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Failed RFID in Retail

Many retailers continue pilots and reports about RFID and success, but CJ Penny, Wal-Mart and other retailers have given up largely because of RFID's unreliability near liquids steel, damp cardboard, and tag angle issues –

Visible Assets has most of the major defense contractors as customers and all have spent many millions of dollars on failed RFID pilots. They do not do Press Releases about these failed pilots, however recently a small retail shoe chain in Florida, did a Press Release in effect saying that RFID does not work well – even on cardboard shoe box's.

While RFID has value in many valid applications, they are actually very limited. RFID has been over sold and over promised on most fronts. It is not secure, and not reliable in harsh environments, and in lower volume applications is very expensive because the high cost readers. A RFID Portal is typically \$15,000 to \$25,000., and a Smart shelf or rack is also \$15,000 to \$25,000. The readers are expensive because in an attempt to make RFID more reliable, they add antennas (up to 8) and increase power. In addition the software becomes expensive because of complex business rules, and need to often tag same asset with many different tags again in an attempt to improve reliability. It is not usual to see a pilot with 8 antennas and three to four tags on asset still not working reliably.

We include in this material:

1. Article about Peltz Shoe cancelled RFID efforts and Press Release
2. Summary of many RFID talks and articles over last five years featured in the press about on the success Peltz RFID effort has been – Peltz Shoes was the poster boy of most RFID conferences for five years.
3. An article on the 2003 initial slow down of RFID at Wal-Mart
4. The famous 2007 Wall Street Journal (WSJ) article on the death of RFID at Wal-Mart.
5. JC Penny Drops RFID (the real reason was unreliable reads).

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