

# UPLIFTING TECHNOLOGY

➤ AIRLINES AND AIRPORTS ARE FACING GREATER CHALLENGES THAN EVER. ACCORDING TO **JOHN SHOEMAKER**, THE PRESIDENT OF SHIPCOM WIRELESS, RF TECHNOLOGIES CAN BRING REAL TIME SOLUTIONS RIGHT NOW.



**JOHN SHOEMAKER**

➤ John Shoemaker is the president of Shipcom Wireless – a solutions provider serving many markets around the world. He has been in high technology for 35 years and has had been responsible for managing teams in start-up, small, medium and large corporations around the globe – particularly in his senior vice president positions at Intermec's Amtech subsidiary, TransCore, Matrics and Symbol Technologies.

Everyday, headlines concerning the aviation industry outline a wealth of problems, while offering an even bigger dose of hope. Pick any industry and you are hard pressed to find one that is experiencing more turmoil than today's airlines and airports. There is a real need for creative innovation and a sense of urgency concerning leveraging individual technologies and harnessing them as part of an integrated solution. The potential is enormous to any aviation operation and can open up a whole new world of operational improvements which have never before been available.

If you can track something and monitor its progress you have actionable intelligence.

It could not come at a better time. What aviation needs and what RF (radio frequency) technologies provide is quite simple – visibility. Aviation needs the ability to see what is going on right now in multiple aviation operations, including baggage handling, cargo transport, storage, asset management and access control in parking facilities.

All airline and airport management want to see what is happening in their operations, to determine bottlenecks, anticipate problems and initiate corrective action before they create a crisis situation. To do this, real time visibility (RTV) is needed. RFID (radio frequency identification) and RTLS (real time location system) will provide RTV and serve aviation needs to better manage increasing volumes of passengers and cargo – as well as customer service requirements, competitive positioning, regulatory compliance, security and cost control, to name but a few organizational aspects.

The efficacy and effectiveness of RFID is real, proven and pragmatic. It was initially invented to serve aviation during the Second World War. Now, it can be harnessed in its latest evolution to serve in dramatic new ways. So, what makes RFID so compelling?

Visibility must occur in real time. If you can track something and monitor its progress during its use

or journey then you have actionable intelligence. If you tag something and can read it anytime, in real time, then you have valuable information that tells you where it is, where it is supposed to be, how to plan for problems and implement changes and corrective actions.

IATA (international air transport association) has identified 24 airports around the globe including: Las Vegas McCarran International Airport, Hong Kong International Airport, Asiana Airlines, Air France/KLM, Emirates Group, Singapore and many more which have implemented or are working on deploying RF-based solutions across their enterprise right now.

## Hybrid RF solutions

RF companies are announcing new products every month and while the past has focused on one frequency type and one technology type, today we have hybrids that include readers and tags which are multi-technology, multi-frequency and multi-purpose. For

example, a hybrid tag can be affixed to a container with passive tagged baggage or cargo inside. The passive tags can be associated to the hybrid which holds megabytes of data. The hybrid can be read at very long range (hundreds of feet) by a RTLS reader from a tug or truck on the airport apron or a passive RFID handheld reader over UHF or 433 MHz.

## Aviation gets a lift

We can track and trace almost anything – where it is, where it is supposed to be and what needs to happen to keep everything on track. We can deliver this intelligence to laptops or handhelds in real time, to an 'operational dashboard' on the bag hall floor or in the board room.

If an airline or airport can see what is happening in real time, where its assets are, where problems are and where potential future problems may arise, then that organization will have the kind of visibility that will give it a serious operational advantage. ○

## HAVE YOUR SAY

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