



## Description

**[0001]** The present invention relates to a mounting and display system for visual material, in particularly photographs.

**[0002]** When writing short messages to friends, many people (particularly when on holiday) choose to do so by using a picture postcard. This is usually a card approximately  $15 \times 10$  cm, one side having a picture, often a photographically reproduced scene pertinent to the location it is being sold in, and sometimes accompanied by a message. The other side is left substantially blank, although it is usual for guiding markings to be printed to indicate the optimum positions for the stamp and address (on one the right-hand half of that side) and message (on the left-hand half). The card is fairly stiff and the picture durably printed so that the card stands a good chance of travelling through the postal service undamaged.

**[0003]** The disadvantage of using picture postcards for communication is that the pictures lack personal relevance to the people sending and receiving them. In contrast, a photograph taken by an individual is unique, and of personal significance. A photograph may include family and friends, which is in practical terms impossible for a picture postcard. Unfortunately most photographs are unsuitable for postal communications, since the photograph is flimsy and delicate, and easily damaged by the rigours of postage. Additionally the rear surface may not be suitable for writing on and has no guiding markings.

**[0004]** Systems for converting photographs to a form suitable for postage do exist. One of these (US 4 825 574) comprises a supporting medium which is folded in half to enclose the photograph, with a transparent window on one half of the medium so that the photograph can be seen. In order though to secure the photograph within the medium, a release material must be peeled back to expose adhesive, the photograph positioned and pressed down over the window, and the second half of the medium folded over and pressed down. This process is timeconsuming, may result in the photograph being misaligned, and makes future recovery of the photograph difficult.

**[0005]** In applications no GB 2 318 087 A, there is described a mounting and display system for visual material, comprising a mounting card for a photograph or the like, and an envelope formed from a base card and a top sheet comprising a transparent flexible material such as cellophane. To adapt a photograph for postage, it is simply mounted on the mounting card, the mounting card is slotted into the envelope, and the envelope is securely fixed. Preferably the system includes a flap at the mouth of the envelope, preferably forming part of the top sheet, which can be tucked in or stuck down to hold the mounting sheet securely. The top sheet may be wholly transparent, or may have an opaque region (eg as an opaque sheet with a transparent window).

**[0006]** This technique, however, presents certain difficulties, for example in the manufacture of the various components of the system.

**[0007]** The object of the present invention is to provide an improved system for allowing a photograph to be mounted.

**[0008]** Accordingly the present invention provides a mounting and display system for visual material, comprising a mounting card for a photograph or the like, and an envelope having a base and a top sheet having a window or aperture therein, wherein the mounting card is of a transparent flexible material such that a photograph can be mounted on the rear of the mounting card, the mounting card slotted into the envelope, and the envelope securely fixed, thereby producing a combination which can be posted. Preferably the system includes a flap at the mouth of the envelope, preferably forming part of the top sheet, which can be tucked in or stuck down to hold the mounting sheet securely. The address will normally be written on the back of the envelope (like a postcard, in which the address is written on the opposite side from the picture). The envelope may be pre-printed with suitable postage, or any stamps required may be stuck onto it.

**[0009]** A mounting and display system embodying the invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the drawings, in which:

**[0010]** Fig 1 is a exploded perspective view of the system.

**[0011]** Referring to Fig 1, the system comprises a mounting card 11, a base card 19, and a top sheet 20, all of which are rectangular and of similar size. The mounting card is slightly smaller laterally and longitudinally than both the base card and the top sheet, which (discounting the top sheet's projections) are the same size. The top sheet 20 has a large open cut-out 23 as shown.

**[0012]** For convenience, the base card 19 and a top sheet 20 are shown separated, but in fact they are attached together as a single envelope unit. They are preferably of the same material, being formed from a single sheet of material which is suitably cut, folded, pasted, and stuck together to form an envelope. This material should be stout enough to withstand handling in the ordinary course of postal handling without sustaining significant damage such as tearing around the cut-out 23. The top sheet is shown with two flaps 24 along the side and rear edges for this purpose; it is joined integrally with the base card 19 along its front edge. The remaining short edge of the top sheet has a tongue 22 protruding from it. This tongue is tucked fully inside the envelope between the mounting card and the base card to secure the mounting card during postage; alternatively, the tongue may be gummed and stuck to the base card 19 for this.

**[0013]** The mounting card 11 is of transparent material, and has four diagonal cuts 13. The photograph 17 to be sent is mounted on the rear of the mounting card

11 by slipping its corners into these cuts, which are so configured as to hold the photograph firmly under a slight bending tension.

[0014] This mounting card is then slid or slotted into the envelope formed by the top sheet and the base card. The mounting card thus forms a protective sheet over the photograph, preventing any damage to the photograph during the normal course of postal handling. The material of the mounting card must of course be sufficiently stout for this purpose.

[0015] Since each end of each of the cuts 13 must correspond closely to an adjacent edge of the photograph for the photograph to be held tightly, their exact configuration will obviously be determined by what photographs the system is aimed for. Further groups of four cuts 15 (or groups of three cuts if one cut is made common to both groups) may be included on the mounting card to accommodate different sizes of photographs.

[0016] The dimensions of the system will of course vary depending on the size of the photographs for which it is intended. Some relevant legend, either pre-printed or written by the user, and/or pre-printed pictures, may be included on the top sheet adjacent to the cut-out 23. The mounting sheet may have printed on it a decorative frame incorporating and thus effectively concealing the slots 13 and 15.

[0017] Instead of four slots, the mounting card may have two slots or even one slot, locating the photograph against one or two of its edges, so that when the base card is inserted into the envelope unit, the photograph is held in position by the combination of the slot or slots and the inner edges of the envelope unit. As a further modification, if the size of the photograph is standardized, it may be possible to make the width of the envelope unit match the height of the photograph, so that the photograph will be held sufficiently tightly in position by the envelope unit when the mounting unit is inserted behind the photograph.

[0018] The mounting card may have its corners slightly chamfered at one end, to assist in inserting it into the envelope unit.

[0019] The back surface of the base card 19 preferably has the usual guiding markings as found on post-cards to indicate the correct positioning of the stamp, address, and message.

[0020] This display system allows a photograph (which may be of either conventional or instant development type) to be mounted so that it is protected during postage, is easy to use, allows the photograph to be recovered later, and allows a message relevant to the location where the medium is being sold to be superimposed or displayed around the photograph.

[0021] A further method of fixing the photograph to the mounting card is to provide the mounting card with an area of releasable adhesive, ie an adhesive which is sufficiently effective to retain the photograph in position when the photograph is pressed lightly onto the adhesive area, but which allows the photograph to be re-

moved from the mounting card without damage.

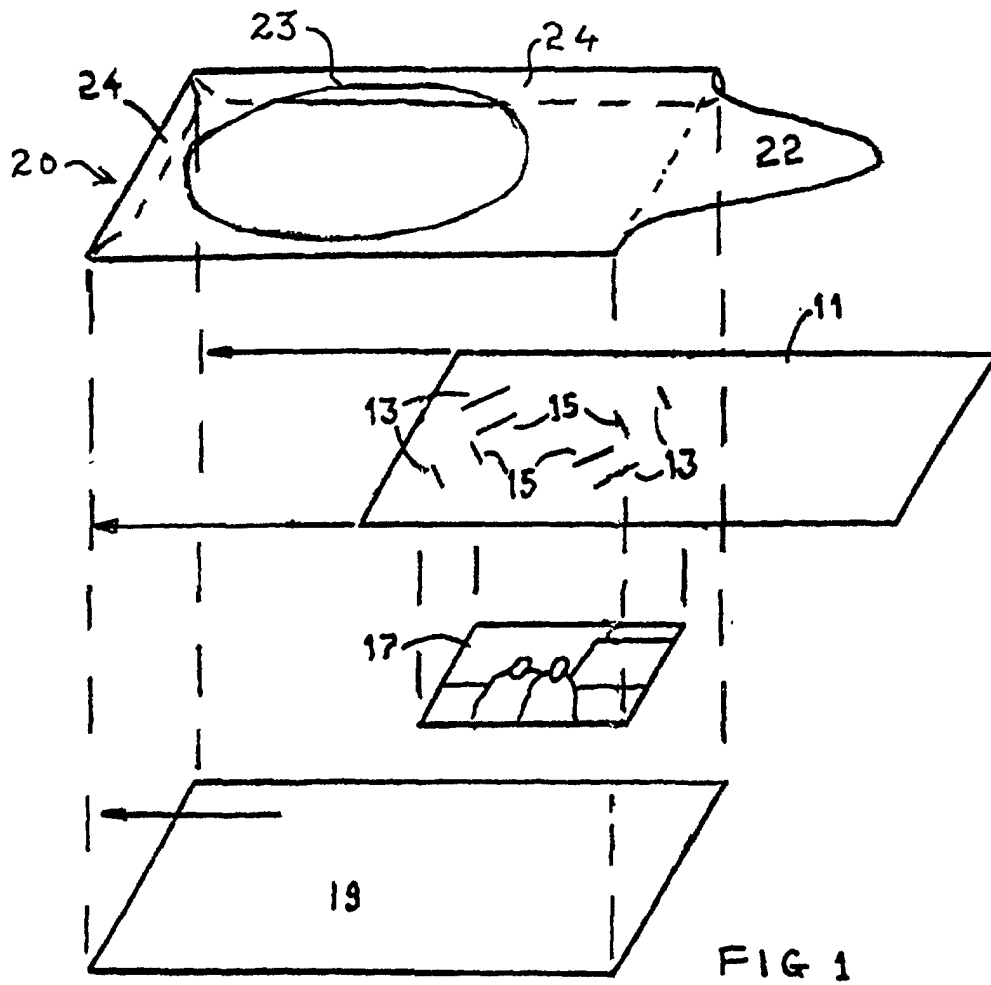
[0022] The tongue 22 may be tucked into the envelope, below the top sheet, during manufacture, with the user inserting the mounting card fully into the envelope and then sliding it back slightly towards the open end so that its end is caught under the flap. It is preferred that the flap should be held in place in the tucked-in position by its inherent stiffness, but an adhesive sealing system may be employed instead if desired.

[0023] If the mounting card is made sufficiently wide perpendicular to the direction along which it is slid into the envelope, the mounting card will be held firmly by the friction created by the tight fit, and the top sheet's tongue 22 may be removed from the design.

[0024] The mounting card may be provided with a fold-out stand, so that it can be removed from the envelope and then stood up to display the photograph.

## Claims

1. A mounting and display system for visual material, comprising a mounting card for a photograph or the like, and an envelope having a base and a top sheet having a window or aperture therein, wherein the mounting card is of a transparent flexible material such that a photograph can be mounted on the rear of the mounting card, the mounting card slotted into the envelope, and the envelope securely fixed, thereby producing a combination which can be posted.
2. A system according to claim 1 including a flap at the mouth of the envelope, preferably forming part of the top sheet, which can be tucked in or stuck down to hold the mounting sheet securely.
3. A mounting and display system for visual material substantially as herein described and illustrated.
4. Any novel and inventive feature or combination of features specifically disclosed herein within the meaning of Article 4H of the International Convention (Paris Convention).





European Patent  
Office

# EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number  
EP 00 30 3058

| 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.7)        |
| A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | US 3 894 684 A (FLOREY)<br>15 July 1975 (1975-07-15)<br>* column 2, line 1 - column 4, line 22;<br>figures 1-5 *     | 1                                                           | B42D15/02                                           |
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| A                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | WO 00 32413 A (HOLLINGBERRY)<br>8 June 2000 (2000-06-08)<br>* page 5, line 7 - page 13, line 22;<br>figures 1-8 *    | 1                                                           |                                                     |
| The present search report has been drawn up for all claims                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                      |                                                             | <b>TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)</b><br>B42D |
| Place of search<br><b>THE HAGUE</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                      | Date of completion of the search<br><b>5 September 2000</b> | Examiner<br><b>Evans, A</b>                         |
| <b>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</b><br>X : particularly relevant if taken alone<br>Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category<br>A : technological background<br>O : non-written disclosure<br>P : intermediate document<br>T : theory or principle underlying the invention<br>E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date<br>D : document cited in the application<br>L : document cited for other reasons<br>& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document |                                                                                                                      |                                                             |                                                     |

EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT  
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 00 30 3058

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on  
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05-09-2000

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