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Putting RFID to Work

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Who Can I Turn to For Help?

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You're Not Alone

- Experienced Partners Can Help
 - Systems Integrators
 - Consultants
- Topics for discussion
 - Why use an integrator
 - Questions to ask
 - How to choose

Presentation Overview

- Why turning to consultants or integrators can be helpful
- The services and value that good consultants or integrators offer
- Criteria to use in choosing a partner
- Who the leading consultants and integrators are and what they offer

Why turn to outside help?

- Companies generally turn to consultants for:
 - Help developing the business case
 - Insights into possible RFID strategies
- Companies turn to systems integrators for
 - RFID installation expertise
 - Project management
 - Integrating RFID data with backend systems

What a Good Partner Provides

- It knows the technology *and* how to deploy it
 - A technology vendor tells you how it should work, while a partner tells you how it will work in your environment
 - Experienced integrators and consultants have learned from other's mistakes
 - They work under a framework of best practices

What a Good Partner Provides

- An integrator or consultant guides the project
- It can act as “one throat to choke”
 - It acts as conduit between you and other vendors (hardware, middleware, application software providers)
 - Hardware and software vendors will work through integrator on many issues

Questions to Ask a Consultant

- Can you provide a business case analysis?
- Can you forecast an ROI?
- Have you consulted on RFID before?
- Have you worked with companies in my industry?
- How much do you understand about my particular business?

Questions to Ask a System Integrator

- How many RFID projects have your RFID team members worked on?
- Have they worked on projects for companies of our size?
- Have they worked on projects in my industry?
- How are they trained?
 - Have they completed certification training?
 - CompTIA is offering RFID+ training certifications

Questions to Ask a System Integrator

- Do you provide testing services?
 - Facility testing / lab testing / hard-to-tag items
- Do you have an area of concentration?
 - Certified by ERP, such as SAP, as integrator?
- Do you have experience in auto-ID?
 - A strong base in workflow design and RFID-barcode integration makes for a strong RFID integration partner

Questions to Ask a Systems Integrator

- What hardware have you installed?
- What software?
- What kind of integration have you done?
 - Warehouse Management System
 - Enterprise Resource Platform
 - Transportation Management System

Questions to Ask a Systems Integrator

- How will you help me benefit from RFID?
- Have you overseen business process change?
- How much change will we need and what kind of disruption can we expect?

Where to Find a Consultant or Integrator

- You'll need to do some digging
 - Read *RFID Journal* and the industry press
 - Ask your supply chain partners for recommendations
 - Ask your business partners who have deployed RFID already

How to Pick a Consultant or Integrator

- Identify Your Basic Needs
 - Just want to comply with mandate?
 - A compliance package MIGHT work
 - If you want to do more and are seeking internal benefits, partnering can really help
- Find Your Match
 - What are your unique needs?
 - Do you want to integrate with a homegrown system?
 - Meet with different providers to test waters

How to Pick a Consultant or Integrator

- Some specialize in verticals
 - Pharma, automotive, retail require vertical expertise
- Others develop customized solutions
- Once you identify candidates, ask their references:
 - Did the integration deployment stay on schedule?
 - Did the partner fulfill its promises?
 - Has it continued to work with and grow the system?
 - Who led the deployment? Is he or she still with the firm?

Who Are the Leading Providers?

- RFID-focused Systems Integrators
 - Acsis, BEA Systems, Franwell, GlobeRanger, OATSystems, ODIN Technology, Venture Research, Xterprise
- Business consultants
 - Accenture, ADT/Tyco, Bearing Point, IBM, Kurt Salmon, Unisys, VeriSign
- Enterprise and applications software players with integration service
 - Manhattan Associates, Oracle, RedPrairie, SAP, Sun

How Leading Providers Differ

- RFID-focused integrators have deepest well of hands-on RFID experience
 - Many also offer their own middleware and/or have a network of software and hardware partners
- Business consultants focus on high-level, business process change
 - Best for multi-facet, global deployments
- Enterprise, application software providers focus on integration with warehouse, enterprise software

Questions?

- Helpful resources
 - *RFID Journal* articles, message boards
 - Buyer's Guide available
- Get involved
 - EPCglobal industry working groups
 - AIM, other associations

Thanks for your attention.

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