



PRESS RELEASE

Austrian RFID/EPCglobal Test CENTER opens in Graz

Practical support for trade and industry on the way to RFID-assisted processes

(Graz, 23 May 2007) – Within the next five years, RFID technology will have a skyrocketing influence on sectors such as the automotive industry, logistics and retail and wholesale trade. RFID will permanently take hold of the processes in these sectors. With a view to this development, the Graz, Austria-based technology company RF-iT Solutions GmbH and the international standardisation organisation GS1 Austria are jointly establishing the Austrian RFID/EPCglobal Test CENTER. The facility will provide Austrian businesses with the opportunity of becoming acquainted, in a neutral setting, with the advantages and benefits of RFID technology and to experience how global standards are being implemented throughout the logistics chain. The cooperation agreement was signed on 7 May 2007.

Neutral consulting platform for RFID

In addition to consulting and training, the RFID/EPCglobal Test CENTER offers feasibility studies and analyses as well as interoperability and performance testing. The test center, which is neutral and manufacturer-independent, supports companies in the implementation of pilot projects as well as in rollouts of real-time projects. In addition, the Graz test center is to serve as a base for individual participants in the supply chain, enabling them to realise future RFID-driven projects in a coordinated, efficient manner with the assistance of the standards provided by EPCglobal. "The aim is to offer, for the first time in Austria, vendor-neutral technology consulting services to interested parties from the trade and industrial sectors and to provide customers with the best support possible for introducing RFID-assisted processes and for taking advantage of the EPC Network," Manfred Piller, division head for GS1 standards at GS1 Austria, explained. The choice of the company headquarters of RF-iT Solutions in Graz as the site for the RFID/EPCglobal RFID Solution Excellence Center".

In order to ensure that business processes which have been optimised on the drawing board also work when applied in practice, potential customers will from now on be tied more closely into an international network and receive comprehensive support in the way of practical expertise. On the one hand, users

will be able to contribute to the development of standards based on EPCglobal guidelines. In addition, the test center offers numerous possibilities which will greatly simplify the project evaluation phase and facilitate implementation through the optimisation of internal and external processes.

Focus on customer orientation

Consulting and training involves for the most part: defining any required actions, such as investments or the modification of processes to allow the introduction of RFID/EPC; initial product analyses focusing on the design of external packaging and pallets to ensure compatibility with RFID/EPC; and overall analyses of required interfaces. "The test center is geared especially toward customers for whom the use of RFID technology represents a competitive advantage and who grasp RFID as a prerequisite for future supply chain development. Those who study the market and wish to stay ahead in the future realise that there is no alternative to RFID," Dominik Berger, managing director of RF-iT Solutions, stated confidently.

EU cooperation guarantees international-level success

"When it comes to the development and introduction of RFID in the various industrial sectors on an international level, global standards are the key to success. Cooperation with the EU is therefore vitally important for GS1 and EPCglobal, so that together we can inform the public at large about the advantages this technology has to offer," said Alexander Peterlik, project head for RFID/EPC at GS1 Austria, commenting on developments. "It is important for people in general to understand that their interests count. All of the standards we have developed are subject to data privacy laws and thus in fact protect privacy. At the same time this implies that no personal data will be stored by transponders."

Customers appreciate expertise and experience

STECO LOGISTIC GmbH, an Austrian logistics service provider with a Europe-wide network, is the first partner from the industrial sector to put their stake in the professional services provided by the test center. "For further developing solutions involving RFID, we rely on specialists who work with the technology on a daily basis and are therefore able to contribute the necessary experience. Our partners provide us both with the know-how and with the equipment. This enables us to work together on solutions aimed specifically at meeting our requirements," Patrick Klinger of the project and process management department at STECO LOGISTIC pointed out.

The staff at the test center is able to reliably and efficiently answer issues raised by STECO, including questions such as: "What kind of transponder is best suited to the new foldable meat box so as to achieve the best possible performance?"; or "What is the optimum position for transponders on multi-

way transport packaging when physical influences and contents are considered?" We are planning to award a contract for research to be carried out at the new test center. The aim will be to resolve the issues that are still open, including the ideal sort of transponder, the effects of various types of contents, and handling under special ambient conditions," Klinger added on a closing note.



from left: A. Peterlik und M. Piller (GS1 Austria), A. Gauby and D. Berger (RF-iT Solutions), P. Klinger (Steco Logistics)

Credit: Foto Fischer, Graz

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