Read-a-Card bridges the gap between standard RFID smart card readers & existing software apps – helping Valeo Foods streamline production process monitoring.

ABOUT VALEO FOODS

→ Valeo Foods Group is a leading international food business with a diverse portfolio of leading FMCG brands.

Valeo brands, which include the iconic Rowse honey, Kettle crisps and Jacob's biscuits, have histories that stretch back over 150 years. This heritage and their strong appeal to consumers is what makes them stand out as category leaders, with sales in over 100 countries.

The talented international workforce takes great pride in creating the foods consumers love to eat, and in realising the potential of their iconic category-defining brands. They are passionate about innovation and their R&D teams have created hundreds of exciting new products, delighting consumers with new takes on their favourite brands.

PROJECT

→ Digitising the collection of large volumes of quality assurance records, taken by numerous staff members over each shift, with full traceability, in a high OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness) factory environment.

Food product production requires frequent monitoring of numerous critical control points, to ensure consistent quality. Additionally, detailed audit trails of process monitoring are often required by customers and industry bodies - to be assured that critical standards or specifications are adhered to.

Because of the hygienic working environment - rugged IP65 rated tablets, with all required peripherals built-in, were selected (Panasonic Toughbook CF-33 running Windows).

To make operator identification and login quick and convenient, the plan was to make use of existing Time & Attendance ID cards, together with the MIFARE / ISO 14443 A/B compatible RFID card reader incorporated in the IP-rated tablets.

THE PROBLEM

→ PC operating systems do not generally make RFID smart card information from standard PC/SC contactless/NFC card readers easily available.

This behaviour is unlike many other Windows 'plug n play' peripherals, and is usually only discovered when people first try to use RFID readers with their application. Additional software is required to interact with, and capture data from, contactless cards via smart card readers. If you're not coding your own low-level solution, and simply want to make use of existing cards with one or more existing apps, a third party card reading solution is required.

THE SOLUTION

"I chose Read-a-Card because the software was quick and simple to deploy and the support I received was excellent"

Toby Atkins
IT Manager
Valeo Foods UK

→ Read-a-Card is a super-flexible software utility for RFID/NFC data handling.

Read-a-Card captures data from all common contactless card/tag types (even securely encoded data on DESFire and iCLASS cards). It can automate data reformatting and output to existing applications - through 'keyboard wedge' functionality, transfer to cloud / web services, producing a log file, or app-launch.

Valeo Foods UK IT Manager, Toby Atkins, found Read-a-Card simple to install and test – his questions to the Read-a-Card support team on reformatting card CSN data were answered swiftly and comprehensively.

With Read-a-Card deployed, operators simply scan their existing MIFARE cards against the rugged tablets, which enables the system to capture their identity when submitting the quality check – it's that straightforward, and delivers the 'Fast' in 'FMCG'.

FIND OUT MORE

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