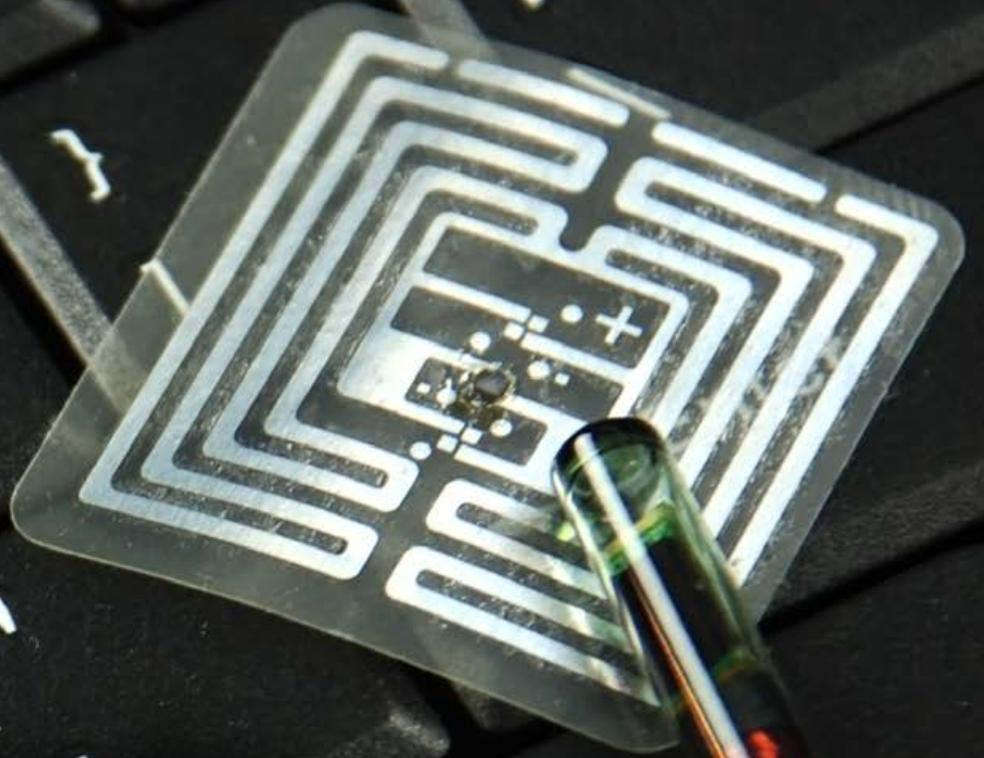




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4 Ways to Overcome End-User Resistance to Adopting RFID

Radio frequency identification (RFID) isn't new, but it's still a new application for many different verticals across the channel. While some businesses have been eager and interested to adopt the technology, it has overall been a difficult sell for many other end-users.

Encouraging customers to buy into a new technology is always a challenge, but why has RFID been such an uphill battle? The technology is sound, the benefits are there, and the cost has dropped considerably in the last few years to accommodate a wide range of applications and purchasing options.

It turns out, there are a few different factors that could be affecting how receptive your customers are to buying RFID solutions for their business.

1. The Price Still Isn't Right

When RFID burst onto the scene as an upgrade from barcode technology, it seemed too good to be true – and for most end-users, it was. It was the flashy new technology, and it had a flashy price tag to go along with it that deterred all but the most dedicated businesses from even giving it a chance.

Although the benefits of RFID and the data it can collect is certainly invaluable, the overall cost of implementation still remains a large barrier. Barcodes are cheap and easy to print. They're everywhere. They get the job done. Your customer may be wowed by your RFID solution when they see it in action at a trade show, but if you can't justify the expense of overhauling an entire system that isn't broken, you're going to struggle to make the sale.

The biggest cost incurred from adopting RFID into most industries isn't from the tags themselves, however. It's the readers. RFID could revolutionize a warehouse, provide high level, usable data, and make the lives of employees much easier – the possibilities and benefits are all there. But you'll have to likely still have to overcome a customer's realization that buying new RFID-enabled scanners for a warehouse is a luxury move they don't feel they can afford.





Some industries may be softer sells on the matter than others, depending on their priorities. Healthcare is already embracing the simplicity RFID provides, because it's proven to cut down on the chaos and improve patient care. High-end retail establishments are coming around to it, because their inventory capabilities are limited, and the technology allows them to stay on top of orders, tracking, and restocking. Research your customers' industries and determine whether or not RFID will likely be seen as a necessity for success or a luxury upgrade they may not need.

2. An Object At Rest Stays At Rest

Inertia isn't just a concept you barely remember from high school physics. Many customers allow their own inertia to affect their buying habits, keeping them on the fence about many different purchases until they're pushed by an outside force.



The reality of RFID is that it's a solution to something many end-users didn't even feel was a problem: barcodes. Barcodes are a legacy technology that's gone unchallenged for ages, and many of your customers may not feel pressured to upgrade or switch to a new technology. With no incentive to change, getting your customers to upgrade to a new technology is an uphill battle from the start. The important thing is to educate the end-user on why RFID is a valuable upgrade, with an emphasis on how it can help make their business future-proof. Upgrades will have to happen sooner or later, and although the barcode may be doing fine or itself today, the odds that it will still be as powerful in even five years are unknown.



It's key to focus on how RFID will improve your customers' business moving into the vast, shifting landscape of the technological future. If it's not broken, and they don't want to fix it, they'll stagnate when their competitors choose to upgrade and embrace the benefits of RFID and other new technologies.

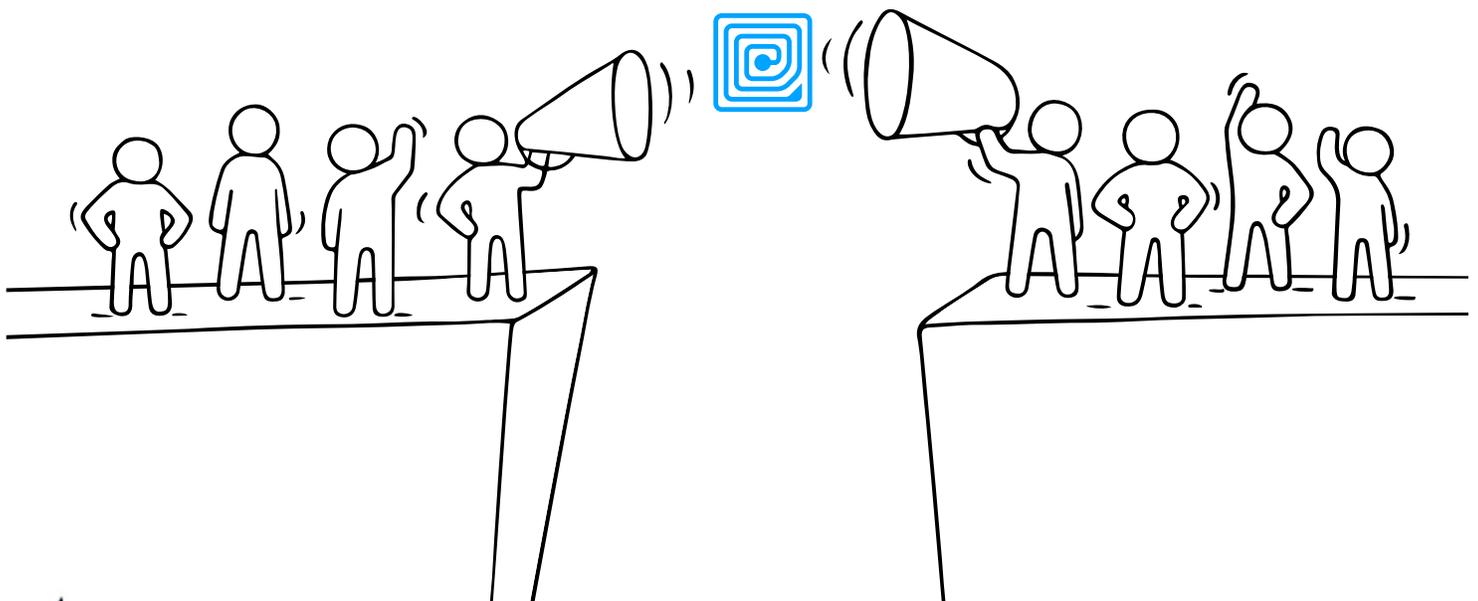
3. A Simple Lack of Understanding

RFID is a buzzword that, since the implementation of EMV chips in the United States, has become misunderstood. Every Christmas, RFID-blocking sleeves for your credit cards, RFID-blocking wallets and purses, and other sham items emerge and find their way into gifts. A simple lack of understanding around the issue of RFID readers and EMV chips has led many in the general public to believe that RFID is simply a tool hackers and thieves use to hijack information they aren't meant to have. It's hard to tell whether or not this level of misinformation is truly affecting the sale and implementation of RFID for end-users, but with any new technology, a product stigma will dampen sales.

Additionally, there's a natural suspicion surrounding RFID because it's a technological replacement for the more analog solution of barcodes. This leaves many consumers with the concern of reliability – barcodes are tried and true, and if they go undamaged they're guaranteed to work. But RFID? For many, it's an untested, new technology that may come with repair costs, failures and outages.

However, you'll have to inform and convince your customers of the truth: that RFID is actually more reliable than its barcode brethren. Additionally, tags purchased should last for many years and can be repurposed more easily than printed barcodes with a singular purpose. RFID isn't simply some cyber-hacking tool to get at your wallet – it's a very real, very reliable solution that can save your customers money while helping them to improve their efficiency and grow their business. A little education can go a long way here, and clearing up the fog of confusion surrounding RFID will certainly help make your interaction go more smoothly.

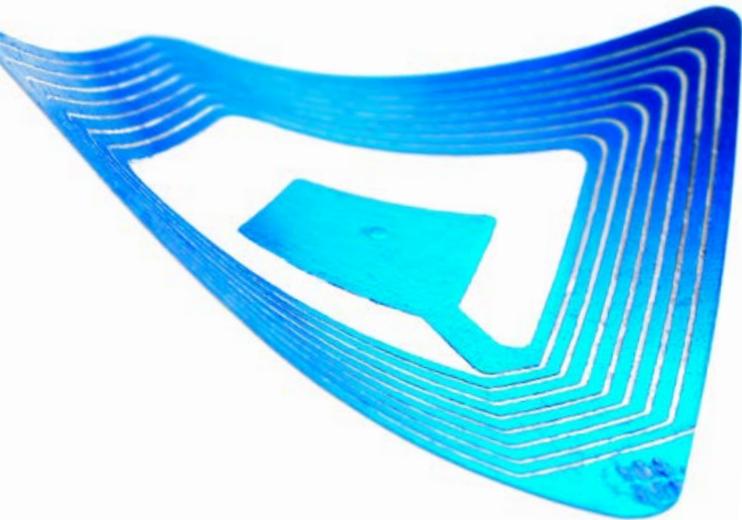
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4. The Business is too Niche

Perhaps your customer is a business-owner operating in a niche. They don't operate a warehouse, their building doesn't need additional security, and they use third party agencies for many of their business-related issues. They're telling you that RFID simply isn't a solid fit for their business, because it doesn't make sense for their industry or their niche.

Regardless of niche, RFID can still provide unique opportunities. These situations are rarer, harder to cater a solution to, and you may still find that RFID isn't actually going to work out for them in the end. But with how rapidly technology and business are changing, it would be naïve to ignore the niche-based, clever implementations of RFID that are emerging all over the world today.



Amazon Go

Amazon recently opened the first grocery store lacking in checkout lanes. A complex system of RFID, sensors, and cameras does all the heavy lifting, and consumers simply walk out the door, bags of groceries in hand. No checkout lanes means no POS system, no cashier, and none of the typical solutions usually purchased to run a convenient store. Now, this is an experimental use case and is certainly not today's standard for RFID use. But it could be.

Ad Campaigns

Many companies have begun to experiment with RFID use in advertisements. In the UK, Battersea Dogs & Cats home used RFID in their #LookingForYou campaign, to boost pet adoption rates for their shelter. Volunteers passed out pamphlets that, unbeknownst to the public, were embedded with RFID labels. These labels then activated nearby billboards, triggering an interactive display that made it appear as if an adoptable dog was following you home as you walked. This campaign resulted in massive attention, and a website visit increase of around 33 percent. Adoptions increased for the shelter so rapidly that demand quickly overwhelmed the amount of adoptable dogs available.

Smart Fitting Rooms

Scanning retail items at specially-outfitted kiosks with RFID readers can help customers see more about the product than ever before. Through this, shoppers can access product information, alternative options, and gain access to information about ordering out of stock options. In some unique cases, RFID was even able to create virtual fitting rooms that, through a camera hybrid solution, displayed what a garment would look like on the customer, without them having to try it on.

Hygienic Solutions

The healthcare industry has been making some strides in implementing RFID within facilities to create a more hypoallergenic, hygienic facility. Staff can wear RFID wristbands that interact with automatic doors, faucets and soap dispensers, and more, to cut down on surface touching. This can help workers to keep themselves more sterile throughout the day by preventing the need to touch door handles, and to make it easier for them to wash their hands throughout the day.

RFID has proven to be a challenging solution to sell for many different industries, despite its proven ability to enhance workflow and increase productivity within a business. The key is to be aware of reasons behind this resistance from end-users, and find ways to prove RFID's abilities to truly fit the needs of your customers. Identify the primary reasoning behind their hesitation, and apply your research and sales pitch to accommodate these concerns to help improve your ability to sell RFID solutions.

