

# wave

Auto ID Newsletter



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# FRONT

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"The Thrills" band members wear PDC's Smart Band® Radio Frequency ID wristbands at SXSW Festivals.

# rock bands

## Smart Band® RFID Wristbands Combat Counterfeiting at World-Renowned SXSW Festivals.

A dynamic new band headlined and performed at this year's SXSW Festivals. Not a rock band, but a wristband! For the first time in SXSW history, admission wristbands with embedded RFID (radio frequency identification) chips were used.

Precision Dynamics Corporation (PDC) supplied South by Southwest (SXSW) with its Smart Band® RFID Wristband System during the world-renowned SXSW Music, Film and Interactive Festivals, which ran from March 12 - 21 in Austin, Texas. SXSW used RFID technology for the first time to prevent counterfeiting and overcrowding while increasing public safety and ticket sales. More than 23,000 RFID embedded credentials were used on the largest crowd to date.

### Prevents Counterfeiting

One of the biggest issues faced by the ticketing industry is counterfeiting. Today, the market for secondary trading of tickets in the U.S. is estimated to be between \$20 and \$38 billion.<sup>1</sup> This translates to high profit loss for venue promoters, performers, and unnecessary burdens to everyone else involved in the selling and purchasing of tickets.



Singer Tim Delaughter is banded with PDC RFID technology.

*(Continued on back)*

*"We found no counterfeits this year..."*

*—Roland Swenson, President of SXSW, Inc.*

*(Continued from front)*

Last year during SXSWWeek, thousands of counterfeit wristbands were made and sold on the street with a face value of as much as \$500,000. Those involved in the counterfeiting were later caught and charged with forgery and trademark counterfeiting. This year counterfeiting of SXSW tickets was prevented using PDC Smart Bands.

"It was a very good solution for us. We had suffered from a high profile incident with counterfeiters in 2003 and implementing RFID wristbands in 2004 was a smart choice for preventing this from occurring again," comments Roland Swenson, President of SXSW, Inc.

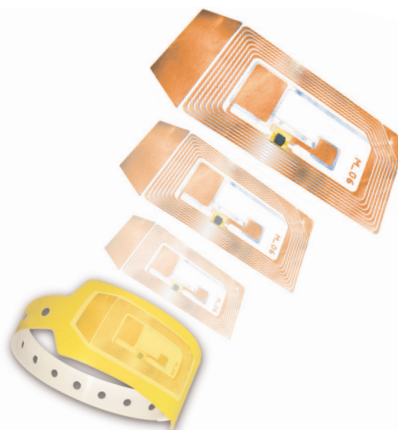
Smart Band wristbands revolve around a tiny, flat RFID chip, sealed in a non-transferable plastic wristband that uses customized software to store and transfer data which is read by RFID readers. The RFID chips used in SXSW wristbands contained serial numbers that were used to verify the authenticity of each band. Smart Band's non-transferable feature is key to preventing scalping and unauthorized access to the information stored on the chips.

During SXSWWeek "the wristbands were scanned by specialized PDAs at the admissions entrance of every venue," said Victor LaRosa, PDC RFID & Age/ID Manager. After the RFID chip was scanned by the RFID reader, a light appeared signaling whether or not the wristband was real—green indicated legit, red indicated fake.

"We found no counterfeits this year and our sources told us that certain groups we were aware of in the past, but could never make a case against, had ceased their activities," said Swenson.

### Improves Admissions, Safety and Sales

RFID technology helps quicken the admissions process. Also, the lack of counterfeit wristbands helps alleviate overcrowding in general. Over-crowding can



hinder a patron's experience as suffocating crowds can lead to unpleasant occurrences. Having the ability to track accurate numbers of attendees makes it easier to manage and control crowds, which in turn increases overall event security.

What's more, employing RFID wristbands at SXSW helped increase ticket sales. "We distribute numerous comps to sponsors, acts, and the media. Some of them sell their comps every year. We believe RFID [wristbands] increased sales because

people were wary of purchasing comp wristbands on the street for fear that they might be counterfeit," added Swenson.

### Additional Features

Many other features can be programmed for use with Smart Band. The wristband can be used as a portable electronic wallet for point of sale applications and easy tracking of sales for event organizers. The system's read/write electronic storage technology allows for easy data transfer to and from host systems. In addition, data can be read and recorded through clothing, water, glass, and the human body.

"Smart Bands can also interface with PDC's new AgeBand™ which helps prevent underage drinking by providing positive patron identification and age verification," comments LaRosa. The AgeBand Electronic Age/ID Verification System uses specialized software and databases from state's departments of motor vehicles to spot fake and expired IDs.

"PDC's RFID wristbands were a valuable addition to this year's event and we look forward to using the high-tech wristbands at a higher capacity in the future," said Eve McArthur, Director of Operations at SXSW. "We're excited to have entered the new era of identification technology and to be one of the first in our industry to implement RFID successfully."

<sup>1</sup>"Will the net end ticket scalping?" MSNBC. September 2, 1999. <<http://zdnet.com.com/2100-11-501311.html?legacy=zdn>>