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intended to be illustrative, not limiting. Various modifications may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the amended claims. Modifications and alterations will occur to others upon reading and understanding this specification; therefore, it is intended that all such modifications and alterations are included insofar as they come within the scope of the appended claims or equivalents thereof.

We claim:

1. A counterfeit detection method that detects distinctive seals in documents, comprising:

training a detector off-line with distinctive seals so as to generate and record templates for each of said distinctive seals;

receiving sample images suspect seals from said detector for identifying the location and orientation of said suspect seals on said sample images;

aligning said templates by rotating and shifting of said templates to said suspect seals; and

comparing said templates and said suspects seals to determine a match.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

recording a color of said distinctive marks during said training step; and

smoothing said distinctive seals using a binary averaging means, whereby said color of said distinctive seals and said smoothed version of the binary of said distinctive seals are generated and recorded as said templates.

3. The method of claim 2, comprising: said binary averaging means is a filter.

4. The method of claim 3, comprising said filter being used by said detector for identifying said suspect seals.

5. The method of claim 1, comprising:

generating a result after said templates and said suspects seals are compared to determine a match, and using said result for further action on said sample images.

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6. The method of claim 2, comprising:

generating a result and comparing said templates and said suspects seals to determine whether there is a match, and

using said result for action on said sample images.

7. An image detection method, comprising:

training a detection means with seals wherein templates are generated and recorded for each of said seals, respectively, by recording an image pattern for said seals which can be used during subsequent detection operations to test suspect image patterns within documents for similarities to said seals;

identifying suspect image patterns within tested documents and determining the location and orientation of said suspect image patterns;

rotating and shifting said templates before matching said templates to said suspect image patterns so that said templates align with said suspect image patterns; and matching said templates and said suspect image patterns by comparing said templates to said tested patterns to determine whether said templates and said suspect image patterns match.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein training further comprises generating said templates by selecting at least one color found within said seals and said color is recorded during training, and wherein said seals are smoothed using a binary averaging means, whereby said color of said seals and said smoothed version of the binary of said seals are generated and recorded as said templates.

9. The method of claim 7 wherein an result is generated after said matching and said result is used to facilitate further action on said documents being tested by with said method.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein said result is utilized by a copier system to prevent counterfeiting after detection of a mismatch between said templates and said suspect image patterns.

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