

RFID UPDATE

RFID BRAND REPORT

RANKING LEADERS IN RECOGNITION,
TECHNOLOGY & MARKETING

2009

IN ASSOCIATION WITH BURNELL REPORTS

Consensus is building about the top brands in the RFID industry, and the gap between these firms and all others is widening. This is among the top findings from RFID Update's 2009 industry branding research, which measured the attitudes of more than 500 RFID users, prospects, providers and integrators around the world. While the overall importance of brand was virtually unchanged from when RFID Update first measured it in 2006, far fewer firms were identified as brand leaders. Some of the top brands of 2006 are in clear decline, while others have muscled and marketed their way to the top.

The original RFID Update *2006 RFID Marketing Strategies Report* was a broad study on marketing perceptions that included both research into marketing messages and tactics as well as an analysis of brand and rankings of RFID marketing leaders. For 2009, the brand and ranking aspects of the 2006 report have been pulled out and expanded in this new and separate report to provide a more detailed examination of brand and how important demographic subsets of the industry view particular RFID companies.

Overall, brand is important to six out of seven respondents, including a third who say it is "very important" (see Figure 1). Brand importance is fairly consistent among the various demographic groups that are analyzed, though the differences that do exist indicate challenges for branding, positioning, and marketing for RFID firms. For example, brand influence is well below average for hot prospects who plan to purchase RFID systems within a year as well as for end users in general, and is also below average for the largest (\$1+ billion) organizations. Also, brand value is stronger in emerging geographic markets in Asia and elsewhere than the larger, more mature markets in North America and Europe.

Figure 1 When considering the purchase of RFID products or services, how important is the company's brand?

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	Response average
2009	**%	**%	**%	**%	**%
2006	**%	**%	**%	**%	**%

In all, respondents named more than 180 different companies as a leader in RFID company recognition, technology or marketing. However, only a handful of nominees are widely recognized and clearly separated from the rest. To put the 2009 rankings and changing brand landscape into perspective, consider the following:

- ***** of the ** most recognized RFID product and service providers of 2006 did not make the list for 2009.

- Only five firms were cited by at least ** percent of survey respondents in 2009 (*****, *****, *****, ***** and *****), a stark contrast to 2006, when 11 firms were recognized by at least ** percent of the audience.
- ***** of the top ** firms of 2006 saw their recognition decline in 2009, including four (*****, *****, ***** and *****) who fell by at least ** percent.
- Only one company (*****, **) saw its recognition grow by more than five percent.

Figure 2 shows the 10 most widely recognized RFID product & service providers, based on the number of citations received from the more than 500 respondents to the RFID Update research survey. The “% cited” column refers to the percentage of respondents who cited the company as one of the most widely recognized RFID product and service providers. Results total more than 100 percent because each respondent could cite up to three companies.

Figure 2 Top 10 Most Widely Recognized RFID Product & Service Providers

2009 Rank	Company*	% cited	± 2006	2006 Rank
1	Alien Technology	**%	**%	**
2	*****	**%	**%	**
3	*****	**%	**%	**
4	*****	**%	**%	**
5	*****	**%	**%	**
6	*****	**%	**%	**
7	*****	**%	**%	**
8 (tie)	*****	**%	**%	**
8 (tie)	*****	**%	**%	**
10	*****	**%	**%	**

* See the Scope & Methodology section for the explanation of how results were calculated for companies that underwent name changes or mergers between 2006 and 2009.

Today ***** firms now stand clearly above all others in recognition, with only ***** and ***** truly contending for the top position. The same firms dominate perceptions about which companies possess the best RFID technology, and which are considered the best marketed (see Figures 3 and 4). Each category — most recognized, best technology, and best marketed — has a different leader.

The ***** of leaders could arguably be a quintet. ***** also enjoys strong recognition and a reputation for technology and marketing excellence, ranking ***** in all ***** categories, but in many measures is closer to the rest of the pack than it is to the top, a significant change from 2006.

Figure 3 RFID Product & Service Providers Perceived to Have the Best Technology

Rank	Company	% cited
1	Impinj	**0%
2	*****	**0%
3	*****	**0%
4	*****	**0%
5	*****	**0%
6	*****	**0%
7	*****	**0%
8	*****	**0%
9	*****	**0%
10	*****	**0%

It is important to note that technology rankings are more a matter of reputation than actual performance. The rankings were not determined by benchmark tests or any other scientific measure. The question presented to respondents was: *Which companies do you think have the best RFID technology? (Name up to three.)* The question was designed to determine how vendors' products are *perceived* to perform, not how they actually perform.

It may be easier for firms to gain recognition through their branding and marketing efforts than by the strength of their technology — only ***** of the top 20 best marketed RFID companies did not also make the list of most recognized firms. In comparison, more than twice as many — ***** — firms rated as having the best technology were not among the most recognized.

Figure 4 RFID Product & Service Providers Perceived to Be the Best Marketed

Rank	Company	% cited
1	Motorola	**0%
2	*****	**0%
3	*****	**0%
4	*****	**0%
5	*****	**0%
6	*****	**0%
7	*****	**0%
8	*****	**0%
T9	*****	**0%
T9	*****	**0%

This report presents and examines these results with additional data about brand value in the RFID industry, plus company rankings, all sorted and analyzed by respondents' role in the industry, geographic location and other variables.

About the Authors	2
Executive Summary	5
Scope & Methodology	8
Brand Importance in the RFID Industry	13
Brand Importance by Industry Role	14
Brand Importance by Experience	15
Brand Importance by Region	16
Conclusion	16
Ranking: Most Widely Recognized	17
End User & Industry Professional Comparison	19
Notable Changes from 2006	21
Recognition Leaders by Region	21
Ranking: Technology Reputation	23
End User & Industry Professional Comparison	23
Technology Leaders by Region	25
Ranking: Marketing Reputation	27
End User & Industry Professional Comparison	28
Marketing Leaders by Region	30
Conclusions	32
Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire	34

Figure 1	How Important Is the Company's Brand?	5
Figure 2	Top 10 Most Widely Recognized RFID Product & Service Providers	6
Figure 3	RFID Product & Service Providers Perceived to Have the Best Technology.....	7
Figure 4	RFID Product & Service Providers Perceived to Be the Best Marketed	7
Figure 5	Response Data for Brand & Ranking Questions	8
Figure 6	Geographic Location of Respondents	10
Figure 7	Company Size of Respondents	10
Figure 8	Type of Respondent Organization	11
Figure 9	Length of RFID Involvement	11
Figure 10	Purchasing Timetable for End User Organizations	11
Figure 11	How Important Is the Company's Brand?	13
Figure 12	Factors That Influence How RFID Companies are Perceived.	14
Figure 13	Brand Importance by Industry Role	15
Figure 14	Brand Importance for Select End User Prospects	15
Figure 15	How Brand Importance Changes with Experience	15
Figure 16	Brand Influence by Geographic Region.....	16
Figure 17	20 Most Widely Recognized RFID Product & Service Providers in 2009.....	17
Figure 18	Changes in Top 10 Most Recognized Companies, 2006-2009.	18
Figure 19	Most Widely Recognized RFID Product & Service Providers by End Users.....	19
Figure 20	Most Widely Recognized RFID Product & Service Providers by RFID Industry Professionals.....	20
Figure 21	Most Widely Recognized RFID Product & Service Providers by RFID Channel Professionals.....	20
Figure 22	Most Widely Recognized RFID Product & Service Providers in North America.....	21
Figure 23	Most Widely Recognized RFID Product & Service Providers in Europe.....	22
Figure 24	Most Widely Recognized RFID Product & Service Providers in Asia	22
Figure 25	Companies Considered to Have the Best RFID Technology	23
Figure 26	Companies Considered to Have the Best RFID Technology — End Users.....	24
Figure 27	Companies Considered to Have the Best RFID Technology — Industry Respondents.....	24
Figure 28	Companies Considered to Have the Best RFID Technology — Channel Responses.....	25
Figure 29	Companies Considered to Have the Best RFID Technology — North American Responses	25
Figure 30	Companies Considered to Have the Best RFID Technology — European Responses	26
Figure 31	Companies Considered to Have the Best RFID Technology — Asian Responses	26
Figure 32	Companies Considered Best at Marketing RFID	28
Figure 33	Companies Considered Best at Marketing RFID — End User Responses.....	29
Figure 34	Companies Considered Best at Marketing RFID — Industry Responses.....	29
Figure 35	Companies Considered Best at Marketing RFID — Channel Responses.....	30
Figure 36	Companies Considered Best at Marketing RFID — North American Responses	30
Figure 37	Companies Considered Best at Marketing RFID — European Responses.....	31
Figure 38	Companies Considered Best at Marketing RFID — Asian Responses.....	31
Figure 39	Summary of Top Ranked Companies.....	32