

Docket No.: 31440/46751  
(PATENT)

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

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In re Patent Application of:  
Kenneth F. Schoening et al.

Application No.: 13/857,616

Confirmation No.: 8818

Filed: April 5, 2013

Art Unit: 2876

For: A RADIO FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION  
SYSTEM FOR TRACKING AND MANAGING  
MATERIALS IN A MANUFACTURING  
PROCESS

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Examiner: A. N. Trail

**AMENDMENT TO NON-FINAL OFFICE ACTION DATED AUGUST 2, 2013  
AND APPLICANT INTERVIEW SUMMARY**

MS Amendment  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Madam:

**INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS**

In response to the Office Action dated August 2, 2013, please amend the above-identified U.S. patent application as follows:

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims which begins on page 2 of this paper.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin on page 11 of this paper.

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) An inventory tracking system for use in tracking placement of physical items within an inventory tracking region, comprising:

a radio frequency tag detection system including[[:]];:

a plurality of radio frequency antennas disposed in a spaced apart manner within the [[an]] inventory tracking region; and

a detection controller coupled to the plurality of radio frequency antennas, the detection controller including a beam-steering control system that controls the operation of each of the radio frequency antennas, wherein one of the plurality of radio frequency antennas uses a beam to scan a portion of the inventory tracking region [[and]] to detect a current physical location of one or more ~~each of a number of~~ radio frequency tags disposed in a scanned portion of the inventory tracking region, wherein the current physical location corresponds to a position defined by two coordinate units in a multi-dimensional coordinate system and the value of each of the two coordinate units is determined by the one of the plurality of radio frequency antennas, and wherein the detection controller generates indications of the detected radio frequency tags and the current physical locations of the detected radio frequency tags in the scanned portion within the inventory tracking region; and

a tracking system coupled to the radio frequency tag detection system to receive the indications of the detected radio frequency tags and the current ~~detected~~ physical locations [[for]] of the detected radio frequency tags in the scanned portion within the inventory tracking region, the tracking system including[[:]];:

a memory for storing inventory item information for each of a plurality of inventory items, the inventory item information for each of the plurality of inventory items including an inventory item radio frequency tag identifier, inventory item identification information defining the identity of the inventory item, and an indication of the current physical location of the inventory item within the inventory tracking region; and

an access system that accesses the memory and provides at least a subset of the inventory item information for one or more of the inventory items to a user for determining the current physical location of the one or more of the inventory items within the inventory tracking region,

wherein the tracking system updates the indication of the current physical location of at least one particular inventory item within the inventory tracking region as stored in the memory for the at least one particular inventory item based on the indication of the current physical location of the detected radio frequency tag for at the least one particular inventory item as produced by the detection controller.

2. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 1, wherein the subset of inventory item information includes the indication of the current physical location of the one or more of the inventory items within the inventory tracking region.

3. (Canceled).

4. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 2, wherein the tracking system stores, for each of the plurality of inventory items, inventory item identification information including two or more defining characteristics of the inventory item.

5. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 2, wherein the inventory item identification information for the at least one of the inventory items includes a type of material associated with the inventory item, a source of the inventory item, or an amount of material associated with the inventory item.

6. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 2, wherein the access system includes a user display system that graphically displays the current physical location of the one or more of the inventory items based on the indication of the current physical location of the one or more of inventory items.

7. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 6, wherein the user display system displays the current physical location of the one or more of the inventory items in a graphical manner juxtaposed with an indication of at least a portion of the inventory region.

8. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 6, wherein the user display system graphically displays the current physical location of the one or more of the inventory items by displaying an indication of a two dimensional geographical location of the one or more of the inventory items within the inventory tracking region.

9. (Canceled).

10. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 1, wherein the access system includes an auditory system that generates auditory signals based on the current physical location of one or more of the inventory items.

11. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 1, wherein the access system includes a visual system that generates lighted signals based on the current physical location of one or more of the inventory items.

12. (Canceled).

13. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 1, further including an inventory control system that receives the current physical location of at least one of the inventory items from the access system and determines if the one of the plurality of inventory items is in a desired location.

14. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 13, wherein the inventory control system compares the current physical location of the at least one of the inventory items to a desired location of the at least one of the inventory items as defined by a job identifier associated with a job that uses the at least one of the inventory items.

15. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 14, wherein the inventory control system produces a warning signal when the location of the at least one of the inventory items associated with the job identifier is not at the desired location for the inventory item for the job defined by the job identifier when running the job.

16. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 14, wherein the desired location is associated with a location of the at least one of the inventory items within a manufacturing process during execution of the manufacturing process during the job.

17. (Original) The inventory tracking system of claim 14, wherein the inventory control system detects movement of the at least one of the inventory items based on the job identifier and compares movement of the inventory item with a desired movement of the inventory item as specified by the job identifier.

18. (Currently Amended) A method of tracking inventory within an inventory region, comprising:

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