

The opinion in support of the decision being entered today was not written for publication and is not binding precedent of the Board.

Paper No. 20

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Ex parte JACQUES H. HELOT,
DANIEL I. CROFT,
and
DAVID A. WILLIAMS

Appeal No. 2001-0004
Application No. 08/961,580

ON BRIEF

Before HAIRSTON, RUGGIERO, and LALL, Administrative Patent Judges.

HAIRSTON, Administrative Patent Judge.

DECISION ON APPEAL

This is an appeal from the final rejection of claims 1 through 15.

The disclosed invention relates to a docking station that is capable of interfacing to a docking port on a mobile computing device. The docking port and the keyboard of the

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mobile computing device are formed on the same surface of the mobile computing device.

Claim 1 is illustrative of the claimed invention, and it reads as follows:

1. A docking station, comprising:

a docking station body having a replicated port formed in at least a first wall thereof;

a receiving port electrically coupled to said replicated port, wherein said receiving port is capable of interfacing to a docking port on a mobile computing device having a housing and a keyboard on a first surface of the housing, wherein said docking port on said mobile computing device is formed on same said first surface of said housing as said keyboard; and

means coupled between said docking station body and said receiving port the [sic, that] permits movement of said receiving port relative to said replicated port.

The references relied on by the examiner are:

Ma	5,290,178	Mar. 1, 1994
Leman et al. (Leman)	5,436,792	Jul. 25, 1995
Ditzik	5,668,570	Sep. 16, 1997

Claims 1 through 3 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lemman in view of Ma.

Claims 4 through 6 and 8 through 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lemman in view of Ma and Ditzik.

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Reference is made to the final rejection (paper number 11), the brief (paper number 18) and the answer (paper number 19) for the respective positions of the appellants and the examiner.

OPINION

We have carefully considered the entire record before us, and we will reverse the obviousness rejection of claims 1 through 15.

Leman discloses a docking station connector 20 in a tray portion 16 of a docking station for receiving a docking port presumably located on the back surface of a notepad computer 18 (Figures 2, 3 and 4).

According to the examiner (final rejection, page 2), "Leman et al. lacks the teaching of a mobile computing device having a keyboard on a first surface." The examiner turns to Ma for a teaching of a "mobile computing device having a keyboard on a first surface," and concludes that "[i]t would have bee [sic, been] obvious to one or [sic, of] ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use any type of portable device in the apparatus of Leman et al."

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Appellants argue (brief, page 8) that:

Ma does not either explicitly or implicitly disclose, teach, or suggest that the "docking port . . . is formed on same said first surface . . . as said keyboard." In fact, Ma discloses that the docking port on the mobile computing device is formed on the rear surface and not the "surface of said housing as said keyboard" as Applicant is [sic, Applicants are] claiming. Thus Ma teaches away from Applicant's [sic, Applicants'] invention and it is improper to combine Ma with the teaching of Lehman [sic, Leman].

We agree with appellants' arguments. Ma discloses terminals 31 on a side edge of portable computer 3, and, as indicated supra, Leman presumably locates a docking port on the back side of the notepad computer. Neither the back side of Leman nor the side edge of Ma has a keyboard located thereon. Thus, the obviousness rejection of claims 1 through 3 and 7 is reversed because the applied references neither teach nor would they have suggested to one of ordinary skill in the art to locate the docking port and the keyboard on the same surface of a mobile computing device.

The obviousness rejection of claims 4 through 6 and 8 through 15 is likewise reversed because the teachings of Ditzik do not cure the noted shortcomings in the teachings of Leman and Ma.

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DECISION

The decision of the examiner rejecting claims 1 through
15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is reversed.

REVERSED

KENNETH W. HAIRSTON)	
Administrative Patent Judge)	
)	
)	
)	BOARD OF PATENT
JOSEPH F. RUGGIERO)	APPEALS AND
Administrative Patent Judge)	INTERFERENCES
)	
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)	
PARSHOTAM S. LALL)	
Administrative Patent Judge)	

KWH:hh

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