

## February 20, 2007

### 25 Top Influencers in the RFID Industry

Since our [last report](#) on the RFID Tribe's [RFID map of the world](#) (via [The RFID Weblog](#)), the number of points that illustrate RFID Tribe's organizations have increased from 233 to 271, or a growth of *over 16 percent within the past two months*. While this map shows organizational location, it doesn't put a face on the major influencers within this industry. What follows here is the list of RFID Gazette's top 25 influencers in the industry, grouped by **Individuals**, **Organizations**, and **Countries**.

#### Individuals

1. **Scott Silverman**: The new CEO of [Applied Digital](#), the parent company of [VeriChip Corp](#), tops the list because this man is both innovative and scary. Implanted with an RFID device ([supposedly](#)), Silverman has become the poster boy for RFID implantation (tagging) while trying to nudge top government officials into implanting his company's products into [immigrants, babies, soldiers, and patients](#). Before you make contact with this company, you might glance through the nearly [20 pages of risk factors](#) recently published in VeriChip's Form S-1 Registration Statement (CHIP), a requirement mandated by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). You'll discover why investors haven't jumped on this IPO or on the idea of tagging in general (52-week range over a three-month period to date = \$5.67 - \$6.99 per share, although VeriChip [initially set the price](#) at \$6.50-\$8.50 per share).
2. **Michael Chertoff**: As the second Secretary of the [Department of Homeland Security](#) (DHS), Chertoff runs a close second on this list of powerful influencers, because he would have the weight to convince the U.S. government to implant RFID devices into humans throughout the U.S. and beyond. The DHS has already implemented [RFID-enabled passports \(e-Passports\)](#).
3. **Dr. Katherine Albrecht**: Founder and Director of [CASPIAN](#) (Consumers Against Supermarket Privacy Invasion and Numbering) Consumer Advocacy. Executive Technology Magazine has called Katherine "perhaps the country's single most vocal privacy advocate" and Wired magazine calls her the "[Erin Brockovich](#)" of RFID." Albrecht, along with Liz McIntyre (#5), is co-author of "Spychips: How Major Corporations Plan to Track your Every Move with RFID" ([Web site for the book](#), written from a Christian perspective).
4. **Liz McIntyre**: Dr. Albrecht's cohort, a consumer privacy expert, and co-author of a series of books about the societal implications of microchip tracking technology, including the book mentioned previously in #4. Both Albrecht and McIntyre can also be found at the [Spychips Web site](#).
5. **Amal Graafstra**: A Washington state native and business owner who underwent the minor procedure of obtaining two RFID implants – [one in each hand](#). He can access his front door, car door, and log into his computer using his implants, and has written a book called "RFID Toys," that details how to build RFID-enabled projects. His girlfriend, [Jennifer Tomblin](#), is also committed to Amal and to RFID with similar implants (which goes to show the power behind Amal's influence, at least around the house).
6. **Eduardo Castro-Wright**: This Wal-Mart CEO oversees the U.S. division of its stores, and this is the first retail unit to demand RFID compliance among its vendors outside the government (DOD, see #3). Because of Wal-Mart's sheer size, this mandate has affected thousands of companies worldwide. The deadlines for vendors have been extended several times because many suppliers face significant difficulties implementing RFID systems. However, retailers [Best Buy and Target](#)

also followed Walmart's initiative, and Walmart is expected to continue to expand its demands and expect compliance through upcoming years. Eduardo is influential in his own right, as he also is a member of the Board of Directors of Dow Jones & Co.

7. **[Richard Stallman](#)**, founder of the Free Software Foundation or GNU Project, continues to lend an influential voice against RFID security cards. Links on his Web page lead to such articles as Wired's "[How To: Disable Your Passport's RFID Chip](#)," and the PDF file on how to "[Build RFID Zappers](#)" for yourself and your friends.
8. **Dr. Paul A. Moskowitz**: Inventor, an expert on the RFID physics, and a Research Staff Member at the IBM [Thomas J. Watson Research Center](#) in Hawthorne, NY. Moskowitz, along with fellow researcher, Guenter Karjoth, is a proponent for the [Clipped Tag](#), an RFID tag that is designed to increase consumer privacy. This Clipped Tag is modified visibly after the point of sale so that the tag can only be read at a short range of less than a few inches. The tag could still be used for later recalls, returns, or recycling, but it would help to protect the consumer's privacy.
9. **John Conner**: Founder of the movement, [The Resistance of Christ](#) and author of [The Resistance Manifesto](#), where [Conner equates VeriChip](#) with "the mark of the beast," which the Bible's book of Revelations describes as a demonic numbering system for people. Conner may not carry much influence among intelligentsia, but he could be a major influence among other conspiracy theorists (quantity unknown).

## Organizations

10. **[The U.S. Department of Defense](#)** (DOD): This is where Silverman is pushing his tagging technology, and – along with Chertoff and the DHS – this is where widespread involuntary tagging could originate. The DOD also requires its suppliers to use RFID-tagged shipments to improve supply-chain management. Although this requirement isn't a law as yet, it might be assumed that it would behoove bidders for government contracts to implement this technology.
11. **[Hitachi](#)**: While RFID IPOs have had a rather [shaky start in the market](#), watch for already established companies that will shoulder their entry into the RFID realm. Hitachi has already created a stir with the smallest and thinnest RFID tags ever produced in [an announcement](#) made 14 February 2007. Measuring just 0.05 x 0.05 millimeters, this chip beats Hitachi's previous mu-chip measurement of 0.4 x 0.4 millimeters. This RFID 'powder' is so small that it can be incorporated into thin paper easily, like in paper currency and gift certificates. It could probably be dusted all over the Pentagon as well.
12. **[Toyota](#)**: In 2005, Toyota South Africa Motors Ltd. selected [Alien Technology](#)® RFID Solution for Vehicle Identification. While this was news from the supplier standpoint, the real influence here is the entire Asian car manufacturing market. [The National RFID Centre](#) reported that "Asia is definitely the hotspot, with European – and to a lesser extent cash-strapped North American automakers following the trend" for using RFID on the production line and in security and tire safety systems.
13. **[The American Library Association](#)** (ALA): You might not like to visit your local library, but they're concerned about you nonetheless. In fact, this organization is a leading voice in the matters of RFID and individual rights. In their online document, "[RFID and Libraries](#)," the ALA offers many links to their policies, their politics, and their guarded usage of RFID. This organization is far more concerned about their patrons' privacy than they are about vendors who use RFID for supply-chain management.
14. **[RFID International Business Association](#)** (RFIDba): Forget any one individual influence – when these individuals flock together to form an international business group, power is magnified. Whether this congregation provides positive or negative clout might depend upon its members and outside influences. Membership is open to end users from all industries, system integrators, government agencies, educators, technology vendors, and individuals.

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15. **EPCglobal**: Now with members in over 100 countries, mainly in North America and Europe (including Wal-Mart), this organization bypassed [ISO](#) (Geneva-based International Standards Organization), in its development of [international RFID standards](#) in 2005. Now, EPCglobal states on its Web site that, "EPCglobal leads the development of industry-driven standards for the Electronic Product Code (EPC) to support the use of Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) in today's fast-moving, information rich, trading networks." Powerful, indeed.
16. **RFID Tribe**: This is another organization built by members who are [industry experts and technology users](#). This organization is much more widespread and seems much larger than EPCglobal, but their mission seems more benevolent. Basically anyone with an interest in RFID can join to discourse about all matters RFID with other worldwide members. They maintain a talent and career center and promote RFID education through classes, seminars, and a speaker's bureau.

## Countries

No one individual or regional public body governs the frequencies used for RFID, although EPCglobal seems to be forging ahead in that effort. In principle, every country can set its own rules for frequency. The debate about which flavor of RFID is preferable for item level tagging – high frequency (HF) or ultrahigh frequency (UHF) – existed in 2005, but it really peaked in 2006 and it will persist throughout upcoming years with [UHF in the forefront](#). Some main bodies that govern frequency allocation for RFID include:

17. **USA: FCC** (Federal Communications Commission): [Kevin J. Martin](#) was designated FCC chairman by President Bush on March 18, 2005. Chairman Martin was re-nominated for a second term as commissioner and chairman by President George W. Bush on April 25, 2006.
18. **Canada: DOC** (Department of Communication): Canada develops its communications programs through the Communications Research Centre, which is an Agency of Industry Canada.
19. **Europe**: In Europe, the national administrations must ratify the usage of a specific frequency before it can be used in any given country. Some organizations in this region include [CEPT](#) (The European Conference of Postal and Telecommunications Administrations) and [ETSI](#) (The European Telecommunications Standards Institute).
20. **Japan: MPHPT** (Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Post and Telecommunication). Laws and progress are well defined on this site, but it's unclear about who to contact for any given issue.
21. **China: Cnii.com** (China Information Industry Net) is charged by Ministry of Information Industry, which is established by People's Posts and Telecommunications News Office (PPTNA), an authoritative news agency in China's info-communications industry. CNII is the only Web site that owns issuance right granted by State Council Information Office.
22. **South Africa: Icasa** (The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa) was established in July 2000 in terms of the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act No.13 of 2000. It took over the functions of two previous regulators, the South African Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (SATRA) and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA).
23. **Australia: ACMA** (Australian Communications and Media Authority) has central offices in Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney plus regional offices and operational centers throughout all states and territories of Australia.
24. **New Zealand: MED** (Ministry of Economic Development) focuses on local issues as well as a competitive environment internationally. Geoff Dangerfield was appointed Chief Executive of the Ministry of Economic Development in May 2001.

25. [Singapore: IDA](#) (Infocomm Development Authority). The board of directors consists of Chairman LAM Chuan Leong and Deputy Chairman YONG Ying-I, and the IDA maintains offices in the U.S., India, and China.

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