

ID SYSTEMS

ID Systems USA and ID Systems Canada are subsidiaries of Dutch A&A Holding B.V. The company operates as Dialoc in Europe, Asia, and Africa. The company manufactures its own tags but uses a chip supplied by Inside Technologies.

ID Systems sells not only radio frequency identification (RFID) systems but also electromagnetic (EM) and radio frequency (RF). It is cautious about RFID for security because it does not have enough data to determine what percentage of the tags passing exit sensors are actually read.

Tags

The tags, called IT Tags, are passive 13.56 MHz tags with capacities of 512 to 2,000 bits. The library may specify the amount of memory. The tags are available as read-write or read-write with a security lock that protects a selected part of the information.

A library also has the option of specifying the dimensions of the tag. A library that wants to minimize the possibility of read failure at library exits should specify tags that are at least 2.0 by 3.0 inches.

A library also may specify that a theft or security bit be included. In that case, ID Systems uses Tagsys tags. ID Systems stresses that its tags are nonproprietary; no signature is added so the tag can be useful to any manufacturers' system, provided the right software is written.

Staff workstations (including conversion-programming)

The staff workstations can be used not only for charging and discharging, but also for conversion. Temporary additional units are available for a large-scale conversion. The staff workstation, as all readers, are configured on a peer-to-peer network, rather than using a server. The rationale is that less contention will occur, giving a workstation the ability to read 30 tags per second.

During conversion-programming, the staff workstation is interfaced with an automated library system. Blank tags are applied to the books, the books are presented to the readers, the automated library system software retrieves the information when it reads the barcode, and the information required is then written to the RFID.

During charging and discharging, the staff workstation can be interfaced with an automated library system or it can function independently. A combination EM/RFID unit is available if a library wishes to use EM for security and RFID for tracking.

The company offers the option of purchasing the complete workstation or only a reader that can be configured with an existing PC.

Patron self-charging station

The patron self-charging station is called ID Systems QuickCheck. It is available as an RFID unit or as a combination EM and RFID unit. The patron card reading options include RFID, EM, magnetic strips, smart cards, and key tags.

The system has several features to protect privacy, including PINs and blocking of missing cards. The screen and printer support up to 10 languages, with languages changeable in midstream. All graphics and images may be customized. It has a printer and a keypad for manual data entry. Cabinet finishes may be chosen by the library. The interface may be SIP2 or an earlier version of the protocol.

PIN: personal identification number

Exit sensors

ID systems offers exit sensors in wood, plastic, and metal. The company recommends that the aisle be as narrow as possible—36 to 42 inches, depending on local code—to assure a high read rate. The exit sensors can be interfaced with the automated library system to ascertain circulation status. A theft bit can be used to trigger immediate alarms, or EM can be used for security.

Bookdrop readers

Readers are available to be used with existing in-wall or in-counter bookdrops.

Sorters

Sorters were still in development as of late September 2003. The RFID software is already designed to trigger light indicators for separate sorting bins. This triggering permits the software to be used with existing bin setups.

Portable readers

ID Systems offers several models of portable readers. A lightweight hand-held model with the power built into the handle is easiest to use.

Wireless communication is available with a range of up to 2,100 feet. The read range varies because of nearby metal and tag placement. Placing tags at least 3 inches about the bottoms of books reduces the chance that the metal shelf on which the book rests will interfere with the reading. (Not all vendors consider that placement necessary.)

Customers

The company declined to reveal the names of its customers.