

# RFID News Roundup

Nokia, Philips, Sony to push consumer RFID; Matrics unveils read-write Class 0+ tag; U.S. to hold wireless sensor conference; First smart active labels hit the market; Alien invades China; HID introduces RFID-mag stripe access control unit.

## **Nokia, Philips, Sony to Push Consumer RFID**

Nokia Corporation, Royal Philips Electronics and Sony have established the Near Field Communication Forum to promote the use of RFID to transfer data between consumer devices at short range. Sony and Philips have been working on the technology for the past 18 months [Sony, Philips Creating RFID Link](#). The support of Nokia is a coup, because Nokia just introduced an RFID-enabled cell phone (see [Nokia Unveils RFID Phone Reader](#)). NFC technology would enable a consumer to download, say, movie tickets to a cell phone and then swipe the phone to enter a theater. The new forum will promote implementation and standardization of NFC technology to ensure interoperability between devices and services.

## **Matrics Unveils Read-Write Class 0+ Tag**

[Matrics](#), a Columbia, M.D.-based RFID systems provider, has unveiled a new read-write version of its Class 0 EPC tag. The original Class 0 tag was written to at the factory. The new Class 0+ tag can be written to in the field and locked after being written to. The company has started supplying read/write tags in limited quantities and will ramp up production in the second quarter of 2004. Girish Rishi, Matrics' senior VP of marketing and strategy, says that for orders of 10 million units or more, the tags would cost from 20 to 30 cents each depending on the size of the antenna required.

## **U.S. to Hold Wireless Sensor Conference**

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration, a unit of the U.S. Department of Commerce, will hold a free forum on April 1 called [From RFID to Smart Dust: The Expanding Market for Wireless Sensor Technologies](#). The event, which will be held in the Commerce Department's auditorium in Washington, D.C., will address the current and potential uses of sensor technologies by industry and government and examine the public policy implications of widespread deployment.

## **First Smart Active Labels Hit the Market**

[Power Paper](#), an Israeli company that has developed a flexible, thin-film battery, and [Graphic Solutions](#), a custom print house specializing in printed circuitry and RFID antennas, say the first active RFID label based on the Class 1 Electronic Product Code specification will be available this fall. Power Paper worked with Swiss semiconductor company [EM Microelectronic](#) to develop a chip (now available) for the label that will work with the Class 1 Gen 2 EPC specification when it is finalized. Power Paper says the label will cost 40 cents to \$1 depending on the volume purchased.

## **Alien Invades China**

[Alien Technology](#) has teamed with [EPC Solutions International](#), an Ellicott City, M.D.-based company specializing in EPC RFID integration solutions and services in China, to bring EPC Class 1 RFID products to the Chinese market. The two companies will create an RFID demonstration center in China, produce a joint education program based on Alien's RFID Academy educational seminar, and develop RFID implementation strategies based on Alien's EPC Class 1 RFID tags, readers and related services.

### **HID Introduces RFID-Mag Stripe Access-Control Unit**

HID, an Irvine, Calif.-based maker of access-control systems, has introduced two new products, the Dorado 230 and 240 Combination/Transition card readers, that can read standard magnetic-stripe cards as well as HID RFID cards. The Dorado 240 model includes a keypad for increased security when utilizing a personal identification number. The company says the readers are aimed at companies that are migrating from mag-stripe access cards to RFID cards and at those that issue mag-stripe access cards to temporary workers.

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