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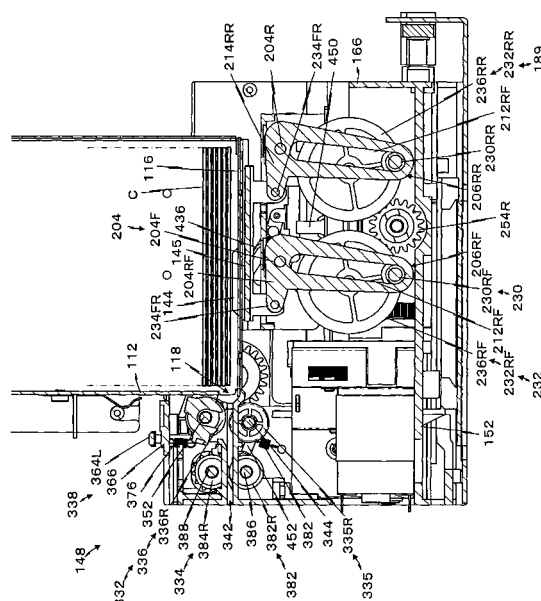
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(54) **Card dispensing apparatus**

(57) An object of the present invention is to provide a card dispensing apparatus that does not damage cards even if the cards are made of vulnerable material.

In a card dispensing apparatus in which a surface of one of cards is pressed toward a base disposed in a fixed state to hold the cards in a columnar shape and a conveying member in contact with the card surface via an opening of the base is moved in a predetermined direction, thereby dispensing the cards one by one in the predetermined direction, the conveying member has a flat contact surface, and is moved by flat loop movement means to advance into the opening from a predetermined advancing position to make a surface contact with the card surface, then linearly move in a predetermined direction while maintaining the contact state, then retract from the opening to a retract position, and then move to the advancing position while maintaining its state.

Fig.5





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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 07 01 6824

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
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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		7 March 2008	Thibaut, Emile
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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EPO FORM 1503 03/02 (P04C01)



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
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			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
The Hague		7 March 2008	Thibaut, Emile
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)



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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:
- ☐ The present supplementary 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 (Rule 164 (1) EPC).



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: 1-8,11-14

invention 1 (claims 1 - 8, 10): card dispensing apparatus with means for moving a conveying member in flat loop

invention 2 (claims 11 -14): card dispensing apparatus with means for moving a conveying member in flat loop, means for drawing the card, and means for retracting the conveying member when a drawing force is applied thereto by the card

2. claim: 9

invention 3: card dispensing apparatus with means for moving a conveying member in flat loop and means for drawing the card

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

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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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07-03-2008

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