

INSIDE AND FIME TEAM TO ENSURE NFC INTEROPERABILITY

Technology Leaders to Solve Key Test and Certification Challenges

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, France, October 31st, 2008 – Working to ensure the continued growth and acceptance of Near Field Communication (NFC), INSIDE Contactless, the world leader in advanced open-standard contactless chip technologies, and FIME, a leading smartcard and terminal testing solutions provider, today announced they are joining forces in a partnership designed to speed up the attainment of NFC interoperability. Through this partnership, the two companies will combine their expertise and leadership to identify and resolve potential conflicts in the interoperability of NFC devices, and develop a comprehensive process, support and service portfolio for testing and certifying NFC mobile handsets.

INSIDE and FIME will work in close cooperation with their customers in this partnership to help develop the most effective test and certification process, and plan to present a first version of this process and associated tools and services to their common customers early next year. Through this cooperative effort, INSIDE and FIME will be able to offer their customers greater visibility into the testing and certification requirements at an early stage during development of their NFC mobile handset products, and provide them with products, tools, know-how and services to ensure compliance. The partnership also intends to consult with various standards bodies, including the NFC Forum, ETSI, ISO and payment and transport associations, providing valuable results based on their experience to boost or amend current certification standards.

“As the leaders in our respective areas of expertise, we are in the best position to undertake this crucial task for the benefit of the entire NFC ecosystem,” said Philippe Martineau, executive vice president of the NFC Business line at INSIDE Contactless. “By developing this comprehensive test and certification process, our customers will be able to avoid the kinds of early market problems that plagued other technologies by ensuring interoperability of NFC devices from day one.”

NFC devices not only have to comply with the NFC Forum’s requirements and include the minimum interoperability level, but also with ETSI standards for HCI and SWP protocols. In addition, they need to be able to cohabitate with traditional NFC applications, as well as a large range of legacy applications and infrastructure combining payment, transport, access control, loyalty and other applications.

On top of all those requirements, there is the issue of connecting to the SIM card or other secure element (SE). As a result, the complex relationship between the NFC chip and the handset application framework requires a new dimension in testing to ensure an optimal interoperability level for contactless applications. To reach the full promise of NFC from day one, this interoperability issue has to be taken into account for the entire NFC device design, manufacturing and go-to-market process.

“Our partnership is uniquely positioned to embark on this mission, bringing to bear not only our combined expertise in NFC technology, but also early access to customers engaged in NFC product developments who need to ensure interoperability when they go to market,” said Vincent Poty, sales director at FIME. “Through our partnership, INSIDE will be able to provide an optimal interoperability level for their NFC chips and tags to ensure their customers develop NFC-compliant products, and FIME will be able to market the test tools and test services these customers will need to ensure NFC interoperability.”

NFC is a short-range wireless connectivity technology standard designed for intuitive, simple and safe communication between electronic devices. INSIDE holds essential patents for the development of NFC, and is deeply involved in helping to create the standard. NFC communication is enabled by bringing two NFC compatible devices within a few centimeters of one another. Applications of NFC technology include contactless transactions such as payment and transit ticketing, simple and fast data transfers, including calendar synchronization or electronic business cards, and access to online digital content.

INSIDE’s innovative next-generation MicroRead™ NFC chip uses Near Field Communication for proximity transactions and interactions. Incorporated into mobile phones or consumer electronics devices, it enables them to operate like RF readers and contactless smart cards to cover the large range of NFC applications and much more. Through its service offerings, INSIDE’s extensive experience with NFC technology enables mobile phone manufacturers to develop a reliable design quickly and cost effectively.

FIME’s NFC testing solutions support the fast development of NFC products enabling mobile payment. FIME is an active member of the NFC Forum and takes part in NFC pilots with mobile phone manufacturers and banks. FIME offers a broad range of testing, consulting and design services and testing tools.

About FIME

FIME is a global provider of test solutions for the smart card, RFID and NFC markets. With a total offer covering tests, tools distribution, consulting and outsourced R&D, FIME is a genuine business catalyst. A pioneer in smart card testing services in the 1990s, FIME is today well advanced in the field of contactless testing. With over 100 employees on three continents, FIME provides a solution adapted to customers' local needs. FIME offers the stability of a company which is part of Orange Business Services, as well as the functional flexibility of autonomous teams strongly implicated in your project. For more information, visit www.fime.com.

About INSIDE Contactless

INSIDE Contactless is the global leader in open-standard contactless payment and Near Field Communication (NFC) semiconductors and software that power the next generation of payment, transit, identity and access control applications. The company's intelligent, microprocessor-based platforms offer the flexibility to be embedded in smart cards, mobile phones and other consumer electronic devices, documents, badges and other items to support a wide range of innovative contactless applications and bring new levels of convenience to users. INSIDE has delivered more than 250 million contactless platforms worldwide to customers and partners that include many of the leading payment card and mobile phone manufacturers, systems integrators, and financial institutions. With a portfolio of 55 families of patents including several essential NFC patents, the company has played a leading role in NFC and contactless innovation. INSIDE is headquartered in Aix-en-Provence, France, with offices in Shanghai, Singapore, Warsaw, Seoul, and Silicon Valley. For more information, please visit www.insidecontactless.com

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