

# **How to Choose the Right Bar Code Scanner**

## **Bar Code Wand or Light Pen**

The light pen must make direct contact with the bar code and the tip has to move smoothly across the entire bar code. It is perfect for scanning a single bar code among many that may be present on a sheet.

## **CCD (Charged Coupled Device)**

A CCD has a “mouth” that emits and receives light using a field of cells (similar to a video camera). The mouth must be wider than the bar code it is scanning. Simply place the glowing mouth of the scanner over the bar code for an incredibly fast and easy read. No contact needed. These scanners can even read poorly printed bar codes.

## **Laser Scanner**

For many years, lasers have been considered “top of the line” for bar code readers. Laser scanners emit a sharp red beam of light which can be read from longer distances than the CCD. This scanner only needs to retrieve a linear view of all of the bars in the bar code for an instant read. It is easy to use, quick and versatile. Some laser scanners have multiple beams. Omni-directional laser scanners emit beams in different directions to allow for the reading of bar codes in different orientations.

## **Linear Imager**

High resolution optics capture the complete bar code. Five times faster than CCDs and lasers, linear imagers can scan five to six inches away from the bar code. With no moving parts and a body that is virtually unbreakable, linear imagers are built to last and are a great value over time.