

## **Star Trek Technology Invades The Meeting World**

Conferon Partners With nTAG To Distribute Computerized Name Badges

By Kevin Eaton

Taking a cue from the Star Trek communicator worn aboard the Enterprise that linked Captain Kirk to his ship and crew, nTAG with their recently updated computerized name badge allows convention attendees to receive instant notifications from event organizers, allows for communication between attendees and can even track what sessions are being attended.

The name tag has both a screen and a touch screen keyboard that allows the wearer to communicate with others and a vibrate function that is set off when an indicated contact is near.

The device is also being used for a host of other purposes such as paperless instant polls, tracking who is networking with whom and even allowing for active participation during education sessions.

The interactive name badge was invented by Rick Borovoy, the current executive vice president of product development, chief technical officer and co-founder of nTAG.

The innovative name tag was created during his time at the MIT Media Lab where he received his masters and a PhD focusing on how technology can support face-to-face communication.

The three prototypes for interactive badges he invented at the Media Lab are the foundation of the company's technology.

The company has been around since 2002 and the interactive name badge has been used at meetings for IBM, Lucent Technologies, GE and Bristol-Myers-Squibb.

To get the device into even more conventions around the country, Conferon, one of the largest event service and meeting management companies, is teaming up with nTAG to act as a reseller of the device.

Conferon Global Services (CGS) will now be offering the second generation of the nTAG computerized name badge with instant communication technology as one of their core services to clients.

The two companies had a more informal alliance/referral relationship but CGS will now be a full-service reseller of the nTAG System Version 2 technology.

The technology start-up has wanted a partnership like this since the company was founded in 2002, company co-founder and executive vice president George Eberstadt said that the partnership is "the gold standard of partnerships."

CGS was one of the first companies that had a preview of the newest computerized name badge that will be officially unveiled fall of this year.

According to Eberstadt, the company was impressed enough with the products new and improved communication capabilities to sign on as a reseller of the product and decided to make it one of their core products.

“Our customers are searching for proven methods to elevate their meetings and events. They view events as a key platform to strengthen customer relationships, promote networking and provide educational opportunities. They need to know that these objectives have been met,” said Rick Binford, CMP, chief marketing officer, CGS. “The interactive nTAG solution will provide leading edge strategies to maximize total event experiences for attendees, sponsors and exhibitors. This new tool is a natural extension to our strategic event consulting service strategy and comprehensive attendee management expertise and infrastructure and we can’t wait to see the impact on our customers.”

The badge is a giant leap in name badge technology, far removed from the safety pin and plastic sleeve, the badge has the capability of monitoring attendance to sessions, networking activity and even booth traffic.

Using the badges capabilities, attendees can go online type in their information, as detailed as they want it to be, then pick up the badge at registration with all their information already loaded into it.

As attendees walk around the convention the badge can give a vibrate alert when it is near someone that has been identified as a potential contact.

“Companies have recognized that face-to-face events are an irreplaceable complement to their overall integrated marketing and communications efforts, and as with these other programs , they’re demanding ways to enhance event success and quantify result,” said David Goretski, CEO at nTAG. “We’re honored to work with CGS, one of the world’s foremost event management organizations, to help more companies achieve this. nTAG provides CGS with a complete event data management solution that is unmatched in the industry.”

CGS will show off the technology to their partners with a sneak peak during their annual meeting and tradeshow in Denver, Colo.