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Wisconsin Company Plans NFC Chip Implant Party

Three Square Market expects about 80 people to have NFC chips inserted between their thumb and forefinger to provide NFC-enabled access control, as well as the ability to select and pay for goods from the company's micro markets.

By Claire Swedberg

Tags: [NFC](#), [Payment Systems](#), [Retail](#), [Security and Access Control](#)

Jul 27, 2017—[Radio frequency identification chip](#) implants for humans have been a subject of discussion and some controversy for years, with limited pilots conducted in part of Europe and in the United States. More recently, larger deployments of hundreds of individuals, rather than dozens, have taken place across Europe. Now, one company in Wisconsin is taking part in that same effort.

Self-service store (micro market) company [Three Square Market](#) (32M) will provide voluntary [chip](#) implants for its employees and members of the public this summer that will allow workers to access the firm's facility and office spaces. Members of the public are banking on future applications using Near Field Communication ([NFC](#)) technology that could provide them a variety of benefits that otherwise would require an ID badge.



32M's Todd Westby

32M is planning an inaugural [chip](#) implanting party at its office in River Falls, Wisc., on Aug. 1, using 13.56 MHz [NFC](#) microchips compliant with the [ISO 14443](#) standard, from Swedish technology company [Biohax International](#). The company is also using Biohax's software-development kit (SDK) to manage the data linked to each [chip](#) ID, says Todd Westby, 32M's president. This is the first of what the firm expects to be monthly events to implant the chips in those who want the technology.

Three Square Market was founded in 1997 to provide kiosks and micro markets so that people such as company employees in break rooms can access convenience-style food from shelf and cold-storage units and then be billed accordingly. This serves as an alternative to vending machines, the company explains, with better selection and more fresh food.

32M has offered its products with several payment options throughout the years, including an ID badge with [NFC](#) or other wireless technology to identify an individual. In some cases, employees simply pay with a credit card, or with a thumbprint scan.

The company has installed approximately 2,100 micro markets in the United States and 20 other countries around the world since it began offering them four years ago. Westby learned of Biohax's implant technology about a year ago, which he determined would be more convenient than carrying a credit or ID card.