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RFID Network Infrastructure is Essential At Each Facility...

- Dynamic Reader Control
- Useful, Accurate Data
- Stable RFID Networks



December 22, 2008

start:Motorola, Impinj, AIM Global and Others Look Into 2009

By Laurie Sullivan

A recession won't necessarily slow spending in 2009 for projects supported by automatic identification technologies.

While CIOs and directors often think about tightening purse strings in tough economic times, analysts and industry insiders suggest those saddled with cost cutting to keep supply chain and manufacturing processes lean could move more dollars toward bar codes, radio frequency identification, and near field communication projects.

Industry trade group AIM Global continues to see a significant trend toward the convergence of auto-ID to support enterprise and consumer applications, according to Dan Mullen, president at AIM global. "The convergence of bar code, RFID, NFC and other ID technologies onto mobile platforms is being driven by efficiency gains," he said. "For the enterprise, particularly the retail enterprise, real-time delivery of data facilitates operational efficiency."

For the consumer, easy access to information through a mobile device leads to more efficient use of personal time. Mullen said consumers will take advantage of the use of personal scanners built into phones to gain more information about products, authenticity, compatibility with other products, and ingredients, especially in the case of pharmaceuticals and food products.

Bar codes, RFID and NFC technologies made strides in 2008. In March, the state of [Washington passed](#) a version of House Bill #1031 on March 4 focused on banning unlawful behavior, rather than restricting the technology. The original bill in February would have required store warnings, incremental security precautions and, in many cases, judged RFID technology as invading consumer privacy.

By September, [Sam's Club added](#) pallet tagging at six new distribution centers and case-level tagging at its De Soto, Texas, though the overall intent by suppliers whether or not to comply seemed mixed at the time.

At the time, the largest issue vendors, system integrators and customers had was weak [software](#) features associated with Gen 2 and many BAP applications. Earlier this year Microsoft said it would provide a mobile application for its BizTalk [Server](#) product with a goal of enabling devices to transmit data to back-end systems. Earlier this month it delivered on its promise to move the app out of trials and [deliver it to customers](#).

[Google launched the G1](#) phone challenging Apple's iPhone and created a developers network. Through that network, a company called Big in Japan introduced Shop Savvy. When a consumer downloads the application and takes a picture of any UPC bar code with the phone, the application brings up a [search](#) page with local listings related to the product.

Motorola, Impinj, AIM Global, ABI Research and other experts shed insight on the future of bar codes, mobile, RFID and NFC technologies in 2009.



Chris Diorio, chairman and cofounder, Impinj, Seattle, Wash.

"Innovations in, and deployments of, UHF Gen2 in consumer-facing retail applications will become the most significant trend in 2009. Retailers like Metro, American Apparel, Walgreens, and NP Collections have already announced real cost savings from improved loss prevention and inventory accuracy, while simultaneously many other retailers are quietly developing and piloting their own UHF Gen2 retail solutions.

On the standards front, while EPCglobal has for several years been leading the charge on standardizing solutions for consumer privacy, authentication, and RFID-based EAS, 2009 will see real breakthroughs as [ISO](#) and the European Commission lend support. Finally, silicon Gen2 reader chips will enable the low-cost mobile and point-of-sale readers that retail applications require, while ever-increasing [tag](#) volumes will drive deployment costs down. This confluence of proven ROI, standardization, and reduced deployment costs will not only ensconce UHF Gen2 RFID as the technology-of-choice for retail applications, but will result in many exciting deployments in 2009." -- Chris Diorio, chairman and cofounder, [Impinj](#), Seattle, Wash.



Chris Schaefer, director of RFID product marketing at Motorola.

"The most significant trend will be convergence in retail, specifically convergence of in-store retail RFID with traditional barcode data capture, convergence at point of sales, with RFID feeding directly into POS systems, and convergence in the in-store handheld product, which will support both barcode and RFID." -- Chris Schaefer, director of RFID product marketing at [Motorola](#).

Michael Liard, research director, RFID & contactless, ABI Research.

ABI analysts don't typically follow bar codes, but interesting developments in two-dimensional bar codes and applications developed for Google's G1 phone will have ABI analysts keeping an eye on developments in 2009. "I am interested in seeing the continued proliferation of 2D bar codes, particularly for mobile marketing, advertisement, and coupons.

My colleague Jon Collins shares that handsets equipped with near field communication technology will come to market in 2009,

alongside the SIM cards (UICC) to support them. He also expects the last wave of pilots with final handset [architecture](#) and the transition to small scale deployments at the end of 2009, through mid 2010, localized around existing infrastructure.

The most significant developments in RFID will surface around holistic partner fusion and delivering effective messaging to end-user communities. Benefits and value propositions of RFID will come through more webinars, white papers, press releases, and examples of real-world deployments. These are critical to drive market adoption and elevate awareness of RFID solutions. RFID is here and now, but it can no longer be treated as a silo." -- **Michael Liard**, research director, RFID & contactless, [ABI Research](#)



Peter Allison, president, Ambient ID.

"RFID technology is playing a much bigger role in streamlining the very high volume and human-critical business processes of the healthcare industry. For example, as the global population ages, the volume of human specimen tests sent to diagnostic laboratories is growing steadily. RFID systems can now streamline lab processes, generating more accurate results with faster turnaround. In 2009, diagnostic labs will, for the first time, have the opportunity to adopt an RFID-based system that significantly enhances the security and efficiency of the specimen tracking processes, enabling physicians to diagnose problems and treat patients much more quickly."-- Peter Allison, president, [Ambient ID](#)

Leslie K. Downey, principal at [RFID Revolution](#), a RFID education and market strategies firm in Silver Spring, Md.

"With the urgent need to reduce greenhouse gases and the likelihood of U.S. cap and trade legislation, industry will search for all feasible means to curb emissions. RFID adoption will accelerate as the technology cuts fuel and power consumption by optimizing transportation and production." -- Leslie K. Downey, principal at [RFID Revolution](#).

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