RFID JOURNAL

webinars

TODAY'S PRESENTER

Mark Roberti
Founder and Editor, RFID Journal

Mark Roberti is a journalist with 25 years of experience covering business and technology. He launched RFID Journal in March 2002. Today, it's the leading source of news and analysis about RFID and its many business applications. More than 200,000 people around the world visit the RFID Journal Web site each month, and RFID Journal LIVE!, the company's annual conference and exhibition in the United States, has become the largest gathering of RFID vendors and end users in the world.

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RFiD JOURNAL

THE WORLD'S RFID AUTHORITY

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT RFID SOLUTION PROVIDER

Mark Roberti | Founder and Editor | RFID Journal
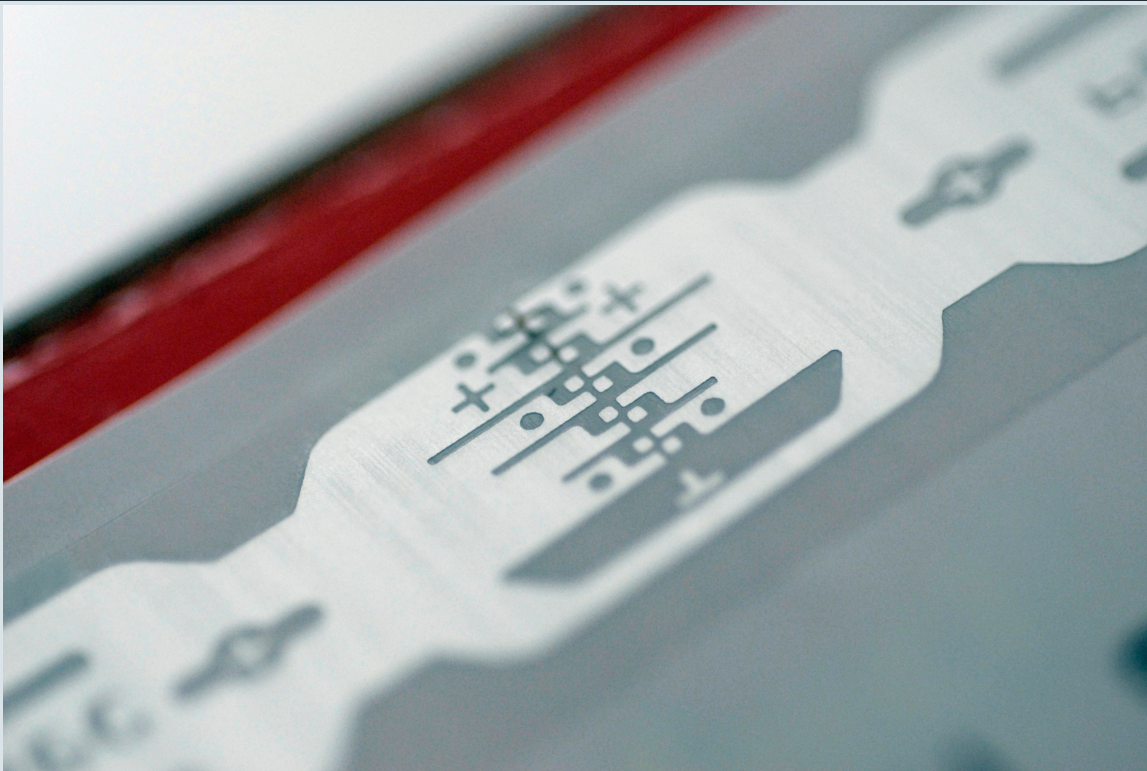
PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- The RFID industry landscape

- The role of systems integrators

- The dangers of hiring just anyone

- The knowledge you need

- Where to get educated

- Should you take it inhouse?

- Questions to ask integrators

- Q&A

THE RFID INDUSTRY LANDSCAPE

- Tag chip providers

- Tag and inlay manufacturers

- Handheld, fixed, and other reader makers

- Middleware and software companies

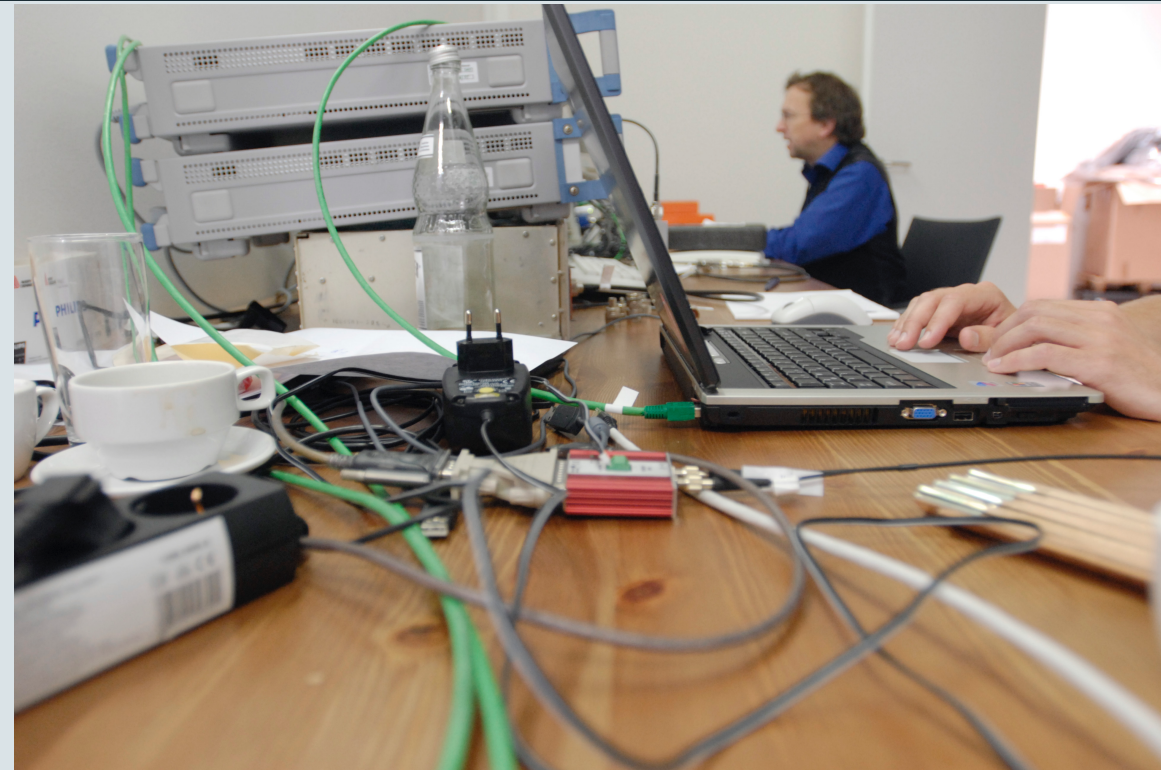- Systems integrators and distributors

THE RFID INDUSTRY LANDSCAPE

- Your key partner can be anyone of these if you are a large company doing a large installation

- Most other companies will need to rely on a systems integrator . . .
  . . . or go it alone

THE ROLE OF SYSTEMS INTEGRATORS

- System integrators play a key role

- Generally help select tags and readers

- May do a business case analysis

- May help with business process reengineering

- Will design and install the RFID system

THE DANGERS OF PICKING JUST ANYONE

- Many bar-code systems integrators say they can install an RFID system

- Many have little or no experience

- This will lead to problems

- RFID is more complex because of the physics involved

A CASE STUDY IN INEPTITUDE

- A CPG company hired an inexperienced integrator
- Created a portal to verify the picking after an order
- Kept reading tags on everything nearby
- Erected this metal structure to prevent stray reads
- Still got a lot of stray reads

A CASE STUDY IN INEPTITUDE

- SI suggested putting doors on the structure

- Having the forklift truck driver drive in, close the doors and then read all the tags

- This defeated the purpose of using RFID, which was to speed up the pick verification process

- Company wasted millions and did not get an ROI

ANOTHER CASE STUDY IN INEPTITUDE

- This is cold storage are of a well-known quick serve chain

- An SI used a drill to punch a whole in the refrigerator wall and install an RFID reader antenna

- Did not consider the effects of damaging to the refrigerator

- The firm did no analysis of antenna orientation

- Could not read the items inside and project failed

RFID **RESCUE** PROJECTS

- A rescue project is when a company hires an integrator and the project goes wrong

- Often the system fails to read tags or reads tags that shouldn't be read

- After spending time and money trying to fix the problems the company hires a new integrator
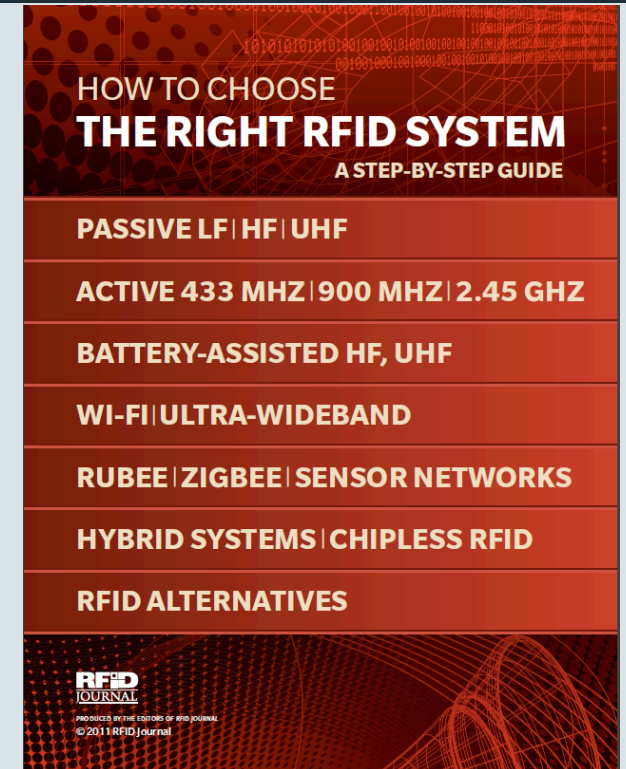
THE KNOWLEDGE YOU NEED

- To properly evaluate systems integrators you need some knowledge of RFID

- Different types of systems, how frequencies behave, standards, and protocols

- The more you know, the more you will be able to ask the right questions and evaluate the answers

WHERE TO GET EDUCATED

- RFID Journal case studies, how-to guides

- Reports:

  - How to Choose the Right RFID Technology
  - RFID Deployment Best Practices

- RFID Journal LIVE!

- RFID Professional Institute Certification Training

HOW TO CHOOSE
THE RIGHT RFID SYSTEM
A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

PASSIVE LF | HF | UHF

ACTIVE 433 MHZ | 900 MHZ | 2.45 GHZ

BATTERY-ASSISTED HF, UHF

WI-FI | ULTRA-WIDEBAND

RUBEE | ZIGBEE | SENSOR NETWORKS

HYBRID SYSTEMS | CHIPLESS RFID

RFID ALTERNATIVES

RFID JOURNAL

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WHY YOU SHOULDN'T TAKE IT INHOUSE

▸ RF issues can be complex

▸ Experience can help resolve issues

▸ The costs will likely be higher

SOME KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK

- These questions are designed to help you evaluate different companies

- There are no right or wrong answers

- There is no perfect partner

- The right partner is the one that works best with you

WILL YOU DO THE BUSINESS CASE ANALYSIS?

- Some integrators are specialists in deploying the readers and helping you select the tags

- Others will help you determine the business benefits of the RFID system

- Some may even help you reengineer your processes

DO YOU DO SITE SURVEYS?

- A good site survey is critical before any RFID deployment proceeds

- The survey will determine possible sources of RF interference and help the integrator find ways to address them

- The integrator will likely charge for this

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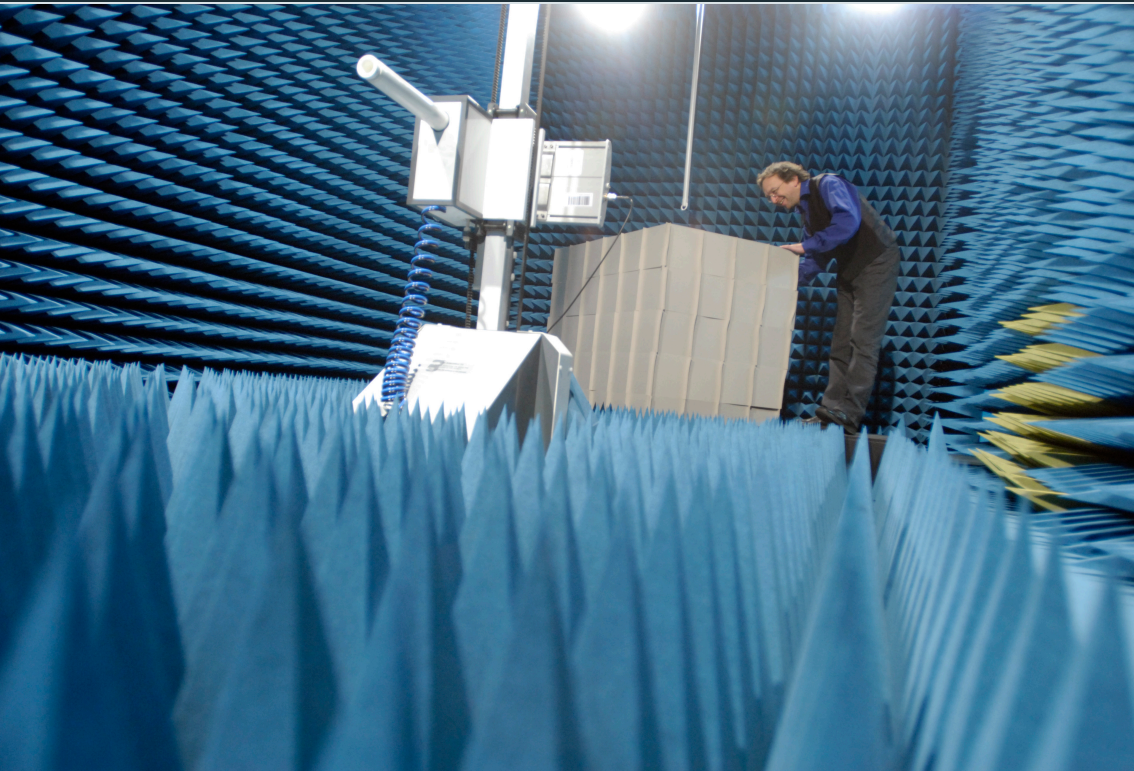# ARE THERE ANY PATENT LAWSUITS PENDING?

- Probably not a huge issue, but worth asking

- There have been some suits involving patent infringement (mainly for tag designs)

- You don't want to use something and wind up getting sued

IS YOUR SOLUTION BASED ON STANDARDS?

- Tags might or might not conform to industry standards

- Software might or might not connect to readers using industry standards

- Data coming out of the reader should not be in a proprietary format

WHAT TEST FACILITIES DO YOU HAVE?

- Testing facilities can help an integrator evaluation tags on your products or assets to quickly find the right tag and right tag placement

- This is not a critical need. You can always set up a test area within your existing facilities
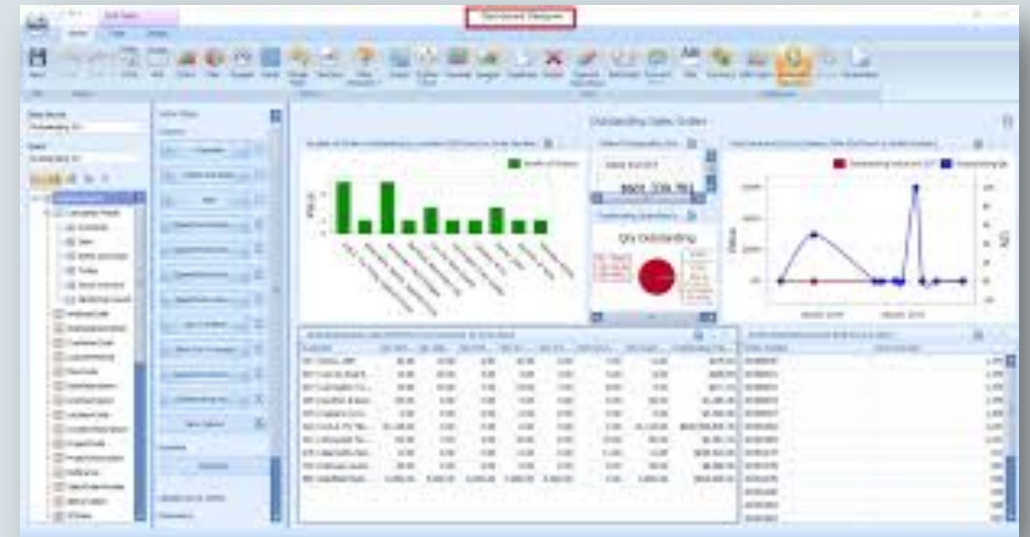
HAVE YOU DONE PROJECTS IN OUR INDSTRY?

- With which company?

- What type of projects?

- What do you know about our processes as a result?

- It's critical that companies bring some sense of how you do business, or you will need to educate them on key aspects of what you do
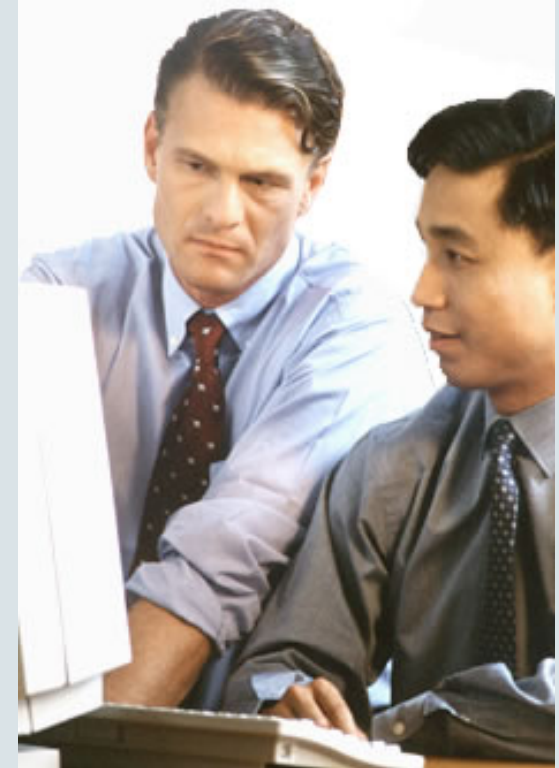
DO WE NEED TO USE YOUR SOFTWARE?

- Some solution providers insist on using their software for all their RFID projects

- This might or might not be a problem, but it's good to know in advance if you are locked into your partner's offering

DO YOU HAVE API'S FOR OUR ERP SYSTEM?

- Companies that have done multiple projects in your industry will likely have APIs for the software used in your industry

- If the firm has no APIs, it could be costly and time consuming to develop them

- What are your options if there are no APIs?

WHAT TYPES OF RFID HAVE YOU DEPLOYED?

- Some companies are strong in active RFID

- Some are strong in passive UHF or HF (NFC)

- You want to hire a company that has deployed RFID solutions that are similar to the one you are likely to deploy
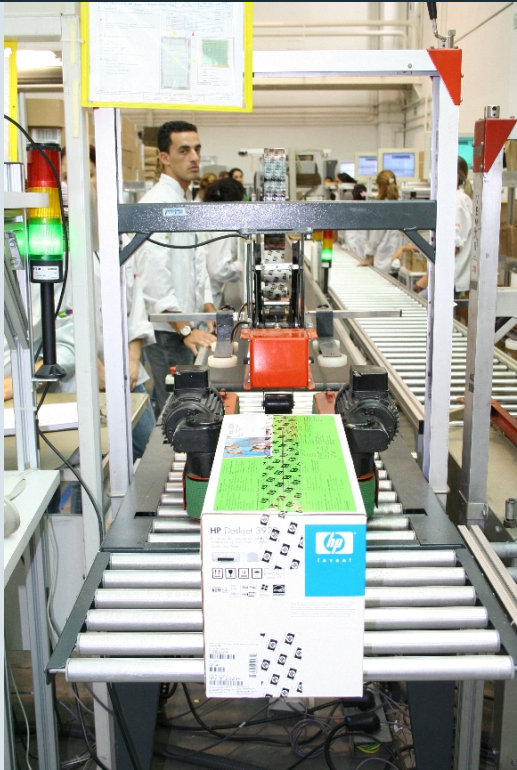
DO YOU USE SPECIFIC COMPANIES' HARDWARE

- Some SIs will use fixed and handheld readers from one company

- They may use tags from a specific vendor

- This is not necessarily a problem

- Ask why and make sure you are comfortable with the answers

HOW CAN WE **EXPAND** THE SYSTEM?

- Will the system deployed be expandable?

- Are there ways to expand the system to achieve additional benefits?

- Do not get locked into a solution that solves one problem but will not work for other assets, tools or materials you may want to track

THE RFP PROCESS

- Develop a detailed assessment and clear definition of your needs

- This should be the basis for your request for proposals

- Ask each SI for recommendations for how each of these needs will be met

RFP SHOULD INCLUDE COSTS AND ROI

- Ideally, the proposal will include:

    - Specific tags and readers to be used and their cost
    - Software to be used and licensing fees
    - Installation costs
    - Setup and testing
    - Benefits and ROI

CREATE A **STATEMENT** OF WORK

- SOW should include all deliverables

- There should be milestones with specific dates

- SI should commit to meeting these milestone

- Internal team should work with and monitor the SI

CHOSING THE **RIGHT** PARTNER IS THE. . .

▶ most important **decision** you will make. **Get it right** and things will likely go well. Get it wrong and you'll **have problems.**

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