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What You Can Learn About RFID From Others

If we have ever met and exchanged business cards, then you know the title on my card is founder and editor of *RFID Journal*, rather than chairmen, president and CEO, titles I also hold at my company. I think of myself, first and foremost, as an editor—and if you were to ask me what I'm

really good at, I would tell you it is being an editor. Part of my job as an editor involves sifting through large volumes of potential information to only share what our readership will really value—and to share it in a factual and objective way. I believe that is of critical importance to businesses that have not achieved the benefits promised by other hyped technologies.

I bring this up because the press release that *RFID Journal* put out today, about our final keynote presenter at RFID Journal LIVE! 2014—our 12th annual conference and exhibition, taking place on Apr. 8-10, in Orlando, Fla.—highlights *RFID Journal's* approach to our conference program and the value it delivers (see Bechtel Added to Keynote Lineup at RFID Journal LIVE! 2014). We will have five keynote presenters this year:



- **Kim Philips**, the head of packaging at Marks & Spencer (M&S), and Richard Jenkins, the company's RFID program head, will share how RFID is helping the leading U.K. retailer to better manage inventory and reduce out-of-stocks (see Marks & Spencer Rolls Out RFID to All Its Stores and Marks & Spencer Leads the Way).
- **Carlo K. Nizam**, Airbus' head of value chain visibility, will discuss how his firm is deploying RFID across the value chain to streamline operations and build airplanes more cost-effectively (see Airbus Leads the Way and Profits in Motion).
- **Kimberly Brayley**, the director of the Veterans Health Administration's RTLS Project Management Office, will explain how the VA is using RFID-based real-time location systems at medical centers and community clinics to better manage

hospital equipment and supplies (see U.S. Veterans Department Announces RFP for Nationwide RTLS Solution and How RFID Is Transforming VA Hospital Operations).

- **Rear Admiral David F. Baucom**, U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM)'s director of strategy, policy and logistics, will outline the U.S. Department of Defense's use of RFID to track shipments and improve supply chain execution (see DOD's RFID Efforts Are Winning the War on Inefficiencies and The Ongoing War Against Inefficiencies).
- **Edward Koch**, Bechtel's automation specialist and software product manager, will detail how the global engineering, construction and project-management company is employing RFID technology to track materials as they move through a complex, localized supply chain, helping it to reduce costs and improve efficiencies in material handling at the construction sites of three mega-sized industrial projects.

You will note that these speakers hail from five different industries: retail, aerospace, health care, defense and construction. This was by design. If you are in one of these five major sectors, then clearly that speaker is going to share a lot of information about his or her company's RFID deployment that you will find valuable. The speakers will outline objectively how RFID is benefiting their companies, and what the technology can and cannot do for yours.

But I believe you will benefit from what the speakers outside your industry have to say as well. The VA might be taking a different approach to its rollout than TRANSCOM, and that approach might be more suitable for your firm. Airbus might view the infrastructure required for total supply chain visibility differently from M&S, but one approach might fit better with your company's needs.

These organizations made a lot of good decisions and had good processes as they deployed RFID, which you can learn from.

What's more, they likely made a misstep here or there that you can avoid by listening to them. They all have lessons learned that they will share.

It's also important to note that each speaker is an end user of RFID technology. This is not to say there is no value in hearing solution providers speak. Often, there is. But listening to end users means you get honest information about what does and does not work. It means your company can have confidence that it can truly benefit from deploying an application similar to one presented in a case study.

This editorial approach—presenting a thoughtful mix of speakers, culling the best case studies and providing objective information—is what our events are all about. And it's also why we call our flagship event RFID Journal LIVE! It's your opportunity to hear directly from the people who spearheaded their RFID deployments and ask them questions. I believe—and I say this with pride, not arrogance—that it's why each year, several attendees come up to me and say, “This is the best conference I've ever been to.”

I hope you will attend LIVE! 2014 this year and find out what the event is all about, and learn how RFID technology can benefit your company.

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, the Editor's Note archive or RFID Connect.



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