

A new foundation for 1-D barcode reading: Hotbars image analysis technology

Submitted by btomasino on Mon, 07/02/2012 - 9:00am Cognex



If contemporary technology has a grand theme, it is that eventually digital will replace analog, and solid state will replace mechanical. Whether it be music or video, publishing or photography, telecommunications or engine control, the story is similar. Mechanical, analog machines have been around for decades, sometimes centuries. They are mature technologies—the kinks have been worked out, the costs have been squeezed as much as possible, the strengths and weaknesses are well understood. The newer solid state, digital challengers at first offer more promise than performance, but with continued innovation and development they come to dominate the market.

So it will be with linear barcode readers. The market is currently dominated by mature, opto-mechanical laser scanners. The weaknesses of laser scanners, however, as also well known. When a new image analysis system is combined with advances in image formation including high-intensity LEDs, liquid lenses and megapixel sensors, the result is a mature barcode reader that delivers the promise of solid-state, digital technology while not yielding performance to opto-mechanical laser scanners

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