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## RFID News Roundup

The following are news announcements made during the past week by the following organizations: Balluff, InformaTrac; IntelliTrack, Visybl; Ecom instruments; Leantegra; NXP Semiconductors, MaskTech; Shoppers Drug Mart, and En-Vision America.

## **Balluff and InformaTrac to Provide Complete RFID Solution**

Balluff Inc., the U.S. subsidiary of Germany's Balluff GmbH and a provider of sensor technologies, and InformaTrac, a provider of software and engineering services for the manufacturing and control-automation industries, have announced a partnership to deliver a complete RFID and asset-management solution. The two companies have combined InformaTrac's RFID-enabled software solutions for tracking assets with Balluff's RFID hardware, Balluff reports, to deliver a comprehensive, fully integrated and enterprise-ready RFID and asset-management solution.

By including enterprise software solutions with RFID hardware, Balluff says, it can now extend that technology's reach from the shop floor to the top floor of an organization. The partnership leverages InformaTrac's experience in data collection and information management across nearly all industries, according to Balluff. With Balluff's RFID technology configured and enabled to collect information, the InformaTrac software now extends the reach of that data into enterprise resource planning (ERP), manufacturing execution systems (MES), and supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) systems.

"Our core competency is in the industrial space," says Wolfgang Kratzenberg, Balluff's marketing manager for industrial identification. "While we make equipment that can be used in an office environment, it is designed to be used in a harsh environment." He adds that the asset-tracking capabilities in the new solution combining InformaTrac's software will be employed to track such items as tools, fixtures, gauges and calibration equipment. Users, whether on a shop floor or in an office, will be able to utilize a single, configurable solution to, for example, visualize a gauge's location, movement and condition, by reading those items' bar-code labels and/or RFID tags.

## IntelliTrack Partners With Bluetooth Beacon Provider Visybl to Offer RTLS

IntelliTrack has announced that it has partnered with Visybl, a provider of Bluetooth beacons and readers, to offer a cloud-based real-time location system (RTLS) that features motion-detection capability. IntelliTrack reports that it is combining its cloud-based StratusAssets application with Visybl's Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) beacon technology to develop a single solution that offers companies real-time visibility of the locations of their critical assets or inventory.



Visybl's beacons and readers

According to IntelliTrack, the new RTLS is suitable for hospitals, colleges and universities, warehouse distribution centers, law-enforcement and public-safety departments, and any other businesses looking to monitor physical assets. By setting up instant mobile notifications or logging into the secure and encrypted StratusAssets application, the company

explains, users can view where assets are located, when they move, and if they are moved at the wrong time or by the wrong owner or personnel.

The system, which includes beacons, readers, apps and cloud software, is turnkey and designed for rapid deployment, IntelliTrack reports. The asset beacons can be read by most iOS and Android smartphones and mobile computers. According to the company, the solution can help businesses identify the locations and temperatures of hundreds of assets within a few seconds, as well as reference detailed logs of who moved assets and when this occurred, increase the accuracy of inventory counts, and reduce asset loss and the amount of time employee spend searching for missing assets.

## **Ecom Unveils CamScan to Capture and Encode RFID Data**

Ecom instruments, a provider of intrinsically safe mobile devices and solutions, has announced its new data-capture software, known as the CamScan Keyboard App, designed to allow 1D and 2D bar codes to be scanned (even offline) simply using the camera of a smartphone or tablet. The software also enables Near Field Communication (NFC) and other types of RFID transponders to be read and encoded.

Ecom's CamScan app works in conjunction with RFID data captured by the RFID-enabled Ident-Ex 01 and i.roc Ci70-Ex handheld computers, for applications calling for the scanning of 200 or more scans per hour, under challenging circumstances, and when long-range scanning from a distance of up to 15 meters (49 feet) is required. The Ident-Ex 01 is an intrinsically safe Bluetooth "All-in-One" bar-code scanner and RFID reader, the company reports, while the i.roc Ci70-Ex is an intrinsically safe PDA.

The ecom CamScan app is a "keyboard wedge" software utility based on Honeywell's SWIFTDecoder Mobile professional offline

bar-code decoding software. According to the company, it uses the integrated camera of the world's first Zone 1/21 and Division 1 certified tablet, the Tab-Ex 01, and the world's first intrinsically safe 4G / LTE-capable Android smartphone, the Smart-Ex 01, to scan bar codes, automatically converting them to human-readable text.

According to Ecom, the CamScan Keyboard scans and enters NFC and other RFID data and nearly all types of bar codes—even in both sunlight and poor lighting conditions—directly into the selected data fields of most applications. To trigger the scan, a user can press the “scan” button shown on the on-screen keyboard or make use of Ecom's Smart-Ex programmable hardware button. This reduces the need for manual typing and eliminates copy and paste actions, which ultimately can reduce the number of errors experienced from free bar-code scanner apps, the company explains. The accuracy of CamScan prevents incorrect asset identification and the wasteful rework, Ecom adds. The system also supports portrait and landscape scanning, as well as batch mode. Offline decoding with 100 or more scans per hour in full 360-degree scanning rotation is also possible, Ecom says.

Using a bar-code scan application in combination with ecom's intrinsically safe mobile devices provides several advantages for companies operating in hazardous areas, according to Ecom. No additional hardware for scanning assets is required, and CamScan Keyboard offers the option of scanning and uploading data directly within third-party apps, thus eliminating the need for mobile workers to manually input results in the field or back at the office.

## **Leantegra Announces New Version of Bluetooth Beacon Platform**

Leantegra Inc., a startup developing software and hardware products for foot traffic engagement and analytics, has

released a new version of its Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) enabled product, known as the Connected Venue Operator (CVO) platform.

CVO combines location-based advertising, or proximity marketing, with a real-time location system (RTLS) and analytics, Leantegra reports, so customers in retail, entertainment and other industries can track, analyze and boost customer engagement.

CVO Release 1.2 enables highly personalized content distribution. While setting up a proximity marketing campaign, a user can choose between several location-based customer behavior options. The solution accurately identifies the direction of a visitor's movements inside a chosen location, or a zone, providing sufficient information to determine whether an individual is entering the premises or about to leave. For example, the company says, a welcome message and a reminder to check a mobile app for a full list of special offers would be suitable for a person who has just entered a shopping mall. Another alternative is to target a message based on dwell time, by specifying the minimum time a person has to stay in either the immediate, near or far zone before a push notification is delivered.

Customers can also choose several groups of BLE beacons, or PowerMotes, to create proximity zones of any configuration, Leantegra reports—even if they do not intersect. This feature, according to the company, is useful when there are several spots within a venue at which the same product is to be advertised. Instead of creating several campaign rules, a user can set up a single rule for a location consisting of several zones, and then run a campaign for that entire site.

There are now two channels for its delivery: Promotional content can either be included in a special offers' list of a mobile application, or be displayed as a push notification, or both.

The solution's content-management system (CMS) now lets customers set parameters regarding age and gender in order to target information. If a proximity application has a registration process in place by which a user needs to indicate his or her age and gender, Leantegra explains, the CV0 platform enables the targeting of recipients based on this information. What's more, according to the company, CV0's proximity marketing mobile application now consumes less smartphone battery due to a decrease in the number of interactions it performs with a beacon when the phone and beacon are not in close proximity to one another.

## **NXP Adds New Security Features to SmartMX2 P60 Step-Up!**

NXP Semiconductors has unveiled its next generation of its SmartMX2 P60 Step-Up!, with new security features such as physical unclonable function (PUF) anti-cloning technology for higher encryption key protection for payment and eGovernment services. The new SmartMX2 P60 Step-Up! secure element provides secure authentication and confidential data exchange. In addition, NXP is collaborating with MaskTech, a provider of high-security smart-card operating systems for electronic ID cards, travel documents and authentication solutions. Together, NXP reports, the companies will add PUF anti-cloning technology to secure smart cards for such applications as ePassports, electronic-ID cards, driving licenses, health cards, payment cards and embedded security.

The latest SmartMX2 generation's PUF support is designed to secure the keys against new attack scenarios via a unique "silicon fingerprint" with each single circuit. There is also hardware support for dedicated cryptography in certain regions, such as SEED (Korea) and OSSCA (China), as well as end-to-end encryption using AES and DES coprocessors for high resistance to side-channel attacks. The new SmartMX2 platform also received comprehensive third-party recognition, including

a Common Criteria EAL6+ certificate (EAL 5+ with Mifare and/or DESFire EV1 inclusion), EMVCo approval and the UL letter of conformance for Mifare functionality.

Sébastien Clamagirand, NXP's senior director and GM of secure identification, said in a statement that the first rollout of SmartMX with PUF technology "is a great milestone and addresses the market need for high secure identification solutions."

## **Shoppers Drug Mart Adopts RFID-enabled Audio Prescription Labels for Sight-Impaired**

Sight-impaired individuals who buy prescription drugs at Shoppers Drug Mart stores in British Columbia will now be able to access prescription information in audio form by using RFID technology provided by En-Vision America, according to Rob Sleath, who heads up an advocacy group called Access for Sight-Impaired Consumers (ASIC).

Shoppers Drug Mart's decision to adopt Envision-America's ScripAbility solution was prompted by a human-rights complaint made by ASIC, Sleath says. ScripAbility is a proprietary system that includes ScripTalk software and encoders to program "audio labels" that contain passive 13.56 MHz high-frequency (HF) RFID tags and can be affixed to the bottom of prescription bottles or containers, according to David Raistrick, En-Vision America's VP and CTO.

A visually impaired person can use a ScripTalk device to read the RFID tag embedded in a prescription bottle's ScripTalk label and hear critical prescription information, including the patient's name, the name and strength of the medication, dosage instructions, quantity, prescription date, refills remaining (if any), the prescriber, the name and telephone number of the dispensing pharmacy, the prescription number, and warnings. It also includes a printer-encoder that can print and encode RFID labels, as well as printed information,



in addition to ScripTalk readers that patients can use at home to turn the information encoded on the tags into spoken language.

Envision-America's RFID-enabled system is already being used by Wal-Mart, Rite Aid, the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs and a number of mail order pharmacies, Raistrick reports.

As a result of the settlement between ASIC and Shoppers Drug Mart, Sleath says, the ScripTalk readers will be provided at no cost to consumers via any Shoppers Drug Mart pharmacy in BC. Accessible prescription medication information using audio labels are also available through all Save-On Foods, PriceSmart, Urban Fare, Bulkley Valley Wholesale, Overwaitea, London Drugs and Peoples Drug Mart locations.



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