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(54) **Modular packing assembly**

(57) A cigarette packing system comprises a plurality of reconfigurable modules (100). Each module includes tooling for performing a section of the packaging process. Product is transferred between modules by robots (110) mounted on the modules and controlled from individual modules. Interface protocols between modules control

transfers between modules. The product may be transferred with or without a carrier between modules. The modules may be reconfigured for a different assembly process and modules added or removed. Process specific tooling may be changed. Reconfigurable modules reduces the time and cost of changing to a different packaging process.

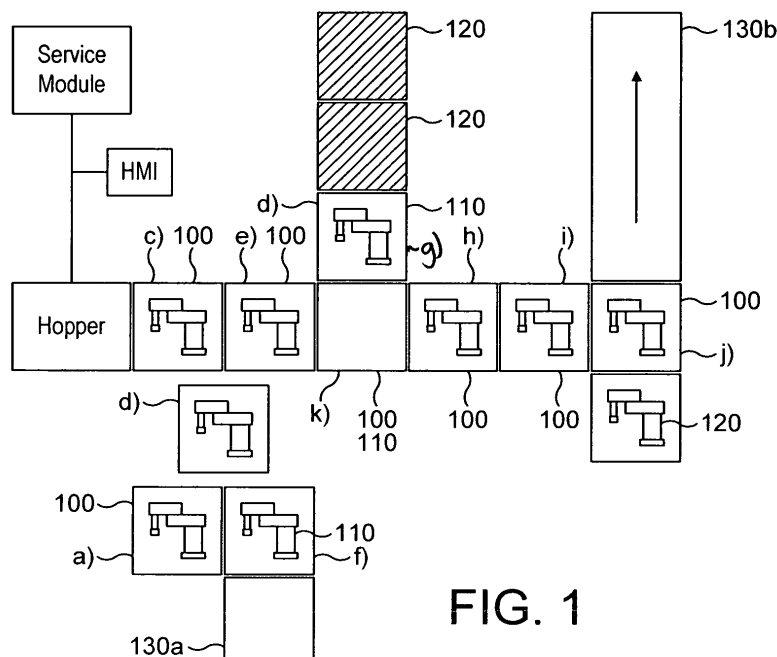


FIG. 1



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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EP 04 25 5730

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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 February 2006	Examiner Grentzius, W
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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EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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