

# Putting Drinks on the Cuff

Using an RFID chip embedded on a wristband, a new age/ID-verification system can prevent underage alcohol sales, operate as an electronic wallet and track customer purchases.

By Claire Swedberg

June 15, 2004—Precision Dynamics Corp. (PDC), an automatic-identification wristband system provider based in San Fernando, Calif., announced that it has licensed Intelli-Check ID-CHECK software to enhance PDC's wristband identification system.

The PDC AgeBand Electronic Age/ID Verification System uses the ID-CHECK software to verify that an ID card is not expired or counterfeit, while the PDC software prints the ID information onto a wristband, according to Victor LaRosa, PDC's RFID and age/ID manager.

The primary purpose of the AgeBand system is to verify a customer's age. But with the inclusion of an RFID chip in the wristband, the system also can be used for a variety of functions such as tracking customer purchases and serving as an e-wallet.

To use the AgeBand system, a customer presents a driver's license or some other official identification card (such as military) at the entrance of an event or business. The system, which comes with a bar code scanner and magnetic stripe reader, uses ID-CHECK to analyze the encoded data in mag stripes and two-dimensional bar codes on government-issued IDs from approximately 60 states and provinces in the U.S. and Canada to determine if the content and format is valid. If the ID is valid and the customer is found to be old enough to enter, the AgeBand system prints the customer's name, the words "Age ID Verified 21" and other information from the ID onto a plastic wristband that can't be removed without being damaged or destroyed.

LaRosa indicates that the AgeBand wristband is also available with an embedded programmable RFID 13.56 MHz chip that can serve greater functions than age identification. The unique ID number in a wristband's RFID chip, for example, can be linked a customer's credit card number or a cash deposit to pay for purchases while on the premises. In a bar, for example, the bartender could use a handheld RFID reader to scan the tag of a patron who had ordered a drink and apply the charge to the credit card or cash deposit.

Using RFID will provide nontransferable positive patron ID, increase per capita spending, enable cashless transactions at the point of sale, and eliminate the need for tickets, according to LaRosa. Business owners can write data to the wristband's embedded RFID tag so that they can track customer purchases and control customer spending. For example, at a sporting event, the wristband could allow each individual a set number of drinks from the bar before they are cut off, LaRosa says.

"It's also an easy way to track statistics for marketing," says PDC's senior marketing communications specialist Paula Maggio. "And it's an easy way to collect demographic information."

PDC—which introduced a bar-coded ID wristband in 1984 for hospital patients, an RFID wristband in 2000 and the AgeBand Electronic Age/ID Verification System in February 2004—has RFID-enabled wristband

systems that can be used for purposes other than age identification. The company says its RFID-enabled wristbands can also be used to identify patients at hospitals. Pilot programs are underway at Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, D.C., and Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston to use PDC wristbands for patient identification.

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