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(71) Applicant(s)
Nemesis Leisure Limited
(Incorporated in the United Kingdom)
Metro House, Northgate, Chichester, Sussex, PO19 1SD, United Kingdom

(72) Inventor(s)
Nicholas James Wilson
James David Coker

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service
Barker Brettell
10-12 Priests Bridge, LONDON, SW15 5JE, United Kingdom

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(56) Documents Cited
GB 2289135 A **GB 2279462 A**

(58) Field of Search
UK CL (Edition R) **G2A AAE**
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Online databases: WPI, EPODOC, PAJ

(54) Abstract Title
Self-photography booth with movable screen

(57) A self-photography booth 1 has a movable screen 22 which in its operative position closes the booth to provide a discreet studio area for the photographic take. The screen 22 engages a guide track 4 on a base 2 and is moved by a drive means. The booth may be circular and the screen may provide the background for the photograph. The camera 8 may have an adjustable field of vision and may be attached to the screen.

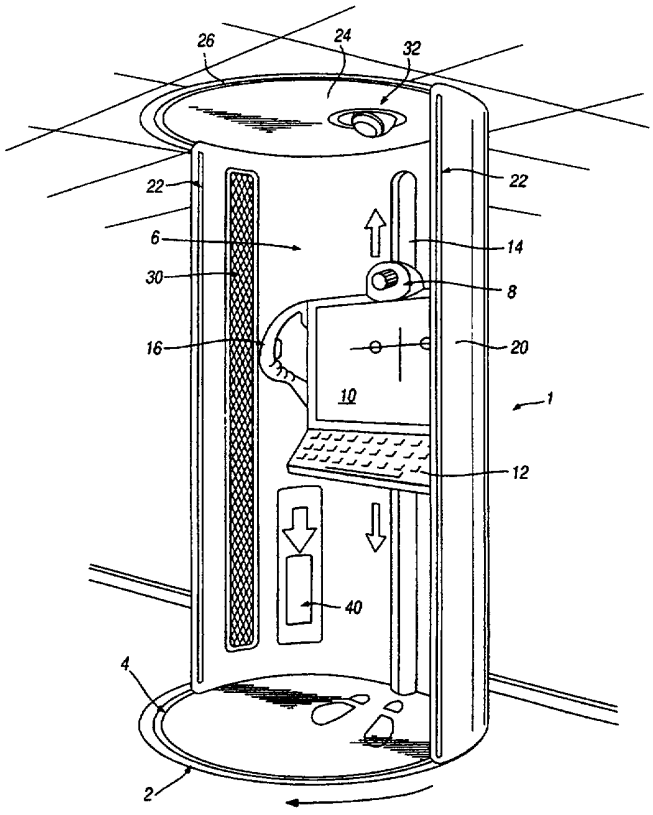

Fig.1

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At least one drawing originally filed was informal and the print reproduced here is taken from a later filed formal copy.

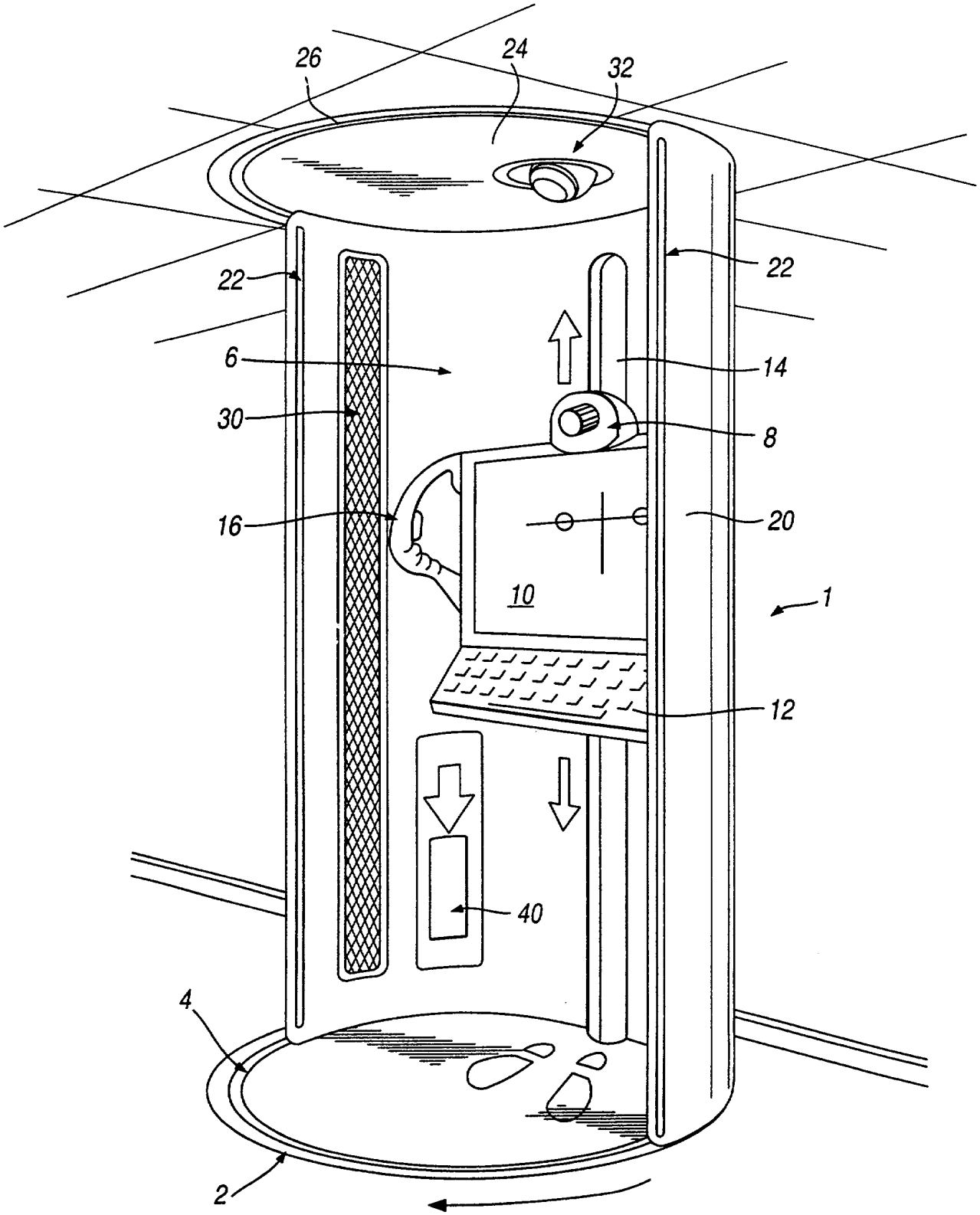

Fig.1

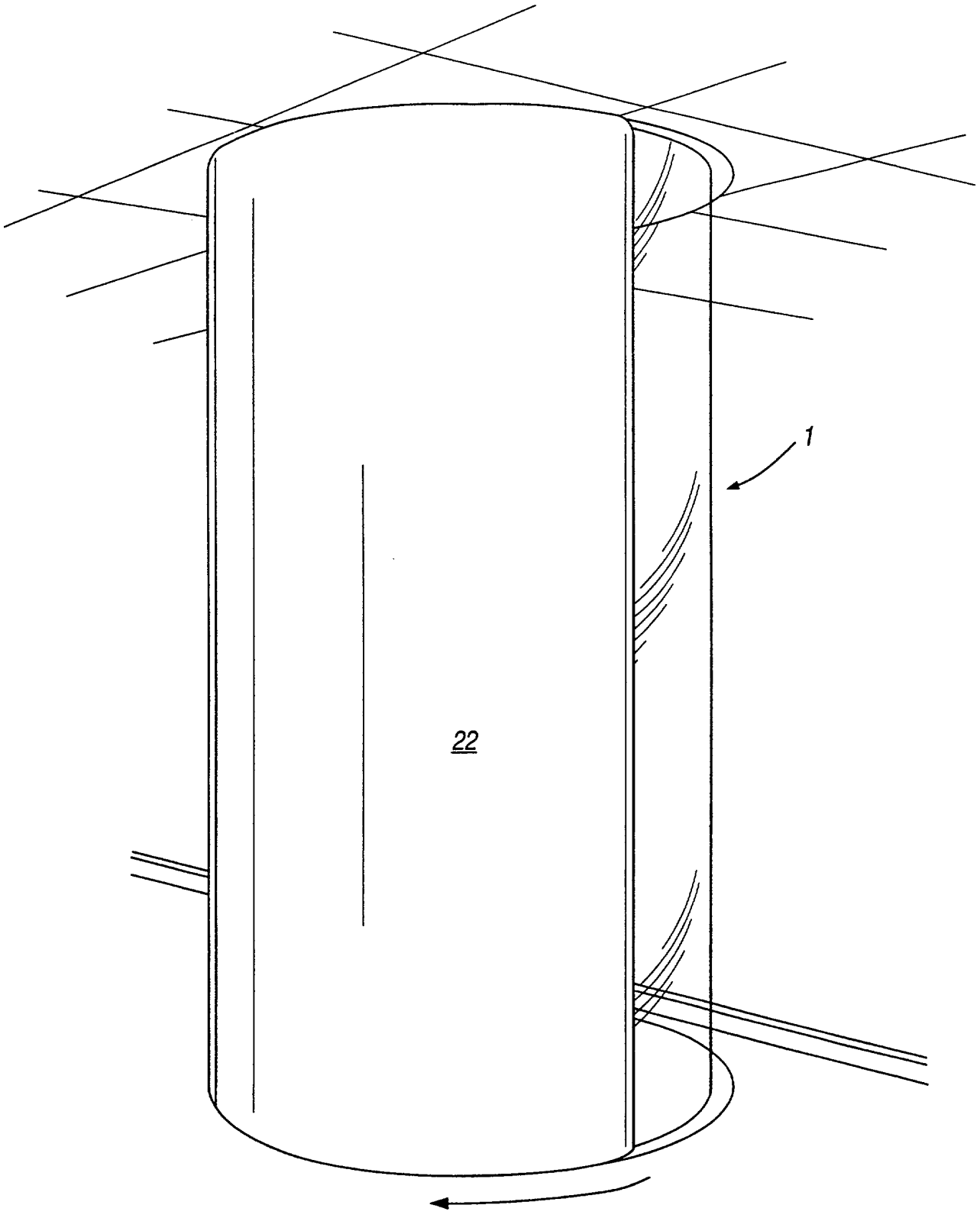

Fig.2

IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO SELF-PHOTOGRAPHY BOOTHS

This invention concerns improvements in or relating to self-photography booths of the kind used by customers for automatically taking and developing photographs for pleasure or for use on identity cards, passports, driving licences and the like.

Such booths are well known and have been in use for many years, and are generally rectilinear in form presenting a bulky and space-consuming structure which takes up or can take up a valuable sales area particularly in the retail trade. Clearly, any such booth needs an entrance and usually a backdrop against which the subject is taken, although it is known to provide freestanding self-photography apparatus without the surrounding and enclosing framework of the conventional booth. However, by the very nature of the self-photography service provided, a degree of privacy is preferred by most users and accordingly, some form of enclosure is desirable, if not preferable.

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved self-photography booth with ease of access, but of more limited floor area than hitherto has been the case.

According to the invention, there is provided a self-photography booth including a base adapted for floor fixture, a guide track formed on the base, a self-photography camera module, a screen provided with track-engaging means, and drive means for moving the screen upon actuation from an open position in which entry to the booth is permitted and a

closed position in which the booth is enclosed to provide a discreet studio area.

The base may be circular with a circular track provided thereon.

The screen may be part cylindrical and may be unitarily formed or in the alternative may be comprise more than one element, each being of arcuate form. The lower periphery of the screen is provided with track-engaging means including runners to render the movement smooth and preferably substantially noiseless.

A roof of corresponding shape to the base may conveniently be provided with an equivalent track, the screen having track-engaging means at its relatively upper periphery for registration with the track.

A drive means in the form of an electric motor suitably positioned and provided with appropriate linkages are provided in association with the screen whereby in the relevant mode of use, the screen may be moved from an inoperative position to an operative position which closes the booth to give a discreet studio area therewithin. In its operative position, the interior of the screen provides the background for the subject being photographed.

The camera module may be mounted on the base in static fashion, although the camera *per se* may be traversable along a vertical and/or horizontal path whereby the field of vision can be altered to capture the subject being photographed in as appropriate a manner as possible to accommodate differing stature.

In the alternative, the camera module may be attached to the screen and accordingly is adapted for movement therewith.

The booth is further provided internally thereof with the conventional elements consisting of a payment mechanism, a control mechanism allowing the initiation of the selection and photographic process, and may also be provided with the means of developing or printing the photograph for delivery within or without the booth. In an alternative, the developing or printing means may be provided remotely from the booth, whence the photograph may be collected after printing. Moreover, the payment mechanism may be adapted to receive currency or tokens, which latter may be purchased at a location remote from the booth.

Suitable lighting for illuminating the preselection and the photographic processes is provided internally of the booth. The lighting may comprise strip lighting and/or individual lighting.

By way of example only, one embodiment of self-photography booth according to the invention is described below with reference to the accompanying drawings:

Figure 1 is a schematic perspective view of the booth in an open condition; and

Figure 2 is a schematic perspective view of the booth in a closed condition.

Referring to the drawings, there is shown a self-photography booth 1 including a circular base 2 which is let into the ground and which carries a circular track 4. Mounted on the base 2 is a self-photography camera module 6 which includes a digital camera 8 supermounting a screen 10

with control console 12, all being adjustable at least in height along a vertical pillar 14 forming a guide. Suitable handles 16 (only one of which is shown) are provided for the manual movement of these integers; however, there may be provided electromechanical means for effecting adjustment thereof upon generation of a suitable signal from console 12.

A curved back panel 20 is provided behind the module 6 and accommodates a screen 22 which is in two parts, one disposed at either side of the module 6 and being extendable from and retractable within the panel. A roof 24 of the booth 1 also carries a track 26 which in conjunction with the track 4 of the base 2 guides the screen 22 along its arcuate path when activated so to do.

The panel 20 and the roof 24 respectively carry strip lighting 30 and a spot light 32 for illuminating the booth for the photographic take.

A printed photograph delivery slot 40 is provided in the panel 20.

In operation, when a subject user wishes to have a photograph taken, payment is made in the booth 1 either by currency or by prepaid token which is placed in a slot mechanism (not shown). Upon insertion of the required payment, the screen 22 is moved from the position shown in Figure 1 to that shown in Figure 2, namely a closed position to close the booth 1 to give a discreet studio area therewithin. When in a closed position, a visible face of the screen 22 may be decorated and/or provided with advertising media.

The subject may then select the type and number of photographs to be taken and by using the handles 16 position the camera module 6 suitably for the photographic session.

Once the photographic session has been completed, the screen 22 re-opens thus allowing the subject egress from the booth 1 after having collected the photographic prints.

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The present invention thus provides a simple and yet effective improvement over the conventional booths, in that it takes far less room and yet affords the privacy people require when having their pictures taken.

CLAIMS

1. A self-photography booth including a base adapted for floor fixture, a guide track formed on the base, a self-photography camera module, a screen provided with track-engaging means, and drive means for moving the screen upon actuation from an open position in which entry to the booth is permitted and a closed position in which the booth is enclosed to provide a discreet studio area.

2. A booth according to Claim 1 in which the base is circular with a circular track provided thereon.

3. A booth according to Claim 1 or 2 in which the screen is part cylindrical and is unitarily formed.

4. A booth according to Claim 1 or 2 in which the screen is part cylindrical and comprises more than one element, each being of arcuate form.

5. A booth according to any one of the preceding claims in which the lower periphery of the screen is provided with track-engaging means including runners.

6. A booth according to any one of the preceding claims in which a roof of corresponding shape to the base is provided with an equivalent track, the screen having track-engaging means at its relatively upper periphery for registration with the track.

7. A booth according to any one of the preceding claims in which the drive means is suitably positioned and provided with appropriate

linkages in association with the screen whereby in the relevant mode of use, the screen is movable from an inoperative position to an operative position which closes the booth to give a discreet studio area therewithin.

8. A booth according to any one of the preceding claims in which in its operative position, the interior of the screen provides the background for the subject being photographed.

9. A booth according to any one of the preceding claims in which the camera module is mounted on the base in static fashion.

10. A booth according to Claim 9 in which the camera is traversable along a vertical and/or horizontal path whereby the field of vision can be altered to capture the subject being photographed in as appropriate a manner as possible to accommodate differing stature.

11. A booth according to any one of the preceding Claims 1 to 8 in which the camera module is attached to the screen and accordingly is adapted for movement therewith.

12. A booth according to any one of the preceding claims in which the booth is further provided internally thereof with the conventional elements consisting of a payment mechanism, a control mechanism allowing the initiation of the selection and photographic process, and is provided with the means of developing or printing the photograph for delivery within or without the booth.

13. A booth according to Claim 12 in which the delivery of the printed photograph is effected remotely from the booth.

14. A booth according to any one of the preceding claims in which lighting for illumination of the preselection and the photographic processes is provided internally of the booth.

15. A self-photography booth substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

Application No: GB 0007973.1 9 **Examiner:** Richard Nicholls
Claims searched: 1-15 **Date of search:** 6 September 2000

Patents Act 1977
Search Report under Section 17

Databases searched:

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:

UK Cl (Ed.R): G2A (AAE)

Int Cl (Ed.7): G03B 17/53

Other: Online databases: WPI, EPODOC, PAJ

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage		Relevant to claims
X	GB 2289135 A	(Prontophot) see especially figures 1,3 and 6	1-3,6-8, 12-14
X	GB 2279462 A	(Temple) see especially figures 1,3 and 4	1-4,6-8, 12-14

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.