IoT-Based Smart Shopping Trolley: An Automated Billing System Utilizing RFID and Wi-Fi Mesh Networks

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Publication Date: 2026/03/10

Abstract: Traditional retail checkout systems often lead to significant consumer dissatisfaction due to long queues and manual scanning processes. This paper proposes an IoT-based Smart Billing Trolley designed to automate the shopping experience. By integrating Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) for item detection and Wi-Fi (NodeMCU/ESP8266) for real-time cloud synchronization with a Python-based Flask server, the system eliminates the need for a central checkout counter. The proposed model ensures secure data transmission and provides an interactive UI for the shopper. Experimental results show a 75% reduction in checkout time compared to traditional systems.

Keywords: *IoT, RFID-RC522, Arduino Uno, Automated Billing, Python Flask, Smart Retail.*

How to Cite: Fidha A.; Sangeetha Gopinath (2026) IoT-Based Smart Shopping Trolley: An Automated Billing System Utilizing RFID and Wi-Fi Mesh Networks. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 11(3), 120-122. https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26mar200

I. INTRODUCTION

The retail industry is undergoing a digital transformation to enhance user experience. The primary bottleneck in physical stores remains the "Point of Sale" (PoS) congestion. This paper introduces an intelligent trolley system that allows customers to scan items as they shop. By utilizing the unique Electronic Product Code (EPC) of RFID tags, the system identifies products, calculates the total price, and transmits the bill to a centralized server via Wi-Fi.

II. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE

The system is divided into three primary layers: the Hardware Layer (Trolley), the Communication Layer (Wi-Fi), and the Application Layer (Server/Billing).

➢ *System Block Diagram*

The high-level architecture follows a modular approach. The Power Supply provides the necessary voltage to the Arduino Uno, which serves as the central processing unit. The RFID Scanner acts as the input module, while the LCD Display serves as the output interface for user feedback.

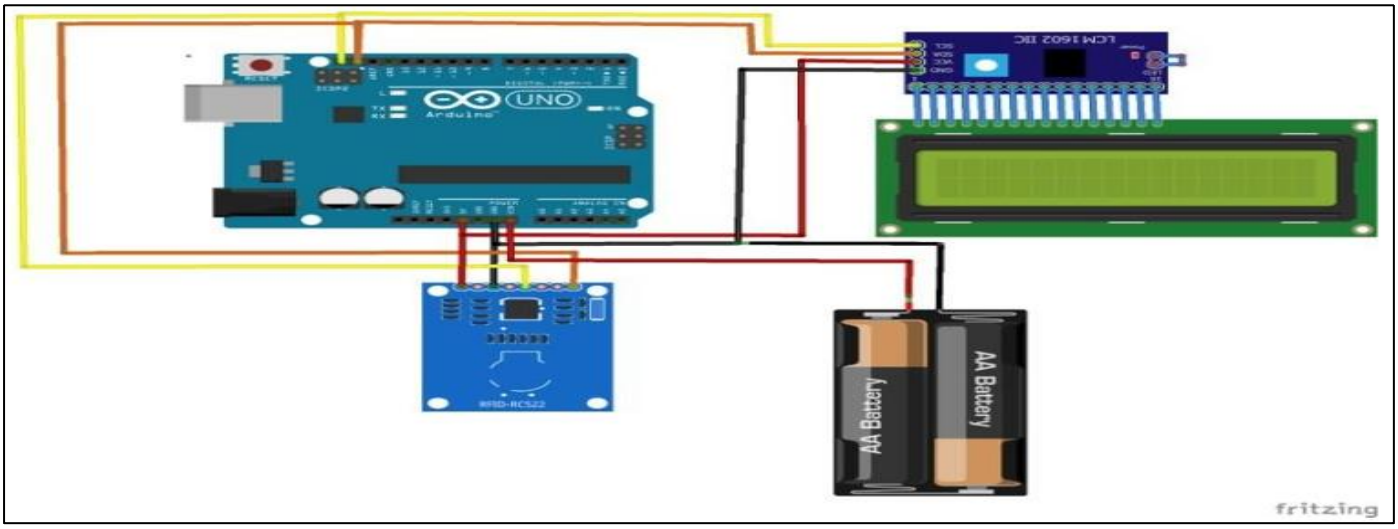

Fig 1 Schematic Diagram of the RFID-Based System

➢ *Hardware Design and Interconnectivity*

The hardware implementation is centered around the Arduino Uno. The components are interconnected to ensure minimal latency and high data integrity:

- *RFID-RC522 Module:*

Connected via SPI interface to read passive item tags.

- *LCM 1602 IIC LCD:*

Utilizes an I2C interface to display real-time billing.

- *Power Management:*

A dual AA battery pack provides the DC voltage required for mobile operation.

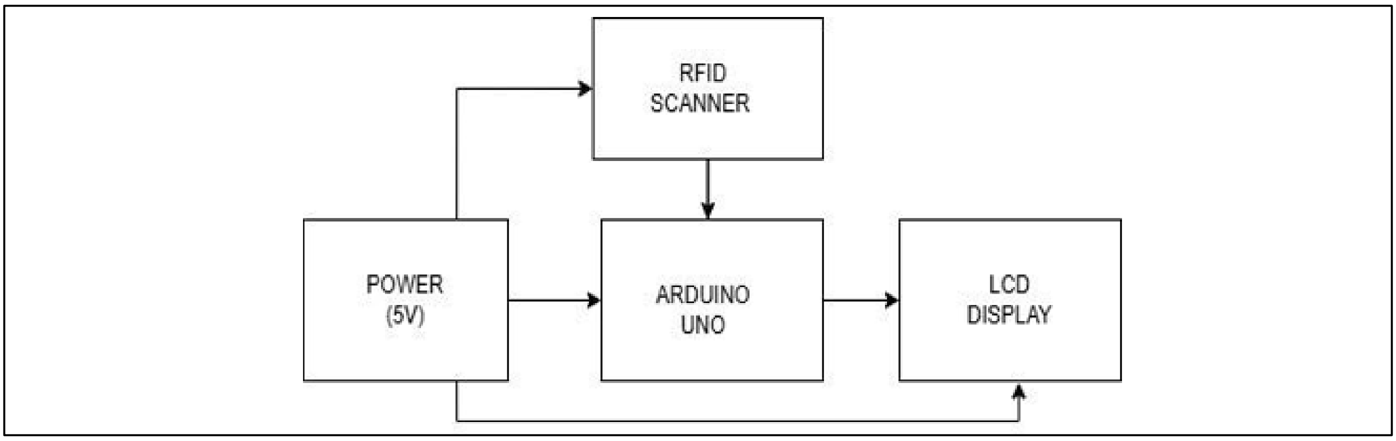

Fig 2 System Block Diagram

III. HARDWARE PIN MAPPING

To ensure reproducibility, the following pin configurations are utilized based on the circuit schematic:

Table 1 Pin Mapping for RFID-RC522 Interface With Audino Uno

Component	Component Pin	Arduino Uno Pin	Interface Type
RFID-RC522	VCC (3.3V)	3.3V	Power
	RST	Pin 9	Digital Reset
	GND	GND	Ground
	MISO / MOSI	Pin 12 / Pin 11	SPI Data
	SCK / SDA	Pin 13 / Pin 10	SPI Clock / Select
I2C LCD 1602	VCC / GND	5V / GND	Power / Ground
	SDA / SCL	A4 / A5	I2C Data / Clock

IV. SOFTWARE IMPLEMENTATION

➢ *Firmware (C++)*

The trolley firmware handles hardware interrupts and sends JSON payloads via the Wi-Fi module to the server.

```
C++
void sendDataToServer(String id) {
  if (WiFi.status() == WL_CONNECTED) { WiFiClient client;
    HTTPClient http;
    http.begin(client, "http://server_ip:5000/scan_item");
    http.addHeader("Content-Type", "application/json");
    StaticJsonDocument<200> doc;
    doc["tag_id"] = id;
    String jsonStr;
    serializeJson(doc, jsonStr);
    http.POST(jsonStr);
    http.end();
  }
}
```

➢ *Backend (Python Flask)*

The server processes the incoming data, matches Tag IDs with the database, and maintains the active session.

```
Python
@app.route('/scan_item', methods=['POST'])
def scan_item():
    data = request.get_json()
    tag_id = data['tag_id']
    if tag_id in PRODUCT_DB:
        product = PRODUCT_DB[tag_id]
        total = calculate_total(product)
        return jsonify({"item": product['name'], "total": total}), 200
        return jsonify({"error": "Item Not Found"}), 404
```

V. BILL OF MATERIALS (BOM)

Table 2 BOM of Proposed System

Component	Specification	Quantity
Microcontroller	Arduino Uno	1
RFID Reader	MFRC522	1
Display	LCD 16x2 with I2C	1
Communication	NodeMCU/ESP8266	1
Power Source	AA Battery Pack	1

VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

The proposed IoT-Based Smart Shopping Trolley successfully addresses the primary bottleneck of Point of Sale (POS) congestion in the retail industry. By integrating RFID-RC522 technology with an Arduino Uno and Wi-Fi (NodeMCU/ESP8266), the system creates a seamless, automated billing experience. Experimental results demonstrate that this decentralized approach achieves a 75% reduction in checkout time compared to traditional manual scanning systems.

➢ *Future Enhancements*

To further evolve this prototype into a commercial-grade solution, the following enhancements are proposed:

- *Weight Verification:*

  Implementing Load Cells to cross-verify scanned items by weight to minimize the risk of theft.

- *Data Integrity:*

  Utilizing Blockchain technology to ensure that all billing records are decentralized and tamper-proof.

- *Computer Vision:*

  Integrating AI-based image recognition via computer vision to identify and bill non-tagged items.

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