



GEMKO Information Group, Inc.
Information Systems Specialists



- ERP
- CRM
- Supply Chain
- e-business



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Fast, affordable RFID solutions for small and medium business



IBM Express RFID Services— slap and ship managed services



Highlights

- *Enables a proactive response to current RFID tagging mandates*
- *Facilitates migration to more full-function RFID solutions*
- *Helps simplify deployment and daily operation with a managed solution*
- *Helps integrate RFID into your business for the greatest gain*
- *Provides the capability to generate advanced shipping notices to strengthen trading partner awareness*
- *Leverages leading resources within IBM and across the industry*

Pushing RFID into the supply chain

Radio frequency identification, or RFID, is revolutionizing the supply chain. Backed by the U.S. Department of Defense and retail giants like Wal-Mart and Target, the microchip technology designed to track objects via radio waves is gaining momentum and steadily emerging as the key to supply chain efficiency. The decision of these organizations to require RFID tagging on all case and pallet loads as a condition of doing business is just the starting point. In the future, RFID will enable manufacturers, distributors and retailers to identify the exact location of their goods at any point in time. And better product visibility will enable the entire supply chain to be more focused on the end customer, producing and shipping goods based on demand and replenishing store shelves with products customers want to buy.

Until now, RFID adoption has been limited to companies who could afford it organizationally as well as financially. With most companies' in-house resources already strained, the complexity of RFID technology has been an issue. Cost has also been a concern, inhibiting RFID adoption for many businesses. The cost to develop needed skill sets and incorporate the requisite scanning and printing devices into a company's existing infrastructure can make the technology especially prohibitive for the midmarket. Many of these businesses are unprepared or unable to incur such a major expense, even with the RFID compliance deadlines looming.

Easing the decision for small and medium business

Finding a fast, affordable way to comply with the RFID tagging mandates is critical for midmarket suppliers. With fewer trading partners, you are at greater risk than your larger counterparts. Your financial stability depends on the ability to retain existing relationships by willingly meeting partners' RFID compliance deadlines as they arise.

IBM Express RFID Services –slap and ship managed services is designed to lift the technical and cost burden of RFID for small and medium business. Aimed at helping you respond proactively to the RFID compliance deadlines, it does away with the need for extensive planning and in-house training and provides you with a low-cost, managed solution for RFID. The solution is highly standardized and modular, so you can implement just the tagging capabilities you need and avoid the additional hardware and consulting services that drive up costs. Because the solution is implemented by IBM or an approved IBM Business Partner and managed remotely by IBM, you needn't be concerned about training or staffing. Only a nominal resource commitment is required internally.

Part of the IBM Express Portfolio™, IBM Express RFID Services are designed, developed and priced specifically to meet the needs of small and medium businesses like yours. In short, they help simplify RFID for the midmarket. The slap and ship managed services offering provides:

- *Rapid implementation of a low-cost, low-risk managed RFID tagging solution*
- *Financing options to lower your up-front investment*
- *Standardized services to facilitate deployment and fit with midmarket business needs*
- *Low technical skill requirement for in-house personnel*
- *Fully upgradeable platform, without requiring an application change*
- *More rapid return on investment due to speed of deployment and exceptionally low startup and steady-state costs*
- *Better collaboration with trading partners by helping them benefit from warehouse and transportation efficiencies*

Helping you get the job done

IBM Express RFID Services – slap and ship managed services is designed to leverage your existing barcodes, converting them to RFID tags capable of communicating product information when they approach an RFID reader.

Your operators can scan the barcodes using a handheld reader, manually key them into an Intel®-based PC at your facility or select them from a preloaded file. The IBM RFID Operations Center (ROC) generates the corresponding EPCglobal RFID tags, and an RFID printer installed at your location prints the tags. Both the barcode reader and RFID printer are included in the IBM solution.

A firewall-protected virtual private network (VPN) enables IBM to manage your operation remotely. The VPN connects the RFID devices located on your premises to a server at the IBM ROC. IBM WebSphere® RFID Premises Server middleware, installed on the host server, and the IBM RFID workflow application collect, analyze and manage the real-time data uploaded from the RFID devices.

The IBM ROC and Help Desk monitor the performance and availability of your devices. The service includes problem detection and resolution as well as alert notification should technicians at the ROC discover a serious malfunction or outage. If a problem requires onsite handling, local maintenance services will be dispatched.

Help Desk support is available 12 hours a day, 5 days a week and is part of the standard service. Your designated focal point can contact the IBM Help Desk for assistance with setup and operation of the RFID system. This service enables you to assist operators at your site, answering inquiries on equipment use and resolving any operational problems that arise.

Keeping trading partners informed

Advanced shipping notices (ASNs), identifying shipment quantities and expected arrival times, can be generated from the RFID tag data and sent to your trading partners electronically via e-mail, electronic data interchange (EDI) or formatted report. You can notify partners of incoming shipments and avoid the vast majority of order-related status calls. Since ASN data is automatically captured during the scanning process, your operators do not need to re-key this information manually to create an ASN, reducing the number of errors. Fewer human errors means fewer product returns, claims and charge-backs. What's more, keeping trading partners informed can help build loyalty and strengthen your relationships.

Expanding your RFID capability

RFID technology is evolving quickly, and so is your business. The last thing you want is to be locked in to a long-term solution. With its one-year contract and use of standard IBM software products, the IBM managed ship and ship offering helps you avoid the technology risk. Plus it gives you the flexibility to migrate to a more full-function RFID solution as your business needs expand, without requiring a change to your software environment. And IBM offers a comprehensive RFID service portfolio to facilitate your transition. Our midmarket consulting services can help you design, build and implement a customized roadmap based on your company's RFID strategy.

We can help you deploy your RFID solution incrementally, gradually reengineering your business processes to support RFID in order to lower the risk of business disruption and keep your costs manageable. Our pilot projects and product testing services help you select the right RFID devices and validate your business plan and technical requirements before extending your solution to a wider production environment. As you look beyond simple compliance, IBM services like these—and our scalable, standards-based technology platform—help to protect your RFID investment.

Boosting your RFID return

Integrating your RFID solution with existing business systems can help you derive the greatest benefit from RFID. It can help you transform the way you and your trading partners forecast demand, manage inventory and stock store shelves. Integrating RFID with legacy sales systems can help you improve customer satisfaction by providing real-time order status. Integrating it into warehouse systems can help you track lost shipments and prevent out-of-stock situations.

IBM can help you integrate RFID technology seamlessly into your manufacturing operation for improved logistics, shipping, receiving and procurement operations, as well as tighter inventory controls. Our middleware solutions are designed to facilitate the integration process, providing you with the kind of intelligence that is key to leveraging RFID data. The insight you can gain into your production line and the entire supply chain can lead to substantial cost savings and operational efficiencies.

Putting the resources of IBM to work for you

In the last decade, IBM has built strong credibility in RFID, with clients spanning both the public and private sector. With 1,000 dedicated RFID professionals covering R&D, consulting, software and hardware, we've accumulated the multifunctional

expertise necessary to help guide today's most complex RFID implementations. Our RFID Testing & Solution Centers, located worldwide, enable clients to test their RFID solutions in real production environments, helping them to reap the benefits of the technology quickly and with low risk.

Strategic alliances with leading RFID hardware and software vendors ensure that IBM's solutions leverage the industry's best tags and readers, middleware and enterprise supply chain management applications. These collaborative efforts enable us to help you develop a cost-effective blueprint for implementing RFID, linking it to your supply chain initiatives and building an enterprise that is truly demand-driven, where workflow is adjusted and inventory is replenished based on real-time events. Whether your RFID objective is as basic as streamlined warehouse management or as expansive as real-time visibility across the supply chain, IBM can help you achieve it.

For more information

To learn more about IBM solutions for RFID, visit:

ibm.com/solutions/rfid

To learn more about IBM Express Portfolio offerings, visit:

ibm.com/businesscenter/expressportfolio



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