

Coors' kegs get RFID tags; safe commerce project off to a good start; Alien readers will use Windows CE; Trolley Scan offers compact fixed reader.

May 28, 2004—The following are news announcements made during the week of May 24.

Coors' Kegs Get RFID Tags

Adolph Coors Co. says its Coors Brewers subsidiary in the United Kingdom has reached an agreement with a U.K. unit of Denver, Colo.-based [TrenStar](#) to outsource the ownership, management and tracking of kegs and casks used by the beer maker. Under the agreement, TrenStar will acquire, for about \$50 million, Coors' 1.2 million kegs and casks, install RFID tags on them and provide ongoing container-management and container-tracking services for the next 15 years. Coors will pay TrenStar each time a keg is filled.

Safe Commerce Project Off to a Good Start

The first 12 intermodal shipping containers sent under Operation Safe Commerce (OSC), a U.S. Transportation Security Administration initiative done in conjunction with private sector companies, arrived this week at a national retailer's distribution center south of Seattle, Wash. The 12 containers traveled through the supply chain by truck from a remote location in Central America to a Pacific Coast port, arriving at the Port of Seattle and finally by truck to the distribution center. The containers were videotaped as they were loaded. They were then sealed with container seals. As the containers traveled by truck and then by ship through the supply chain, they were tracked with RFID transponders and GPS satellite tracking. The purpose of the OSC project is to find methods and technologies for protecting commercial maritime shipments from threats of terrorist attack, illegal immigration and other contraband while minimizing the economic impact upon this vital transportation system. Additional containers will be tracked over the next few months, as OSC officials try to determine which technologies and procedures are required to secure the supply chain. [Science Applications International](#)., [Parsons Brinckerhoff](#), [Savi Technology](#), and Mercator Transportation Group participated in the project.

Alien Readers Will Use Windows CE

Warehouse management software specialist [Manhattan Associates](#) says it has convinced [Alien Technology](#) to use the Windows CE device operating system from [Microsoft](#) in Alien's readers. Manhattan Associates' "RFID in a Box" offering includes Alien tags and readers and a limited license to use Manhattan Associates' Trading Partner Management application. Manhattan Associates wanted Alien to offer Windows CE as an option Alien's EPC readers because that will make it easier for its customers to integrate Manhattan Associates' RFID middleware offering, which is based on Microsoft .NET platform, with Alien's readers. No date for delivery of the new Windows CE-based reader software has been set, but Alien says its ALR-9780 reader, which will read multiple EPC protocols (today's Class 1, Class 0 and the coming UHF Gen 2), will support Windows CE.

Trolley Scan Offers Compact Fixed Reader

[Trolley Scan](#), an RFID design and development company based in Johannesburg, South Africa, announced that it has developed a compact fixed UHF reader that offers read ranges as far as 36 feet

(11 meters). The new reader is housed in a molded plastic case, weighs 7.7 pounds (3.5 kg), operates at UHF frequencies of 860 to 930 MHz. The reader can read up to 500 transponders in a field at a time. It uses a proprietary protocol for communicating with Trolley Scan's EcoTag, Ecochiptag and Ecowoodtag.