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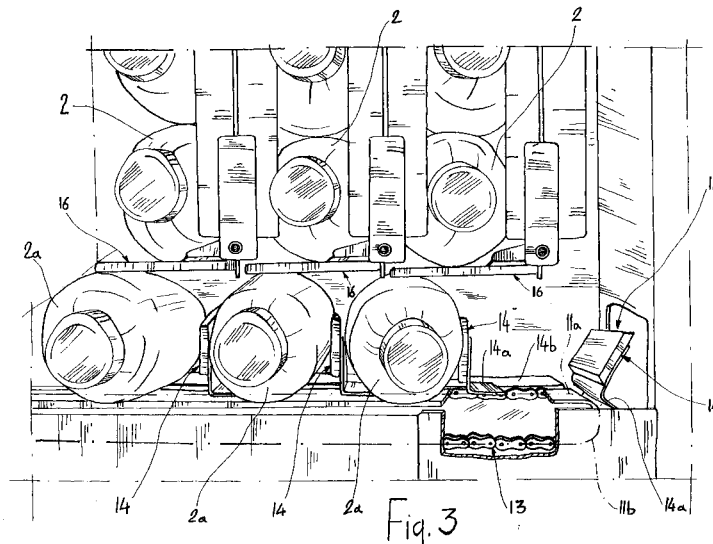
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(54) **An automatic vending machine for packaged products**

(57) An automatic vending machine for packaged products, in particular for packages (2) such as bottles, is described and comprises a storage chamber for packages which are stacked on top of one another in a plurality of columns (6) arranged side by side, and means for moving the packages (2) sequentially to a dispensing opening (10) of the vending machine. The movement means comprise conveyor means (9) movable transverse the stacking axes of the columns (6) and acting on the packages (2) which are at the bottoms of the columns (6) and are arranged in alignment in the transverse direction, in order to move the row of packages

(2) at the bottom towards the dispensing opening (10). Retaining means (15) are independently associated with each column (6) and movable sequentially between a first operative position of interference with the packages (2) of the corresponding column (6) in order to restrain the column, and a second, non-interfering operative position in which the packages (2) of the corresponding column (6) are supplied onto the conveyor means (9) by falling and are consequently moved towards the dispensing opening (10) as a result of the movement of the conveyor means (9) in the transverse direction.



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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT				
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)	
X	DE 198 15 357 A1 (MAIDHOF VERTRIEBS-GMBH & CO. KG) 7 October 1999 (1999-10-07) * column 3 - column 4; claims 1,8; figures 1-4 *	1-14	G07F11/24	
X	----- US 2 889 074 A (REYNOLDS JOHN M) 2 June 1959 (1959-06-02) * column 2, line 11 - column 4, line 69; figures 1,3 *	1-14		
A	----- DE 19 68 357 U (KARL HONNER) 14 September 1967 (1967-09-14) * page 3, line 7 - line 13; figure 1 *	1-14		
A	----- US 1 967 114 A (CUTLER BERNARD) 17 July 1934 (1934-07-17) * page 1, line 48 - page 2, line 11; figure 2 *	1-14		
A	----- US 2 452 837 A (COLBERT CARL C) 2 November 1948 (1948-11-02) * column 1, line 23 - line 41 * * column 4, line 16 - line 50 * * column 5, line 1 - line 24; figures 2,3 *	1-14		TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
A	----- US 2 578 545 A (HAASE GORDON W ET AL) 11 December 1951 (1951-12-11) * figures 2-6 *	1-14		G07F
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims				
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 14 February 2005	Examiner Lavin Liermo, J	
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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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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