

A Wisconsin company will let employees use microchip implants to buy snacks and open doors

By [Adi Robertson](#) | [@thedextriarchy](#) | Jul 24, 2017, 10:42am EDT



Michale Shane / The Verge

A Wisconsin company called Three Square Market is [going to offer](#) employees implantable chips to open doors, buy snacks, log in to computers, and use office equipment like copy machines. Participating employees will have the chips, which use near field communication (NFC) technology, implanted between their thumb and forefinger. It's an extension of the long-running implantable RFID chip business, based on a partnership with Swedish company Biohax International. The vending kiosk company, also known as 32M, will "chip" employees at a party on August 1st. (According to an email to *The Verge*, chips and salsa will be served as snacks.) Around 50 people are supposedly getting the optional implants.

NFC chips are already used in a couple of workplaces in Europe; *The Los Angeles Times* reported on [startup workspace Epicenter's](#) chip program earlier this year. In the US, installing them is also a form of simple biohacking. They're essentially an extension of the chips you'd find in contactless smart cards or microchipped pets: passive devices that store very small amounts of information. A Swedish rail company [also lets people](#) use implants as a substitute for fare cards. 32M CEO Todd Westby is clearly trying to head off misunderstandings and paranoia [by saying that](#) they contain "no GPS tracking at all" — because again, it's comparable to an office keycard here.

Chip implants are far from common, and although Westby speculates on a future where RFID chip technology is used for "your passport, public transit, all purchasing opportunities," a lot of people might prefer those chips in [the form of jewelry](#) or a smartphone component. In an office environment, employers can already monitor most of the data that they could collect through these chips, but in a larger environment, a device you couldn't easily remove could raise privacy concerns. Still, this is a good sign for biohacking enthusiasts who are already interested in the tech; I have an NFC chip, for example, that I've been trying fruitlessly to use as an office keycard for years. The US has also been [lagging behind Europe](#) on adopting this kind of tech, so it's cool to see it make its way to an American company — even if it's mostly an interesting experiment on both continents.