



news release

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ZEBRA EXPANDS SMART MEDIA SUPPLIES LINE TO MEET GROWING DEMAND FOR DIVERSE SMART LABELING NEEDS

New supply agreements, conversion capabilities create broadest line of RFID media

Vernon Hills, Ill., February 24, 2006—Zebra Technologies now offers a complete range of smart media to help companies meet compliance tagging and other radio frequency identification (RFID) needs. Zebra has entered new supply agreements with many leading Gen 2 inlay manufacturers, including Alien Technology, Avery Dennison, Raflatac, Symbol Technologies and Texas Instruments. The agreements, along with Zebra's label converting facilities in North America and Europe, enable Zebra to produce the broadest range of cost-competitive labels, tickets, wristbands and other smart media to provide reliable RFID performance for a variety of pallet, case and other tracking needs.

In 2006, industry watcher IDTechEx expects demand for smart media to grow significantly as more companies adopt RFID to meet compliance mandates. Other industry applications driving demand will include healthcare, pharmaceutical, library/rental, archiving, airlines, military and transportation. As a result, 1.3 billion tags are forecast to be sold in 2006, and about 500 million RFID smart labels will be used for pallet and case level tagging (roughly double the usage in 2005). This growing demand will be the result of several influences: the availability of viable Gen 2 UHF EPC tags; the growing number of companies who need to meet compliance mandates in 2006 and 2007; and the increasing use of "closed loop" RFID applications for operations such as work in process and asset tracking.¹

"The increasing demand for smart media reflects the growing acceptance of RFID applications in business today," said Bob Cornick, vice president and general manager for RFID at Zebra Technologies. "In all these applications, it is critical that smart media transmit data reliably. Zebra's strategy is to offer a broad selection of high quality, tested media, so that customers can rely on us to not only provide reliable and robust printer/encoder hardware, but also equally dependable smart media that matches the performance of our hardware."

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Zebra is a leader in on-demand thermal printing and supplies, combining nearly 10 years' experience in RFID research and development with 20 years' experience designing and manufacturing specialty thermal printing supplies. Zebra is positioned to offer the highest quality, reliable smart media to meet or exceed industry standards for performance, from Gen 2 and other UHF protocols to ISO standards and popular 13.56 MHz high frequency technology. The company has a custom media development and testing laboratory that sources RFID inlays from suppliers worldwide to develop targeted solutions to meet special needs.

By converting RFID inlays into smart label media itself, Zebra can control manufacturing and institute efficiencies to meet quality standards while producing smart media at extremely competitive prices. Zebra inspects inlays at three stages: prior to conversion into the label, after conversion into the label and finally encoded and read/verified within the printer/encoder. The first two stages ensure that only usable inlays are converted into smart labels. The third stage of inspection takes place while the label is being printed and encoded – the final possible failure point – to ensure the printed label will perform as expected.

“Our goal is to make running genuine Zebra RFID supplies on Zebra printer/encoders the ‘smartest’ smart media solution for our customers, so they get the cost-effective results they need,” said Cornick.

Zebra is active in the ongoing development of RFID smart label technology, standards and applications for supply chain and business improvement programs designed to help suppliers to the U.S. Department of Defense, Wal-Mart and other retailers meet the RFID EPC compliance labeling requirements. For more information on Zebra's RFID solutions, visit www.rfid.zebra.com/ or call +1 800 423 0442.

¹ Source: *IDTechEx, “Smart Labels Analyst,” Issue 60, January 2006.*

About Zebra Technologies

Zebra Technologies Corp. (Nasdaq: ZBRA) delivers innovative and reliable on-demand printing solutions for business improvement and security applications in 100 countries around the world. More than 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies use Zebra-brand printers. A broad range of applications benefit from Zebra-brand thermal bar code, "smart" label, receipt, and card printers, resulting in enhanced security, increased productivity, improved quality, lower costs, and better customer service. The company has sold nearly five million printers, including RFID printer/encoders and wireless mobile solutions, and also offers software, connectivity solutions and printing supplies. Information about Zebra bar code and RFID products can be found at <http://www.zebra.com>.

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