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Spreading the Word About RFID in Latin America

By Mark Roberti

July 12, 2010—When I launched *RFID Journal* on March 1, 2002, I envisioned it as an international resource for companies and other organizations that wanted to take advantage of radio

frequency identification technologies to improve their operations. The reason I never saw *RFID Journal* as a U.S. media company, even though it is based in the United States, was simple: I believed RFID's biggest benefits would come from tracking goods through the global supply chain, so *RFID Journal* had to take a global approach to covering the technology.

We have become a global resource, in part, for that very reason. Companies worldwide are also deploying RFID to improve internal operations and lower costs, and they want to understand how suppliers, customers and competitors in other regions are using the technology. Approximately 55 percent of those who visit our Web site each month come from outside the United States. We run events in Europe and the Middle East, and will soon host our first event in Latin America, in partnership with LOGyCa, a supply chain services firm based in Bogotá, Colombia. RFID Journal LIVE! Latin America (LatAm) will be held in Bogotá from Aug. 31 to Sept. 1, and will be conducted in Spanish.



I am excited about hosting our first event in Latin America, because this region has been behind Asia, Europe and North America in exploring RFID's potential. It is now starting to catch up, and that is reflected in the speakers from the region who are participating at the conference.

Jesús Quintero, the logistics manager for Almacenes Éxito, the largest supermarket chain in Colombia, will discuss how the retailer is working with several key suppliers to track goods

through the supply chain, in order to reduce shrinkage and improve supply chain visibility.

Luis Vicente Ortega, Liverpool's dynamic response manager, will reveal why the Mexican department store chain expanded its RFID-tagging program, which it rolled out in late 2007 after two years of testing. More than 2,300 of the retailer's suppliers have begun shipping their products in tagged plastic totes to its main distribution center. Liverpool reads the tags to confirm incoming shipments, as well as ready them for distribution to retail stores.

Elkin Alonzo Diez, the supplier relationship manager at Familia Sancela, a South American manufacturer of disposable diapers, baby wipes, toilet paper, napkins and other personal hygiene products, will explain why his company is employing RFID at its plants in Colombia to provide 100 percent inventory accuracy as the goods are packed, stored and loaded for shipping. The firm ships out approximately 250 pallets loaded with its products every day. Before deploying the RFID system, the items would often end up missing between the time the pallets were loaded at the processing plant and when they should have arrived at the warehouse. Diez will explain how RFID solved the problem, and how the technology delivered other benefits as well.

And Sonia del Pilar Acuna Duran, the director of information technology and communications at the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia, will describe the RFID project that won this year's RFID Journal Award for Best Use of RFID in a Product or Service. She will explain how Almacafé uses RFID technology to identify each grower associated with specialized and premium coffee products, the benefits it achieves, and the benefits that accrue to growers and retailers.

And other interesting speakers will be at the event as well, from Latin America and the United States. The International Supply Chain Education Alliance (ISCEA) will host post-event

training that will enable LIVE! LatAm attendees to become certified RFID supply chain managers (see RFIDSCM Training and Certification).

If you are based in Latin America, I hope you will join us for this important event. You will hear how companies like yours are benefiting from RFID, and gain ideas for how the technology can improve the way you do business.

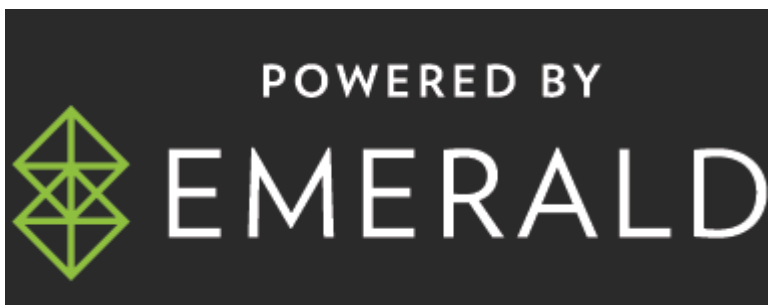
Mark Roberti is the founder and editor of RFID Journal. If you would like to comment on this article, click on the link below. To read more of Mark's opinions, visit the RFID Journal Blog or the Editor's Note archive.



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