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RFID News Roundup

Presented here are news announcements made during the past week by the following organizations:

the Auburn University RFID Lab;

A2B Tracking;

Atos;

Longview IoT;

Zscaler; and

Event Genius.

Auburn University RFID Lab Announces Retail Supply Chain Project

The Auburn University RFID Lab has announced the CHIP Project, a blockchain proof-of-concept for serialized data exchange in retail and apparel supply chains. CHIP, an acronym for **CH**ain **I**ntegration **P**ilot, is designed to integrate item-level data streams from various stakeholders into a blockchain solution, thereby creating a common record of information that can then be jointly shared by trade partners to improve visibility and decision making.

Since the project's inception in June 2018, CHIP has onboarded 21 partners that will participate directly in the proof-of-concept and support the project as a collective working group. There are currently five brand owners, including PVH, Herman Kay, Under Armour and Spanx, with four national retailers and a global logistics provider also contributing to project efforts.

More than half a dozen technology solution providers are involved with the project, including Avery Dennison, Checkpoint Systems, IBM, Mojix, Smartrac, SML and Zebra Technologies. These firms will support data-capture systems and other Internet of Things (IoT) infrastructure, as well as help develop the blockchain solution. Strategic partnerships have been formed with GS1 US, Collaboration, Elverston, Mindy Rector Consulting and Tuskegee University to ensure compliance with global standards.

The RFID Lab is also joining Hyperledger, a global collaboration hosted by the Linux Foundation that aims to advance cross-industry blockchain technologies. Hyperledger is a multi-venture, multi-stakeholder effort that includes various enterprise blockchain and distributed ledger technologies. By becoming a Hyperledger member, the lab joins

companies in the finance, banking, IoT, supply chain, manufacturing and technology sectors, and will thus be positioned to inform and influence the direction and application of blockchain technologies worldwide.

The project allows companies to capture and contribute item-level data streams, such as EPC, QR code, SSCC and other SGTIN-based methods, into a blockchain solution. Thus, an item-level record of product information can be created for goods flowing from one supply chain stakeholder to another. RFID, serialized case codes and other data-capture systems will tie into the blockchain solution, which will serve as a medium for data exchange and a platform for leveraging supply chain-wide information. The blockchain solution will be powered by Hyperledger Fabric.

A2B Tracking Launches Mobile RFID Asset-Tracking App

A2B Tracking has announced that it has added an Android-based app for mobile RFID asset tracking to its asset-management software platform. The RFID Tracker App connects to the platform in the cloud and enables asset management and tracking via RFID technology.

The app enables fast inventory cycle counts with greater accuracy, the company reports. Users can perform floor-to-record inventory counts directly from a handheld device, improving accuracy and accountability. The app can connect to a Zebra RFD8500 reader with a single click and operates on any Android smartphone version 4.4 or greater.



The app's Pro-Locate feature has been upgraded with regard to asset location detection, the firm indicates, enabling it to search for specific assets by interrogating an area with an RFID signal. This proximity locator can visually represent the signal's strength on a mobile display in order to guide a user to a missing asset. As the individual moves throughout an area, Pro-Locate searches for that specific item and indicates if he or she is moving closer or farther away, thus enabling the user to hone in on the exact spot within minutes. Other features include inventory cycle counts, check-out with due-back assignments, check-in, put-away, commissioning, asset search and detailed record editing.

Atos Intros IoT Edge-Computing Server

Atos, a provider of digital transformation technologies, has announced the launch of BullSequana Edge, an edge-computing server designed to manage collected data. The BullSequana Edge can be used securely with the Internet of Things (IoT) in

environments in which fast response times and real-time analysis are crucial, such as manufacturing 4.0, autonomous vehicles, health care, retail and airport security.

The embedded BullSequana Edge server securely manages and processes IoT data, close to the source where it is generated. It analyzes and runs artificial intelligence (AI) applications in real time for instant insights, so that actions and decisions can be made swiftly to optimize operations.



The server is intended to help businesses overcome challenges such as limited bandwidth, intermittent network connectivity, securing data at the edge and network costs. Key benefits, according to the company, include security and privacy, as both data and the physical server are protected by a chain of security measures; immediate responsiveness, thanks to real-time data analysis; and a reduced dependence on cloud and data-center availability and connectivity, ensuring that apps are not disrupted in the event of limited or intermittent network connectivity. The BullSequana Edge can communicate via radio, GSM or Wi-Fi and supports three main use-case categories:

AI: Atos Edge Computer Vision provides extraction and analysis of features (people, faces, emotions, behaviors) so that automatic actions can be carried out. It enables a large set of intelligent cameras—for example, in video surveillance—to

collaborate holistically in real time, enabling operations to be tracked without interruption.

Big data: Atos Edge Data Analytics enables organizations to improve their business models with predictive and prescriptive solutions. It utilizes edge-data lake capabilities to make information trustworthy and useable.

Containers: Atos Edge Data Container (EDC) can run at the edge and serves as a decentralized IT system, ranging from an individual rack to a complete containerized data center. It can run autonomously in non-data center environments as well, with no need for local onsite operation.

Longview IoT Unveils New IoT Protocol, Extends Its Secure IoT Solutions

Longview IoT, a Carnegie Technologies company, has announced the launch of Super-B, a patent-pending protocol designed to bring quality of service (QoS) to LoRa-based IoT networks. Super-B, available as part of the firm's IoT Solution offering, allows organizations to achieve up to 95 percent capacity on their LoRa network, while enabling enterprise organizations to scale their IoT deployments and conduct firmware-over-the-air (FOTA) updates without having to add hardware.

All private LPWAN networks, including LoRa, operate in unlicensed spectra, which can be interference-prone since sensors from IoT networks talk to those networks, and over each other, in order to report their data. This can result in data loss, with companies often programming their sensors to transmit messages multiple times to improve the chances of a successful transmission. This practice further compounds the interference problem, the company explains.

The Super-B protocol is built on top of the LoRaWAN protocol and utilizes the same network infrastructure as LoRa. However,

Super-B extends LoRa's structure to allow for the scheduling of messages into a time slot in which each sensor in a network can transmit data to the gateway. The ability to schedule a specific sensor's transmission time slot without increasing power requirements reduces interference and improves data delivery, the company reports. Because there is less noise from the scheduled transmissions, more sensors can be added to the network, allowing for LoRa networks to scale without the need for adding new gateways.

The protocol extends the bi-directional communications capabilities found in Class B LoRa, creating FOTA capabilities to allow for easy security and maintenance updates. Updates can be broadcast to all sensors, or in a discrete way to just a single sensor, with a specific message. Longview IoT also supports all LoRa 1.0.3-compliant Class A sensors, avoiding vendor lock-in.

Furthermore, the company has announced additions to its IoT Solution offering. These include an updated version of the Longview IoT LoRa gateway with multiple frequencies for coverage worldwide, a new gateway specifically designed for indoor environments and a range of new sensors to support a growing list of enterprise IoT use cases.

A new version of the Longview IoT Gateway offers increased power output and supports the 800 MHz and 900 MHz frequencies to cover additional regions, including Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Southeast Asia, North America and South America. The gateway is a wide-area networking device that creates LoRaWAN connectivity for sensors and other IoT components.

The MicroGateway is an indoor LoRaWAN gateway that can create a high-speed 900 MHz LoRaWAN IoT network. With a small form factor and flexible power and connectivity options, the MicroGateway is designed for use in offices, residential sites, factories or warehouse environments.

A range of new sensors, including two new push-button sensors, a temperature and humidity sensor, a leak sensor, a fill sensor, a motor sensor and an air-quality sensor, allow the firm to support a range of IoT use cases across numerous vertical markets. These range from asset tracking to site and equipment monitoring, as well as safety applications.

Zscaler Releases Report on IoT Traffic and Threats

Zscaler, a provider of cloud security solutions, has announced the release of its 2019 report, "IoT in the Enterprise: An Analysis of Traffic and Threats," which examines traffic stemming from IoT device footprints across the Zscaler cloud during a span of 30 days. Zscaler's ThreatLabZ research team analyzed 56 million IoT device transactions to understand the types of devices in use, the protocols used, the locations of the servers with which they communicated, and the frequency of inbound and outbound communications.

These transactions were processed in the Zscaler cloud from 270 different types of IoT devices made by 153 different manufacturers. The analysis showed that more than 1,000 organizations have at least one IoT device transmitting data from the network to the internet via Zscaler's cloud-based platform. The most commonly detected device categories included IP cameras, smart watches, printers, smart televisions, set-top boxes, IP phones, medical devices and data-collection terminals.

"As is often the case with new innovations, the use of IoT technology has moved more quickly than the mechanisms available to safeguard these devices and their users. Within only one month of traffic, our threat research team saw an astronomical amount of traffic stemming from both corporate and personal IoT devices," said Amit Sinha, Zscaler's executive VP of engineering and cloud operations and chief technology officer, in a prepared statement. "Enterprises need

to take steps to safeguard these devices from malware attacks and other outside threats.”

The top IoT security concerns cited were weak default credentials, plain-text HTTP communication to a server for firmware or package updates, plain-text HTTP authentication and the use of outdated libraries. “We observed that over 90 percent of IoT transactions are occurring over a plain text channel, which we believe makes these devices and the enterprises that house them vulnerable to crafted attacks,” said Deepen Desai, Zscaler’s VP of security research, in the prepared statement.

“Enterprises need to assess their IoT footprint, as they will only continue to expand and raise the risk of cyberattacks,” Desai added in the statement. “From changing default credentials to restricting access to IoT devices from external networks, there are a variety of steps that can be taken to increase the IoT security posture.”

Event Genius Services Four Cashless Events Simultaneously via RFID

The early May bank holiday is typically a busy ticketing and access-control weekend in the United Kingdom. Despite this, Event Genius reports that it recorded its busiest ever cashless weekend this year by servicing four cashless events simultaneously in two countries. By using the Event Genius Pay system, those attending Annie Mac’s Lost & Found Festival in Malta, as well as Forbidden Forest, Pier Jam and Chelmsford Racecourse in the United Kingdom, were able to pre-purchase credits online.

These credits were then loaded onto RFID-enabled wristbands, which visitors received in exchange for their tickets, and which could be used to buy drinks, food and merchandise with a single tap at event bars or vendors. During the bank holiday weekend, the Event Genius team traveled more than 4,500 miles

across the U.K. and Europe to provide events processing in excess of 200,000 transactions via 700 devices, according to the company.

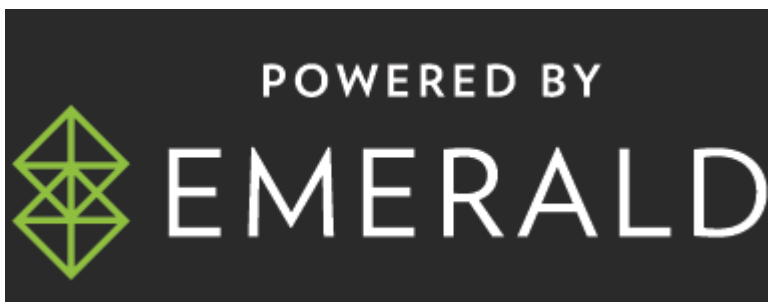
“Everyone at the business has worked their socks off to make the early May bank holiday a success,” said Reshad Hossenally, Event Genius’s founder and managing director, in a prepared statement. “This was a landmark occasion not just for Event Genius, but for the U.K. cashless market in general, and I couldn’t be prouder of the team for making it happen.”



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