

*"5 minutes with Bob Scher" – Bringing You Answers About RFID  
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## Feds buy into IT asset tracking

*Chris Brumett is Chief Operating Officer at Fluensee, a Colo.-based asset tracking provider.*

**We hear Fluensee just began an asset tracking project for the government. Can you tell us for what agency? Is it a local Colorado branch?**

Yes, we're providing our AssetTrack software, RFID hardware and professional services for a large IT asset management project. We can't specify which government agency it is yet, but we'll be making a public announcement soon with the details. The agency has nine buildings in which our team will be implementing the solution over the next few months, starting with six buildings at their main campus in Northern Virginia and a handful of other buildings around the D.C. area.

**Did you get the work by going FedBizOpps and applying, or was there a different process to get the work? Do you often work on government projects?**

Actually a member of this agency inquired directly through our website and we started the conversation with them at that point. Over the course of a few months, we gave them product demonstrations and details about how the project might work. We then received an RFP from them a few months later and became involved in a bid for the project – and were selected.

One of the reasons we were told we were selected is because we are hardware-agnostic and platform-independent, which provides the flexible technology with which they can grow as their auto-id requirements change. Right now we are involved with several government projects; and for the most part we work through partners on our government efforts. This latest project was one of the first we received directly from a government agency itself.

**What type of assets must you track?**

We will help them track IT assets such as servers, peripherals and laptops. We've put together an end-to-end IT asset tracking solution, with our web-based asset management software and active RFID tags and readers to get them started. When the project is fully implemented, our client will have real-time visibility of their IT assets throughout each facility, and designated users will be able to see all assets in every facility just by logging onto our AssetTrack system.



*Chris Brumett  
COO, Fluensee*

Interestingly, we have found that some companies shy away from active because active tags are more expensive than passive tags. However, in this case and based on our client's need for security and real-time visibility of asset movements, a detailed ROI analysis helped them find that the operational and cost-benefit advantages of active RFID provided a quicker payback.

Organizations that take the time to collect the data that goes into an ROI analysis often find that they can do more with RFID than they initially thought possible, with an ROI quicker than they thought possible, too.

**Do you see a difference in approach between government and the private sector?**

Nearly every day we receive inquiries from many different types of companies – large and small – most from the private sector, that want to have better visibility, control and security of their IT assets. We're seeing more and more budgets that have been allocated for IT asset tracking.

People understand now that RFID is one of the most efficient ways to track IT assets, especially when the cost of losing IT assets isn't just the asset itself, but the information stored on that laptop or server. Replacement costs and the cost of lost intellectual property can be huge and in some cases loss of information can really damage corporate credibility.

We have found that the approach is quite similar between government and private sector clients. They do their homework, examine their business processes and then come to us to figure out how RFID might work to track their IT assets. The timelines are similar too – the bigger the organization, the longer they take to decide and the more budget they have allocated.

One difference might be that sometimes government agencies require more detailed documentation and there are requirements like the Fair Trade Agreement under which equipment from designated countries has to be purchased, for example.

**Does your company implement this on your own or do you partner with other providers?**

Fluensee is flexible in that we partner on certain projects and use partners to support the installation, configuration and training on our solutions. However, for this project we are doing those components ourselves. We will rely on a partner on this project to work on the active RFID infrastructure so that we can shorten the implementation timeline and rely on their specific expertise.

**What is the biggest challenge you face in accomplishing the client's goals?**

Well, the scope of the project is huge; and we have some challenges to overcome ensuring the system and infrastructure capture a huge number of moving parts. Our solution is very scalable, so we know it can handle thousands and thousands of assets in many locations. But it's the figuring out of the workflow and the business processes to ensure that we're applying the technology in the most efficient way.

Another challenge is to manage our customers' expectations of what RFID can do and how it works in real life. So we break each project up into smaller, more manageable pieces, focusing on the success of each smaller part so that we can provide proof to the project sponsors that the technology is being deployed and works the way we said it would.