Title: MODULAR COMPACT PRINTER SYSTEM

Abstract: A compact printer system consists of at least a printer module and a range of further modules. The modules are connectable together to form a rod-shaped printer system. Each module has a connection means at one or both ends for interconnection of the modules. The connection means include a physical connection means and a logical connection means. The physical connection means comprises a plug on a male connection means and a socket on a corresponding female connection means. The logical connection means comprises a serial bus. The serial bus consists of four conductive strips that carry power and data between modules.
INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int. Cl.: B41J 3/36, 3/44, 3/46, 29/00

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 7: B41J

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
WPAT

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category*</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>US 5493409 A (MAEDA et al.) 20 February 1996 Column 29 line 29 to column 30 line 67, figures 27 to 38</td>
<td>1-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>US 4937676 A (FINELLI et al.) 26 June 1990 Whole document</td>
<td>1-13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: From correspondence with the applicant it has been established that the drafter intended for claim 13 be appended to claim 1 and it has been construed as such for the purpose of this report.

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C

See patent family annex

* Special categories of cited documents:
  * "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
  * "E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date
  * "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
  * "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
  * "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

Later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone.

Document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

Document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search
24 July 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU

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Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (July 1998)
**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

**Box I** Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. [ ] Claims Nos:  
   because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. [ ] Claims Nos:  
   because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:

3. [ ] Claims Nos:  
   because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a)

**Box II** Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. Claims 1 to 12 relate to a compact printer system. It is considered that the features of the compact printer system comprises a first “special technical feature”.

2. Claim 13 relates to a serial bus. It is considered that the features of the serial bus comprises a second “special technical feature”.

1. [ ] As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims

2. [X] As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.

3. [ ] As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. [ ] No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

**Remark on Protest**

[ ] The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.

[ ] No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.
This Annex lists the known "A" publication level patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

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END OF ANNEX