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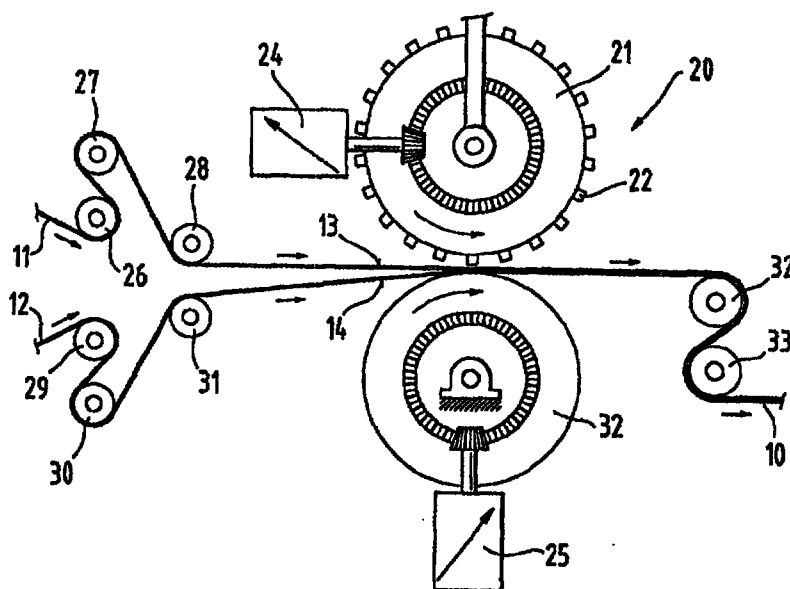
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(21) International Application Number: PCT/US97/21135 (22) International Filing Date: 18 November 1997 (18.11.97) (30) Priority Data: 96118654.1 21 November 1996 (21.11.96) EP (34) Countries for which the regional or international application was filed: BE et al. (71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY [US/US]; One Procter & Gamble Plaza, Cincinnati, OH 45202 (US). (72) Inventor; and (75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only): SCHMITZ, Christoph, Johann [DE/DE]; Dr.-Lieser-Strasse 2, D-53881 Euskirchen-Stotzheim (DE). (74) Agents: REED, T., David et al.; The Procter & Gamble Company, 5299 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45217 (US).	(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, GH, HU, ID, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, KE, LS, MW, SD, SZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG). Published <i>With international search report.</i>	

(54) Title: THERMAL JOINING OF WEBS



(57) Abstract

A method of joining at least two webs (11, 12), said webs (11, 12) being porous and comprising meltable components, said webs (11, 12) being arranged in an adjacent manner to form a web structure (10), said web structure (10), comprising outer surfaces (13, 14) and an area of overlap (15) between said webs (11, 12); said method characterised by the steps of: 1) sufficiently heating a fluid to enable at least a partial melting of said meltable components; 2) directing a high speed jet of said heated fluid towards at least one of said outer surfaces (13, 14); 3) allowing said fluid to penetrate said webs (11, 12) at discrete locations; and 4) allowing said fluid to circulate in said webs (11, 12) to at least partially melt said meltable components. In another aspect of the invention, a disposable absorbent article is made according to the method described herein.