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(54) PHARMACY PACKAGING SYSTEM

(57) A packaging unit for packaging pharmaceuticals into a pouch includes packaging equipment operable to form the pouch, a track configured to direct the pharmaceuticals toward the packaging equipment, and a receptacle coupled to the track upstream of the packaging

equipment to receive the pharmaceuticals from the track. The receptacle includes a valve mechanism that is movable relative to the track to push the pharmaceuticals into the pouch.

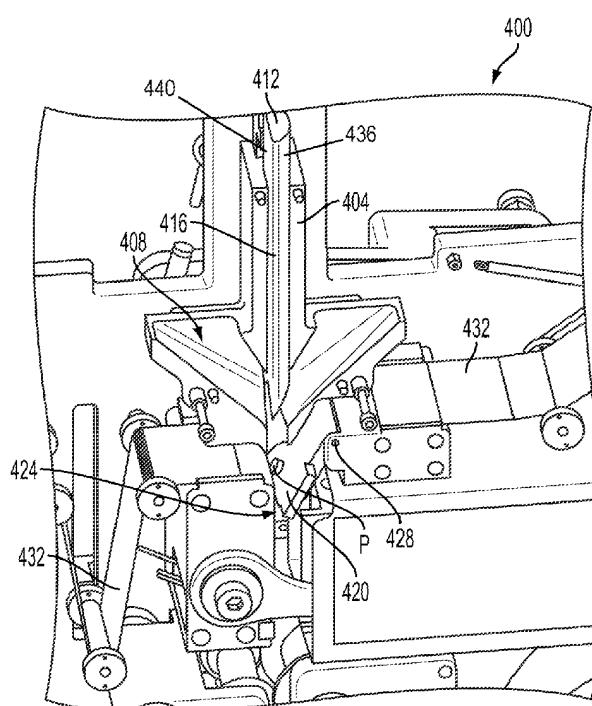


FIG. 18



PARTIAL EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

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under Rule 62a and/or 63 of the European Patent Convention.
 This report shall be considered, for the purposes of
 subsequent proceedings, as the European search report

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
10	<p>Y US 2013/318931 A1 (HOLMES WILLIAM K [US]) 5 December 2013 (2013-12-05) * paragraphs [0044], [0052] – [0057], [0042], [0048], [0047]; figures 10, 13, 14, 15 *</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Y US 9 272 796 B1 (CHUDY DUANE S [US]) 1 March 2016 (2016-03-01) * column 16, lines 7-31; figures 15-17 *</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Y US 2009/205291 A1 (ANTONEVICH DONALD F [US] ET AL) 20 August 2009 (2009-08-20) * paragraphs [0010], [0036] *</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Y EP 1 707 490 A2 (SEALED AIR CORP [US]) 4 October 2006 (2006-10-04) * claim 37 *</p> <p>-----</p>	1-15	INV. B65B9/02 G07F9/10 G07F11/16 G07F11/44 G07F11/60 G07F17/00 ADD. B65B39/00
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35			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
40			B65B
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INCOMPLETE SEARCH			
35	The Search Division considers that the present application, or one or more of its claims, does/do not comply with the EPC so that only a partial search (R.62a, 63) has been carried out.		
40	Claims searched completely :		
45	Claims searched incompletely :		
50	Claims not searched :		
55	Reason for the limitation of the search: see sheet C		
2			
50	Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
	Munich	20 March 2024	Garlati, Timea
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
	X : particularly relevant if taken alone	T : theory or principle underlying the invention	
	Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category	E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date	
	A : technological background	D : document cited in the application	
	O : non-written disclosure	L : document cited for other reasons	
	P : intermediate document	& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	



**INCOMPLETE SEARCH
SHEET C**

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Claim(s) completely searchable:

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Claim(s) searched incompletely:

1-15

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Reason for the limitation of the search:

The current application has been filed as a divisional application of EP17857299, which was published as WO2018064095.

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1 In order to fulfil the requirements of Article 76 EPC, the subject-matter of a divisional application must be contained in the parent application. This is not the case for claims 1 and 10 for the following reasons:

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1.1 The parent application was directed to four embodiments listed in paragraphs [0003], [0004], [0005] and [0006] of the description, out of which paragraphs [0003] and [0004] relate to a system including at least a frame and a canister moving assembly while paragraphs [0005] and [0006] relate to a packaging unit comprising at least a track, a receptacle and a valve mechanism. None of these embodiments however correspond to the subject-matter of independent claims 1 and 10 on file, which do not include any of these features.

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1.2 It is noted that the only paragraphs of the entire parent application that relate to determining the length of the pouch are paragraphs [0072] and [0074], which however mention this as an additional aspect of the particular embodiments of the packaging unit shown in figures 17-19. Paragraphs [0065]-[0067] which describe to the packaging unit 400 of figures 17-18, however also include a track 246, a valve mechanism 412 and a receptacle 404. There is no teaching in the parent application that these parts of the apparatus can be left out. As such, the subject-matter of claims 1 and 10 is considered to be an intermediate generalisation of the content of the parent application, adding subject-matter to the original teaching disclosed in particular in paragraphs [0003], [0004], [0005] and [0006] which define the four embodiments of the invention. This deficiency is also not overcome by the alternative subject-matter indicated by the applicant in the "auxiliary request" filed in response to the Rule 63 EPC communication.

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1.3 For the sake of completeness, it is noted that the parent application as filed does not disclose any "electronic processor". While the word "processor" appears in paragraphs [0033] and [0063], these processors are for completely different purposes. Should the applicant refer to the control system 50 mentioned in paragraph [0033], it is to be noted that the packaging unit 400 and the control system has not been disclosed in the application in isolation but together with the remaining parts of the system for storing and packaging pharmaceuticals. Also for this reason, the the subject-matter of claims 1 and 10 is considered to be an intermediate generalisation of the content of the parent application, adding subject-matter to the original teaching disclosed therein.

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2 In view of the above deficiencies and since the features that originally defined the packaging unit in the parent application (see [link to #cd0d4d15-f996-4fc3-a03c-abd37ce9c9ad] above) are also not present in any of the dependent claims 2-9 and 11-15, the application fails to comply with Article 76 EPC to such an extend that it is

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impossible to carry out a meaningful search on the basis of all of the subject-matter claimed.

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3 The search was therefore limited to:

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3.1 A packaging unit for packaging pharmaceuticals into a pouch, the packaging unit comprising: packaging equipment operable to form the pouch; a track configured to direct the pharmaceuticals toward the packaging equipment; and a receptacle coupled to the track upstream of the packaging equipment to receive the pharmaceuticals from the track, the receptacle including a valve mechanism that is movable relative to the track to push the pharmaceuticals into the pouch, (i.e. claim 1 of the parent),

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3.2 wherein the packaging equipment includes a feed stock roll, the feed stock roll having material that forms the pouch (i.e. claim 11 of the parent)

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3.3 wherein the packaging unit includes a control system (i.e. [0029] of parent) electronically coupled to the packaging equipment ([0033] of parent) and configured to: determine an amount of pharmaceuticals expected to be loaded into the pouch; determine a length of the pouch based on the amount of pharmaceuticals expected to be loaded into the pouch; and control the packaging equipment to form the pouch having the length ([0074] of parent).

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

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5 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.

20-03-2024

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