

# SecureVote™ Aces ‘Super Tuesday’

White Paper

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In a U.S. presidential primary election, “Super Tuesday” is the name the media has given to the day on which primary elections are held in the largest number of states. Candidates can win more delegates on Super Tuesday than on any other day in the campaign, and so it has become a crucial point in the races to secure both the Republican and Democratic presidential nominations. This year’s “Super Tuesday” was February 5, 2008, a day on which 24 states held their primaries or caucuses, with 41 percent of Republican and 52 percent of Democratic delegates at stake.

One of the states holding its primary on Super Tuesday was California. In Alameda County, just across the Bay from San Francisco, election officials responsible for 3,000 pieces of voting equipment and 810 polling places were counting on a new RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) tracking system to help them track and deliver the equipment containing results from hundreds of thousands of paper and electronic ballots accurately and with no delay. The new system was designed to eliminate problems that had been plaguing the county’s previous tracking system.

## Streamlining the Process

In previous elections, Alameda County used a process that relied on bar coding to track and deliver vote results from polling places to intermediate return centers and finally to the counting center in Oakland. The process begins before polls open with the delivery of bags with tamper proof seals to each of the 810 sites. The bags contain three bar-coded components: a memory pack to hold voting results scanned from paper ballots, a paper index of voters and a PCMCIA card to hold touch screen voting results. When polls close, components are sealed inside the bags and delivered to 27 intermediate return centers for verification, which is performed by scanning the barcodes to make certain all equipment is accounted for. While bar code scanning is highly efficient for most tracking needs, Alameda County required a tracking process that allowed the bags to remain sealed. This would improve the amount of time to track any missing voting equipment by several hours.

Not surprisingly, all the collected bags tended to arrive at the intermediate centers at approximately the same time. Workers had to open each bag manually to verify that all components were present. The result of this laborious methodology was often huge logjams. And, if even one component was missing, long delays occurred until the



component was located. Final election results were frequently delayed, sometime by several hours, which can seem endless in an election.

According to Guy Ashley, Alameda County registrar spokesperson, “It was a difficult experience. We needed a better way to track those crucial components from point-to-point to avoid any security breach or delay in the vote count process.”

#### RFID-Powered SecureVote™ Solution

Alameda County turned to one of Motorola’s partners, RFID Global Solution, to help election officials develop a system that would reduce logjams and eliminate delays in the vote counting process. Working closely with county officials, the company developed the innovative SecureVote system powered by Motorola’s XR400 fixed RFID readers. The solution provides RFID tags for each piece of voting equipment, and for each bag, and associates each bag with its specific contents. Using Motorola handheld MC9000-G RFID readers, county employees can quickly verify that all equipment is accounted for by scanning the tag on the outside of the bag, as well as the tags on the components inside... without ever having to manually open the bag or break the seal.

The process was tested before Super Tuesday during a November, 2007, preliminary election that utilized 75 polling places. Only two items were flagged as missing by the system, and both were quickly located. When the bags reached the vote count facility, employees were able to scan and verify all equipment in about 90 minutes, as opposed to four or five hours with the previous process. “In combination with the Motorola handheld readers, which were very easy to use, the SecureVote solution helped us add a new layer of security and efficiency onto our existing process,” notes Ashley.

#### The Super Test

Alameda County was now ready for Super Tuesday. With all 810 polling places equipped with RFID-enabled equipment, the process flowed smoothly and without incident. “I watched in amazement on February 5th,” concludes Ashley. “Everything was calm, organized and in stark contrast to the process we had in place in 2006. We established a highly efficient, electronic chain of custody, had no breaches in security and were able to turn in our vote count much faster. Having this extra level of protection has also really bolstered public confidence.”

“We have a low-tech front-end with paper and pencil voting, but a high-tech back-end with real-time tracking and security that accounts for each and every piece of equipment, said Dave Macdonald, director of IT and Registrar of Voters, Alameda County. “With the RFID solution, we can achieve our goal of ensuring that every person’s vote is counted.”



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## ABOUT RFID Global Solution

RFID Global Solution, Inc. is the world's leading provider of asset visibility solutions for defense, government and commercial customers. RFID Global Solution's experience extends beyond RFID to the whole range of active and passive RF, Cellular and GPS technologies used in its award-winning, turnkey and custom solutions. RFIDGS is viewed within the industry as the leader in RFID solution development and deployment.

RFIDGS designs and installs asset tracking and visibility solutions for Aerospace & Defense, Government, Healthcare, Manufacturing, Retail, and Transportation & Logistics industries and the Art market. Our focus is on cross-industry applications that provide real-time visibility, asset tracking and location awareness, for goods, supplies, parts, tools and high-value assets, at the site and enterprise level.

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