an enterprise mobile platform because it improves productivity and provides competitive advantage," says Jill Stelfox, CEO of Defywire.

Defywire's software aims to enable its customers to build applications that link mobile and laptop computers and handheld devices such as cell phones and PDAs with the organizations' back-end operational systems. The middleware connects through the Java operating environment on the device side and to a variety of enterprise software applications such as SAP or PeopleSoft through middleware from partner and middleware specialist webMethods.

To access RFID-derived information, Defywire's Mobility Suite would not have to connect to RFID readers but would instead connect to RFID network software and to an organization's back-end systems. The company says it has already linked its software to RFID systems from OAT Systems and from Manhattan Associates.

Defywire says its software will let wireless devices access information from back-end systems and compare it with data gathered by RFID readers at loading bays and other sites where fixed readers are deployed. Mobility Suite would then provide real-time verification that orders are being shipped or received correctly. Mobility Suite could also be used at a manufacturing plant, where Defywire's software could link wireless handheld devices to both the RFID network and the factory's back-end systems to enable real-time checks along a assembly line at any point and at any time.

There are other potential mobile applications enabled by Defywire's Mobility Suite. "Using cellular communications, RFID tagged items can be tracked in real-time so that, for example, a box—and even items in that box—can be tracked while in the process of being delivered," says Brian Groves, director of product marketing at Defywire.

Based in Herndon, Va., Defywire was founded in March 2002 as a spin-off from the Noblestar, an international information technology consulting and software engineering firm based in Reston, Virginia. Defywire sells its software licenses directly, as well as through partners. The company has joint sales and marketing deals with webMethods and electronics giant Sharp, as well as a joint development partnership with Intel.

Prices are based on the number of end users for any deployment. The company says it already has a handful of

customers and a number of trials underway with using its software.

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