

(19)



Europäisches Patentamt  
European Patent Office  
Office européen des brevets



(11) Publication number:

**0 492 439 A3**

(12)

**EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**(21) Application number: **91121788.3**(51) Int. Cl.<sup>5</sup>: **G07B 17/02**(22) Date of filing: **19.12.91**(30) Priority: **19.12.90 US 629796**(43) Date of publication of application:  
**01.07.92 Bulletin 92/27**(84) Designated Contracting States:  
**CH DE FR GB LI**(88) Date of deferred publication of the search report:  
**05.08.92 Bulletin 92/32**(71) Applicant: **PITNEY BOWES INC.**  
**World Headquarters One Elmcroft**  
**Stamford Connecticut 06926-0700(US)**(72) Inventor: **Blackman, Fran E.**  
**125 Roanoke Avenue**  
**Fairfield, Connecticut 06430(US)**  
Inventor: **Collins, Jacqueline**  
**200 Woodmont Avenue, Apt. 116**  
**Bridgeport, Connecticut 06606(US)**  
Inventor: **Doeberl, Terrence M.**  
**111 Simpaug Turnpike**  
**West Redding, Connecticut 06896(US)**  
Inventor: **Wilson, Tracy S.**  
**17 Foran Road No. 80**  
**Milford, Connecticut 06460(US)**(74) Representative: **Ritter und Edler von Fischern,**  
**Bernhard, Dipl.-Ing. et al**  
**HOFFMANN - EITLE & PARTNER**  
**Arabellastrasse 4**  
**W-8000 München 81(DE)**(54) **User interface for a mail processing system.**

(57) A user interface system for an electronic postage meter mailing machine apparatus has a programmable microcontroller for controlling the hard and soft system functions of the postage meter mailing machine (1). A non-volatile memory stores data information and executable routines. A display (7) and a plurality of soft and hard keys 9,11,13,15 are provided. The soft keys (8) are aligned to a portion of the display (7). Stored in the NVM is a plurality of system screens for display on said visual display (7), each of said screens having a menu field having N columns and M rows, a data window field and a prompt field and having descriptors for each of said respective fields, a plurality of text strings, a plurality of graphic display run routines, and a plural-

ity of routines for enabling said soft keys and for identifying said respective subsequent screen. The microcontroller is programmed under the influence of a user program being programmed to identify a first screen and then execute a screen select routine comprising the steps of (a) getting the screen identified from said screen region of said memory and display on said display, (b) getting the text strings identified by said screen descriptor of said identified screen from said text region and displaying said text string in respective areas of said menu field of said screen, and enabling said respective soft key for said respective menu area, and (c) displaying dynamic information in the data window field of said screen and executing graphic routine.

**EP 0 492 439 A3**

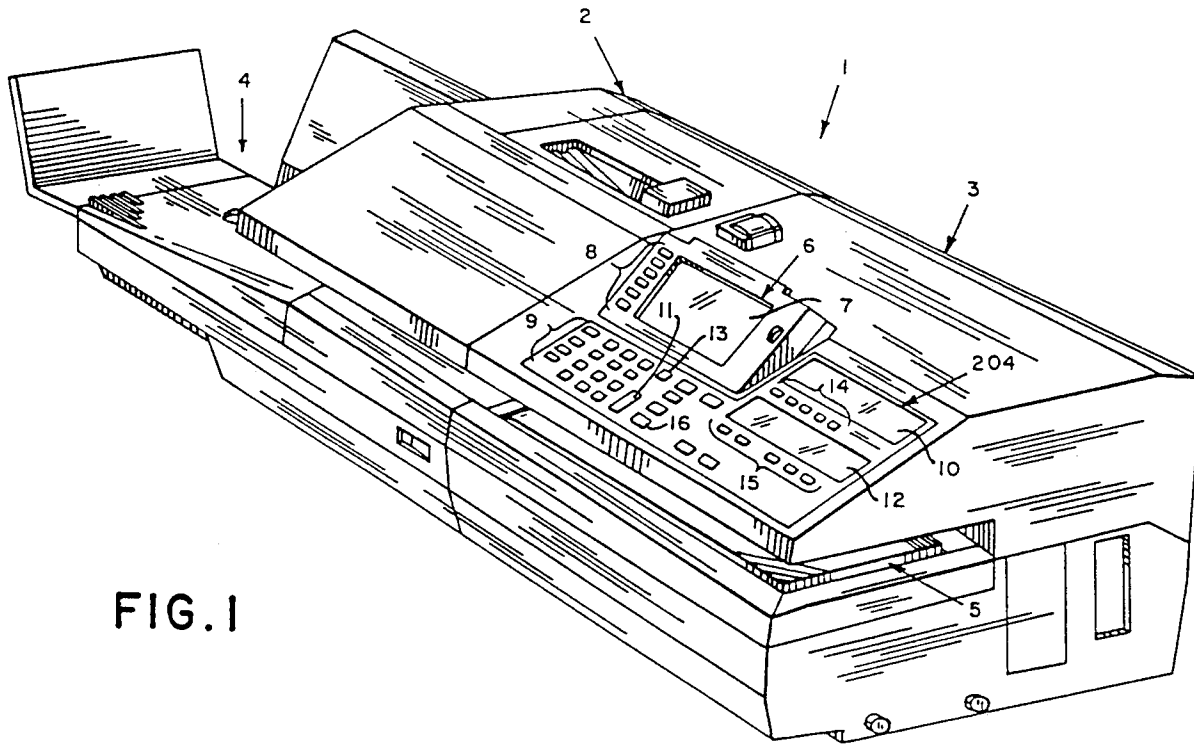


FIG. 1



European Patent  
Office

## EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 91 12 1788

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.5)
X	GB-A-2 119 992 (KABUSHIKI KAISHA) * page 6, line 67 - page 7, line 66 * * page 8, line 15 - line 110 * * page 10, line 94 - line 105; figures 13,16-21 *	1,2,4,11	G07B17/02
Y		6,7,9,12	
A		3,5,8,10	
	---		
Y	GB-A-2 132 138 (PITNEY BOWES) * page 3, line 7 - page 4, line 126; figures *	6,7,9,12	
A		1,4	
	---		
A	US-A-4 449 186 (KELLY ET AL.) * column 3, line 67 - column 4, line 68 * * column 103, line 34 - column 105, line 5; figures *	1-12	
	---		
A	EP-A-0 336 589 (W & T AVERY LTD) * page 2, column 2, line 5 - page 3, column 3, line 58; figures *	1,4,6-12	
	-----		
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
			G07B G07F G05B
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 05 JUNE 1992	Examiner RAKOTON DRAJADNA C.
<b>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</b> 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 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			