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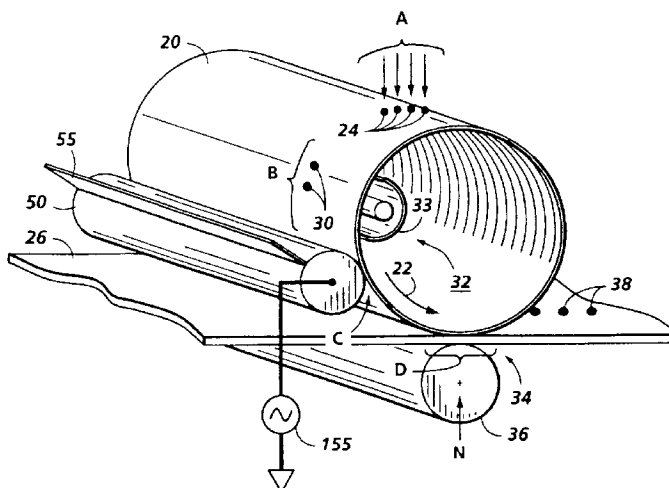
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(54) **Apparatus and method for conditioning a dry toner image**

(57) Apparatus for color printing which employs a conditioning roller (50) for conditioning a dry toner image (24). An intermediate member (20) first acts as a receptor for marking particles representing an image, whereby the marking particles may be deposited directly or indirectly on the member. The member is then exposed, via an internal heat source (32), to an elevated temperature sufficient to cause the melting and coalescing of the marking particles. The tackified image (30) is conditioned by a conditioning roller. The rollers create a thinner, more cohesive image without degradation of the image

for subsequent imaging. In a multicolor printing configuration, the intermediate member is advanced and at least a second color marking particles is deposited onto the previous image. The image is again conditioned by the conditioning roller. When the multicolor, tackified image is completed, or for monochrome printing, when the single color image is completed, the intermediate member is advanced so as to place the multicolored tackified marking particles present on the outer surface thereof into intimate contact with the surface of a recording sheet (26).

**FIG. 1**

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# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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EP 95 30 6921

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.6)
X	US 5 233 397 A (TILL HENRY R) 3 August 1993 * column 4, line 26 - column 5, line 55; figure 1 *	1	G03G15/16 G03G15/01
A	US 5 136 334 A (CAMIS THOMAS ET AL) 4 August 1992 * column 5, line 9 - column 6, line 56; figure 1 *	1-4,6-10	
A	US 4 992 833 A (DERIMIGGIO JOHN E) 12 February 1991 * column 2, line 34 - column 4, line 38; figures 1,2 *	1,5,10	
A	NL 9 200 713 A (OCE NEDERLAND BV) 16 November 1993 * column 7, line 13 - line 20; figure 1 *	1,6,9,10	
A	PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN vol. 008, no. 254 (P-315), 21 November 1984 & JP 59 125766 A (KONISHIROKU SHASHIN KOGYO KK), 20 July 1984, * abstract *	6,9	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6) G03G
P,A	US 5 353 105 A (GUNDLACH ROBERT W ET AL) 4 October 1994 * abstract; figures 1-4 *	1,5,6,9,10	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 18 June 1997	Examiner Cigoj, P
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS 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			

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