



(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

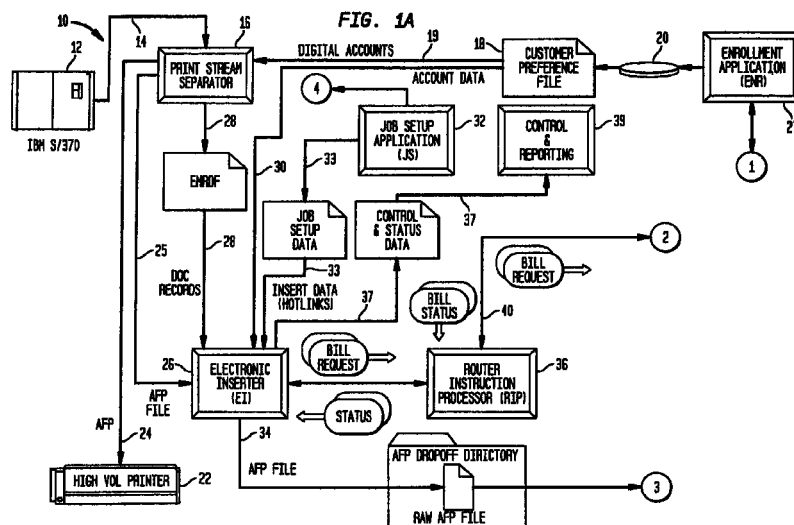
- (88) Date of publication A3: **14.02.2001 Bulletin 2001/07**
 (51) Int. Cl.⁷: **G06F 17/60**
 (43) Date of publication A2: **05.07.2000 Bulletin 2000/27**
 (21) Application number: **99126155.3**
 (22) Date of filing: **29.12.1999**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU MC NL PT SE
Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK RO SI</p> <p>(30) Priority: 29.12.1998 US 222219</p> <p>(71) Applicant: PITNEY BOWES INC.
Stamford, Connecticut 06926-0700 (US)</p> | <p>(72) Inventor: Bresnan, Mark
Newtown, Connecticut 06470 (US)</p> <p>(74) Representative: HOFFMANN - EITLÉ
Patent- und Rechtsanwälte
Arabellastrasse 4
81925 München (DE)</p> |
|---|---|

(54) **Bill processing server and method for a digital document delivery system**

(57) A bill processing server and method forms part of an overall digital document delivery system and is primarily responsible for maintaining an account database which in turn contains information concerning the account balance of the customers which receive electronic bills. The bill processing server interacts with a router instruction processor for receipt of bill data objects for updating the account database as well as for receiving customer response information via an interactive bill presentment server so as to maintain the account database including receipt of payment informa-

tion from the customers. The bill processing server can send account information to an associated payment processing system. The bill processing server can also generate reports concerning the status of the account database and can further generate notification to the customer of an existence of an electronic bill. Finally the bill processing server can generate links to secondary documents to be associated with a generated primary document (bill).





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 99 12 6155

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.CI.7)
X	US 5 761 650 A (LOGAN JAMES R ET AL) 2 June 1998 (1998-06-02) * abstract * * column 1, line 28 - line 62 * * column 2, line 62 - column 4, line 58 * * column 5, line 30 - column 6, line 31 * * column 10, line 46 - column 13, line 30 * * ---	1,10,11	G06F17/60
X	US 5 121 945 A (THOMSON ERIC A ET AL) 16 June 1992 (1992-06-16) * column 2, line 20 - line 62 * * column 9, line 7 - line 25 * * column 5, line 1 - line 43 * * column 11, line 16 - line 29; figures 10,11 * * ---	1-14	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.CI.7) G06F G07F H04M G07B
Y	US 3 652 078 A (SATHER EUGENE ET AL) 28 March 1972 (1972-03-28) * abstract * * column 1, line 56 - column 3, line 11 * * ---	1-14	
Y	HORAN T F: "Electronic bill presentment and payment: the next step for the E-commerce market" EDI FORUM: THE JOURNAL OF ELECTRONIC COMMERCE, 1998, EDI GROUP, USA, vol. 11, no. 4, pages 10-19, 100, XP000944299 ISSN: 1048-3047 * page 10 - page 11 * * ---	1-14	
A	US 5 699 528 A (HOGAN EDWARD J) 16 December 1997 (1997-12-16) * abstract * * column 2, line 3 - column 3, line 49 * * -----	1-14	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search MUNICH		Date of completion of the search 15 December 2000	Examiner Glaser, N
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	

EPO FORM 1503 03/92 (P4/C01)

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

EP 99 12 6155

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.

15-12-2000

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 5761650 A	02-06-1998	AU 1425097 A WO 9724680 A	28-07-1997 10-07-1997
US 5121945 A	16-06-1992	CA 1288164 A EP 0481135 A US 4974878 A US 4948174 A	27-08-1991 22-04-1992 04-12-1990 14-08-1990
US 3652078 A	28-03-1972	NONE	
US 5699528 A	16-12-1997	AU 716268 B AU 7722996 A CA 2236432 A EP 0859983 A WO 9716798 A	24-02-2000 22-05-1997 09-05-1997 26-08-1998 09-05-1997

EPO FORM P0458

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