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P&G EPC Leader Takes New Role

As director of B2B supply chain innovation at Procter & Gamble, Larry Kellam was a leader in promoting Electronic Product Code (EPC) technology. In December, Kellam retired from P&G after 35 years. He has set up his own consulting company, the Kellam Group, and joined the board of advisors of GenuOne, a Boston software firm that specializes in systems designed to thwart product counterfeiting and diversion.



Larry
Kellam

“After a little more than 35 years at P&G, it seemed like a good time to take my retirement,” Kellam told *RFID Journal*. EPC has moved passed the research and development phase and into the implementation phase. My role was in supporting the technology, not implementing it, so it was a good time for me to say 35 years is enough.”

P&G has put two coleaders in charge of its EPC implementation, says Kellam. One will continue to work toward commercializing the technology and developing EPC standards. The other coleader will be in charge of internal EPC deployment.

Kellam set up the Kellam Group because a number of companies have asked him to help educate senior executives about the business case for deploying EPC technology in their industry. Kellam has also been engaged by EPCglobal to help get additional research and development money from the U.S. government to expand the EPC system beyond consumer packaged goods. One area with great potential is tracking airline baggage as it moves through the global network of airports.

“I’m doing this to help the EPC system and EPCglobal make progress,” he says. “I’m also interested in helping other vertical industries get it and see how they might use EPC technology. For that I have a passion, but I’m not planning to work full time.”

Kellam learned about GenuOne while at P&G. The software company’s TraceGuard product is a middleware platform

originally designed to track goods with bar codes. The company has been upgrading its platform to work with RFID. P&G is still evaluating the technology, but Kellam was impressed enough to sign on to the advisory board.

“Their middleware has practical use and offers new value from a business case perspective that some companies don’t think about,” he says. “P&G’s former CEO has said that counterfeiting is costing the company \$500 million a year in China alone. If EPC technology can be combined with GenuOne’s solution to reduce counterfeiting, [the benefits for companies that use it could be significant].”

TraceGuard enables suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, retailers and service centers to share information within a central Web-based platform. The application runs on Unix, Linux and Windows 2000, or companies can choose to have GenuOne host the application. TraceGuard offers a discrete database that’s designed for high-volume transactions. It can interface with existing enterprise resource planning (ERP) applications, as well as warehouse management systems (WMS) and inventory management systems using XML and other languages and tools

As a member of the advisory board, Kellam will offer GenuOne insights into the issues businesses face in trying to reduce counterfeiting and diversion. That will help the software company tailor its platform “to help companies extract the most value from their supply chain,” says GenuOne CEO Jeff Unger.

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