



*Example of Matrics loyalty card chip. RFID proponents would like to see all loyalty cards, ATM cards and other ID's RFID enabled with chips like this. Imagine! Banks, retailers, supermarkets and governments could find out everything about you when you walk past a reader device since line-of-sight is not necessary to access the information. The radio waves could go right through your pants and through your wallet to get the information on the card's chip. Imagine how valuable it would be for businesses to determine who is worth serving and who should be ignored!*

# Auto-ID: Tracking everything, everywhere

BY KATHERINE ALBRECHT

[Katherine Albrecht is a privacy advocate and educator, holding a Masters in Education from Harvard and an undergraduate degree in International Marketing. Katherine founded CASPIAN, Consumers Against Supermarket Privacy Invasion and Numbering, in 1999. Since its founding, she has uncovered what Americans are only now becoming aware of—an enormous infrastructure of data collected by the private

sector, commercial organizations, and retail outlets. She is also concerned with the resulting infringement on civil liberties, privacy, and increased government control on the individual's right to buy or sell.

As a Christian, she is concerned about supermarket cards that require the use of a numbered card in order to obtain reasonable prices on food as these cards relate to the prophecy found in Revelation 13:16-17: "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to

receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

Footnotes for all facts in this article are available on request.]

"In 5-10 years, whole new ways of doing things will emerge and gradually become commonplace. Expect big changes." —Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Auto-ID Center

Supermarket cards and other retail surveillance devices are merely the opening volley of the marketers' war against consumers. If consumers fail to oppose these practices now, our long-term prospects may look like something from a dystopian science fiction novel.

A new consumer goods tracking system called Auto-ID is poised to enter all of our lives, with profound implications for consumer privacy. Auto-ID couples radio frequency (RF) identification technology

with highly miniaturized computers that enable products to be identified and tracked at any point along the supply chain.

The system could be applied to almost any physical item, from ballpoint pens to toothpaste, which would carry their own unique information in the form of an embedded chip. The chip sends out an identification signal allowing it to communicate with reader devices and other products embedded with similar chips.

Analysts envision a time when the system will be used to identify and track every item produced on the planet.

### A number for every item on the planet

Auto-ID employs a numbering scheme called ePC (for "electronic product code") which can provide a unique ID for any physical object in the world. The ePC is intended to replace the UPC bar code used on products today.

Unlike the bar code, however, the ePC goes beyond identifying product categories. It actually assigns a unique number to every single item that rolls off a manufacturing line. For example, each pack of cigarettes, individual can of soda, light bulb or package of razor blades produced would be uniquely identifiable through its own ePC number.

Once assigned, this number is transmitted by a radio frequency ID tag (RFID) in or on the product. These tiny tags, predicted by some to cost less than 1 cent each by 2004, are "somewhere between the size of a grain of sand and a speck of dust." They are to be built directly into food, clothes, drugs, or auto-parts during the manufacturing process.

Receiver or reader devices are used to pick up the signal transmitted by the RFID tag. Proponents envision a pervasive global network of millions of receivers along the entire supply chain—in airports, seaports, highways, distribution centers, warehouses, retail stores, and in

the home. This would allow for seamless, continuous identification and tracking of physical items as they move from one place to another, enabling companies to determine the whereabouts of all their products at all times.

Steven Van Fleet, an executive at International Paper, looks forward to the prospect. "We'll put a radio frequency ID tag on everything that moves in the North American supply chain," he enthused recently.

The ultimate goal is for Auto-ID to create a "physically linked world" in which every item on the planet is numbered, identified, catalogued, and tracked. And the technology exists to make this a reality. Described as "a political rather than a technological problem," creating a global system "would... involve negotiation between, and consensus among, different countries." Supporters are aiming for worldwide acceptance of the technologies needed to build the infrastructure within the next few years.

### The implications of Auto-ID

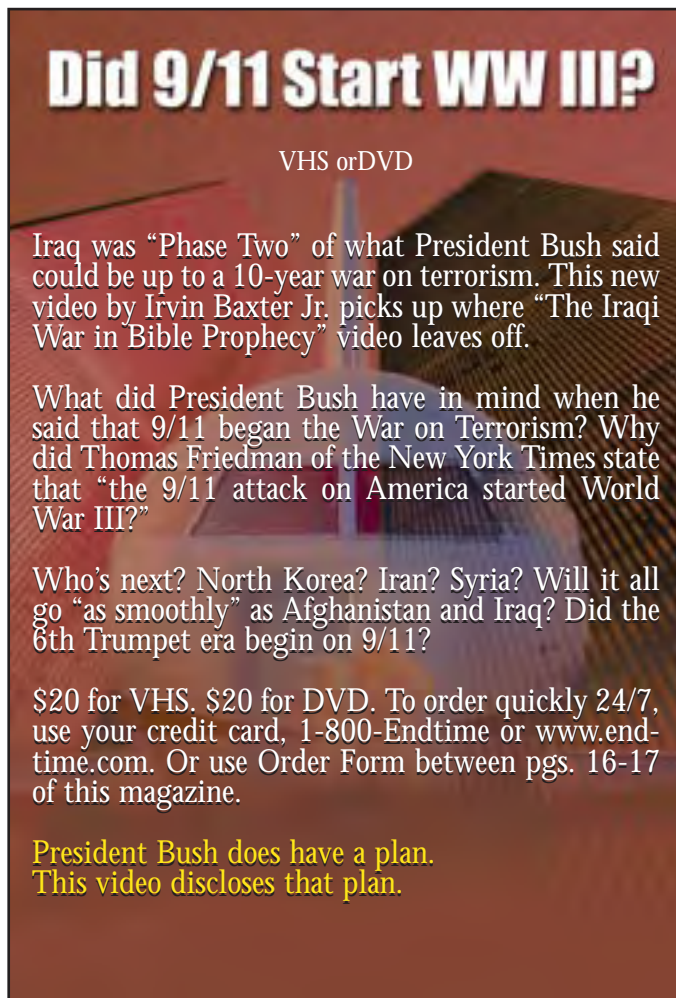
"Theft will be drastically reduced because items will report when they are stolen, their smart tags also serving as a homing device toward their exact location." —MIT's Auto-ID Center

Since the Auto-ID Center's founding at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in 1999, it has moved forward at remarkable speed. The center has attracted funding from some of the largest consumer goods manufacturers in the world, and even counts the Department of Defense among its sponsors. In a mid-2001 pilot test with Gillette, Philip Morris, Procter & Gamble, and Wal-Mart, the center wired the entire city of Tulsa, Oklahoma with radio-frequency equipment to verify its ability to track Auto-ID equipped packages.

Though many Auto-ID proponents appear focused on inventory and supply chain efficiency, others are developing financial and consumer applications that, if adopted, will have chilling effects on consumers' ability to escape the oppressive surveillance of manufacturers, retailers, and marketers. Of course, government and law enforcement will be quick to use the technology to keep tabs on citizens, as well.

The European Central Bank is quietly working to embed RFID tags in the fibers of Euro bank notes by 2005. The tag would allow money to carry its own history by recording information about where it has been, thus giving governments and law enforcement agencies a means to literally "follow the money" in every transaction. If and when RFID devices are embedded in banknotes, the anonymity that cash affords in consumer transactions will be eliminated.

Hitachi Europe wants to supply the tags. The company has developed a smart tag chip that — at just 0.3mm square and as thin as a human hair — can easily fit inside of a banknote. Mass-production of the new chip will start within a year.



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# Prophecy Conference

## Schedule for Irvin Baxter Jr.

### Milwaukee — August 8 (New Date)

Parkway Apostolic Church  
10940 S. Nicholson Rd. in Oak Creek. I-94,  
Exit 322, east on Ryan Rd., Hwy 100. Head  
east on Ryan 2.5 mi., so. on Nicholson 1.5 mi.  
7:30pm; 414-571-2680  
Host: Pastor Anthony Tamel

### South Bend — August 20 (and 21\*)

LeSea Broadcasting Studios  
Ironwood Rd., 1 mile so. of bypass  
Aug. 20 7pm: Irvin Baxter Refutes Preterism  
\*Aug. 21 7:00pm: RFID Chips & The Mark of  
the Beast featuring Katherine Albrecht

### Chicago — August 21

United Pentecostal Church in Bartlett  
270 E. Shick, halfway between Rt. 59 and  
County Farm (Barrington)  
7:30pm; 630-837-9800  
Host: Pastor Jack Yonts

### Detroit — August 22

Churchill High School in Livonia  
8900 Newburgh Rd. I-96, I-275 south, Exit 28  
Ann Arbor Rd., east 1.25 miles, right on  
Newburgh, 1/2 mile  
7:30pm; 734-542-6886  
Host: Pastor Anthony Harper

### Jackson, MS — Sept. 12

Parkway Pentecostal Church in Madison  
1620 Mannsdale Rd. I-55, Exit 108, west 1/4  
mile, right on Bozeman, 1/4 mile, left.  
7:30pm; 601-853-2607  
Host: Pastor Jerry Dillon

### Omaha — Sept. 19

The Church of Omaha  
3715 North 104th Ave., I-680 between Maple  
and Fort.  
7:30pm; 402-572-8904  
Host: Pastor Jimmy Toney

### Corpus Christi — October 3

Holiday Inn Airport  
S.P.I.D., Leopard St. exit  
7:30pm; 361-242-1171  
Host: Pastor Russell Campbell

### Indianapolis — Oct/Nov TBD

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## Prophecy Insight

Consumer marketing applications will decimate privacy

“Radio frequency is another technology that supermarkets are already using in a number of places throughout the store. We now envision a day where consumers will walk into a store, select products whose packages are embedded with small radio frequency UPC codes, and exit the store without ever going through a checkout line or signing their name on a dotted line.” —Jacki Snyder, Manager of Electronic Payments for SuperValu (Supermarkets), Inc., and Chair, Food Marketing Institute Electronic Payments Committee

Auto-ID would expand marketers' ability to monitor individuals' behavior to undreamt of extremes. With corporate sponsors like Wal-Mart, Target, the Food Marketing Institute, Home Depot, and British supermarket chain Tesco, as well as some of the world's largest consumer goods manufacturers including Procter and Gamble, Phillip Morris, and Coca Cola, it may not be long before Auto-ID-based surveillance tags begin appearing in every store-bought item in a consumer's home.

According to a video tour of the “Home of the Future” and “Store of the Future” sponsored by Procter & Gamble, applications could include shopping carts that automatically bill consumer's accounts (cards would no longer be needed to link purchases to individuals), refrigerators that report their contents to the supermarket for re-ordering, and interactive televisions that select commercials based on the contents of a home's refrigerator.

Now that shopper cards have whetted their appetite for data, marketers are no longer content to know who buys what, when, where, and how. As incredible as it may seem, they are now planning ways to monitor consumers' use of products within their very homes. Auto-ID tags coupled with indoor receivers installed in shelves, floors, and doorways, could provide a degree of omniscience about consumer behavior that staggers the imagination.

Consider the following statements by John Stermer, Senior Vice President of eBusiness Market Development at ACNielsen:

“[After bar codes] [t]he next 'big thing' [was] [f]requent shopper cards. While



Photo by Brian Benjamin/Endtime Staff

*It appears that Wal-Mart will be leading the entire global retail industry into the era of Radio Frequency ID technology. It was announced on June 11 that its top 100 suppliers are to start using RFID chips by 2005.*

these did a better job of linking consumers and their purchases, loyalty cards were severely limited... consider the usage, consumer demographic, psychographic and economic blind spots of tracking data... [S]omething more integrated and holistic was needed to provide a ubiquitous understanding of on- and off-line consumer purchase behavior, attitudes and product usage. The answer: RFID (radio frequency identification) technology... In an industry first, RFID enables the linking of all this product information with a specific consumer identified by key demographic and psychographic markers... Where once we collected purchase information, now we can correlate multiple points of consumer product purchase with consumption specifics such as the how, when and who of product use.”

Marketers aren't the only ones who want to watch what you do in your home. Enter again the health surveillance connection. Some have suggested that pill bottles in medicine cabinets be tagged with Auto-ID devices to allow doctors to remotely monitor patient compliance with prescriptions.

While developers claim that Auto-ID technology will create “order and balance” in a chaotic world, even the center's executive director, Kevin Ashton, acknowledges there's a “Brave New

World” feel to the technology. He admits, for example, that people might balk at the thought of police using Auto-ID to scan the contents of a car's trunk without needing to open it. The Center's co-director, Sanjay E. Sarma, has already begun planning strategies to counter the public backlash he expects the system will encounter. □

## RFID Chips & The Mark of the Beast

Privacy advocate Katherine Albrecht leads the grassroots consumer resistance to supermarket loyalty cards and RFID chip implantation. On Thursday, August 21, she is scheduled to film two exciting videos on RFID the Mark of the Beast. Both are projected to be available through Endtime by Sept. 5.