

Vast potential for new wireless technology

OPPORTUNITIES brought about by NFC technology are huge, due to flourishing contactless transport infrastructures in every major city, and the growing popularity of contactless payment.

According to Ruault Jean-Philippe, who is marketing director of Secure Transactions, Gemalto, by leveraging on those infrastructure and the interactivity of mobile phones, consumers will benefit from a range of value-added services such as purchasing train tickets online or downloading coupons into the mobile phone.

He added that the banking sector has also found NFC convenient and can be leveraged to simplify service deployment and ensure a more secure transaction.

"In addition, the opportunities for one-to-one marketing and CRM (customer relationship management) are virtually limitless," he said.

Potential

In Asia, many trials and early deployments of NFC technology have already displayed great potential for stakeholders in the ecosystem.

"However, most can agree that acceleration on the rate of success in NFC depends on the pro-activeness and collective involvement of all parties in this exciting value chain."

Jean-Philippe said the value proposition of adding NFC technology to the mobile phone is vast, and players see the possibilities derived from the coupling of the technologies.

Issues

Although the technology is mature and the potential ahead is clear, Jean-Philippe said there are a number of key issues security, application management, handset development

Near Field Communication is a new, short-range wireless connectivity technology that evolved from existing contactless identification and interconnection technologies. **Tech&U** talks to Secure Transactions, Gemalto's marketing director Ruault Jean-Philippe to gain an insight on NFC.



NFC technology can help people speed up connections, receive and share information, and make fast and secure payments.

and market education, that are yet to be fully tackled to see more commercial rollouts of NFC services and buy-in at mass adoption paces. As NFC adoption requires a high level of education, standardisation, interoperability and security, across multiple applications in many industries, questions arise in these areas.

"Gemalto's involvements in diverse payment projects worldwide (Pegasus, Pay-By-Mobile initiative) enable us to understand market needs and deliver the right solution at the right place and time.

"Our partnerships with key industry players (operators worldwide, chipset manufacturers,

handset vendors, financial institutions, standard bodies) greatly reduced the technical/standard uncertainties and enable all stakeholders to focus in developing the Mobile Contactless business with its partners."

Jean-Philippe said success in the mobile contactless world demands far more than technology.

"Building the ecosystem requires experienced partners who will help operators claim and retain a major stake in this dynamic new market as it grows in response to customer demand.

"Partners who will help stakeholders deliver

the killer combination of creativity and security that's key to differentiation in the mobile contactless world.

"Gemalto participates in several projects that use payment applications, e-ticketing, loyalty, and smart poster in different countries."

Speeding up adoption

According to Jean-Philippe, various stakeholders must be involved to make NFC adoption a reality – phone manufacturers, network operators, card issuers, public transportation companies, contactless transportation ticketing providers, payment processors, media vendors, and merchants and retailers.

"They must vie for a 'slice of the pie', and figure out who accepts certain responsibilities, such as consumer support issues. Mobile Contactless Payment NFC requires co-operation between different stakeholders – banks, mobile operators and transport companies, each with their own culture and expectations. They have the same basic requirement – the need for security and confidentiality."

NFC in Malaysia

Jean-Philippe foresees tremendous potential for widespread NFC adoption here, as Malaysia has always been an early adopter for new technologies, products, and solutions.

"Mobile operators and banks are very active, facing a competitive market. With an existing contactless infrastructure which accepts Contactless Payments, Malaysia is in a good position to accept Mobile Contactless Payment widely. Stakeholders have already shown strong interest in building the ecosystem."