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## RFID News Roundup

The following are news announcements made during the week of June 28.

**RFID Will Affect 4 Million U.S. Jobs by 2007**

In a new report, "Users and Vendors are Beginning to Explore

the Utility of RFID Technology in the Supply Chain," the Yankee Group, a Boston-based research and consulting firm, says that during the next three years, manufacturers will spend approximately \$2 billion on Electronic Product Code (EPC) tags and another \$1 billion to \$3 billion on RFID-related infrastructure. The report suggests that the use of fixed RFID readers will affect the jobs of some 4 million people who scan bar codes in the supply chain. In the short term, workers may have to scan RFID tags in addition to bar codes. Over time, workers will shift from mundane identification and routing tasks to providing additional customer service. The Yankee Group says that some jobs will be eliminated by the end of the decade, after RFID becomes well entrenched in the supply chain. "In manufacturing environments, we've already seen RFID, in conjunction with other automating technologies, results in job loss and job transitions," says Adam Zawel, director of the Yankee Group's wireless, mobile enterprise and commerce practice.

### **New UHF Regulations Move Forward in Europe**

The European Telecommunications Standards Institute (ETSI) has moved a step closer toward issuing new regulations covering the use of UHF RFID systems in Europe. Currently, ETSI allows UHF RFID readers to emit only half a watt of effective radiated power (ERP) in a narrow 250 kHz band (from 869.4 MHz to 869.65 MHz). The new regulations would allow UHF RFID readers to emit 2 watts of ERP, which could boost the read range of readers in Europe more than tenfold. The new regulations would also allow readers to operate in a wider 2 MHz band (from 865.6 MHz to 867.6 MHz), which gives users more flexibility to assign readers to slightly different frequencies so they don't interfere with each other. ETSI approved the draft regulations for a vote by members of the

European Union, which will take place between July 5 and Sept. 3. If approved, ETSI would issue the final regulations shortly thereafter. That would enable RFID equipment makers to begin production of tags and readers designed to operate under the new regulations.

### **SIRIT, Intel Team to Develop Reader Technology**

SIRIT Technologies, a Mississauga, Ontario-based provider of RFID reader technology, announced that it has signed an agreement with Intel to collaborate on the development of an RFID reader architecture and components. SIRIT makes reader modules that can be integrated into handheld and fixed RFID readers by original equipment manufacturers. It will work with Intel to design a reader based on standard components, which OEMs could manufacture. In a press release, SIRIT said the agreement includes “certain technology licensing and commercial sales components” but declined to elaborate. Intel is already working with ThingMagic, an engineering startup in Cambridge, Mass., to develop readers based on Intel’s XScale processor. Intel sees readers as a potential market for its processors and is also interested in promoting RFID adoption because the large volumes of data expected to be generated by RFID systems will create demand for Intel’s high-end processors.

### **RFID Center Launched in the United Kingdom**

A new RFID resource center, the RFID Center, has been established in the United Kingdom as a way to showcase RFID technology and applications through simulations of dock doors and other business environments. The core activity of the center will be to provide organized prebooked demonstration tours, but Ed Cowley, the founder of the center, says it will also provide European businesses with impartial advice,

testing and education services to help users with their evaluation and trials of RFID. The center is funded by the U.K. government's Department of Trade and Industry and Intel and Microsoft. Cowley says he expects to recruit 15 commercial sponsors.

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## **Attend RFID Journal University**

There are less than two weeks left until RFID Journal University in Atlanta. This unbiased educational course, presented by *RFID Journal* and members of Auto-ID Labs, is designed to provide the in-depth understanding of RFID and EPC technologies needed to evaluate vendors and begin planning a successful implementation. Register today, or to see complete course outlines, visit RFID U.



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