Implanet Tracks all its Surgical Implants with the Help of Frequentiel

Medical technology company's use of RFID technology benefits both patients and hospitals

"A considerable amount of time was saved, as the use of RFID tags makes it possible to carry out inventories two to three times faster."

— Christophe Le Borgne, IT Project Manager at Implanet

Key facts

- 55,000 tags encoded each year
- Solution deployed in 21 countries
- Inventories carried out 2-3 times faster

Instilling tracking Using RFID

Implanet provides orthopedic implants for different surgical markets. Implanet has been using Beep N Track's RFID-based tracking software platform since 2008 to support item-level tracking of the implantable medical devices it distributes to surgeons at hospitals. The company must meet stringent procedures to ensure the quality and integrity of its products.

Previously, Implanet encoded its RFID tags manually. The company now has an industrialized solution, developed jointly by Frequentiel, the project's architect and integrator, and Toshiba Tec, a printer encoder manufacturer.

"The implementation of the overall project took about six months, during which time we worked closely with Frequentiel," says Christophe Le Borgne, IT Project Manager at Implanet.

Frequentiel, the solution integrator, selected Toshiba Tec for the performance of its B-SA4 RFID printers.

"We were involved in the upstream phase, for functional design and the technical aspects," says David Rocher, Managing Director at Frequentiel. "We orchestrated the encoding and printing part with the Toshiba Tec system. We also intervened on some parts of the SAP development and parameterization."

The use of three Toshiba B-SA4 printers helped to industrialize the system. Previously, the process took much longer since each box was manually encoded. This collaboration has enabled a substantial increase in the volume of the implants tagged. Today, 250 tags are encoded per day, which corresponds to about 55,000 tags each year.

Challenges

- Optimize cumbersome processes associated with the monitoring and quality control of product.
- Accelerate item level tagging of implants.

Frequentiel Solution

- Frequentiel expert RFID software and hardware integration services.
- Toshiba B-SA4 printers.

Benefits

- Complete tracking of products.
- Considerable time gained by hospitals and at Implanet.
- Elimination of paper archives at hospitals.
- Better safeguards in place in the event of a recall.
- Patients keep an RFID-tagged document that uniquely describes their implant.

RFID at the Heart of Health Security

The implant tracking solution consists of an RFID chip that is glued to the box, which makes it possible to identify the article code, batch code, expiry date, diameter, etc.

In practice, the implants then go through an RFID tunnel, which guarantees a strict conformity control of package contents, and the shipment of the right implants to the right hospitals. Using an encoding table saves valuable time.

As soon as the implants are delivered to the hospital, the staff has a PDA equipped with an RFID reader to read the tags. Item-level tracking makes it possible to aggregate all the essential information concerning the patient, the establishment, the surgeon, the assistants, etc.

When a surgical procedure is validated, a resupply order is automatically sent to Implanet's SAP ERP, which keeps track of all orders. If an order is sent after 3pm, resupply will occur from 8am the following day.

Item-level tracking is a real plus for patients. In the rare event of a product recall, it is easy to quickly localize implants.

A Considerable Time Saver for Hospitals

On the hospital side, inventory reception and dispatch were previously conducted manually and generated large volumes of archiving. With RFID, everything is automatic.

Currently, 50 of the hospitals who collaborate with Implanet are equipped with this RFID solution, and the number is growing.

As for patients, they have an RFID card that contains all the information relating to their implant, accompanied by a manual that describes how to live better with a prosthesis.

Frequentiel

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