RAIN RFID: Getting to Mass Adoption

Strategies the RFID community can adopt to accelerate the widespread use of RFID

Mark Roberti
Founder and Editor
RFID Journal
What Will Be Covered

• The state of adoption globally today
• The technology adoption lifecycle
• Issues hampering adoption
• Five strategies the RFID community can adopt to grow adoption
State of Adoption

No industry has reached mass adoption of RFID

- Less than a dozen retailers have RFID in all stores
- Less than 5% of hospitals globally use an RTLS
- Less than 5% of manufacturers globally use RFID
- Less than 2% of logistics companies use RFID
- Less than 1% of mid-size companies use RFID
Grow Adoption, Grow Your Business

• If we can double the amount of companies using RFID, we can double the size of the RFID industry.
• If we can double the size of the RFID industry, we can double the revenue of most companies in the industry.
• How can we do that?
Look to Geoffrey Moore

• Selling new technologies is not the same as selling cars, desks, or even new versions of existing technologies
• Most companies are skeptical of new technologies
• Reference customers help overcome skepticism
Technology Adoption Life Cycle
Diagnose and Adapt as Markets Evolve

Innovators
Chasm
Early Adopters (Visionaries)
Early Market

Early Majority (Pragmatists)
Tornado

Main Street
Late Majority (Conservatives)
Bowling

Alley
Total Assimilation
Laggards (Skeptics)

Conditions Needed for Mass Adoption

• A problem no other technology can solve
• A global standard
• The “whole” product (integrated solution)
• Critical mass of end users
• A gorilla the market can embrace
Retail Apparel Is Closest

Some of these conditions exist or will soon:

✓ A problem no other technology can solve
✓ A global standard
✓ The “whole” product
  • Critical mass
  • A technology gorilla
Health Care Is Was Also Close

Some of these conditions exist or will soon:

✓ A problem no other technology can solve
  • A global standard
✓ The “whole” product
  • Critical mass
  • A technology gorilla
Manufacturing? Not so much

Some of these conditions exist or will soon:

✓ A problem no other technology can solve
✓ A global standard
• The “whole” product
• Critical mass
• A technology gorilla
Some Technologies Are Too Complex for Mass Adoption

- Computer-aided design software
- High-end Sun workstations
- Jetpacks
- Flying cars
Is RFID Destined to be a Niche Technology?

• RF properties are well understood, and tags exist for most products now
• But environments are infinitely complex, making it hard to create a plug-and-play system that achieves 99% or 98% read accuracy anywhere
• Can this issue be resolved?
• I believe you can resolve it
Issues Hampering RFID Adoption

- Few integrated solutions
- We are good at creating solution components
- Not so good at creating easily deployable solutions
- This might not be an issue that can be resolved
Issues Hampering RFID Adoption

- Associations could be doing more:
  - More government lobbying
  - More industry promotion
  - More education to foster adoption
Issues Hampering RFID Adoption

Big tech companies not promoting RFID

- Who promotes RFID in TV ads?
- Cisco promotes IoT
- IBM promotes AI
- Microsoft promotes cloud computing
Issues Hampering RFID Adoption

Most RFID companies struggle with marketing

- Most have no product strategy
- Most have no marketing strategy
- Most don’t even have a good product image
RFID Companies Run Away from RFID

Instead of countering negative views of RFID, companies often say they sell Internet of Things technology or sensor networks

• True, it is those things, but it’s RFID
Issues Hampering RFID Adoption

• Geoffrey Moore says in his book *Escape Velocity* that if a company spends $250,000 on product development, it should spend $250,000 on the product launch

• No RFID company has ever done anything like this
How Can We Speed Up Adoption?

How Can We Make RAIN RFID Ubiquitous?
Work Together to Deliver Whole Products

- Partnering to deliver tags, readers, software and services reduces risk for users
- The complete solution needs to be industry-specific (at least at this stage)
Sell the Technology, Then Your Solution

- Bashing competing RFID companies and solutions slows adoption and hurts your company in the long term
Get End Users to Speak About the Benefits

- End users sell other end users on RFID
- More end users speaking at events or being quoted in press articles means more competitors focused on RFID
Make RFID Easier to Deploy

• Solutions don’t need more features or capabilities
• Making them easy to deploy will speed adoption
• Reduce the cost, complexity of deployments
• Help the executive who gets RFID sell it internally (without betting his/her career on it)
Focus on Those Most Likely to Deploy RFID

- Marketing to laggards is a waste of time, money, energy and resources
- Companies not actively researching RFID will not deploy a solutions until their competitors force them to
Focus on Those Likely to Deploy

• Those who have a problem no other technology can solve
• These people will invest
• They become reference customers
• Focus on competitors of your existing customers
• Competition drives adoption
Market More, Market Wisely

• Most buyers don’t know what solutions exist
• Most sellers have no brand recognition
• That makes it hard to connect buyers and sellers
• More can be achieved without spending huge amounts of money
• We can — and will — get to RAIN RFID ubiquity
Consider the RFID Industry

• Think about your organization, but consider also what is in the interests of the industry
• Promoting RFID – giving RFID a good name – helps us all
• We can — and will — get to ubiquitous RAIN RFID
Any Questions?

Feel free to contact me privately

Mark Roberti
Founder and Editor, RFID Journal
Mark.Roberti@rfidjournal.com
THANK YOU