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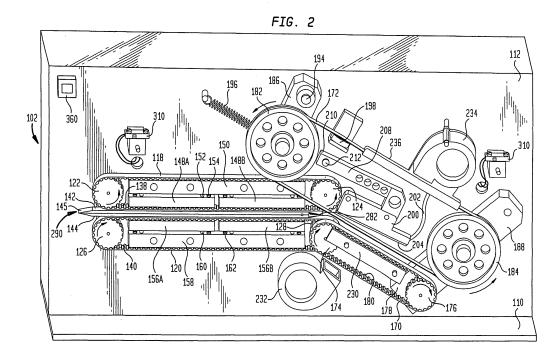
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(54) Apparatus and method for forming inflated packaging cushions

(57) An inflation apparatus (100) automatically inflates and seals a plurality of pockets (24) preformed in a film web (10) to form packaging cushions. As the film web is advanced, a stream of inflation gas is directed from an inflation port (282) into each of the pockets. The stream of inflation gas is directed in a flow direction hav-

ing a component in the direction of travel. A sealing mechanism is positioned as close as possible to the inflation port (282) so that the opening of each pocket is almost entirely closed and sealed while the stream of inflation gas is directed into the pocket. As a result, it is possible to achieve more fully inflated packaging cushions on a consistent basis.



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number EP 06 00 5631

Category	Citation of document with in of relevant passa	dication, where appropriate,	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)	
Х	US 2002/166788 A1 (14 November 2002 (2 * paragraph [0035]	SPERRY CHARLES R ET AL) 002-11-14)	1-4,6-9,	, ,	
Υ	figures 1-7 *		10-13, 20,27-29		
Υ	US 2003/106282 A1 (12 June 2003 (2003- * paragraph [0064]; * paragraph [0095]	figures 1-7 *	20		
Y	WO 02/26589 A (LOER 4 April 2002 (2002- * page 13, line 24 figures 16,17 *	04-04)	10-13, 27-29		
A	US 2004/206050 A1 (21 October 2004 (20 * paragraph [0033];	figure 6 *	1,4,19,	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC) B31D	
	Place of search	Date of completion of the search		Examiner	
Munich		11 July 2006	Joh	ne, Olaf	
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		E : earlier patent do after the filing dat er D : document cited i L : document cited fo	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 oited for other reasons &: member of the same patent family, corresponding		



Application Number

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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES
The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing more than ten claims.
Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):
No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for the first ten claims.
LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:
see sheet B
All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.
Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:
None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims: 1-4, 6-13, 19-29



LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION SHEET B

Application Number

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The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-4,6-13,19-29

flow direction of inflation gas stream having a component in the direction of travel of a film web

2. claims: 5,14-18

portion of outlet port being positioned between the nip of opposed sealing rollers and an imaginary vertical line tangential to one of the rollers

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

EP 06 00 5631

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 The European Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

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For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82