

For example, the U.S. Army is doing trials on a system in which food rations for the troops, called Meals Ready to Eat, in military jargon, are tagged with cheap identifying tags, while the crates they are shipped in carry active tags that measure the ambient temperature.

Other good ideas outside the supply chain include tracing objects through their life cycle.

However, you don't have to get too far beyond these good ideas before you find yourselves in the realm of the bad (or at least the badly thought through).

This would supposedly reduce shoplifting--razor blades are apparently a popular item--by, for example, identifying individuals who are seen to take a packet of blades but never recorded as paying for those blades at the checkout.

The privacy advocates' outcry about a tag that really can trace an individual whenever they're near a reader is easy to imagine.

We're all familiar with the difficulty that store checkout clerks sometimes have in making sure that a barcode can be read. And obviously, credit cards and ATM cards must be swiped through a special reader.

Tag collision occurs when many tags are present in a small area; but since the read time is very fast, it is easier for vendors to develop systems that ensure that tags respond one at a time.

The chip typically is capable of carrying 2,000 bytes of data or less.

The placement of the device is usually done with a hypodermic-type needle.

They need to be encased in a special kind of casing that will not irritate or react with the living tissues that they are inserted into.

The leader does these things:

Plays a dual role as leader and participant.

Helps participants clarify their positions.

Involves reluctant participants while restraining vocal students.

Must be patient enough to allow understanding to evolve.

Helps participants explore new interpretations.

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