



Future Networks, Future Power

DHL and Radio Frequency Identification

DHL has always been at the forefront of technology - DHL delivered the world's first Arabic computer and the first commercially available Web and WAP shipment tracking capability. One of the latest technologies promising to provide our customers with a competitive advantage is Radio Frequency Identification (RFID).

What is RFID and how will it help you?

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) is a silicon chip-based transponder that communicates via radio waves. RFID has been commercially available for many years, but the latest RFID developments now offer the compatibility with an express logistics and transport system to enable the following potential improvements to service:

- Increased security of your package and items within your shipment
- Visibility of items within your shipment without opening the package (note: source tagging of items required)
- Later cut-offs due to automated and simultaneous identification
- “Near” real time track and trace, which is dynamic, automated and proactive, through links to GPS (global positioning system) and communications systems
- Condition monitoring (eg, temperature, vibration, humidity) through links to micro sensors
- Counterfeit protection through validation of genuine goods throughout the logistics process - Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
- Dynamic multi-modal merge in transit



DHL has been exploring RFID with multiple component trials since 1998. We are backing international standards that will provide a truly 'open' system for express logistics and transport, and this has been demonstrated to have a close match with our customer's processes.

Saluting the CHIEFS

The CHIEFS project formed part of the UK Home Office's Chipping of Goods Initiative and was initiated in 2001. Nokia and DHL delivered a successful pilot in May 2002, proving the potential of an RFID tag system coupled with GPS. It moved DHL closer to providing a complete view of the end-to-end piece process in the supply chain and proof of ownership. However, cost and form factors limited wider deployment.

Meanwhile, DHL has been sponsoring its own successful RFID development, including an aircraft container RFID system linked to GPS. This forward-looking work coupled with the initial CHIEFS success has created CHIEFS 2.

As a result, March 2003 sees DHL demonstrating a system with truly global potential for the future advantage of all our customers. RFID devices will be incorporated into individual Nokia phones, not only allowing control of phones throughout the distribution process, but also reducing crime since phones will have a unique identification number for tracking. All Nokia shipments will be entrusted to DHL from shipment processing through to delivery. This will offer innovative solutions to our customers in the very near future.



Other key benefits of CHIEFS 2 are:

- Low cost passive tags complying with ISO standards
- Wafer-thin tags that can be incorporated within labels or customer products
- Simultaneous printing and encoding of tag labels at DHL and our customer
- Automated instantaneous confirmation of receipt, departure, arrival and final delivery

Latest Test News

CHIEFS 2 is being tested during March and April and you will see the results here under 'Latest Test News' as soon as we receive them.

If you wish to know more about RFID, please email us at globalrfid@dhl.com.