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(71) Applicant: Edmunds, Richard John London W11 2NT (GB)	(74) Representative: Eder, Ephry E. EDER & CO. 39 Cranbrook Road Ilford, Essex IG1 4PA (GB)

(54)

Apparatus for aiding the layout and/or editing of items of sheet material

(57)

Apparatus (10) for aiding the layout and/or editing of items of sheet material, said apparatus comprising a portable case (12) composed of a plurality of panel units (14,15,16) hingedly coupled to one another such as to form, when folded together, a closed container. The closed case (12) contains a plurality of tabular elements (24,25,26), at least one of said tabular elements (24,25) being co-operable with a said panel unit (14,15) such as to be erectable into an easel-like state when the

case (12) is open with said panel unit (14,15) providing support for said tabular element (24,25) in an inclined position. This or another one of the tabular elements (25) may be provided with a repeatably adherent adhesive substance of low adhesion to permit peeling off therefrom of items of sheet material (54) temporarily mounted thereon. Another one of the tabular elements (26) supports, when the case is open, a cutting device (62) for trimming the items of sheet material to desired sizes.

FIG.1

EP 1 281 332 A1

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Description

Technical Field

[0001] This invention relates to apparatus for aiding the layout and/or editing of items of sheet material, particularly, (but not exclusively) such sheet material bearing indicia, e.g. wording and/or pictures (drawings, paintings, prints or photographs).

[0002] It is known to arrange pictorial elements (drawings, paintings, prints or photographs) in a selected position or array on a sheet, and then to place such sheet in a file, folder or book for subsequent viewing. Generally this activity requires considerable table space and, if interrupted because, say, the table is required for some other purpose, results in considerable disruption as elements not yet selected for mounting on sheets have to be repacked into their previous store and partially-completed sheets have to be placed in some intermediate place or an inappropriate position in the file, folder or book.

[0003] With a view to ameliorating these and/or other difficulties one aspect of the present invention provides apparatus for aiding the layout and/or editing of items of sheet material, wherein said apparatus comprises a portable case composed of a plurality of panel units hingedly coupled to one another such as to form a closed container when folded together, said case, when closed, containing a plurality of tabular elements, at least one of said tabular elements being co-operable with a said panel unit such as to be erectable into an easel-like state when the said case is open with said panel unit providing support for said tabular element in an inclined position.

[0004] Preferably the angle of inclination of said tabular element is adjustable.

[0005] Preferably, one of said tabular elements is provided with a repeatably adherent adhesive substance of low adhesion to permit peeling off from the one tabular element of items of sheet material temporarily mounted thereon. This permits mounting of the items in a variety of trial positions before a suitable positional relationship or montage is decided upon and finally selected.

[0006] Advantageously one (preferably another) of said tabular elements is provided with a plurality of ledges to support loose items of sheet material to be sorted (and/or applied to the repeatedly adherent adhesive substance). The ledges may be provided by the lower limbs of generally L-section elements protruding from one face of the said tabular element.

[0007] Preferably, one (with advantage, a further tabular element) supports, when the case is open (i.e. the panels are unfolded), a cutting device for trimming said items of sheet material to desired sizes.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0008] By way of example one embodiment of this in-

vention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings of which:

Figure 1 is a schematic perspective view from above and one side of said embodiment in a fully closed condition,

Figure 2 is a similar view to Fig 1 of said embodiment in a partly open condition,

Figure 3 is a schematic perspective view from below and the other side of the said embodiment, and

Figure 4 is a schematic perspective view from above and one side of said embodiment in a fully open and erected condition.

Detailed Description of Example(s) of the Invention

[0009] The illustrated apparatus 10 for use as a portable composition aid, i.e. for aiding a user in the layout and/or editing of items of sheet material. A particular, (but not exclusive) use for the portable composition aid 10 is with sheet material bearing indicia, e.g. wording and/or pictures - including drawings, paintings, prints or photographs.

[0010] The apparatus 10 comprises a case 12 having a plurality of main panel units 14, 15 and 16 molded of plastics material with each panel unit of somewhat tray-like recessed form, the recesses facing inwardly of the closed case 12. The panel unit 15 is generally frusto-triangular outline with its two inclined edge portions pivotally connected by hinges 17, 18 to two opposite end panel units 14, 16. The latter are shaped and dimensioned such that they can be folded over the intermediate panel unit 15 and fastened to one another and/or to panel unit 15 to provide a closed condition for the case 12. Such fastening may be by detent devices molded integrally with the panel units 14-16 to provide snap-fitting inter-engagement due to the inherent resiliency of parts of the detent devices. The edge portions of the end panel unit 14 and/or of the end panel 16 may be provided with a semi-oval indent 19 (two opposed such indents are shown in Fig 1) to permit gripping insertion of the user's fingers to open the case 12 by pulling and overcoming the locking action of the detent devices.

[0011] The outer face of panel unit 15 is provided with four protrusions 13 (Fig 3) so that when in the case-open condition shown in Fig 4, the panel units 14, 15, 16 can lie in a generally horizontal plane. In this open condition, internal tabular elements 24, 25, 26 are revealed that are either provided by or are contained within the interior of the panels 14, 15, 16 respectively.

[0012] Tabular element 24 is selectively movable between a stowed, out of use condition within the tray-like form of unit 14 and an erected in use condition in which it is elevated and inclined to the generally horizontal plane of units 14-16. Erected element 24 comprises a pair of rack units 41, 42, disposed one above the other in a generally common inclined plane, the lower edge of

bottom rack unit 41a being pivotally connected at 43 to a forward part of the recess of panel unit 14, and the upper edge of bottom rack unit 41 being pivotally connected at 44 to the lower edge of the upper rack unit 42. This allows the two rack units 41,42 to be folded over one another and stowed within the tray-like recess of the end panel unit 14 (and occupy an out-of-use condition). Each of the rack units 41,42 is integrally molded with a plurality of elongate L-section support strips 46 for use in supporting a plurality of items of sheet material (that are to be edited or subjected to layout composition) in rows and therealong in easily viewable positions. The forward part of panel unit 14 is provided with a plurality of grooves 45 any one of which can accommodate additional or reserve items of sheet material prior to their being supported and temporarily arranged in rows upon the elongate L-section support strips 46.

[0013] A flat stay (not shown) is pivotally attached by its upper end to the rear face of lower rack unit 41, and the lower end of this stay (when pivoted away from that rear face) is engageable with a protrusion upstanding from the base of the tray-like recess of each panel unit 14 to hold rack units 41,42 in their erect inclined condition.

[0014] Tabular element 25 may be likewise movable pivotally from out of the tray-like recess of intermediate panel unit 15. In one arrangement, tabular element 25 may have a bottom edge that is to be located in a groove (or in a selected one of a plurality of grooves) to adopt a particular inclined position. Alternatively, the tabular element 25 may be hinged at 52 directly to the panel unit 15 and a pivoted stay (not shown) extending between the panel unit 15 and the underside of tabular element 25 serves to hold tabular element 25 in its elevated (i.e. inclined) in-use condition. The tabular element 25 supports a pad of sheets 54 each provided with a repeatably adherent adhesive substance of low adhesion to permit peeling off from the uppermost sheet 54 items of sheet material temporarily mounted thereon. This permits mounting of the items in a variety of trial positions before a suitable positional relationship or montage is arrived at, decided upon and finally selected. To assist in such positioning, the sheets 54 of said pad may be provided with markings corresponding to or indicative of a grid or like array.

[0015] In an alternative arrangement the pad 54 is omitted and the front face of tabular element 25 is itself provided with said repeatably adherent adhesive substance.

[0016] Tabular element 26 is a cutting board that is pivoted to the front edge portion 61 of the tray-like recess of end panel unit 16 and, when unfolded forwardly to its opened in-use condition, lies horizontally to permit access to its cutter device 62. The cutting board is provided by two parts 63,64, hinged to one another to pivot about their mutually adjacent longitudinal edges in the manner of a book and, when opened out, provide a common horizontal support surface for an item to be trimmed

or cut by device 62. The latter comprises a ruler 66 which has a lateral extension 67 at each end pivoted to the outer cutting board part 64 whereby the ruler 66 can be pivotally raised off from the horizontal support surface provided by the cutting board's parts 63,64. The cutter device's ruler 66 has a longitudinal slot therein and a block 69 mounted slidably within this slot. A small cutting wheel or blade protrudes downwards from the underside of block 69 and extends into an elongate groove provided therebeneath in cutting board part 64. Thus, as block 69 is slid along ruler 66 the cutting wheel or blade can run along the elongate groove. The two parts 63,64 are provided with a rib or ridge 65 extending along a common line at right angles to the groove and path of the cutting wheel or blade. This rib or ridge 65 provides an abutment for one edge of an item of sheet material that is to be cut by the cutter device 62 (after being inserted beneath the ruler 66).

[0017] Other modifications and embodiments of the invention, which will be readily apparent to those skilled in this art, are to be deemed within the ambit and scope of the present invention, and the particular embodiment (s) hereinbefore described may be varied in construction and detail, e.g. interchanging (where appropriate or desired) different features of each, without departing from the scope of the patent monopoly hereby sought. For example the panels and/or tabular elements may be fabricated from metal or other materials and need not be moldings of plastics material of the form illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

Claims

1. Apparatus for aiding the layout and/or editing of items of sheet material, said apparatus being **characterised in that** it comprises a portable case composed of a plurality of units hingedly coupled to one another such as to form a closed container when folded together,

in that a first of said units includes a first tabular element that is erectable to an inclined position and is provided with a plurality of horizontal ledge means located at intervals spaced apart in an upwards direction of the tabular element when the latter is in said inclined position, said ledge means being to support in use loose items of sheet material to be sorted,

and in that a second of said units includes a second tabular element that is erectable to an inclined position and is provided with a repeatably adherent adhesive substance of low adhesion to permit peeling off therefrom of items of sheet material that have been temporarily mounted thereon.

2. Apparatus according to Claim 1, **characterised in that** the first tabular element in its said inclined position has an angle of inclination that is adjustable.

3. Apparatus according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, **characterised in that** the second tabular element in its said inclined position has an angle of inclination that is adjustable. 5
4. Apparatus according to any preceding Claim, **characterised in that** the first of said units comprises a support element and means articulating thereto the first tabular element. 10
5. Apparatus according to any preceding Claim, **characterised in that** the second of said units comprises a support element and means articulating thereto the second tabular element. 15
6. Apparatus according to any preceding Claim, **characterised in that** the said first tabular element has said ledge means provided by the lower limbs of generally L-section elements protruding from a face of the first tabular element. 20
7. Apparatus according to any preceding Claim, **characterised in that** a third of said units includes a cutting device for trimming a said item of sheet material to a desired size, said cutting device being mounted on the third unit for guided travel linearly and normal to a step defined by the third unit and in use abutted by an edge of the said item to be trimmed. 25
- 30
- 35
- 40
- 45
- 50
- 55

FIG.1

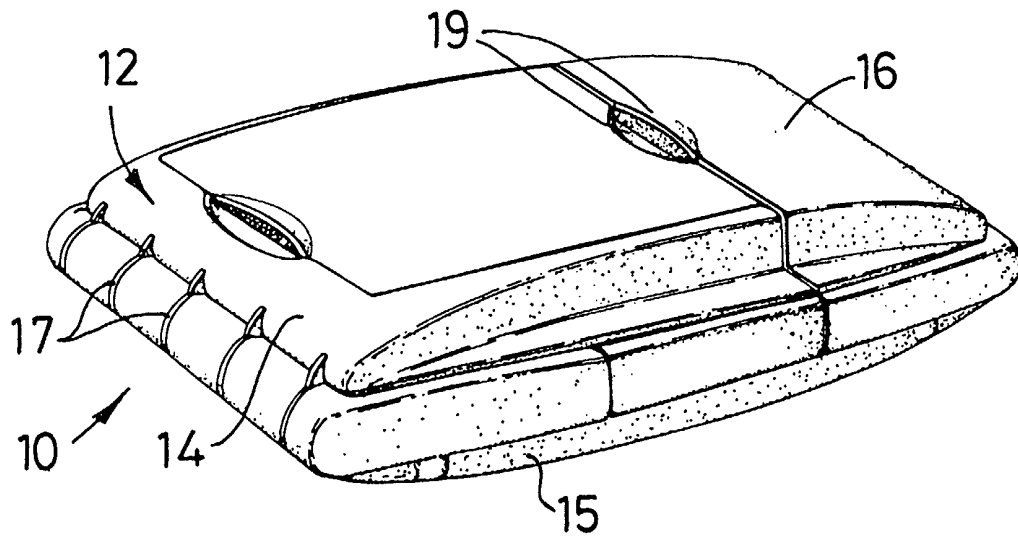


FIG.2

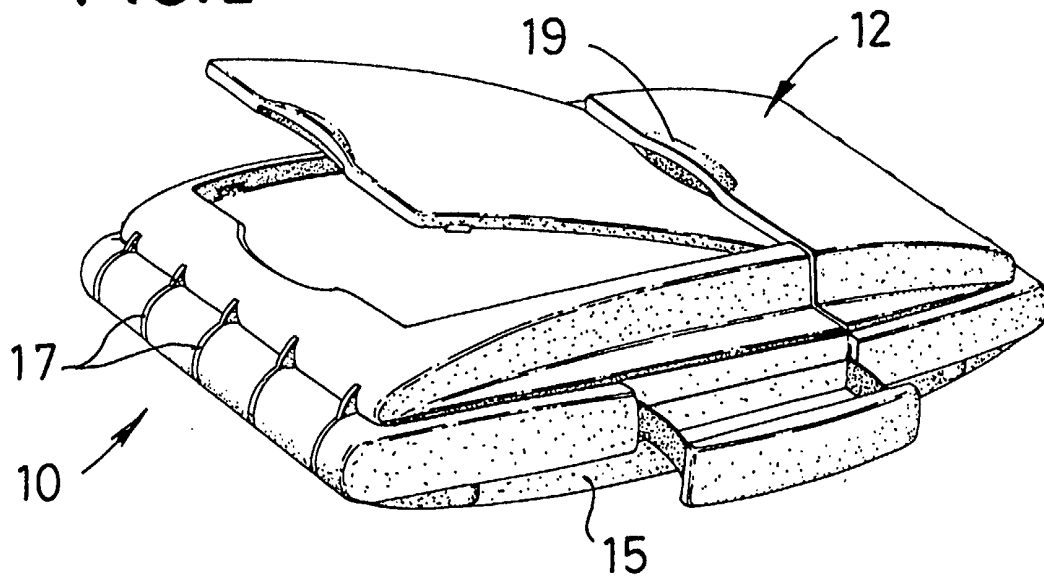


FIG.3

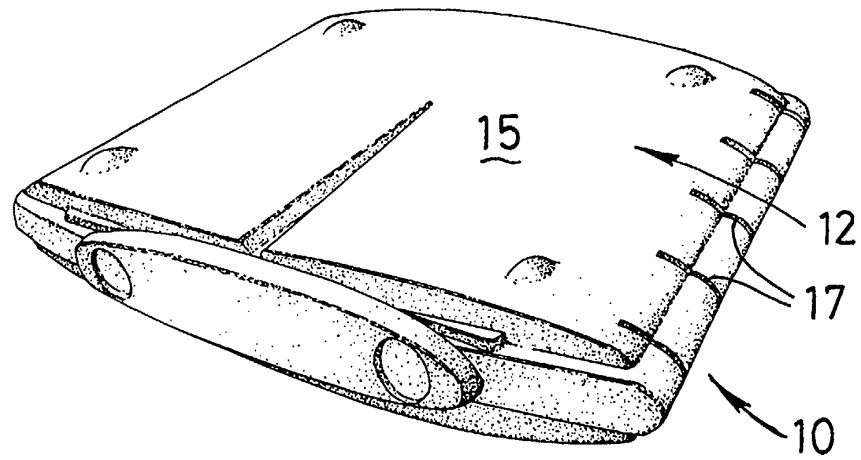
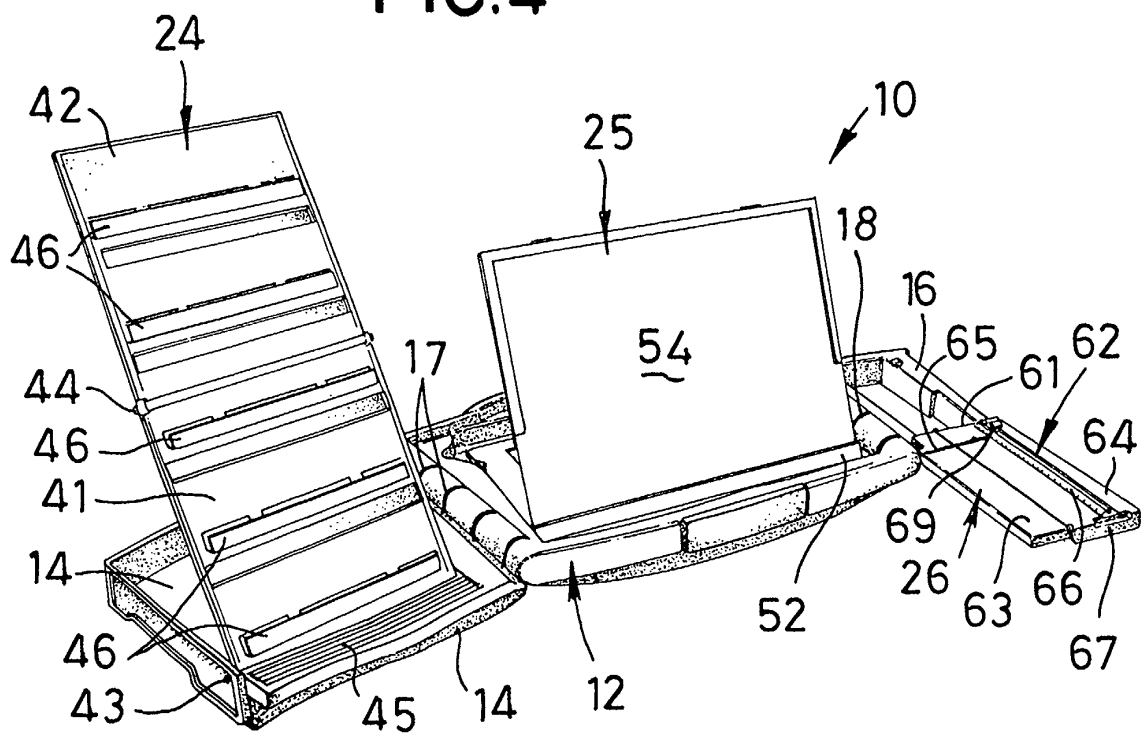


FIG.4





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 01 30 6537

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 5 833 201 A (GRAYBILL DAVID M) 10 November 1998 (1998-11-10) * column 2, line 20 - column 3, line 4; figures 1-5 *	1-6	A45C11/36 A47B19/00								
A	US 3 678 589 A (BAIER ROBERT J) 25 July 1972 (1972-07-25) * column 2, line 26 - line 43 * * column 3, line 68 - line 71; figures 1-4,12 *	1									
A	US 1 343 778 A (HAYS CASWELL V) 15 June 1920 (1920-06-15) * page 1, line 24 - line 27; figure 2 *	1									
A	US 5 971 171 A (HIMEBAUGH DOUGLAS R ET AL) 26 October 1999 (1999-10-26) * column 1, line 33 - line 48 * * column 3, line 21 - line 30; figure 1 *	6									
A	US 1 719 840 A (CARL HORIX) 9 July 1929 (1929-07-09) * page 2, line 11 - line 13; figure 5 *	7	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A45C</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>A47B</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>B43K</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)		A45C		A47B		B43K	
TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)											
A45C											
A47B											
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims											
Place of search MUNICH		Date of completion of the search 2 October 2001	Examiner Papadimitriou, S								
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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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02-10-2001

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