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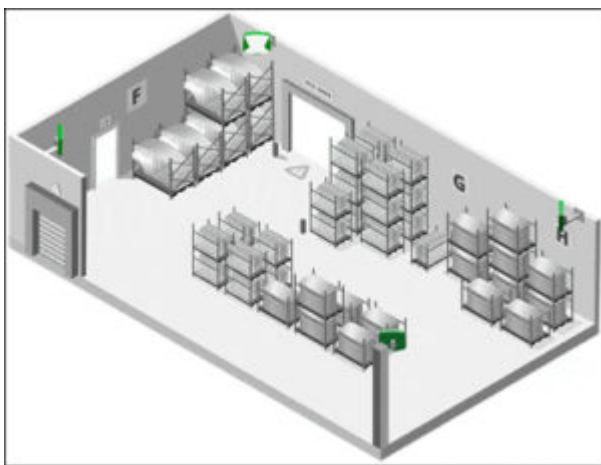
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RFID News Roundup

Presented here are news announcements made during the past week by the following organizations: Sewio, SSE Technologies, Portable Technology Solutions, Sigfox, MachineMetrics, u-box, Thingstream, STMicroelectronics, CoreRFID and Catena.

SEWIO OFFERS FREE IOT SOFTWARE, CONSULTANCY FOR SMART QUARANTINING

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, the health and wellbeing of the workforce is of vital concern to all organizations, and efforts are under way to minimize the virus's spread during the general quarantine, when many factories are closed. With that in mind, real-time location system (RTLS) supplier Sewio has announced a plan to support industry once the economy starts recovering, in order to help companies hit the ground running with increased employee safety.



Quarantining and other enforced measures are designed to save lives, Sewio notes, but once such restrictions are lifted, the pressure to resume manufacturing operations will increase. One danger this brings is the risk of a COVID-19-positive employee introducing the virus into the workplace, thereby increasing the risk of infecting others, endangering lives and placing the factory under quarantine once again. With that in mind, Sewio has announced that it will offer free consulting and software licenses to help businesses take the steps necessary to deploy ultra-wideband (UWB) RTLS employee-tracking technology that can help save lives during pandemics.

Ultra-wideband RTLS solutions enable companies to track personnel on their premises, Sewio reports, in order to help prevent the spread of infection by monitoring anyone who has come into contact with a newly identified infected person. In

addition, the technology can save lives by making sure exposed staff members are tested and receive treatment as quickly as possible. According to Sewio, smarter, faster and selective quarantining can save lives and keep mission-critical operations running.

SSE TECHNOLOGIES LAUNCHES MOBILE APP USING PTS SOFTWARE TO TEST FOR COVID-19

To support the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, SSE Technologies has developed its Golden Test patient-tracking and data-validation application for remote testing facilities. The system uses TracerPlus, a mobile application development software suite created by Portable Technology Solutions (PTS).

Golden Test is a HIPAA-compliant application designed to assist medical professionals with patient data entry, check-in and completion of a screening questionnaire based on CDC guidelines. It allows healthcare providers to scan a driver's license through a car window, thereby minimizing patient-to-caregiver contact and increasing throughput speed.



“My daughter recently spent some time with a friend that tested positive for COVID-19,” said Adam Egert, a partner of SSE Technologies, in a prepared statement. “When she developed a low-grade fever and chills, we decided to visit a drive-up

testing facility that had just opened up that day. What we experienced was not up to hospital standards. While they did their best to limit patient-to-caregiver contact, patient registration was still paper-based, delaying the input process and increasing the chance of exposure. It was pretty obvious that we could improve the process with barcode readers. Golden Test was developed to help those healthcare professionals out there protecting and taking care of us with a safer and more efficient patient registration process and test sample tracking.”

In addition to patient registration, the Golden Test application has the ability to track the COVID-19 testing process from administration and collection to transportation and result, while providing printable test tube labels and scannable barcodes that can be used for patient retrieval and data entry by laboratory information management systems. The app allows healthcare professionals to print QR mobile labels for patients that enable them to scan and retrieve their results, find out what to do in the case of positive or negative results, and obtain other pertinent information from the screening facility.

Golden Test can run on iOS-, Android- and Windows-based mobile phones, as well as on laptops and data-collection terminals. It is scalable to any number of needed devices, the company reports, and is available with limited to no network connectivity. “No one is immune to the effects COVID-19 has on our communities,” said Brad Horn, PTS’s CEO and co-founder, in the prepared statement. “We’re all adapting to this constantly evolving situation and PTS is committed to supporting our customers and partners, especially those directly involved with bringing this unprecedented crisis to an end.”

SIGFOX SUPPORTS COVID-RELATED EFFORTS

Sigfox has issued a call to the Internet of Things (IoT) community to join forces in designing and implementing

solutions that can help address critical challenges related to the coronavirus pandemic. For all initiatives directly linked to fighting the pandemic, Sigfox will waive connectivity costs.

Many companies and individuals have launched initiatives to fight COVID-19 in the United States. In addition to impacting human health, Sigfox explains, this pandemic challenges mankind's way of life and economy, and it threatens to overwhelm the healthcare system and disrupt supply chains. The technology company says it believes the IoT can do a lot to help in terms of monitoring medical supplies, inventory, healthcare workers and more.

Sigfox is reaching out to all members of the IoT ecosystem, including device manufacturers and systems integrators, and is asking that they join forces to design and implement solutions that can help save lives. Until July 31, 2020, and for all initiatives directly linked to fighting the pandemic, Sigfox has decided to wave all connectivity costs in covered zones. Those interested should contact the company at BEATCOVID.US@sigfox.com for more information.

MACHINEMETRICS GRANTS FREE ACCESS TO MANUFACTURERS FIGHTING CORONAVIRUS

MachineMetrics has announced that it is taking efforts to support front-line workers on manufacturing floors and in the medical field. Specifically, the company is offering support to all manufacturers contributing to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We're offering free access to MachineMetrics for any manufacturer involved with the production of ventilator parts, test equipment, protective equipment or any COVID-19 related manufacturing support, as well as to help companies produce new products, increase production volumes and bring therapies faster to market," the company announced in a prepared

statement. "MachineMetrics currently supports a number of the top precision component and medical device manufacturers in the world and is uniquely capable to support this initiative. Our system is plug-and-play, with no onsite setup required; most modern equipment can be connected within minutes."

MachineMetrics's program launch is intended to provide free remote monitoring capabilities to manufacturers. The program features free access to the company's Internet of Things (IoT) platform, including its data-collection and remote monitoring applications, which enable social distancing and remote work for factory workers. By leveraging MachineMetrics' digital apps and enabling more mobile workers, the company explains, businesses will be able to ensure the safety of their workers while continuing to serve customers.

U-BOX ACQUIRES IOT COMPANY THINGSTREAM

Thingstream, a provider of Internet of Things (IoT)-based communication-as-a-service (CaaS) solutions, has announced that it has been acquired by Swiss company u-blox, a provider of positioning and wireless communication technologies. The acquisition enables u-blox to offer its customer base complementary services for fast-growth IoT projects. Thingstream's IoT CaaS offering is designed to remove barriers to IoT adoption by simplifying the process of getting meaningful data from devices to the cloud securely and at scale.

"We are delighted to bring Thingstream under the u-blox business umbrella," said Thomas Seiler, u-blox's CEO, in a prepared statement. "Many of our existing 7,000 global customers will really benefit from this fantastic service given it removes all the barriers to getting data from their devices into the cloud."

"By joining our business with u-blox," added Philipp Bolliger, Thingstream's CEO, in the prepared statement, "we are further

able to accelerate the rollout of our best-in-class, low-cost, low-power and global IoT Communication-as-a-Service solution. This in turn enables customers to fast track their IoT deployments with a predictable cost and reliability.”

STMICROELECTRONICS UNVEALS RUGGED CONTROLLER FOR SMART DEVICES

STMicroelectronics has announced its VIPer222 controller for high-voltage converters up to 8W. According to the company, the controller is small in size and versatile for such applications as home appliances, building-automation devices, smart lighting and smart meters.

With integrated features including an error amplifier, current-sensing MOSFET and high-voltage startup circuitry, the VIPer222 can be used in a variety of converter topologies, the company reports. These include non-isolated flyback converters, isolated flyback converters with primary-side regulation or secondary-side regulation using a photo-coupler, buck converters and buck-boost converters.



The VIPer222 is the first device in ST’s integrated controller family to contain a 730V avalanche-rugged power stage, the company reports. Also provided are short-circuit protection, thermal protection, pulse-skipping protection, soft-start capability and circuitry to manage burst-mode operation for enhanced efficiency at light load.

Additional features are intended to minimize external BoM and simplify converter design. These include an operating voltage (VCC) range of +4.5V to -30V, which allows the device to be powered regardless of the desired output voltage. A startup voltage of 30V DC permits a wide input-voltage range, the company indicates, and eases starting at low supply voltages. The VIPer222 is currently in production.

CORERFID AUTOMATES LIFTING EQUIPMENT INSPECTIONS FOR CATENA

Lifting solutions firm Catena has purchased CoreRFID's CheckedOK modules to record the results of inspections from engineers working remotely and in a specially equipped workshop. Data is entered via tablets and is immediately sent to a secure hosted database, the company explains, and reports and certification are then available to users via a Web browser. The system assists authorized users to meet LOLER and PUWER industry regulations.

CoreRFID supplied several tailored features, including Global Pool of Jobs (which enables engineers to access outstanding work) and Document Retrieval (designed to eliminate the need to call or e-mail for documents), which can now be downloaded onsite. A third feature is the Invoice Indicator, which enables the company's finance team to confirm that chargeable work has been invoiced.

Catena supplies lifting equipment and provides onsite and in-house inspections to ensure compliance with LOLER regulations. It offers proof load testing services tailored to specific industry requirements. CheckedOK is CoreRFID's inspection system for the cranes and lifting industries in the United Kingdom, Ireland and worldwide. Since its launch in 2009, it has gone through a series of improvements to meet regulatory and operational changes facing clients.

"We appreciated the benefits of mobile working solutions for

capturing data electronically for inspectors and engineers onsite,” said Catena’s owner, Matthew O’Mara, in a prepared statement. “However, our first attempt at finding a system which fitted with our own operations proved problematic and we switched back to a manual system. CheckedOK was customized to our exact needs. It’s stripping vast amount of paperwork from our operations and improving the way we work. We believe it will make a big difference to our efficiency, customer service and in turn bottom line.”

“Firms need inspection solutions which adapt to their needs now and as their requirements change,” added CoreRFID’s technical director, Munzi Ali, in the prepared statement. “CheckedOK is designed to grow with the client’s operations.”

LORA ALLIANCE INTRODUCES CERTIFICATION AFFILIATE PROGRAM FOR LORAWAN DEVICES

The LoRa Alliance, a global association of companies backing the open LoRaWAN standard for Internet of Things (IoT) low-power wide-area networks (LPWANs), has announced its Certification Affiliate option for certifying devices with the LoRaWAN standard. The program offers a path for non-LoRa Alliance members to obtain LoRaWAN device certification. It includes full protocol testing, interoperability and RF performance, which is critical for open global standards. The Certification Affiliate program is designed to increase the number and breadth of LoRaWAN Certified devices available in the market to serve the IoT needs of companies and users around the world.

“LoRaWAN Certification is more important than ever to ensure that end-users implement devices that meet all technical and security standards,” said Donna Moore, the CEO and chairwoman of the LoRa Alliance, in a prepared statement. “With this new program, we are offering an additional path to enable rapid certification of products. While we believe membership in the LoRa Alliance remains the best and most affordable path to

certification, this ensures that all companies have access to certification if membership is not an option.” The program allows any device manufacturer to certify its products to meet end-user requirements for dependability, interoperability and security as defined by the LoRaWAN standard.

Under the Affiliate Certification program, companies receive the following benefits: the use of the LoRaWAN Certification Test Tool (LCTT), a precertification test tool allowing device manufacturers to test products at their own facilities prior to sending them to an authorized test house for certification; one license for the LCTT included in the affiliation fee per year, with affiliates having the right to purchase additional licenses; the use of the LoRaWAN Certified logo on certified products in compliance with LoRa Alliance policies; the ability to have certified products included in the LoRaWAN Showcase online catalog of certified products; and LoRa Alliance communications regarding certification.

Historically, companies were required to be a member of the LoRa Alliance to certify their devices, but since certification is key to global adoption, the LoRa Alliance says it is offering this new option. The organization still encourages companies to become members, however.



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