

■ Remarks for Special Issue on RFID

I'd like to express my thanks for your loyal patronage.

This year is the third year of the Japanese government's u-Japan Concept; a project aimed at creating a flourishing society based on ubiquitous information network technologies. And RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology is gaining attention as an indispensable, key component in developing a society in which anyone can connect anytime and anywhere to diverse things.

For businesses, the application of RFID is shifting from the initial phase of experimentation to the next phase of actual installation and implementation as an infrastructure shared across corporate boundaries. As its applications expand into automating the supply chains of entire industries, the call to add new value to RFID is becoming ever more stronger. RFID is fast becoming one of the most important tools for enhancing the corporate value of any enterprise and for building a safer, more secure society.

At NEC, we recognized the potential of RFID early on. We therefore revamped our research center and launched the RFID Verification Center in 2002, and have been involved in all stages from basic research to demonstrative experimentation. To further promote practical implementation, we also established the RFID Business Solution Center in 2004.

We were the first Japanese PC manufacturer applied RFID in our PC production facility, as an example of the successful application of RFID into an enterprise. We use RFID in production management system, and abolished paper-based production instruction and bar-code scan. As a result, we improved operation and product quality as well as over 10% improvement of productivity. As the second step, we use "Electronic Kanban" system which is applied RFID for parts procurement system between supplier and NEC. We have succeeded in dramatically reducing the lead time. We now provide products and solutions based on the expertise we've obtained through such in-house applications in order to apply RFID into our customers' environments.

Constructing an RFID system is not just a matter of combining the necessary components. We consider it is important that sharing wireless and recognition technologies, and knowledge of RFID system implementation. Therefore we published a book entitled "*Zukai Nyumon - Yoku Wakaru Saishin Musen IC Tagu No Kihon To Shikumi* (Diagrams for Beginners: The Basics of How the Latest Wireless IC Tags Work)" from Shuwa System Co., Ltd. in August 2005. It is our hope that this book contributes to the society spreading of the knowledge of RFID.

Our device, wireless and software technologies are contributing to the standardization of RFID, namely through our participation in the Low Power Radio System Committee of the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), as well as cooperation with the Hibiki Project, participation in EPCglobal as the first Japanese system integrator, and our membership in the Ubiquitous ID Center.

As for our relationship with EPCglobal, we were the first Japanese firm to join EPCglobal as a solution partner in May 2004, commencing sales of Japan's first EPCglobal-compliant middleware "RFID Manager." In October 2005, we also joined EPCglobal as an end user member, clearing the way for us to apply the EPCglobal network system to our business by using the EPC (Electronic Product Code) as defined by EPCglobal. The capability of providing more advanced systems based on the EPCglobal network will allow us to expand our RFID business throughout the global market.

It is my sincere hope that this RFID special issue can provide you with helpful information to assist in your business activities. We look forward making a difference in your business and welcome any comments, opinions or inquiries regarding this issue or our services. Thank you.



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