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NXP Launches Mobile Wallet Solution For Wearables, IoT

LONDON — One of the ongoing challenges for device manufacturers is how to move up the value chain and offer system-level solutions that can add more value. Addressing the mobile wallet ecosystem, NXP Semiconductors has developed an end-to-end hardware and software solution for OEMs looking to add mobile payment capability to wearable, mobile, or IoT devices.

German high-end luxury goods manufacturer Montblanc is set to use NXP's new solution, mWallet 2Go, in a smartwatch strap.

Developed in collaboration with Mastercard and Visa, mWallet 2Go comprises NXP's near-field communications (NFC), secure element (SE), NFC middleware, SE JavaCard operating system, SE applets, secure element management service (SEMS), wallet application and software developer kit (SDK), wallet server, and Mastercard digital enablement service (MDES) and Visa token service (VTS) tokenization platforms

Asus Foreshadows 5G Handsets

Asus announced at Computex what could possibly be the most powerful smartphone to date. The Asus ROG (Republic of Gamers) is a beast, with features such as vapor chamber cooling (found only in gaming laptops), a Snapdragon SDM845 SoC, 8GB RAM, 512 GB storage and a slew of accessories.

The handset has the potential to redefine smartphone gaming. However, my interest in this phone is not gaming, but in one of its connectivity features called 802.11ad aka WiGig, a 60 GHz version of Wi-Fi.

This is Asus' second attempt at .11ad. Its first .11ad smartphone, the Asus Zen 4 announced last year, only had limited availability. This announcement along with recent news about Facebook's Terragraph trials shows continued .11ad momentum.

Arm Acquires Scottish Connectivity Specialist Stream

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Arm acquired Stream Technologies (Glasgow) in an effort to grow a business in paid services for devices on the Internet of Things. The move comes as the IoT is still in an early stage but widely seen to have huge potential with services expected to be one of its hottest sectors.

Stream, a private company founded in 2000, claims that its connectivity management software and services are used by 770,000 devices carrying 2 terabytes of traffic daily. Though mainly focused on cellular, its offerings are network-agnostic, also supporting LoRa and satellite nets carrying IP and non-IP data.

Stream serves a wide variety of applications including asset tracking, smart meters, and the U.K.'s National Rail system. Its services include support for billing and the so-called embedded subscriber identity module (eSIM), a software-based cellular ID. Earlier this year, Arm rolled out software that it called Kigen OS to enable eSIM on its cores.

Auto Industry Shifts Gears With AI

Artificial intelligence (AI) is disrupting both the automotive sector and its suppliers, according to executives who will discuss the issues at Semicon West.

AI will enable cars to control more driving scenarios, monitor driver attention and alert drivers to danger with reliability as the key competitive advantage. It is also reshuffling the electronics supply chain with new options and new players for how and where to integrate this new intelligence. The issues will be the focus of an expanded smart automotive program at Semicon West.

Beyond automated driving, AI will soon monitor the driver. "A front-facing camera can discern where the driver is looking or, more importantly, where the driver is not looking," said Tim Wong, one of the session's speakers and a technical marketing manager for autonomous vehicles at Nvidia.

Fingerprint Sensor Sets The Beat

A novel fingerprint sensor includes a heart rate detector to make it more secure, likely starting a trend, according to an analyst who conducted a teardown of it.

Fingerprint sensors are quickly becoming the standard for unlocking and securing mobile phones. Their convenience and speed make them preferred over passwords, facial recognition, retinal scanning or user-input patterns.

Common methods of defeating fingerprint sensors include creating a rubber mold of the finger, copying a fingerprint to a piece of tape or using the actual finger removed from the person. We recently discovered a combination fingerprint sensor and heart rate detector in a few smartphones that avoids these attacks.