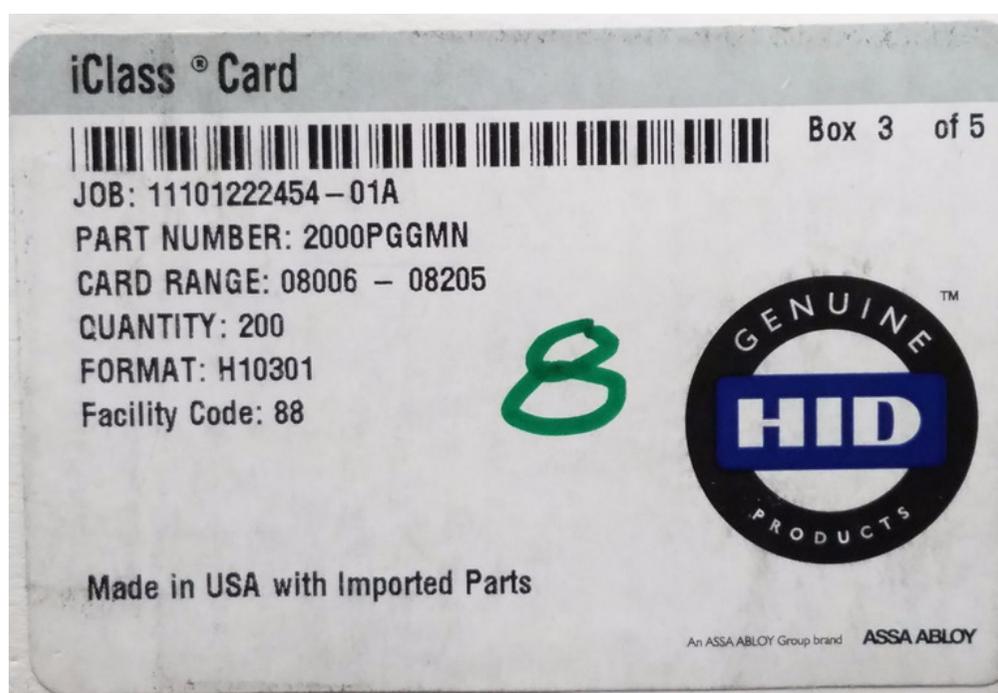




**WHAT CARD ARE
YOU USING?**

How many times have you tried to quote a card only to find out that the customer has no idea of the manufacturer, format or even frequency of their credential? Oftentimes it can be challenging because the original box or label is not available or the person who typically orders the cards is no longer with the company. Here are a few suggestions to help “sleuth” out the card type and format and several questions to ask.

Find a Box Label or Previous Order



This is your best option if indeed the box label is from the original manufacturer. Most often you will have the part number, format name, facility code (if the format supports this) and card range. This will give you everything you need to place an order. Some manufacturers like HID print their sales order numbers directly on the card which is the second best option. We can research this sales order number and at least verify the part number and confirm if it is an open format. This number typically is an 8 – 10 digit number followed by a -1 or -1a printed in a small font along the bottom of the card.

No Information is Available

If the customer is just holding a white plastic card, then you have some work to do. Start with asking these questions...

Is the card a thicker, clamshell-style card or is it thinner and glossy to work with a photo ID printer? If it is the thinner graphics quality style, also find out if it has a mag stripe on the back too. You will also want to check to see if it needs to be the composite (more durable and required for high-temp printers). If it is a credential that is smaller and designed to go on your keychain then this will be pretty evident and is a keyfob style.

What type of reader does the card work with? Try to get the exact part number of the reader as this will help determine if it is a low (125K) frequency or high frequency (13.56) reader and we can determine the manufacturer. If they do not know the part number of the reader, they may have to temporarily remove it from the wall to look at the manufacturer's part number on the backplate. This is critical to make sure that the new card order works with the existing readers (because not all low frequency readers are interchangeable with each manufacturer).

If the reader is the high frequency type, then we will have to try and determine the memory size of the card too (and possibly the most challenging). If they are using the card for just access control and no other functions, it most likely is a 2K minimum memory card. If they are using the card to support other applications such as fingerprint storage, debit/credit systems to store money, etc., it probably is a 16K or higher memory card.

Determining Card Format

If you have the base part of the card pretty much figured out, then there are still questions that need answers in order to quote and supply the correct card. If the customer knows that it is an open format such as 26 bit (H10301), then you only need the facility code and next starting number. At this point it is also helpful to confirm if the internal number matches the external one or whether they have an off-set.

The other common open format is the 37 bit H10302 where there is no facility code and the next available number is provided by the manufacturer.

This one can be a little tricky in that the card number can be over 10 digits long and if your access control system will not support this, you must order it with the stipulation that the number cannot exceed "X" number of digits. If the customer knows that they are using a Corporate 1000 format, then this is a customer-controlled format and they can authorize any company to purchase on their behalf by simply completing a Corporate 1000 Format Change form. There is an extra fee for this service as the manufacturer keeps track of the programmed numbers used as to avoid duplication. One other suggestion is to look within the access control system typically under cardholders or where the devices are defined to see if they reference a format name.

When All Else Fails

If the customer just cannot determine their format or frequency, you can send the card to our main office to have us test it internally. It is not 100% but we have been pretty successful over the last 25 plus years. Oftentimes customers

assume they do not have options for getting competitive card quotes or just get complacent. We always appreciate the opportunity to provide pricing on any of your supplies and typically find we can offer a tremendous savings. Please feel free to contact us at 1-800-332-1013 or email us at sales@access-specialties.com.

