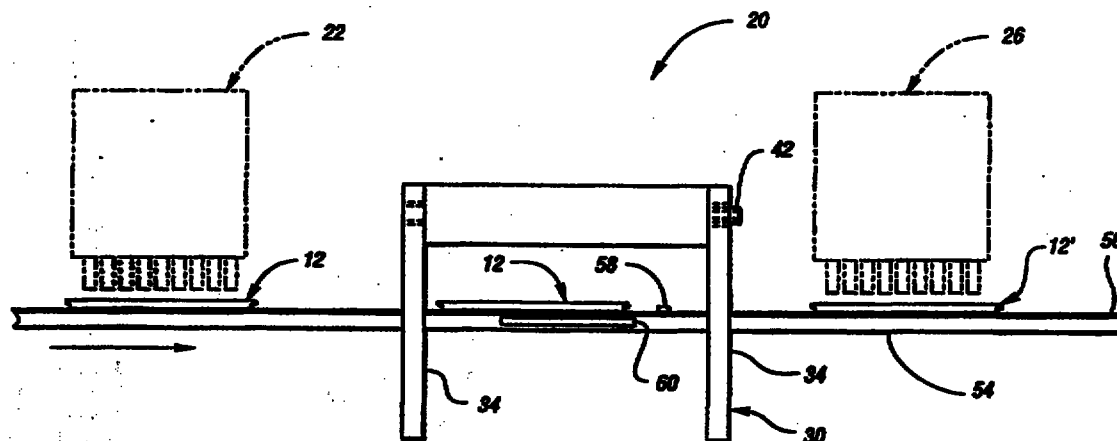




INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁶ : B65G 65/23	A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 99/02437 (43) International Publication Date: 21 January 1999 (21.01.99)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/US98/09294 (22) International Filing Date: 6 May 1998 (06.05.98) (30) Priority Data: 08/891,862 9 July 1997 (09.07.97) US (71) Applicant: GENERAL SCANNING, INC. [US/US]; 1650 Voyager Avenue, Simi Valley, CA 93063 (US). (72) Inventors: JACKSON, Robert, L.; 13676 Laurelhurst Road, Moorpark, CA 93021 (US). DUDLEY, Russell, E.; 491 Mark Drive, Simi Valley, CA 93065 (US). NOBLETT, David, A.; 6394 Smoketree Avenue, Agoura, CA 91301 (US). (74) Agents: SYROWIK, David, R. et al.; Brooks & Kushman, 22nd floor, 1000 Town Center, Southfield, MI 48075 (US).	(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BE, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GE, GH, GM, GW, 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, UZ, VN, YU, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), 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: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR INVERTING A TRAY



(57) Abstract

A method and system are provided for flipping a tray (12) of parts such as integrated circuit packages (10) including a pair of flippable storage trays (12, 12'). A first storage tray has an upper surface (14) which forms a grid of storage compartments (16, 16') wherein each of the storage compartments is adapted to hold a single integrated circuit package. Initially, the first tray is received at a flip station (20) from a first part processing station (22). Then, the first and second trays are joined together so that they mate. Then, the mated first and second trays are inverted so that the packages are held in the second tray. Then, the first and second trays are separated and the second tray which now holds the plurality of packages is transferred to a second part processing station (26). Then, the cycle is repeated with a third tray of parts and the now empty first tray.