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College Football Hall of Fame to Kick Off With RFID

When Atlanta's new College Football Hall of Fame opens its doors in late August, visitors will be able to enjoy a personalized experience at exhibits located throughout the facility. The ultrahigh-frequency (UHF) RFID system, provided by Stark RFID, includes RFID-tagged "credentials" that

visitors can use to receive content tailored specifically for them, as well as 100 readers installed at entrances, exhibits and other parts of the facility, and software residing on six servers that manage the collected data—not only to present information to visitors, but also to track details for the purpose of analytics, such as how long guests remain at each exhibit, and where bottlenecks occur. The solution also enables visitors to collect videos and photographs related to their visit, and to share that content with friends via social media.

The College Football Hall of Fame is owned by Atlanta Hall Management (AHM), a nonprofit corporation that will operate the facility via a license from the National Football Foundation (NFF), an educational organization that aims to foster student athletes who play amateur football. The museum will be housed in a \$66.5 million, 94,000-square-foot structure designed to bring entertainment and information related to American college football to its fans—an expected 1 million or more annually. It will represent, in some way, all 767 college football teams throughout the United States, providing information, videos and pictures about those teams, according to Marcus Margerum, the College Football Hall of Fame’s VP of marketing and communications.



The Hall of Fame is installing Alien RFID readers at its various exhibits, enabling it to offer an interactive and personalized experience to visitors, as well as determine which exhibits are popular, and where bottlenecks occur.

The Hall of Fame intends to be more than a museum, Margerum explains—its goal is to provide an interactive experience connecting a visitor to his or her favorite team, as well as providing a broad view of the college football scene in its entirety.

For instance, the museum has a 52-foot-long wall consisting of screens for viewing videos of major college football teams, including specific moments during games, interviews with players and coaches, and still photos and statistics. On another wall, the facility displays the football helmets of every major college team. The Hall of Fame is intended to allow individuals not only to experience the world of college ball as a whole, but also to focus on their favorite teams.

Enabling this has required nearly two years of development of an RFID solution, says Lance Burnett, Stark RFID's president. AHM first began working with Stark RFID to create an RFID-based solution after its management viewed an example of the company's work at the Georgia Aquarium, where RFID readers captured the movements of visitors carrying UHF tags, prompting exhibits to display information customized for each individual. The Hall of Fame's organizers sought to use the technology to bring personalization to the new museum.

Once the facility's doors open, the system will include a souvenir credential that each visitor purchases to gain access to the Hall of Fame (the credential's price includes museum admission) and then wears around his or her neck on a lanyard. Each credential contains an Alien Technology ALN-9654 "G" RFID inlay encoded with an ID number corresponding with the eight-digit number printed on the credential's back side. The user

is then given the chance to personalize the credential.

If a guest opts to personalize the credential, it would work in this way: After receiving the credential, the visitor sets up a record in the software, linking him to the credential's tag ID number. This can be accomplished in one of three ways: via that person's mobile phone, at a kiosk or with help from a staff member. In the case of the phone, the visitor simply follows instructions on the back of the card to access the Hall of Fame server dedicated to this purpose, and then enters the eight digits on the card, along with his name, favorite college football team, and e-mail address or cell phone number.

For the kiosk option, the visitor uses the built-in Alien ALR-9900+ RFID reader, installed by Stark RFID, to read the credential's tag ID, then simply enters his name, preferred team, and e-mail address or phone number, to be stored together in the software. In the final scenario, the visitor could approach a staff member, who would then use a Tertium Technology Bluetooth Blueberry HS UHF RFID reader paired with a handheld device, such as an Apple iPod, to read the credential's ID number and enter the personal data.



The
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As the visitor then walks through the museum, the exhibits will be personalized for him. At the wall of helmets, the

headgear of his favorite team will be highlighted. At the 52-foot-long wall known as "Why We Love College Football," which is equipped with 13 Alien ALR-9900+ readers, content such as video footage relevant to his preferred team will be displayed. If he is accompanied by another individual with a different favorite team, a touchscreen will display the relevant teams based on their tags' RFID reads, and each guest will then be able to select his team to view the corresponding video footage.

At another display, visitors can create a video of themselves in an ESPN-style newsroom, announcing their favorite team's dramatic win against a rival. In this case, once the guest enters the rival team's name, the system calls up data about his favorite team, then provides a script for him to read specific to a game between the two opposing teams, with appropriate video displayed on the green screen behind his head. This video is stored in the software and linked to his credential's printed eight-digit ID number. Upon returning home, he can then view content sent to his e-mail address, as well as access the video—and share it with friends via social networks—by visiting the Hall of Fame's website and entering the eight-digit ID.

A fourth exhibit will allow users to play Fight Song Karaoke by singing their favorite team's song, as well as create a video of the performance for their own use, and for sharing with friends and family members.

Additionally, the system provides access control. Those who purchase a credential from a museum employee on the street, for example, can simply walk into the facility. A worker will then use the Bluetooth Blueberry handheld to capture the credential's ID number and approve admittance.

Whether or not the credential is personalized, it will still provide useful business analytics data to AHM, as the company can view the movements of fans throughout the facility and

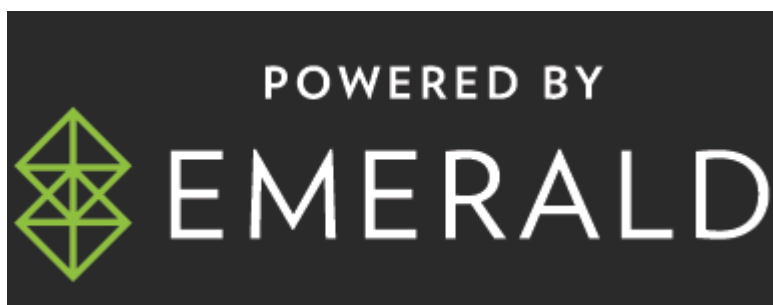
determine which exhibits are popular, how long guests remain at them, and when and where bottlenecks occur. By analyzing this data, Margerum explains, the museum could fine-tune, upgrade or replace certain exhibits. AHM can also share this information with sponsors of certain exhibits, so that those sponsors have a better idea of how well their exhibits are being received.



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