



First Look report: Paradigm Imaging ImagePRO GX 56 Wide format Scanner

First Look at Paradigm Imaging ImagePRO GX 56 Series of Wide-Format Scanners

Paradigm expands its ImagePRO series with new 56" wide format Scanners. The ImagePRO GX 56 series add six new models to the market further bolstering Paradigm Imaging Group as the most successful scanner distributor in the US & Canadian market. The new Gx+ 56 scanners target the specialist reprographics, copy shop, graphic arts, GIS, and, of course, the AEC/CAD markets. The series also addresses needs of the aeronautical and automobile segments, which scan oversized documents. The market for 50"+ scanners is relatively small and represents 5%-8% of the total wide-format scanner market. The new imagePRO GX 56 scanner series is an OEM product from Colortrac based on Colortrac's GX+ 56 scanners.



The Paradigm Imaging Group ImagePRO Gx 56 scanner is among the widest scanner on the market today.

The scanners are available in six different models — three GX 56 and three GXT 56 models. All of the models are identical in specifications and performance; however the three T (Thick) 56 models can scan thick originals up to 0.8" while the three other models are limited to a 0.08" thickness. What is new is that Paradigm Imaging made the scanner 2" wider than the industry standard of 54" and also added white LED instead of the traditional fluorescent lamp used in



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Paradigm's GX 42 series CCD-based scanners. Finally this series is the first to reach a true optical resolution of 600 dpi for the extra-wide scanner segment over 50".

| Features – Models | GX 56m GXT 56m | GX 56c GXT 56c | GX 56e GXT 56e |
|--------------------------|--|---------------------|-------------------|
| Scan Width | 56" | 56" | 56" |
| Monochrome Speed @200dpi | 9 ips | 9 ips | 9 ips |
| Color Speed @200dpi | N.A. | 1.5 ips | 3 ips |
| Optical Resolution | 600 dpi | 600 dpi | 600 dpi |
| Scanning Technology | CCD | CCD | CCD |
| Max Media Thickness | 0.08"/0.8"(T) | 0.08"/0.8"(T) | 0.08"/0.8"(T) |
| Field Upgradable | \$2,000 to –c model \$4,000 to –e model | \$2,000 to –e model | No |
| Warranty | 2 years on-site | 2 years on-site | 2 years on-site |
| Price* | \$20,995/22,995 | \$22,995/24,995 | \$24,995/26,995 |

*Price include the scanner stand. The optional ScanWorks scanning software is priced at \$695.

Features and Technology

The new 56+ series breaks with the company's traditional use of a fluorescent lamp, instead using a bright white LED light as the illumination source. LED has a much longer lifetime and can typically work for 50,000 operational hours, compared to approximately 4,000 hours for a fluorescent lamp. This means less maintenance cost over the useful lifespan of a scanner. Another benefit in these environmentally friendly times is that LED lights use considerably less energy, and the ImagePRO 56+ scanner is Energy Star certified, using less than 5W in standby mode and approximately 40W in normal operations.

Like its other models, the ImagePRO GX 56 series comes standard both a USB 2.0 interface and a 1 Gigabit Ethernet connection that allows for maximum flexibility in the deployment of the scanner. The 1 Gigabit Ethernet is faster than the USB 2.0 interface and will be beneficial for scanning color documents at the maximum width of 56" because of the vast amount of color data that needs to be transmitted to the computer.

The GX 56 scanner series still uses face down scanning (where the document is fed into the scanner with the information on the bottom side). There is no quality difference when scanning face down or face up. The document still exits at the rear of the scanner.



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Internally the ImagePRO uses 48-bit color capture and can deliver the best 24-bit color in either raw RGB or sRGB. To scan a 56" wide document, ImagePRO GX 56 uses eight CCD cameras across the scan width in a rigid monocoque camera chassis to minimize distortions and misalignment due to temperature variations and torsion.

The new GX 56 is rated at 9 ips monochrome scanning speed and between 0-3 ips in color, depending on the scanner model, with an optical resolution of 600 dpi and a maximum interpolated resolution of 9,600 dpi — more than enough for any customer needs. The scanner comes in three different models that can be field upgraded.

Available Models

The entry model is the GX 56m — a monochrome scanner for only \$20,995, which includes a 2 years, on-site warranty and scanner stand. The on-site warranty can be expanded for an additional annual fee. The GX 56c is a color entry-level scanner priced at \$22,995, and finally the GX 56e is \$24,950. The equivalent T models are capable of scanning thick media and cost an additional \$2,000 on top of the base price for these models.

The GX 56 series is considerably faster for monochrome scanning than the ImagePRO series previous top model, the GX 42 42" scanner. While 9"/sec is not the fastest time in the market, it is still more than adequate for the vast majority of customers. The difference between the m, c, and e models is no color scanning capability (m model), fast color scanning at 1.5"/sec (c model), and faster color scanning at 3"/sec (e model). The GX 56 scanners come standard with the SmartLF scanning software for easy scan-to-file and scan-to-print operations. The SmartLF software is entry-level software, and more professional users will most likely add the ImagePRO ScanWorks software with added features and more control over the scanning process.

The GX 56 series has the optional professional scanning software, ScanWorks, for additional \$695.

Market Position

Paradigm now offers a full product line with 40", 42" and 56" wide scanners in there ImagePRO series. As with previous ImagePRO scanners it follows the same strategy of offering six different models per scan width in the GX 56 series. Three of the models can scan thick media, and the other three can scan thin media for \$2,000 less. Not all customers need thick media capability, and it is wise for Paradigm Imaging to give the customer a choice.

By offering six different 56" wide scanner models, Paradigm Imaging offers more choices than its competitors as well as the flexibility of an easy upgrade path



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between the different models. Furthermore Paradigm Imaging also leads in highest optical resolution, widest scanner capability, and a fast 1 Gigabit Ethernet connection among the class of 50"+ wide scanners.

Stanley Adams Group Recommendations

Paradigm Imaging set a new standard to lower the price level of 50"+ scanners, which has long been regarded as an overpriced segment. We certainly also welcome more competition in the 50"+ segment, and the ImagePRO GX 56 models will clearly rock the boat. The new price level standard clearly benefits the buyers, giving them more value for their money. Even that the ImagePRO is priced slightly higher than Colortrac equivalent scanner series you get a scanner stand and two years on-site warranty included for peace of mind.

The differences in a scanning width of 56" versus the industry standard of 54" and a 600 dpi optical resolution versus competitors' approximately 500 dpi are not significant for the majority of customers, since scanning needs are usually satisfied with a scanning resolution at or below 500 dpi. However the ImagePRO GX 56 series should have an extra edge in a very competitive market given the environmental benefits, low power consumption, 1 Gigabit Ethernet connection, the use of a long-lasting LED illumination source and of course the build in two years on-site warranty.

| Pro | Con |
|---|---|
| Two years on-site warranty | New scanner usually requires a ½ year to iron out all bugs. |
| Both Thick & Thin media scanning models | |
| New LED light source with 50,000+ operational hours and no warm-up time | |
| Energy Star compliant | |
| Gigabit interface | |

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About the Author

Henrik Vestermark is an independent consultant and professional who has worked in the wide-format scanner and printer industry since 1988. His expertise includes all aspects of the wide-format digital capture market, and particularly focuses on the wide-format scanner industry.