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(54) Mass loader mechanism and method.

(57) A mass loader (10) stores a plurality of cartridges (14) for loading a selected one of the cartridges (14) into an optical disk reader (12). The loader (10) comprises a magazine carrier (18) and a cartridge loading apparatus (28). The cartridges (14) are stored in a vertical and parallel orientation within slots in a magazine (16) which is then inserted into the magazine carrier (18). The magazine carrier (18) depends from a follower nut (52) which travels along a lead screw (50) in a direction transverse to the parallel orientation of the cartridges (14). As the leadscrew (50) turns, the follower nut (52) travels therealong to move the magazine (16) into the correct position to load the selected one of the cartridges (14) into the reader (12). After the magazine is properly positioned, another lead screw (30) is driven to propel another follower nut (32) therealong. The follower nut (32) has a loading pin (40) protruding therefrom which engages the selected one of the cartridges (14) for loading. The leadscrew (30) is then driven to propel the cartridge (14) via the pin (40) on the follower nut (32) into the reader (12).

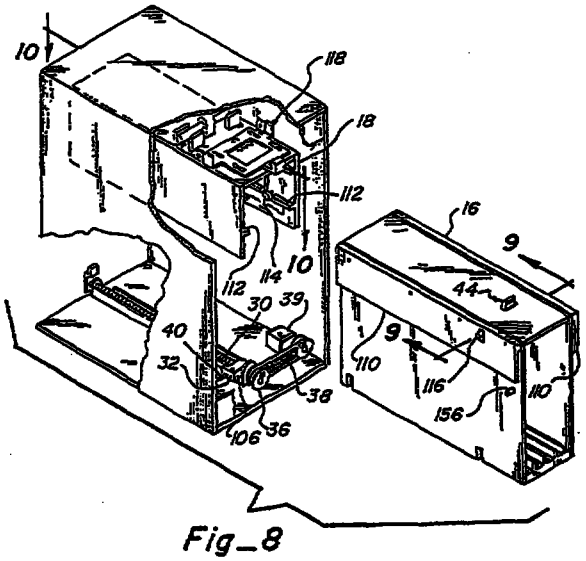


Fig_8

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