

# RFID and Mediamatic Lab applications

An interview with Michel Langendijk  
Mediamatic Lab  
<http://www.mediamatic.nl>



## What is Mediamatic Lab?

Mediamatic foundation is a cultural organization working on new media, art and society. We organize exhibitions, lectures, workshops and projects. We receive funding from several Cultural Funds and from the Dutch government. Mediamatic Lab is our sister organization who develops websites and new media tools. Together we are Mediamatic.

**RFID technology is usually related to topics as Asset Tracking, Supply Chain, IT Infrastructure, etc. How do you use this technology in your laboratory? And why have you used it in your artistic or cultural experiences?**

At Mediamatic we always play with new technologies and experience; to know how it influences our lives and how on the other hand our cultural practice can influence technology. RFID is a good example. It is indeed used in logistic processes. For the last five years or so we have experimented using it in a totally other context. RFID is an interesting technology to link the online world with physical objects, space and people. A reason why we work on this is the fact that when we developed social network websites for our clients we started to think how we can connect the virtual social networks with real people. To put it differently how can we connect the online with the offline world?



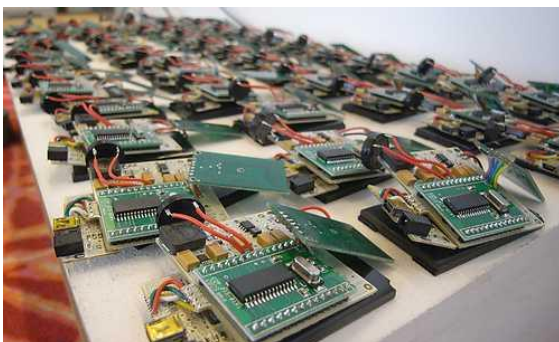
Over the past years we have organized a number of workshops on The Internet of Things, and also our annual Social RFID Hackercamp. This is a 5 day intensive Dev Camps for which we invite more or less 30 artists, designers, interaction designers, people working with robots, coders etc. Their goal is to develop new engaging installations, in just 5 days. The Hackercamp took place during a big new media festival called PICNIC. All the visitors (>2000 people) have a profile on the [picnicnetwork.org](http://picnicnetwork.org) website. At the registration desk of PICNIC they receive a free RFID tag which is connected to their profile. On the festival they can use this so-called ikTag (in English it would be translated as me tag, or iTag) to activate different installations such as the:



- Friend Drink Station.
- ikRun (running game where you start and finish with the ikTag, and a finish photo with time will be included on the profile).
- ikWin (Google Battle), two players step in two scissor lifts, the ikTag is used to activate the machine, it will search the number of hits on Google. The more hits you have, the higher you go.



- ikCam, use the ikTag to make a picture or group portrait that is instantly uploaded to your online profile
- ikPoll, use the ikTag as a mood polling station (how do you feel / what do you think of the last speaker / etc..) or to add keywords to your profile
- Friend Drink Station. If you meet a new person at, let's say a conference, you can go to this station, swipe your ikTag and it will do three things: 1) connect the two people in the social network as friends 2) print a paper with the 'visiting cards', for you to exchange 3) a coupon for a free beer.



### **Can you talk us about your experience with iPod and RFID sticker?**

The ikPod (a combination of a iPod with an RFID reader) is a new cultural tool we have developed at Mediamatic Lab. It enables visitors of a museum to access online information (audio, photographs, webpages) while walking through

the museum. RFID stickers can be placed under information signs or in objects. The RFID sticker is linked to an URL. When you click on the ikPod you can watch or listen to the information.

**Which kind of future can you imagine for RFID cultural experiences?**

Vast possibilities. We will have another Social RFID Hackercamp coming up in autumn. It is always surprising what new ideas and prototypes are thought up by the participants.

**Do you think the Internet of things can encourage innovative publishing projects?**

It encourages social media as it makes it easier for people to publish their own content.

