NEWS

RFID News Roundup

Omron Developing Smart Antenna

Omron, a Japanese RFID technology company, says it has developed a new type of UHF interrogator antenna that improves read rates and limits unintentional tag reads. Interrogators can't control the signals generated by conventional antennas, so they create large read zones that can generate multipath interference if the signals reflect off objects in the interrogation zone. Omron says interrogators (readers) can control the new antenna electronically and target its interrogation zone to a specific point. This, the company says, thereby limits instances of interference and potentially reduces the number of unintentional reads and the amount of data the interrogator generates. The company reports that it is still verifying and evaluating the validity of the technology for potential applications, and that it hopes to commercialize and implement it into RFID readers by the second half of 2006.

University of Parma RFID Lab Wins UHF Spectrum License

The University of Parma says its new RFID research lab has been awarded a six-month renewable license from the Italian government to use UHF spectrum for its work. The lab was notified last week and awarded a six-month renewable license from the Italian government to give more comprehensive coverage in warehouses and distribution centers. This will help avoid blind spots, the agency predicts. Singapore was the first Asian country to allocate RFID spectrum in November 2004 (see Higher Power Limits and Wider Spectrum for Singapore's RFID). Prior to that, use of the RFID spectrum in Singapore was restricted to just 0.01 watt ERP. With that range and power limit, no meaningful RFID applications could be deployed. The IDA believes its support for RFID adoption in Singapore has spurred RFID use among logistics companies and other firms in the supply chain. Since 2004, the agency

Singapore Expands RFID UHF Spectrum

Singapore's telecom regulator, the Infocomm Development Authority (IDA), is set to increase the spectrum allocated to UHF RFID systems. IDA says it will more than double UHF RFID bandwidth allocation in the 900 MHz band, which is currently set at 923 to 925 MHz and will be expanded to 920 to 925 MHz. There is no announced date for when the new rule will come into effect, but the additional spectrum is expected to clear by mid-2006. According to the agency, the move will help improve the performance of RFID technology in Singapore by enabling fewer errors when reading the RFID tags, as systems will be able to select from more channels to achieve less interference. The additional spectrum will also allow RFID readers to be deployed closer together to give more comprehensive coverage in warehouses and distribution centers. This will help avoid blind spots, the agency predicts. Singapore was the first Asian country to allocate RFID frequency (866.1 to 869 MHz and 924 to 925 MHz) to November 2004 (see Higher Power Limits and Wider Spectrum for Singapore's RFID). Prior to that, use of the RFID spectrum in Singapore was restricted to just 0.01 watt ERP. With that range and power limit, no meaningful RFID applications could be deployed. The IDA believes its support for RFID adoption in Singapore has spurred RFID use among logistics companies and other firms in the supply chain. Since 2004, the agency
reports, it has funded projects that have resulted in RFID being used in supply chains carrying goods worth more than $900 million annually in the nation's manufacturing, logistics and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industries. In 2004, the IDA launched a $10 million (US$6.2 million) RFID initiative, which it says has so far spurred a total of 27 companies to invest more than $30 million (US$16.7 million) in RFID projects, with 380 professionals receiving RFID training. While available spectrum will more than double, power output limits will remain unchanged, at 2 watts ERP.

U.K. Hospital Deploys New Xtag Patient-Tracking System
The Darlington Memorial Hospital in the United Kingdom completed the first deployment of Xtag’s redesigned RFID security system for patient tracking. The new system operates at 686.95 MHz. Its predecessor operated at 433 MHz (see Xtag Unveils Infant Security System). Xtag has added additional intelligence to ensure that readers respond only to alerts that come from tags within their control. The new tag features a strap design that makes the tags tamper-proof. Once the strap is fitted to a tag, a conductive polymer strip in the strap creates a loop that—should the strap be cut to remove a tag—causes the tag to send out an alert. According to the company, the tags send a signal to receivers every 1.4 seconds when activated, and have a continuous-use battery life of a year. Because they can enter a sleep mode when not attached to a patient, they have a useful life of up to three years.

<< Previous Page | 1 | 2

RFID Journal Industry Summits
These four co-located events feature a shared technology exhibit. This is a unique opportunity to learn how RFID can benefit your company. Leading end users will present case studies in four key industries. Vendors will demonstrate new technologies designed to address real business problems in these sectors. And attendees will get to participate in highly interactive, immersive summit meetings with these thought leaders to determine how and where RFID can be used to solve real problems or add real business benefits within their industry.

RFID Journal LIVE! Europe 2006 is a unique RFID event, designed for end users and potential end users of the many types of radio frequency identification technology. Whether you are just beginning to explore RFID potential to improve the way your company does business or are already using RFID in your operations, the in-depth, multifaceted educational content presented by leading end users will help you understand where RFID can—and can’t—help improve the way you do business.