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News

Infineon to Supply Security Chips for U.S. Passports

Infineon Technologies AG has announced that it had won a contract from the U.S. government to supply its integrated circuit technology for a new electronic passport system. The government is planning to start issuing the passports to its citizens by the end of the year, with about 15 million electronics passports in the first year.

Designed to facilitate international travel by allowing automatic identity verification, faster immigration inspections and greater border protection and security, the new passports include a computer chip in the back cover that securely stores the same information that is printed on the document.

Germany, Hong Kong, Norway and Sweden are also using Infineon's security chip for their electronic passport systems. Infineon said that out of almost 300 million Americans an estimated 67 million held a U.S. passport. In Germany there were about 24 million passports. Worldwide there are currently about 900 million passports, with an estimated 125 million being issued or exchanged every year, the company said.

These passports are formulated to provide better security than the conventional ones. However, there have been many speculations questioning the security of these passports.

According to a German Scientist, Lukas Grunwald, the data, stored on RFID chips, could be copied on to blank chips which could then be used in fake passports.

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