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Symbol LS9203 Review

Product: LS9203
Manufacturer: Symbol
Type: Omnidirectional Scanner
Support: 2 Year warranty through Symbol; Lifetime support through POSGuys.com

The Symbol LS9203 is an omnidirectional scanner designed primarily for hands-free scanning. It is in the same family as the LS9208, but lacks the raster mode and adjustable base.

Typical uses and environments:
The fast reading and hands-free scanning method for the LS9203 make it ideal for high volume retail, grocery, or any locations where individual customers may purchase many items.

Standard Features:
The LS9203 comes standard with base and interface cable, with no additional configuration required to send data, making for an easy, plug and play experience. A green LED on the top of the unit lights up when powered, and will blink on successful scans. The omnidirectional scan pattern allows the scanner to read barcodes of any orientation, easing the scanning process.

Unique Features and Advantages:
Like the LS9208, the LS9203 features full light immunity, allowing it to perform well in locations where daylight may shine onto the scanning path. It also has the same easy access release clasp as the LS9208, making cable or scanner replacement incredibly easy.

Drawbacks:
Unfortunately, there are a few features missing from the LS9203 that would let it stand out from other omnidirectional scanners. The base is not adjustable and forces the beam to shine parallel to the counter, which could cause problems when sliding products across counter space. The lack of a secondary scan pattern also causes problems when scanning barcodes densely populated on an item.

Performance Testing:
To determine the scanning prowess of the Symbol LS9203, we ran it through a series of tests designed to determine the optimal focal range, ability to scan dense, wide, damaged, or differently colored barcodes, as well as the scanners resistance to light. Our test determined the scanner to fall in line with the average requirements for an omnidirectional scanner.

The optimal scan range for the LS9203 is from contact to 9" away from a standard UPC-A barcode, average for scanning barcodes on counter in a point of sale environment. When scanning damaged & worn barcodes, the LS9203's multiline mode helped in getting a good read, and it was able to successfully scan all but one of our damaged barcodes. The LS9203's full light immunity really helps differentiate it from the rest of class, and could easily scan in full daylight or with a 150W lamp nearly blocking the barcode from view.

One of the drawbacks of the LS9203 is high density and low density scanning. The densest barcode we could scan was 8.8 mil, less dense than is found on many smaller products. The maximum scan range is 9", putting the scanner outside of the optimal scan range when scanning barcodes 4" or wider.

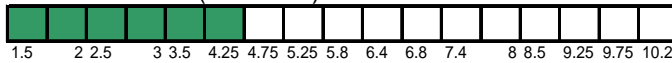A breakdown of the Symbol LS9203 capabilities is listed in table and graph form below.

Scanner Performance Testing

Scan Range (Depth of Field)

| 1" | 5" | 10" | 15" | 19" |

Standard Scan Range for retail environments

Wide Barcodes (In Inches)

1.5 2 2.5 3 3.5 4.25 4.75 5.25 5.8 6.4 6.8 7.4 8 8.5 9.25 9.75 10.2

Scans above standard retail barcode sizes

High Density Barcodes (In Mil)

2.1 3.8 5.8 7.1 8.8 11 12 14 16 17 22 27 32 37 42 48 53 58 68 84

Has difficulty with high density and very low density barcodes, but good with retail

Poor Quality Barcodes*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

Could read almost every damaged barcode. Excellent for rough retail use

Resistance to Light

Complete Darkness   Retail Lighting Cloudy   Direct Sunlight
          Indoor   Outdoor
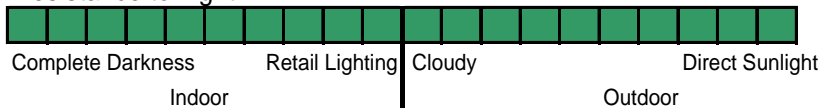
Full light immunity, excellent compared to class

1D Results

Highest Density Barcode Scanned	9 mil	Average
Widest Barcode Scanned	120.65mm	Average
Shortest Barcode Scanned	38 mm	Good
Range Ideal Conditions (Standard 100% UPC-A)	Contact – 9 inches	Average
Scratched Barcode	3 of 3	Good
Worn Barcode	2 of 3	Good
Warped Barcode	2 of 2	Good
Curved Barcode	2 of 2	Good
Multiple Barcodes in close proximity	Difficult to get accurate read	Average
Scan through plastic layers	4 Layers	Good
Multicolored Barcodes Successfully Scanned	Blue, Orange, Black on Brown, Green	Good
Multicolored Barcodes Not Scanned	Red, Yellow, Black on Dark Grey	Average
Simulated Sunlight Test	Fully Light Immune	Excellent

Conclusion:
The Symbol LS9203 is a solid omnidirectional scanner. Unfortunately, it lacks many features of the LS9208, to the point that the LS9208 would be a better and more versatile solution. If you already have an in-counter barcode scanner and are looking for a secondary scanner to increase scannable sides, the LS9203 would be a good choice. Otherwise, the Symbol LS9208 provides many more features and is a good solution for grocery environments looking for a first scanner.

To Purchase this product, go to the Symbol LS9203 page.

To see our complete line of barcode scanners, visit our Barcode Scanners section.

For Additional Reviews, visit our Product Reviews page.

Other Symbol Products	Ideal Setting	Description
LS9203	Grocery, high volume retail	Lower-cost counterpart to LS9208, also light immune. Only features one scan mode and lacks adjustable-tilt base
LS9208	Grocery, high volume retail	The LS9208 features two scan modes, including omnidirectional rasterizing mode and single line. Also features an adjustable tilt base.
LS7708	Grocery, high volume retail	Stationary scanner, designed for high first-pass read rate

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