

Comparing RFID Frequencies for Item-Level Pharmaceutical Applications

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[Philips](#), TAGSYS and [Texas Instruments](#) today announced the release of a joint white paper, "Item Level Visibility in the Pharmaceutical Supply Chain: A Comparison of HF and UHF [RFID](#) Technologies." As established providers of radio frequency identification (RFID) technologies, the companies combined their expertise to detail the technical capabilities, deployment characteristics, and applicability of passive high-frequency (HF) and ultra-high frequency (UHF) technology for pharmaceutical item-level pedigree tracking applications. The white paper also highlights some of the existing commercial pharmaceutical and healthcare pilots and implementations.

The pharmaceutical industry is looking to RFID as a primary way of improving the safety and efficiency of the international drug supply chain through counterfeit prevention, decreased shrinkage and diversion, improved inventory management, and faster product recalls. According to the Food and Drug Administration, RFID provides the most promising approach to reliably track, trace and authenticate pharmaceutical products, and is recommending widespread use of RFID at the item-level by 2007. Despite industry momentum for RFID, there are still many misconceptions and issues to be resolved including the choice of frequency. While much of the focus has been on passive tags in the ultra-high frequency (UHF) bandwidth, the paper also provides an in-depth perspective on high-frequency (HF) technology, discussing the technical and deployment characteristics that make it the most effective path with the lowest risk for item-level identification and pedigree tracking.

"RFID has the opportunity to transform the pharmaceutical supply chain," said Lisa Clowers, Vice President, Industry Relations, HDMA. "We support collaboration with all members of the healthcare distribution supply chain to explore the appropriate RFID frequencies that will drive industry adoption."

To download a copy of "Item-Level Management in the Pharmaceutical Supply Chain: A Comparison of HF and UHF RFID Technologies," visit any of the authors' Web sites at www.semiconductors.philips.com, www.tagsys.net, or www.ti-rfid.com.

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