



INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY BLOG

Happy 50th Birthday to the Bar Code

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This month marks the 50th anniversary of the use of bar codes. The first bar code transaction occurred on June 26, 1974 when a pack of gum was purchased at a Marsh Supermarket in Troy, Ohio by Clyde Dawson, the head of research and development at Marsh. The first commercial bar code scanner was sold under the name Spectra-Physics Modal A and was developed by National Cash Register and Spectra Physics Inc. That first scanner, which sold for \$4000 (in 1974) was based on original work by Norman Woodland and Bernard Silver, the inventors of the bar code. Woodland and Silver applied for a patent to their "Classifying Apparatus and Method" in 1949 and were granted [US Pat. No. 2612994](#) on October 20, 1949. In the 50 years since its introduction, bar codes have become ubiquitous, and have found their way into all segments of our society. The Bar Code may be one of the many big "game changing" inventions of the 20th century.

If you have a game changing invention, or even just a modest improvement to something in existence, give our patent attorneys a call and find out how to get it protected.