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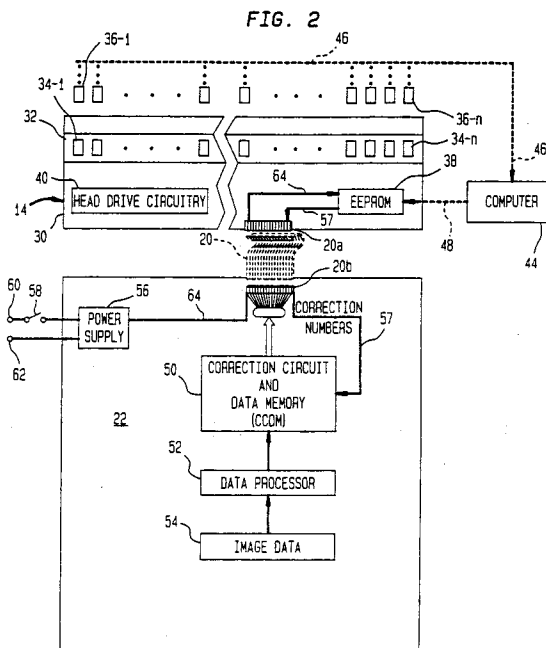
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**W-8000 München 22 (DE)**(54) **Thermal print head unit.**

(57) The invention provides a thermal printer with a removable print head unit (14) having a multitude of very small resistance heating elements (34-1....,34-n) for printing small dots or pixels (e.g., 300 pixels per inch) of an image. Minor variations in the printing characteristics of the multitude of individual head elements are electronically compensated for to achieve uniform print densities for that head unit (14). Print compensation data in the form of correction numbers respective to each resistance element of the print head are permanently stored in a low cost device, such as an electronically erasable programmable read only memory (EEPROM), which is furnished as an integral part of the removable head unit (14). Each such head unit is uniquely calibrated by its permanently stored correction numbers to achieve uniform printing action so that for all intents and purposes all such head units perform the same in any printer. Any head unit may be operated in a given thermal printer without further adjustment to the printer. When the printer is powered-up, the correction numbers unique to the head unit (14) then installed in the printer are automatically loaded into the high speed memory and compensation circuits of the printer. This arrangement greatly simplifies the replacement of the head unit of a printer in the field.

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## EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 92 11 8896

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	EP-A-0 421 806 (CANON K.K.) 10 April 1991	1,2,5,8	B41J2/36
A	* page 13, line 35 - page 14, line 8; figures 18,22 *	6,7	
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A	WO-A-9 114 577 (DOWTY MARITIME LTD.) 3 October 1991	1,5,8,9	
	* page 1, line 20 - page 2, line 16 *		
	* page 10, line 22 - page 11, line 3 *		
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A	DE-A-3 820 927 (MINOLTA CAMERA K.K.) 5 January 1989	4,6,9	
	* column 6, line 34 - line 64 *		
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 13 MAY 1993	Examiner FONTENAY P.H.
<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	