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i-technology



A mobile phone is displayed with Visa payment platform at a trade show in Barcelona, Spain. Phones that can be used to pay for things, much like credit cards have been a dream of the wireless industry for years.

Cell Phones turned into 'Electronic Wallets'

Tickets, coupons among uses for tap-to-pay phones

(AP) -- Cell phones are usually used to communicate with people far away. This year, they'll get the ability to do the opposite: communicate with things that are close enough to touch.

It may not sound immediately useful, but phones will get some surprising capabilities with the addition of chips for so-called Near Field Communications, a wireless technology with a range intentionally limited to just a few inches.

The phones will be able to talk to payment terminals designed for "smart cards," replacing credit and debit cards. They could be used as mass transit passes. You could tap two phones together to exchange contact information.

Or you could tap a "smart tag" on a poster, product or sticker to get your phone to do something, such

as retrieving information from the Internet or placing a call to the product's customer support line.

The industry has been talking about including NFC in phones for years, mainly to turn them into "electronic wallets."

But at the world's largest cell-phone trade show, held last week in Barcelona, Spain, it was clear that the log-jam has loosened, in part because NFC chips are now cheaper. Millions of NFC-equipped phones will be in consumer hands in the U.S. and Europe before the end of the year.

NFC turns the limitation of short-range communications into an advantage. When an NFC terminal senses an NFC-equipped phone, it knows that's because the user is holding it right up close and wants to interact in some way — for instance, paying for a can of Coke.

In stores, phones with NFC could be popular if they do more than merely replace a wallet of credit and debit cards. They could help merchants track and reward loyal customers, replacing both loyalty cards and printed coupons.

The PORTLAND WATER BUREAU

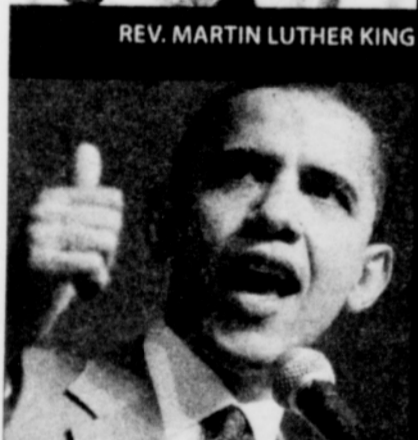
CELEBRATES

Black History Month

FEBRUARY 2011



REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING



PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA



LENA HORNE



OPRAH WINFREY

In 1926, African American historian Carter G. Woodson single-handedly pioneered the celebration of "Negro History Week", for the second week in February, to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The week was later extended to the full month of February and renamed Black History Month.



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Randy Leonard, Commissioner
David G. Shaff, Administrator

Solar Plant Jobs Cheered

Gov. Kitzhaber cheered an announcement Thursday by U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu of a conditional commitment to SoloPower, Inc. for a \$197 million loan guarantee to support the retrofit of an existing building and installation of additional equipment to operate a thin-film solar panel manufacturing facility in Wilsonville.

When completed and at full capacity, the facility is expected to

produce over 400 megawatts of flexible photovoltaic panels annually. According to SoloPower estimates, the project will create approximately 500 permanent jobs and 270 construction jobs.

"SoloPower is bringing exactly the kind of new jobs Oregon needs," said Kitzhaber. "We are continuing on the path toward establishing a stronger clean technology manufacturing base in Oregon."