



Franwell rfid> Trace Enables Electronic Pedigree Verification

Florida law mandates pedigree documentation of controlled substances along each link from manufacturer to distributor to retail store. Pedigree documentation involves uncompromised records, secure access, an authentication process, and certification. Prior to the use of RFID technology, pedigree verification was not possible with a high degree of accuracy. With rfid> Trace, however, pedigree verification is enabled when the data is securely logged, records are authenticated, and shipments are certified at each link of the pharmaceutical supply chain.

Does this mean that complete end-to-end pedigree verification is now taking place, thanks to innovative RFID edge applications such as Franwell's rfid> Trace? A great RFID track and trace system *alone* is not sufficient to guarantee pedigree verification. The verification process must include an infrastructure, such as VeriSign provides, to which end users (at manufacturing, distribution, or retail level) can publish their data. When clients can access a centralized online pedigree database, digital certification can be maintained from point to point, certifying product identification, quantity, date, time, and other descriptive information that enables pedigree reporting and provides searchable history to authenticate the pedigree.

There are a number of ways to enhance track and trace of controlled substances using rfid> Trace. Whether operating from a PC or a handheld device, the user scans product into the rfid> Trace database that provides warehouse shipping and store receipts. Additionally, the data is available for posting to an online Web application that provides secure login to verify transaction information (such as transaction type, unique identification numbers, link-stage name, and an agent for managing pedigree documentation). This enables wholesalers to move tracing to the retail store level for verification of pharmaceutical orders.

When manufacturers provide product already encoded with EPC tags, distributors are able to scan and verify identification and quantities of items upon receipt and throughout movement from point to point at the DC. rfid> Trace enables order validation upon shipping so extra product, or product not commissioned in the database, are not included in order fulfillment. Distributors push tracing of pedigree from distribution centers by publishing to a Web service that copies the order with tag data to the store. The receiving store is able to compare data by scanning the order upon receipt. Certifying security of transactions and eliminating the opportunity for substitution of counterfeit drugs are two of the most important factors to pursue pedigree verification.

The process of shipping and receiving using rfid> Trace is greatly enhanced by integration of another Franwell RFID product, the rfid> Tote Portal. Individually tagged bottles (each bearing a tiny write-once, Class 0, 92-bit pre-encoded pharma tag) are placed within a tote (a corrugated box used for pharmaceuticals) and the tote is passed through the RFID portal especially designed to fit on a store shelf or counter. The advantage is that all of the containers within the tote are scanned without individual handling or removal. The Tote Portal is practical housing for RF equipment that transmits data to the rfid> Trace database, where it is recorded for search and historical reporting functionality.

Providing track and trace history from a warehouse or distribution center to a retail store database provides digital validation of pharmaceutical transactions. Additionally, the history of scans can be consolidated by the DCs or stores. Enabling full pedigree tracking online, maintaining a secure database of its own, providing compliance with emerging RFID mandate standards, as well as controlling and maintaining superior inventory management, are just a few of the major benefits pharmaceutical clients realize with Franwell's rfid> Trace.