

EXHIBIT 2004



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U.S. Patent Application S.N. 09/528,951

12/a

Title: MODULAR TRANSPORT SYSTEM FOR COVERINGS FOR ARCHITECTURAL OPENINGS

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Examiner: Blair M. Johnson

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231, on September 12, 2001

Name CAROLYN LAUGHERTY Date September 12, 2001

Signature Carolyn Laugherty

Amendment

Commissioner of Patents
Box Non-fee Amendment
Washington D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

This paper is being filed in response to the Office Action mailed June 12, 2001. Please amend the application as follows:

In the claims:

Please cancel claims 35-44, 45-52, 53-56, 57-66, and 112-116, without prejudice, as relating to distinct inventions that have been restricted out of this application.

Please amend claims 4, 16, 21, 83, 120, and 124 and add claims 126-128 as follows:

- 4. A transport mechanism for a covering for architectural openings [as recited in claim 3], comprising:
a lift rod having an axis of rotation;

a plurality of lift modules, each including a lift spool driven by said lift rod;

a transmission module, including a transmission input shaft; a transmission output shaft which drives said lift rod; a transmission mechanism; and a transmission module housing which contains said transmission mechanism;

a power module, including a power output shaft, means for inputting power to drive said power output shaft, and a power module housing which contains said power output shaft and said means for inputting power; wherein said power module housing and said transmission module housing are mounted with the power output shaft of the power module driving the transmission input shaft, so that driving the power output shaft drives the lift rod through the transmission module; and

wherein said power module housing includes projections and recesses, for aligning said power module housing with another similarly-shaped housing or adapter; and wherein said power module housing includes a hook and a hook-receiving recess for hooking said power module housing together with another similarly-shaped housing or adapter; and

further comprising a transmission adapter mounted on said transmission housing, including projections and recesses that mate with the corresponding projections and recesses in said power module housing.

16. A transport mechanism for a covering for architectural openings, comprising:

a power module, including a power spool, having an axis of rotation; an output shaft driven by the power spool; a spring having two spring axes of rotation, the first spring axis of rotation being the resting axis and the second spring axis of rotation being the axis of rotation of the power spool; and a housing containing said power spool and said spring;

a lift rod driven by said output shaft; [and]

a plurality of lift spools driven by said lift rod, at least one of said lift spools having an outer surface and a range of motion;
a lift cord; and
means for ensuring that said lift cord wraps onto the outer surface of said at least one lift spool in only a single layer throughout its range of motion, thereby effectively preventing overwrapping.

21. A transport mechanism [as recited in claim 16] for a covering for architectural openings, comprising:

a power module, including a power spool, having an axis of rotation; an output shaft driven by said power spool; a spring having two spring axes of rotation, the first spring axis of rotation being the resting axis and the second spring axis of rotation being the axis of rotation of the power spool; and a housing containing said power spool and said spring;

a lift rod driven by said output shaft;

a plurality of lift spools driven by said lift rod; and further comprising a transmission module, including a transmission input shaft; a transmission output shaft; a transmission mechanism; and a transmission module housing, which contains said transmission mechanism, wherein said power module output shaft drives said transmission input shaft, and said transmission output shaft drives said lift rod.

83. A transport mechanism [as recited in claim 82,] for a covering for architectural openings, comprising:

an elongated lift rod;

a plurality of lift spools driven by said lift rod;

a power module, comprising a power output shaft; and means for inputting power to drive said power output shaft;

a transmission module, comprising a transmission drive shaft; a transmission driven shaft parallel to said transmission drive shaft; and a

transmission cord having a first end connected to said transmission drive shaft and a second end connected to said transmission driven shaft, and being wrapped around the outer surface of at least one of said transmission drive and driven shafts, wherein at least one of said transmission drive and driven shafts has a tapered outer surface; and a transmission housing containing said transmission drive and driven shafts, so that said transmission can be removed from said transport mechanism assembly without affecting the relative positions of said transmission drive and driven shafts, wherein said power output shaft drives said lift rod through said transmission module;

a first locking pin, which is received in the transmission housing and locks the driven shaft in a position in which the transmission cord is prewound on the driven shaft; and further comprising a second locking pin received in the transmission housing [a] and locking the driven shaft in a position in which the transmission cord is prewound on the driven shaft[, wherein a person installing the transmission can dispose of the locking pin that will be more difficult to reach during installation and use the locking pin that is more accessible, depending upon the orientation of the transmission].

120. A transport mechanism for a covering for architectural openings, comprising:

a power module, including a power spool, having a first axis of rotation; an output shaft driven by the power spool; a spring having two spring axes of rotation, the first spring axis of rotation being the resting axis and the second spring axis of rotation being the axis of rotation of the power spool; and a housing containing said power spool and said spring; and

a lift spool driven by said power module and having a second axis of rotation; a lift cord mounted on said lift spool, said lift cord having a diameter, and a cover on said lift spool defining a gap between said cover and said lift cord which is less than two times the diameter of the lift cord, in order to ensure that the lift cord wraps onto said lift spool in a single layer, without overwrapping.

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