

# THE STATE OF RADIO FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION (RFID) STANDARDS

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## ABSTRACT

RFID is a wireless technology likely to improve many operational business processes. For this to happen a broadly accepted set of standards must be in place. This paper looks at the status of this process, and the influences on this process. The implications for the diffusion of RFID are sought.

## INTRODUCTION

Supply chains require dynamic information, which is an inherent problem in Radio Frequency Identification (RFID).

**Two Types of Standards.** There are three interesting aspects about standards and RFID. The first is the perception that is often voiced that there are no standards. This is interesting because it is so obviously wrong. The RF part -which stands for Radio Frequency -describes the part of the technology industry working on this area. The most striking attribute of this portion of the technology industry is that they operate from venture capital which is provided on the basis of the stability of the technology domain. Stability of a domain is generally demonstrated with standards. Thus, standards help get venture capital, and there are many standards related to RFID.

The second interesting aspect of RFID standards is that while the overall purpose for RFID is the flow of information, RFID standards are generally about the underlying technology. It is likely that those involved in the RFID domain assume that the experience with bar codes has provided sufficient examination of the information involved tagging units. Interestingly this assumption leads to a criticism sometimes directed at the Information Technology (IT) field generally -that we pave cow paths. Building radio enabled bar code tags amounts to paving a cow path, RFID has much more to offer.

This leads to the third interesting aspect of RFID standards, dynamic information. As previously mentioned, standards in the information area are wanting.

## CONCLUSION

RFID is an implementation of technology with great promise. However, like most technology efforts the concept of operations is critical. Unlike other technologies, the involvement of a serial group of users, in three domains, is very likely to leave a void where a vision for the technology should be developed.