



FDA's RFID Support Critical to Secure Pharmaceutical Supply Chain *Technology Vendors Must Provide Solutions Tailored to Address Government Initiatives and Industry Pain Points*

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) recommendations, coupled with retailer mandates and other government initiatives, supporting the use of radio frequency identification (RFID) technology have the potential to profoundly benefit the pharmaceutical ecosystem and homeland security more generally. In the wake of these recommendations, drug manufacturers are beginning to embrace RFID for its ability to secure the supply chain and prevent drug counterfeiting, contamination and diversion.

While pharmaceutical companies recognize the promise of RFID and have made great strides to meet specific industry and government requirements, widespread success will depend both on continued FDA support and technology vendors' ability to offer specialized pharmaceutical and government RFID implementation and integration expertise and tailored industry-specific solutions. Gaps in the pharmaceutical distribution system and the increase of consumers purchasing expensive drugs over the Internet and abroad has boosted counterfeiters' "business." With terrorism on the rise, the possibility of contamination of the U.S. drug supply weighs heavily in the minds of policy makers and corporate executives alike. RFID tagging has recently emerged as the best solution to combat and thwart these illegal activities for its ability to automatically track and trace drug shipments.

To ensure successful deployments, it is critical that pharmaceutical companies have the ability to integrate RFID into existing enterprise systems and business processes. The technology solutions employed must support these systems and processes or RFID will fail to have a lasting or measurable positive impact on the pharmaceutical supply chain. RFID technology vendors must demonstrate experience not only with the business processes specific to the pharmaceutical industry but also a depth of knowledge in complying with all government rules, recommendations and regulations.

The pharmaceutical industry is on the fast track to RFID. The promise of the elimination of diversion, counterfeiting and contamination, along with reduced medication errors and improved patient care, is too appealing and necessary to ignore. Both regulators and manufacturers must be prepared and ready for this migration to RFID with a proven program and experienced technology partner capable of helping them meet their supply chain optimization goals.

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