



SPECIFICATION**TITLE**

**"METHOD AND ARRANGEMENT FOR COMPENSATING A POSTAGE MACHINE
USER FOR PRINTED AND BILLED, BUT UNUSABLE FRANKING IMPRINTS"**

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**Field of the Invention**

The present invention concerns a method for refunding the first postage value of an unusable printed franking imprint that has been deducted in a billing module of a franking arrangement of the type wherein the franking imprint is detected in a detection step and error information associated with the error event is stored and information derived from the error information is transmitted to a reimbursement entity for authorization of the reimbursement of the postage value. The present invention furthermore concerns a franking arrangement suitable for implementation of such a method.

Description of the Prior Art

Franking arrangements such as, for example, franking machines, PC frankers or the like typically are used to generate a franking imprint on a mail piece or a label that is attached to a mail piece. This franking imprint serves as verification of payment of the required postage for the carrier of the mail piece. Such franking arrangements normally have a tamper-proof billing module in which a billing (charge) ensues for each franking imprint.

In the billing module, for each franking imprint one or more registers normally are changed by a value corresponding to the postage value to be printed in order to document the consumption (use) of postage by the franking arrangement. In order to prevent fraudulent manipulations, the billing in the billing module normally ensues at or immediately after the point in time at which the print data necessary for the

