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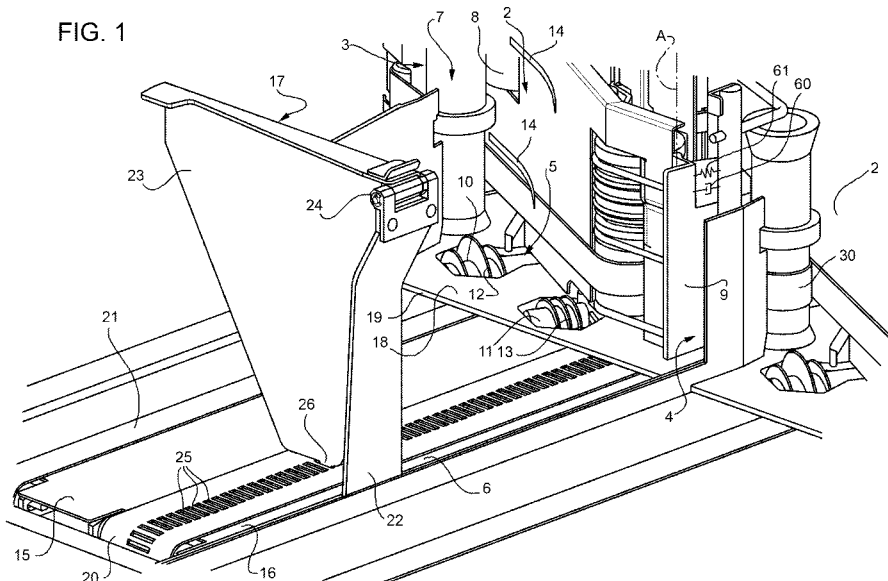
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(54) **Stacking machine for processing standard- up to C4-sized postal items**

(57) A stacking machine comprising a launching device (3) to handle standard and elongated postal items (40) one by one, a bottom wall (18) to support a longitudinal side of the postal item when the latter is processed by the launching device (3), a stop wall (9) facing the launching device (3) to stop the postal items launched by the launching device (3), a compacting module (6) comprising a resting plane (15) to support a longitudinal

side of the stacked postal items (40) processed by said launching device (3), and a first helix (10) arranged to engage a tail portion (42) of a postal item (40) exiting the launching device (3) and configured to guide the tail portion (42) towards the compacting module (6) and to free the outlet of the launching device (3), the stop wall (9) being spaced from the launching device (3) so that when a C4 postal item contacts the stop wall (9), the first helix (10) engages the tail portion of the C4 postal item.

FIG. 1



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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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 (IPC)
X	US 4 518 160 A (LAMBRECHTS ERIC G Y [BE] ET AL) 21 May 1985 (1985-05-21) * the whole document *	1-10	INV. B65H31/06 B65H29/70
X	JP 55 043773 U (.) 21 March 1980 (1980-03-21) * figures 1-4 *	1-3	
X	JP 48 075378 U (.) 19 September 1973 (1973-09-19) * figure 1 *	1,10	
X	JP 49 083769 U (.) 19 July 1974 (1974-07-19) * figures 4-7 *	1,2,8,10	
X	US 2 970 836 A (SMITH JOHN G) 7 February 1961 (1961-02-07) * the whole document *	1-3,8	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			B65H
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
The Hague		8 August 2011	Ureta, Rolando
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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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing claims for which payment was due.

- Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those claims for which no payment was due and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):
- No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those claims for which no payment was due.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

- All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.
- As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.
- Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:
- None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:
- 1-11
- The present supplementary European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims (Rule 164 (1) EPC).



**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B**

Application Number
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The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-11

A stacking machine comprising a bottom wall, a helix projecting with respect to said bottom wall, an elastic element, and/or a second helix, and/or a compacting module having motorized mobile member and a downwards inclined resting plane separated from said bottom wall by a step, and/or a launching device having a profiled roller to curve the postal item.

2. claims: 12, 13

A stacking machine comprising a mobile stop wall to dissipate the striking energy of a postal item against it.

3. claims: 14-16

A control method for a stacking machine comprising a compacting module having a motorized mobile member, the method comprising the step of controlling said mobile member.

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

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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
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08-08-2011

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