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# United States Patent [19]

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Whitehouse

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[54] **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PURCHASE AND APPLICATION OF POSTAGE USING PERSONAL COMPUTER**

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[51] Int. Cl.<sup>5</sup> ..... **G07B 17/00**

[52] U.S. Cl. .... **364/464.03; 364/464.02**

[58] Field of Search ..... **364/464.02, 464.03**

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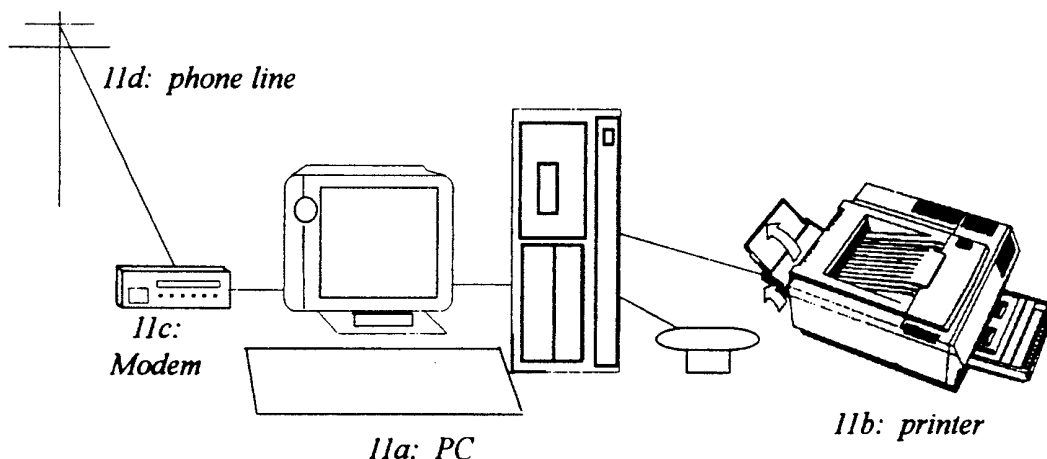
Primary Examiner—Edward R. Cosimano  
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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A distributed computer system enables end-users hav-

ing personal computers to purchase postage from the post authority. End-user computers each include a modem for communicating with a computer at the postal authority, a secure non-volatile memory for storing postal usage and remaining postage information, a postage meter control program that includes a program for communicating with the postal authority to purchase postage and for updating the contents of the secure non-volatile memory. The end user computers preferably include a printer and a postage printing program for directing the printer to print addresses and postage on envelopes and labels. The postage printing program assigns a unique serial number to every printed envelope and label, where the unique serial number includes a meter identifier unique to that end user. As a result, every printed envelope and label contains a unique serial number. The postage printing program also directly controls the printer so as to prevent end users from printing more than one copy of any envelope or label with the same serial number. By capturing and storing the serial numbers on all mail pieces, and then periodically processing that information, the postal service can detect fraudulent duplication of envelopes or labels. The postage meter control program in each end user computer also allows the postal service to collect from the secure non-volatile memory audit information concerning postage purchased and postage applied to mail pieces by the end user's computer.

**6 Claims, 12 Drawing Sheets**



RPX Exhibit 1114

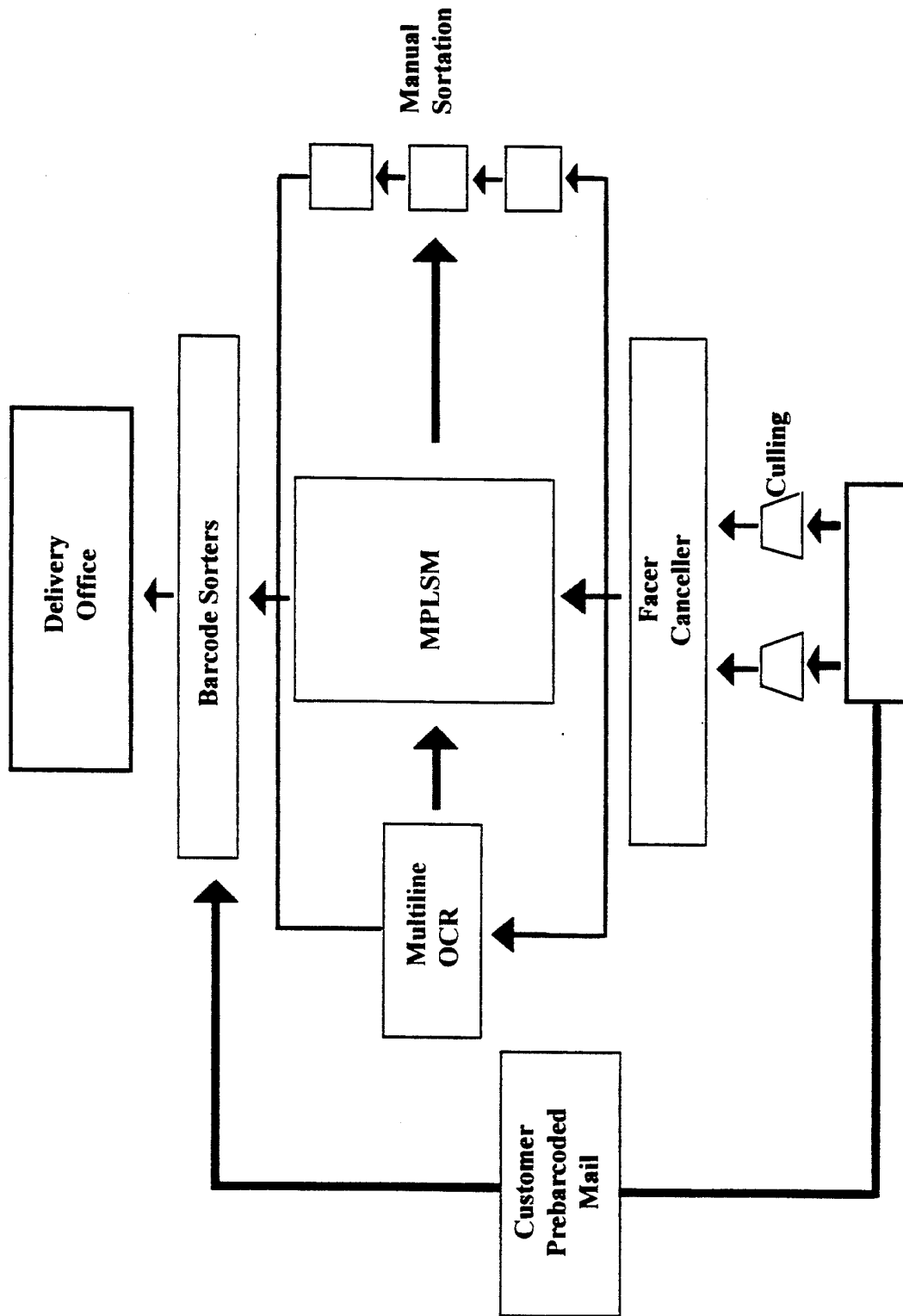
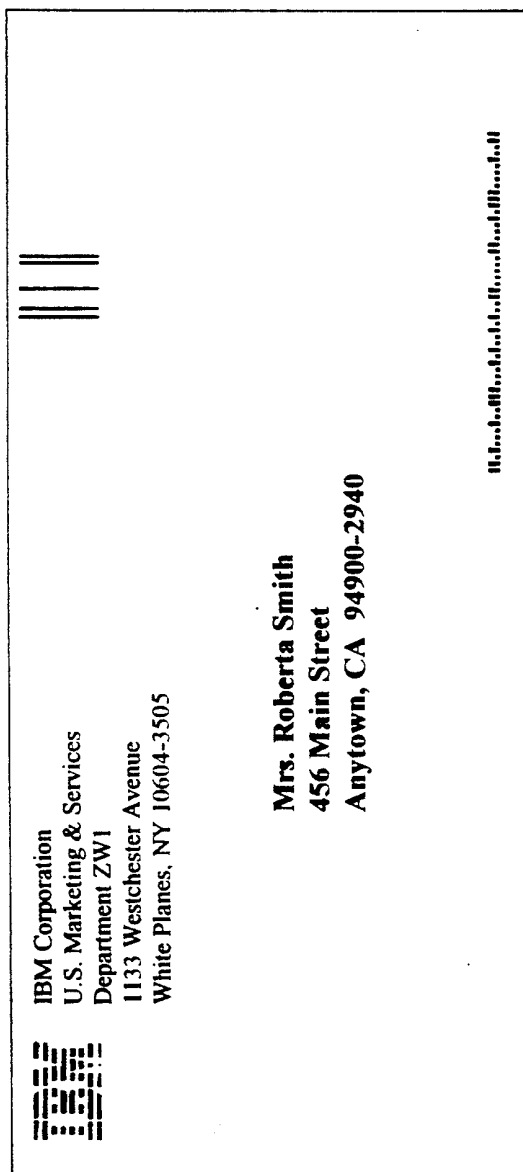


Figure 1



PLACE  
FIRST  
CLASS  
POSTAGE  
HERE

Fig 3a

First-Class  
Postage  
Required  
Post Office will  
not deliver  
without proper  
postage.

Fig 3b

First-Class  
POSTNET  
Personal  
Automation  
Discount  
27 Cents  
for 1st Ounce

Fig 3c



Penalty for Private  
Use to Avoid Payment  
of Postage, \$300

Fig 3d

FIRST-CLASS  
MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT #99999  
PALO ALTO, CA

Fig 3e

Non Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #9999  
Palo Alto, CA

Fig 3f

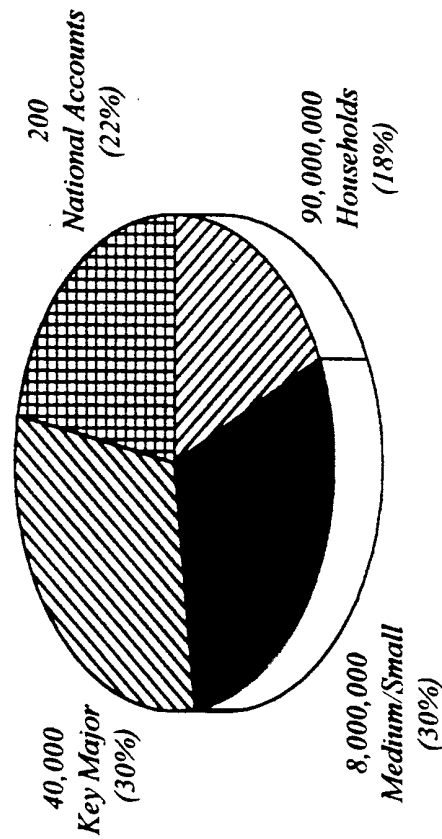


Figure 4

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