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71 Applicant: **ALCATEL BUSINESS SYSTEMS LIMITED**
P.O. Box 3 South Street
Romford Essex, RM1 2AR (GB)

72 Inventor: **Herbert, Raymond John**
34 Stirling Avenue
Leigh-on-Sea Essex, SS9 3PP (GB)

74 Representative: **Loughrey, Richard Vivian Patrick et al**
HUGHES CLARK & CO 63 Lincoln's Inn Fields
London WC2A 3JU (GB)

54 **Printing of franking and the like on mail items.**

57 A franking machine system is disclosed in which mail items (24) such as envelopes or labels are treated with heat sensitive material and the franking machine 910,11) is provided with a thermal print head (18) to apply selectively heat to the sensitive material to produce a change in colour of the material and thereby print a franking impression (26) on the mail item (24). The thermal print head (18) may also print a destination address (23). The entire face or only predetermined areas (25) of the mail item (24) may be treated with sensitive material and if desired different areas (25a,25b) of the mail item (24) may be treated with material which is changed to different colours by the application of heat in order to produce images of different colours.

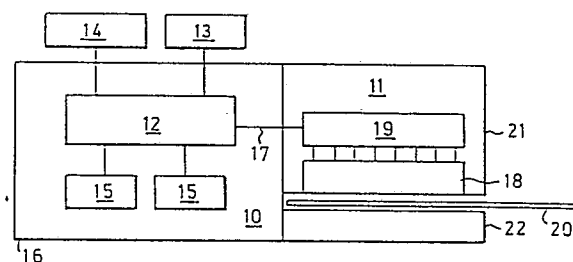


FIG.1.



EP 88 30 7948

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT							
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 4)				
X	WO-A-8 501 604 (TELUB) * Page 2, line 22 - page 5, line 16; figures *	1-8	G 07 B 17/00				
Y	---	9					
Y	EP-A-0 111 297 (TOSHIBA) * Abstract; page 1, line 1 - page 2, line 30; figures *	9					
A	EP-A-0 193 342 (TOKYO ELECTRIC) * Abstract; page 6, line 7 - page 8, line 2; figures; claims *	1-9					
A	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN, vol. 6, no. 23 (M-111)[901], 10th February 1982; & JP-A-56 142 093 (FUJI SHASHIN FILM K.K.) 06-11-1981 -----	9					
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.4)				
			G 07 B G 01 G B 07 C B 41 J B 41 M				
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims							
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 23-06-1989	Examiner MEYL D.				
<table border="0"><tr><td>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</td><td>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</td></tr><tr><td>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</td><td></td></tr></table>				CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS	T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document	
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