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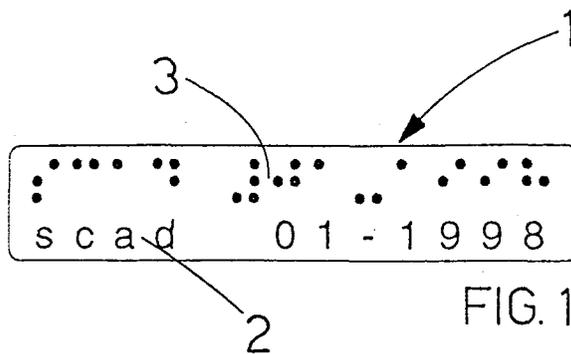
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(54) **System for applying lettering for the blind combined with alphanumerical lettering on packaging and in particular on perishable goods.**

(57) The particularity of the system in question is that it permits application of messages indicating the validity date on packages of perishable goods, taking them from pre-printed self-adhesive label forms that carry the message both in letters for the blind, for example in Braille or the like, with the corresponding message in alphanumerical lettering, preferably so that each message is formed both with a predetermined text and a

modular text made by combining standard prefixes and additional suffixes.

The system basically exploits self-adhesive labels (1) carrying messages regarding expiration dates given both in alphanumerical lettering (2) and in lettering like that of Braille (3) so that each letter of the alphanumerical message corresponds to letters in the Braille message.



Description

[0001] This present industrial invention patent proposes a system for applying letters for the blind combined with alphanumerical lettering on, in particular, packaging for perishable goods such as that which contains drugs or other similar products, forming messages that indicate validity periods and expiration dates and that can be recognized by persons with severe vision deficits and able to read Braille or similar lettering.

[0002] The system in question, dedicated to the blind, permits identification of expiration dates of packaged perishable products and is structured so that it can be applied to the packages both by blind persons themselves and by persons who read or who do not read Braille.

[0003] This system consists in application of special self-adhesive components which carry, on the front part, a set of data consisting of combination, no matter how this is obtained, of a text in relief such as in Braille or the like and a corresponding text in alphanumerical lettering.

[0004] As is well-known packages of drugs or of other perishable goods such as homeopathic products, cosmetics, foodstuffs, chemicals, etc., carry special messages that refer to the expiration date of their contents or to the final date for use of the same.

[0005] It is also known that packages of the above-indicated products can be purchased by the blind or by persons with severe vision deficits who, even if they are generally able to recognize and read writing in Braille, have difficulties in purchasing these products because in most if not in all cases the expiration date on the packages is only indicated in alphanumerical lettering and not in Braille lettering with its typical form of dots in relief.

[0006] Failure to indicate expiration dates for perishable products in Braille lettering is not so much to be attributed to neglect by the producers as it is to the fact that the expiration date can be applied to the package only after the package itself is combined with the product it must contain.

[0007] It is not possible to know, in fact, the validity term for the product that will be packaged at a later date at the time the packages are being printed. Consequently printers can only apply messages, in Braille lettering, that indicate the name of the product and cannot print information regarding expiration dates.

[0008] Since this problem has recently become quite important, correctly being raised by the associations for the blind, workers in the sector have been giving increasing attention to finding a way to apply, at the time of retail sale, lettering in Braille that carries the expiration dates for a given perishable product that is already packaged or in a box.

[0009] At the present time the method that is used for this task involves manual application of lettering in Braille using composition lettering machines. This system, however, has disadvantages of a practical nature

since every time it is necessary to formulate the individual letters that form the message and, above all, since it is not possible to have labels where Braille lettering corresponds to alphanumerical lettering, it is difficult to check if what has been composed is correct.

[0010] The purpose of this invention is the creation of a new system for applying messages in lettering for the blind on packages of perishable goods. The particular feature of this invention is that it calls for applying messages carrying validity data for the package contents from preprinted forms of self-adhesive labels that carry both the message in Braille lettering and the corresponding message in alphanumerical lettering, preferable in such a way that each message is formed both with the predefined text and with a modular text made by combining standard prefixes and additional suffixes.

[0011] The immediate advantage that is achieved by the invention in question is that application of these labels on any type of package of perishable goods can be performed correctly by persons with correct vision who do not necessarily know Braille since, as stated, each label carries both the text in Braille relief and the corresponding text in alphanumerical lettering.

[0012] Another advantage of this invention is that it permits production of preprinted label forms limited to a few basic versions since the labels themselves can be made with partly modular text, in this case consisting of a part in complete text except for the last or the last few numbers that specify the expiration date and that can be taken from another set of labels and positioned based on the numbers that need to be applied.

[0013] These purposes, advantages and particular functions are all achieved, according to the invention, by a system for applying lettering for the blind combined with alphanumerical lettering on packages of, in particular, perishable goods, characterized by the fact that on one support material, preferably consisting of a transparent self-adhesive label or the like, with permanent type adhesive, preprinted labels are formed that indicate validity terms and expiration dates in lettering in relief for the blind, such as in Braille lettering, combined with a corresponding message in alphanumerical lettering and by the fact that these preprinted double-lettering texts are both the predetermined and the modular type.

These preprinted self-adhesive labels can be taken off their respective support material and applied to packages of perishable products with the expiration date and/or other similar information to which the labels themselves refer.

[0014] Another characteristic and unique feature of this invention is better clarified in the following description of a preferential form that is illustrated, as an indicative but not limiting form, in the attached drawing where:

- Figure 1 gives a schematic view of a first example of a label in a version with complete data, applicable on packages of perishable products;

- Figure 2 gives a schematic view of a label version where the month of expiration is in modular text;
- Figure 3 gives a schematic view of a label version where the year of expiration is variable in modular text;
- Figures from 4 to 7 show other possible variations of the system according to this invention.

[0015] With reference to the attached illustrations, illustration 1 indicates a complete self-adhesive label according to this invention in the version with complete preprinted text.

[0016] This type of label, consisting of the system's first solution according to the invention, consists of combining two complete messages, the first, indicated by 2, is made using normal printed alphanumerical lettering while the second, indicated by 3, is made using Braille lettering or similar with application of particular letters in relief points.

[0017] In the illustrated example the message in Braille lettering is positioned above that in alphanumerical lettering. In this way the corresponding Braille letter is combined with each alphanumerical letter.

[0018] Naturally the layout of messages can be inverted compared to the layout illustrated or positioned in any other manner that is held to be opportune.

[0019] The label that is illustrated is part of a series of similar labels present successively on the same form and includes the complete ready-to-use text for a particular expiration period. As a consequence, to keep within the realm of the example being illustrated, it could be applicable for example to packages of perishable goods that expire in the month of December 1999.

[0020] Labels are made by standard die-cutting of sheets or reels of self-adhesive material and by application of alphanumerical lettering, printed by printing presses, for example, or silk-screened or by whatever method is held to be most opportune and application of lettering in Braille relief no matter how this is made.

[0021] The self-adhesive labels, that can be designed both for manual and for automatic application, are preferably made using a transparent support material. The adhesive is the permanent type so that the labels can be applied to any type of surface made out of any material, rigid or flexible, printed or not printed.

[0022] The sheet that contains the labels is made, as has been stated, out of transparent material in order to permit legibility of texts or graphics below it. At the same time the Braille lettering and the corresponding text is made out of transparent inks to permit legibility of texts and graphics on the package.

[0023] The permanent adhesive on the back side of the label permits the labels to remain on the package of perishable product up to the expiration date, preventing it from being detached and consequently evidencing any attempts to tamper with it.

[0024] The system also calls for labels that may be made out of anti-counterfeit materials, using water-

marks or special paints or other systems and also that references can be applied to indicate the proper direction for reading them.

[0025] Figure 2 illustrates how labels can be made according to a system using a modular text.

[0026] In this case the label consists of a base part 4 made using the same system specified above, meaning with application of alphanumerical lettering in the lower section and the corresponding Braille lettering in the upper section while zone 5, corresponding to the number for the month of expiration, is left blank.

[0027] This number is part of another set of labels, indicated by number 6, where the number of the month of expiration is printed, again in both alphanumerical and in Braille lettering. This is designed so that this label can be applied to part 5 of base label 4 as shown in figure 2.

[0028] As figure 3 illustrates the modular label can also be made leaving the part for the year of expiration blank.

[0029] In this case the base label is indicated by number 4, the blank zone, corresponding to the number for the year of expiration, is indicated by number 5, where variable labels 6 are applied.

[0030] Naturally other combined solutions are also possible and can, if necessary, also include information regarding the day of expiration.

[0031] The examples illustrated in figures 4 to 7 show further possible variations where the labels can be made by separating the part in Braille lettering from that in alphanumerical lettering (fig. 4), or where the label contains only the part in Braille lettering while the part in alphanumerical lettering only remains indicated on the sheet (fig. 5) or, finally, where the abbreviated message "expiration" and the numbers indicating the month and year can be partially or totally separated from each other (figures 6 and 7).

[0032] Naturally the descriptions that have been given can refer to any other expiration period. In fact, based on the type of perishable goods where they are applied, messages can refer to expiration periods of the annual, monthly or daily type.

[0033] As it is possible to see, labels made with the system that has been described can be applied correctly even by persons without vision defects and who are not familiar with Braille symbols because each label includes both the text in Braille relief and the corresponding text in alphanumerical lettering.

[0034] In this way the system can be used equally well by persons who know Braille and by persons who do not since the combination between a text in Braille relief and the corresponding text in alphanumerical lettering is guaranteed.

[0035] It is evident that the system as described can be used in many sectors regarding retail sale of perishable goods such as, for example, both by producers and by retailers of products subject to expiration dates such as drugs, homeopathic products, cosmetics, foodstuffs,

chemicals or other products which are even purchased by persons with vision defects.

[0036] The system in question for application of lettering for the blind on packages of perishable goods has been described and illustrated according to a preferential solution but several variations can be provided for, technically equivalent to the aforementioned parts and components and consequently to be considered as included in the protective range of this present invention.

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the fact that these labels can be made with modular parts of text in this case consisting of a base part with complete text except for the numbers that vary to indicate expiration terms and which can be taken from another set of labels.

Claims

1. System for applying lettering for the blind combined with alphanumerical lettering on packages in particular of perishable products, characterized by the fact that labels are made on a support material, preferably of the transparent self-adhesive type or similar type and preferably with permanent adhesives, which labels carry preprinted text giving messages regarding product validity and expiration and/or terms for use of the product no matter how expressed (expires on, best before) in lettering in relief for the blind such as in Braille lettering or the like, combined with a corresponding text in alphanumerical lettering and by the fact that these preprinted double-letter messages can contain both a complete or a modular predetermined text.

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2. System for application of lettering for the blind according to the preceding claim characterized by the fact that the labels are made using standard die-cutting processes on sheets or reels of self-adhesive material or similar material and by application of printed alphanumerical lettering, using a printing or silk-screening or similar process and by application of the corresponding Braille lettering no matter how these are made.

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3. System for application of lettering for the blind according to the preceding claims characterized by the fact that these self-adhesive labels, designed both for manual and for automatic application, are preferably made on a support material which is not necessarily a single material and which is transparent while the adhesive can preferably be the permanent type so that the labels themselves can be applied to any surface made of whatever material, rigid or flexible, printed or not printed.

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4. System for application of lettering for the blind according to the preceding claims characterized by the fact that these labels can also be made of anti-counterfeit materials using, for example, watermarks or special paints or other systems.

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5. System for application of lettering for the blind according to the preceding claims characterized by

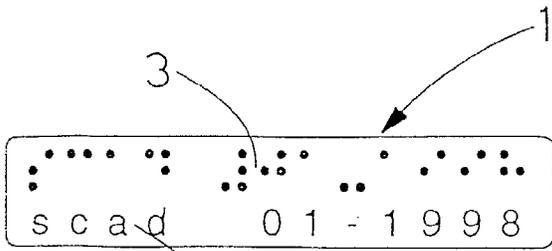


FIG. 1

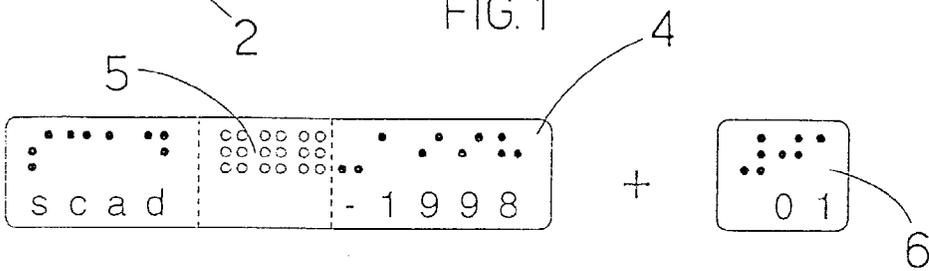


FIG. 2

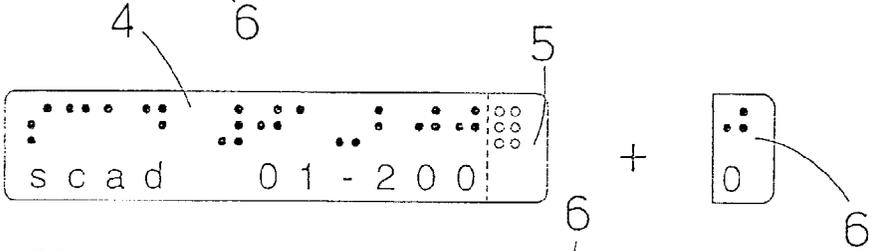
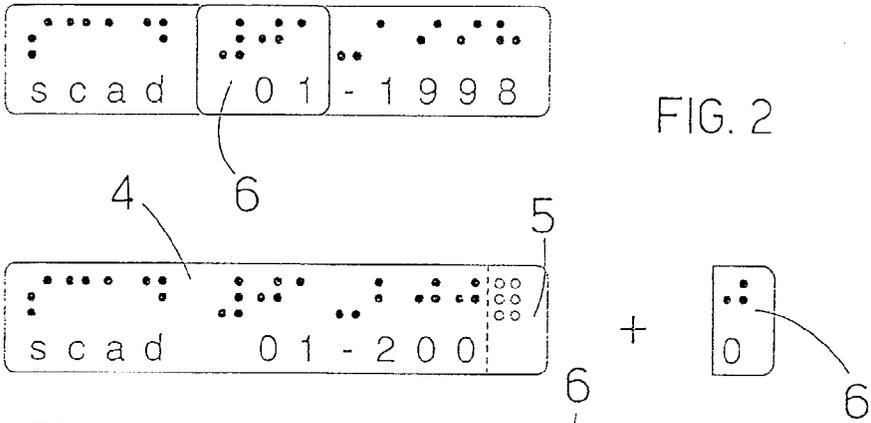


FIG. 3

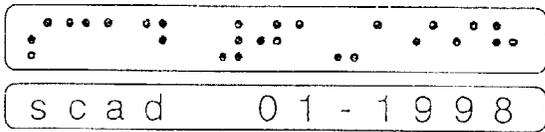
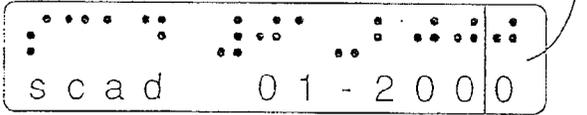


FIG. 4

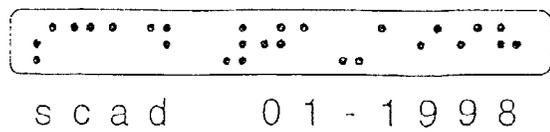


FIG. 5

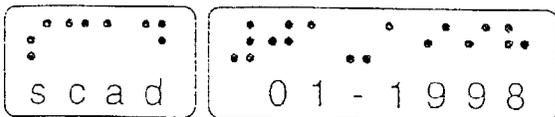


FIG. 6

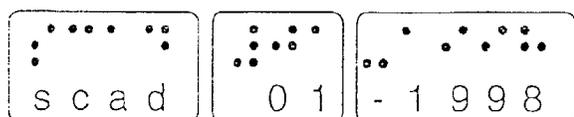


FIG. 7



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 98 83 0492

| DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT | | | |
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| Category | Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages | Relevant to claim | CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6) |
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| The present search report has been drawn up for all claims | | | |
| Place of search | | Date of completion of the search | Examiner |
| THE HAGUE | | 23 October 1998 | Gallo, G |
| CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS | | | |
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