

Omni-ID Prox™ Tags Improve IT Asset Tracking for Efficiency, Risk Mitigation, and Compliance in Financial Services

Summary

One of the nation's largest financial institutions is using Omni-ID Prox RFID tags to inventory its computer servers and other IT assets, including recording whenever any are removed or returned to a data center.

Challenge

The financial institution's data center operations require accurate tracking of its computer servers and other high-value IT assets to satisfy regulatory compliance and manage risk mitigation. The barcode technology that the data centers were using for tracking assets was a labor-intensive and time-consuming solution. They wanted to deploy a solution that would be more efficient, reliable, and would integrate with its BizTalk EDI software. UHF RFID was promising; if they could source RFID tags that was capable of operating reliably in the metal-rich environment of the data centers, had a small enough form factor to allow for placement on IT servers with little available real estate, and had acceptable read capabilities from a mobile cart.

Process

Rather than conduct a typical months long proof-of-concept of the technology, the financial institution invited vendors into their data centers and deploy an RFID solution. The vendor who demonstrated a reliable solution would be offered a contractual agreement.

Solution

The solution the financial institution decided to deploy included the Omni-ID Prox™ passive UHF RFID tag which is EPC Gen 2-compliant, mobile RFID interrogators that are mounted on mobile carts, and BizTalk EDI software that is RFID "intelligent". Fixed RFID reader portals, the third element of the solution, are deployed at "choke points", where they can track servers leaving the data center.

Implementation

The mobile interrogators are mounted on carts that employees wheel up and down rows of server racks (and other assets) within the data centers in order to read the RFID tags. Portal-based RFID readers are mounted around the doorways leading into and out of the facilities, collecting the IDs of tags attached to servers and other assets as they are removed from and returned to the data center. The information collected by the readers is uploaded into the BizTalk asset management system.

Results/Benefits

This automated RFID solution was deployed in 17 data centers for just \$1 million. In addition to maintaining the integrity of its assets, the financial institution has since realized benefits in three main business areas:

- Operational Efficiency – Employees have achieved significant timesavings during the inventory process. In addition, the RFID solution has enabled a streamlined process for tracking the shipping and receiving of the IT assets it purchases, leading to faster payment and order discrepancy resolution with vendors.
- Risk Mitigation – While this business area is difficult to quantify, being able to quickly identify the assets holding customer data, and their location is a business imperative.
- Regulatory Compliance – Having up-to-date and accurate inventory data has streamlined the process of complying with Sarbanes-Oxley and other legal and governmental regulations.