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Matching Personal Property with its Owners

This invention concerns a method of matching personal property with its owners.

It is known from the state of the art how to put name and address tags on personal property, for example pieces of luggage or the like, so if they are lost, the property that is found can be matched with its owners and then delivered to them.

The disadvantage of using such name and address tags is that they are easily accessible to third parties, and it is therefore possible for these personal data to be misused. For example, travelers often leave their luggage unattended, and it is possible for third parties to learn the traveler's name and address without being noticed. The fact that travelers leave their luggage unattended is not just due to the negligence of many travelers. Travelers cannot attend their luggage while a ship or aircraft is being loaded or unloaded, so it is possible for third parties to learn the corresponding information from the name and address tags. The data they learn concerning absence from home, name and address of travelers can then be deliberately misused by third parties for break-ins.

Starting from the state of the art, this invention is based on the problem of providing a method of matching personal property with its owners that does not allow unauthorized third parties to learn the name or address of the owner.

For the technical solution to this problem, the invention provides a method of anonymously matching personal property with its owners, wherein a code is assigned to a person, the personal data and the code are stored centrally and the personal property is provided with an information carrier, which contains the code and information on how to reach the person authorized accessed to the stored information, wherein the code on the personal property found is reported to the central site, and the owner found from the code number with the assigned personal data is informed by the code center.

With the method in the invention, it is now possible to match personal property with its owners without unauthorized third parties learning the owner's personal data. This anonymous matching is done with a clear code, which is assigned to a person and is stored at a central site along with the corresponding personal data. Only the persons authorized access to the stored data can match the code with the personal data. Personal property can now be provided with an information carrier that gives no information on the person of the owner, but contains only a code, and the code does not allow third parties to make any inferences about the person of the owner. A finder reports his find with the information of the code number on the property marked in the invention to the central site, which forwards the information to the owner. The property found is transferred directly from the finder to the owner.

Besides the code, the information carrier also contains information on how to reach the code center, which can match the code with the personal data found on the information carrier. Third parties in possession of found property can then report their find, giving the code, to the code center. The code center matches the personal data with the code given by the third party and informs the owner of what it has found. The owner can then contact the finder or he can agree to forward his address to the finder through the code center, so that the finder can in turn contact the owner.

The method in the invention thus offers an advantageous way of anonymously matching personal property with its owners without unauthorized third parties obtaining information on the person of the owner that could be misused.



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Another advantageous proposal in the invention is computerized registration of personal data and corresponding code assignment, so that data that is needed can be accessed quickly and safely.

Another advantageous proposal in the invention is that the information carrier attached to the personal property have information on how to reach the code center in the form a telephone number, and the telephone number information guarantee international understanding in an advantageous way and therefore offer the possibility of fast, immediate contact. Besides the information on the telephone number, information on a fax number and e-mail address is likewise conceivable, since both fax numbers and e-mail addresses are understood internationally and allow fast contact.

In another advantageous proposal, the invention has a code made up of a sequence numbers and/ or letters and the degree of coding can be as high as desired, depending on the number of code digits used. The use of such a code also guarantees international understanding.

According to another advantageous proposal of the invention, the information carrier contains procedural information that explains to the finder what to do next, and this procedure is advantageously multilingual on the information carrier.

According to another advantageous proposal of the invention, the information carrier has a card-like shape and is made of plastic, metal or the like and is therefore advantageously weather-proof and cannot be destroyed intentionally.

According to another advantageous proposal of the invention, the information carrier is a self-adhesive film, which is struck directly on the surface of the property to be marked and that especially helps avoid unintentional separation of the information carrier and the personal property when the property so marked is not handled properly.

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According to another advantageous proposal of the invention, unused surfaces of the information carrier can be used for other purposes, for example advertising purposes.

The invention provides a method of anonymously matching personal property with its owners that is uncomplicated and simple to handle and that gives no information on the person of the property owner to unauthorized third parties. Moreover, the data can be called up quickly and safely by computerized personal-data entry, so that the owner can be informed as quickly as possible if the property is reported found.

Having the code composed of a sequence of numbers and/or letters and the information on the telephone number on the information carrier instead of an address makes the information carrier internationally understandable and the method in the invention able to be used worldwide.

Other advantages and features of the invention are given in the following description using the figures.

Fig. 1 shows a front view of a card-like information carrier

Fig. 2 shows a back view of a card-like information carrier.

The same elements are given the same reference numbers and letters in the figures.

Fig. 1 shows the front of a card-like information carrier 1, which has a holding area 2a to hold an attachment element 2b and an information area 3. The information carrier 1 can be attached to and detached from the personal property, not shown here, by means of the attachment element 2b, and the information carrier can be connected to the personal property in such a way that the information carrier 1 is easily accessible at any time.

The information surface 3 of the information carrier contains the code 4 stored in a code center, information 5 on reaching the code center and procedural information 6 that is advantageously multilingual.

Third parties who are in possession of found property that has such an information carrier 1 can report what they have found to the code center and give the code 4. The code center then finds the owner of the found property from the code and informs him of what has been found. Information 5 on reaching the code center is given, in this example of embodiment, in the form of a telephone number 5a, a fax number 5b and an e-mail address 5c, so the information on how to make contact is easily understood internationally.

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Fig. 2 shows the back of a card-like information carrier 1, which has a holding area 2a for holding an attachment element 2b, and an information area 3. In this example of embodiment, the unused information area on the back of the information carrier is used for advertising purposes.

List of Reference Numbers

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- 1 card-like information carrier
- 2a holding area
- 2b attachment element
- 3 information area
- 4 code
- 5 information
- 5a telephone number
- 5b fax number
- 5c e-mail address
- 6 procedural information

1. A method of anonymously matching personal property with its owners, wherein a code is assigned to a person, the personal data and the code are stored centrally and the personal property is provided with an information carrier, which contains the code and information on how to reach the persons authorized access to the stored information, and the code on the personal property found is reported to the central site, and the owner found from the code number with the personal data is informed by the central site.
2. The method in Claim 2, characterized by the fact that the personal data-entry and code assignment are computerized.
3. The method in Claim 1, characterized by the fact that the information carrier provided with the personal property has the telephone number of the person authorized access to the stored information.
4. The method in Claim 1, characterized by the fact that the code is composed of a sequence of 3 numbers and/or letters.
5. The method in Claim 1, characterized by the fact that the information carrier provided with the personal property contains procedural information.
6. The method in Claim 1, characterized by the fact that the information carrier can be attached to the personal property and is easily accessible.
7. The method in one of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that the information carrier has a card-like shape and is composed of plastic, metal or the like.
8. The method in one of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that the information carrier is a self-adhesive film.
9. The method in one of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that unused surfaces of the information carrier can be used for other purposes.