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(54) ADJUSTABLE COMPUTER SLEEVE

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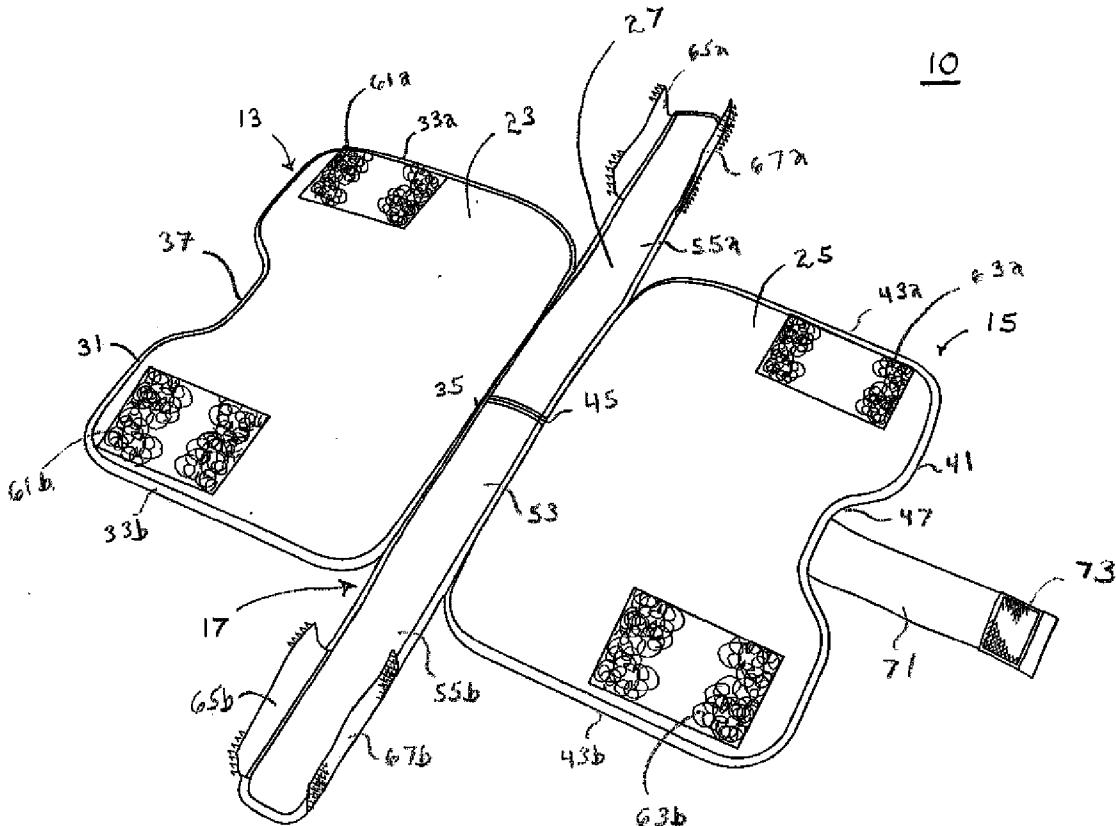
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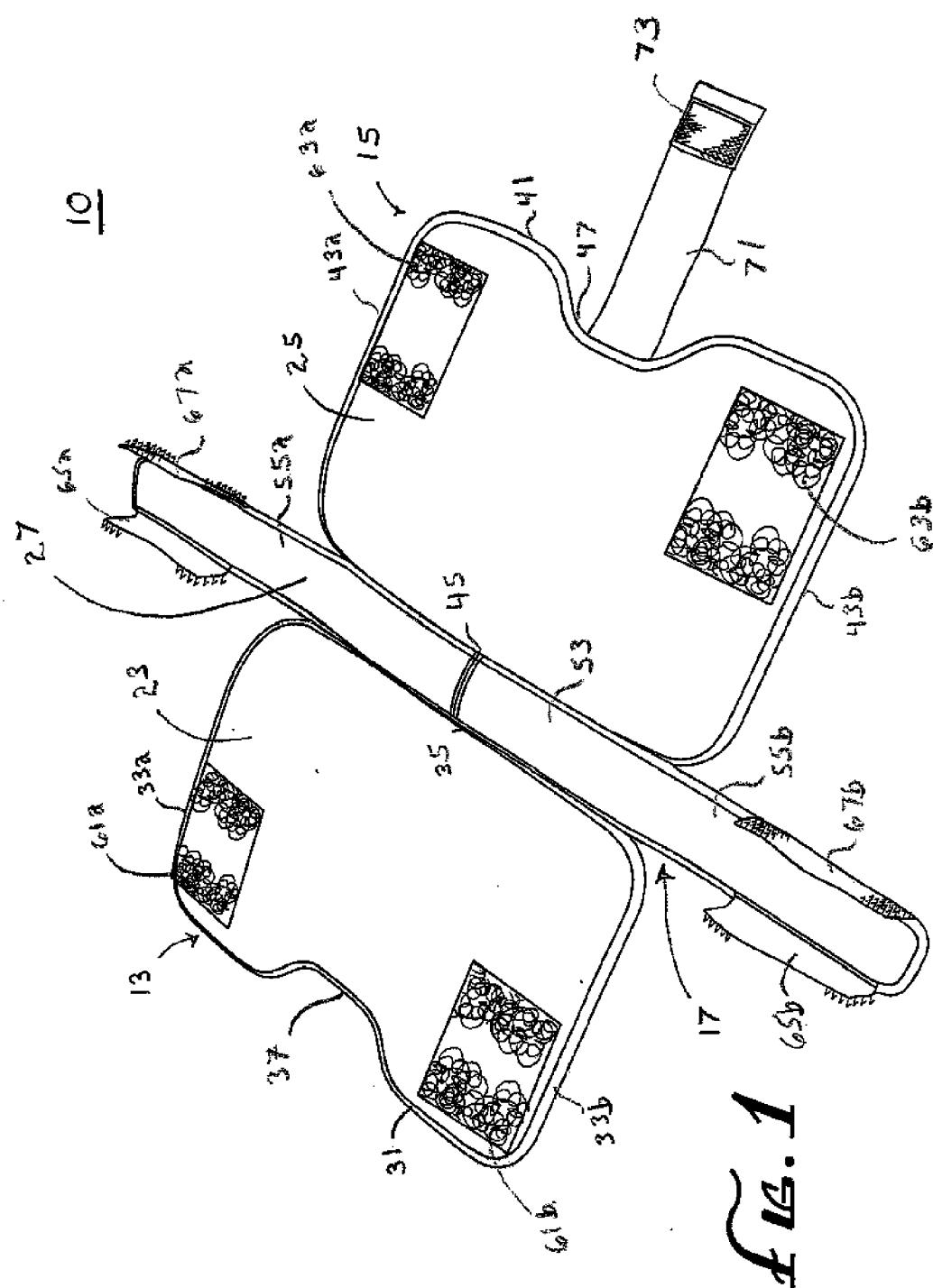
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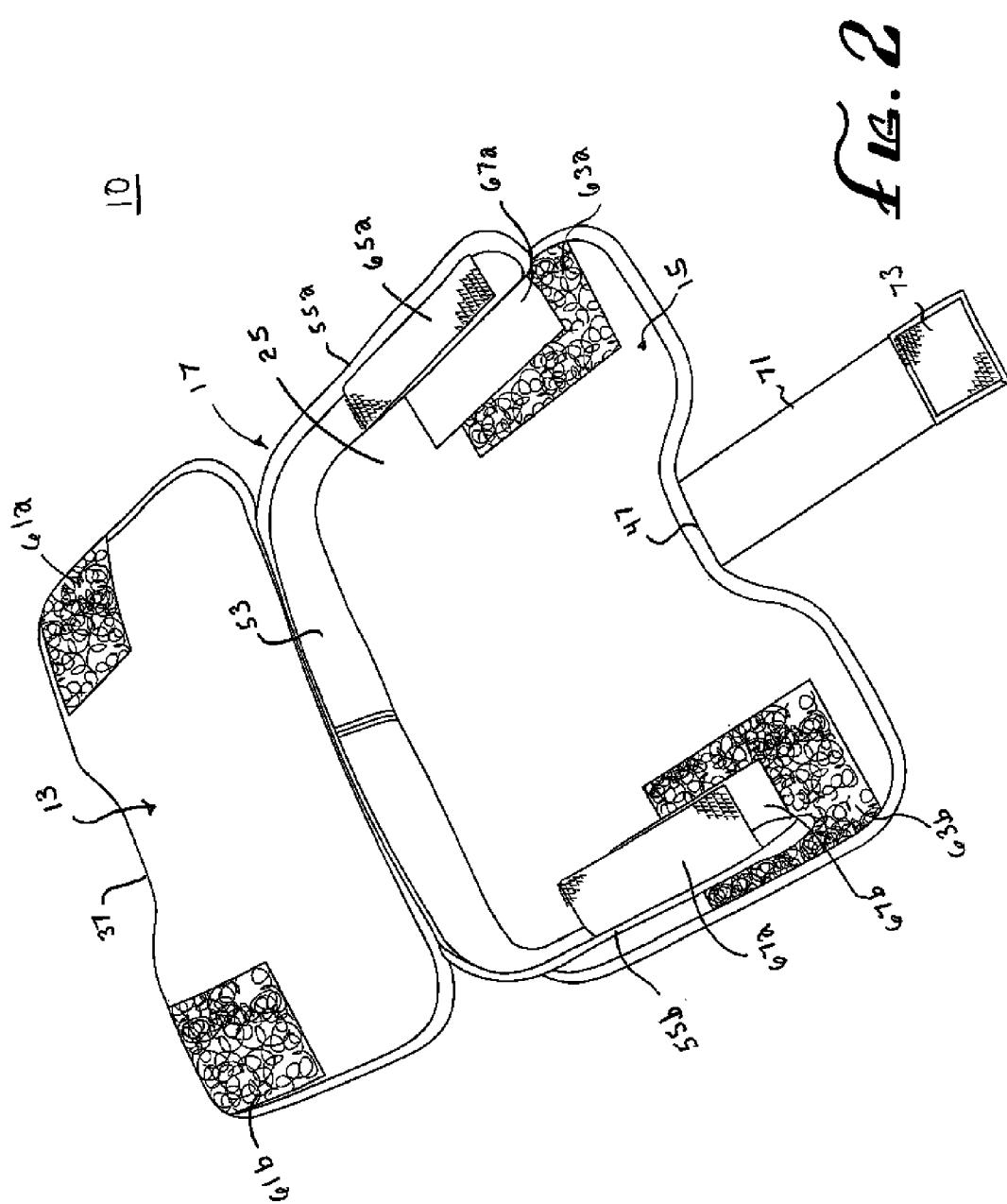
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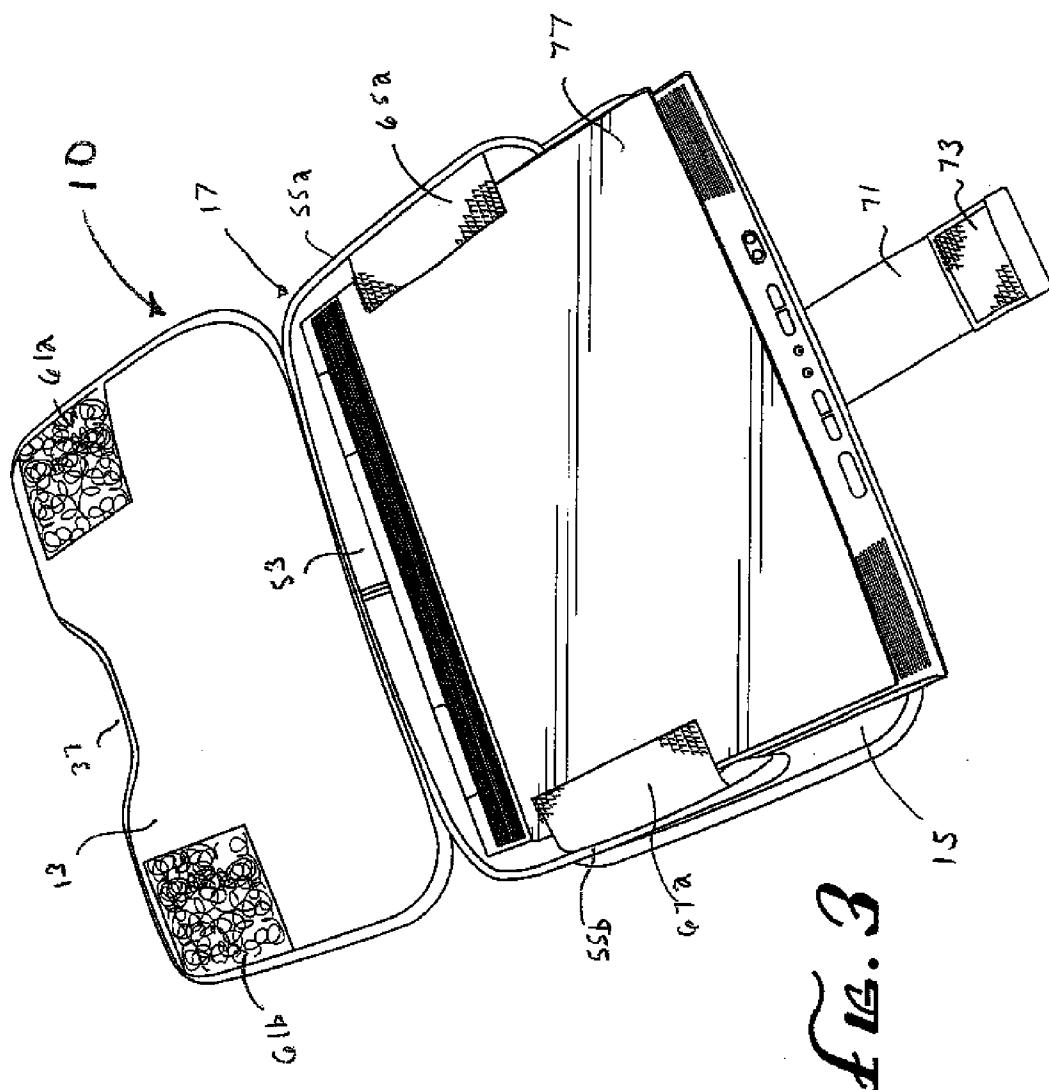
ABSTRACT

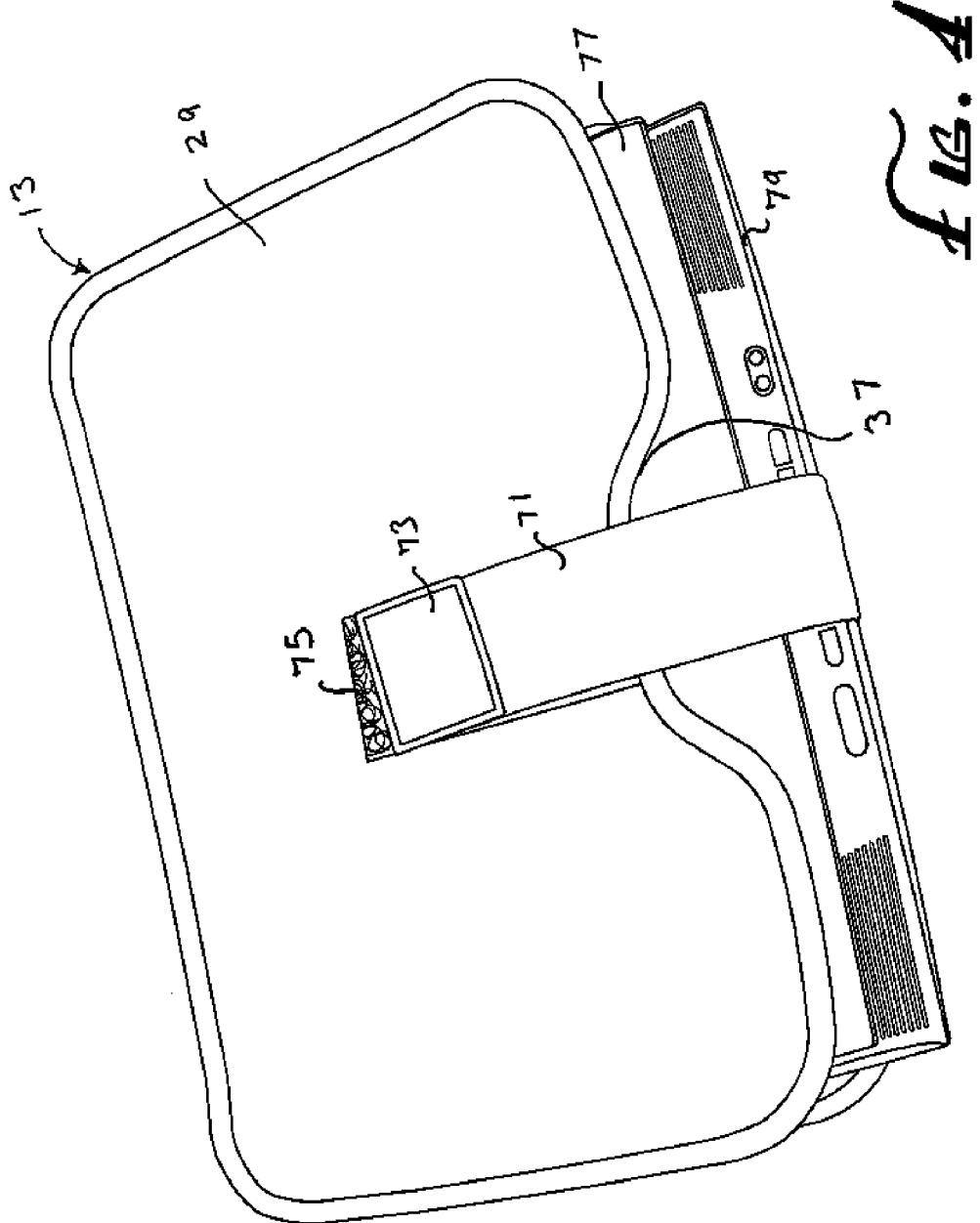
The present invention provides an adjustable computer sleeve that can be adjusted to snugly fit computers of various sizes in the computer sleeve. In an exemplary embodiment, the adjustable computer sleeve comprises a first panel, a second panel, and a band. The band has a central portion attached between the first and second panels and two side portions extending from opposite ends of the central portion. The side portions are bendable so that the band can be bent into U-shapes of varying widths to snugly fit computers of various widths in the sleeve in order to provide an adjustable fit for computers of various sizes. The adjustable computer sleeve further comprises adjustable fasteners, e.g., hook and loop fasteners, for fastening the side portions of the band between the first and second panels when the band's U-shape is adjusted to a desired width. The adjustable computer sleeve further comprises a strap that can be adjustably fastened to secure computers of various heights in the computer sleeve.

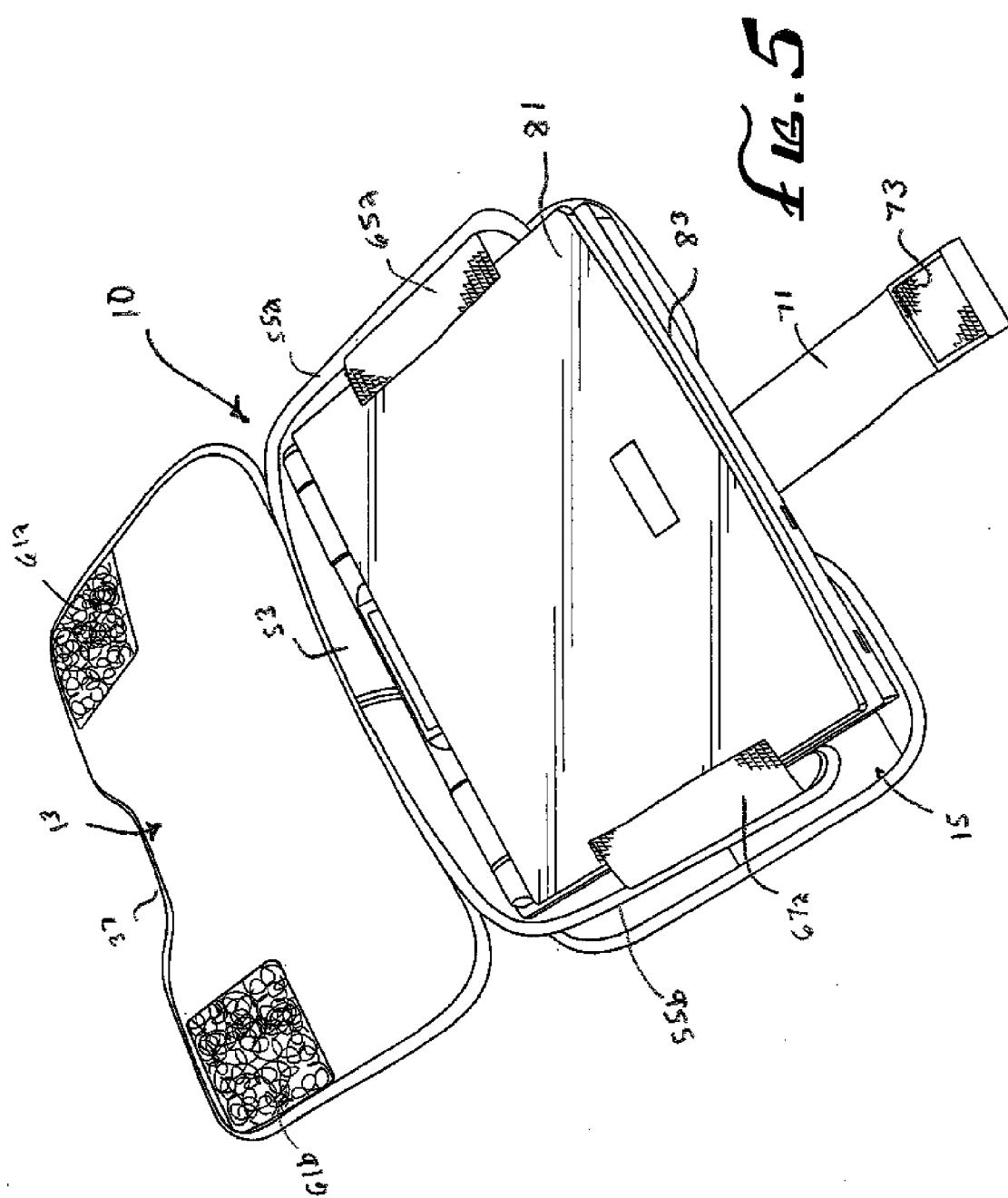


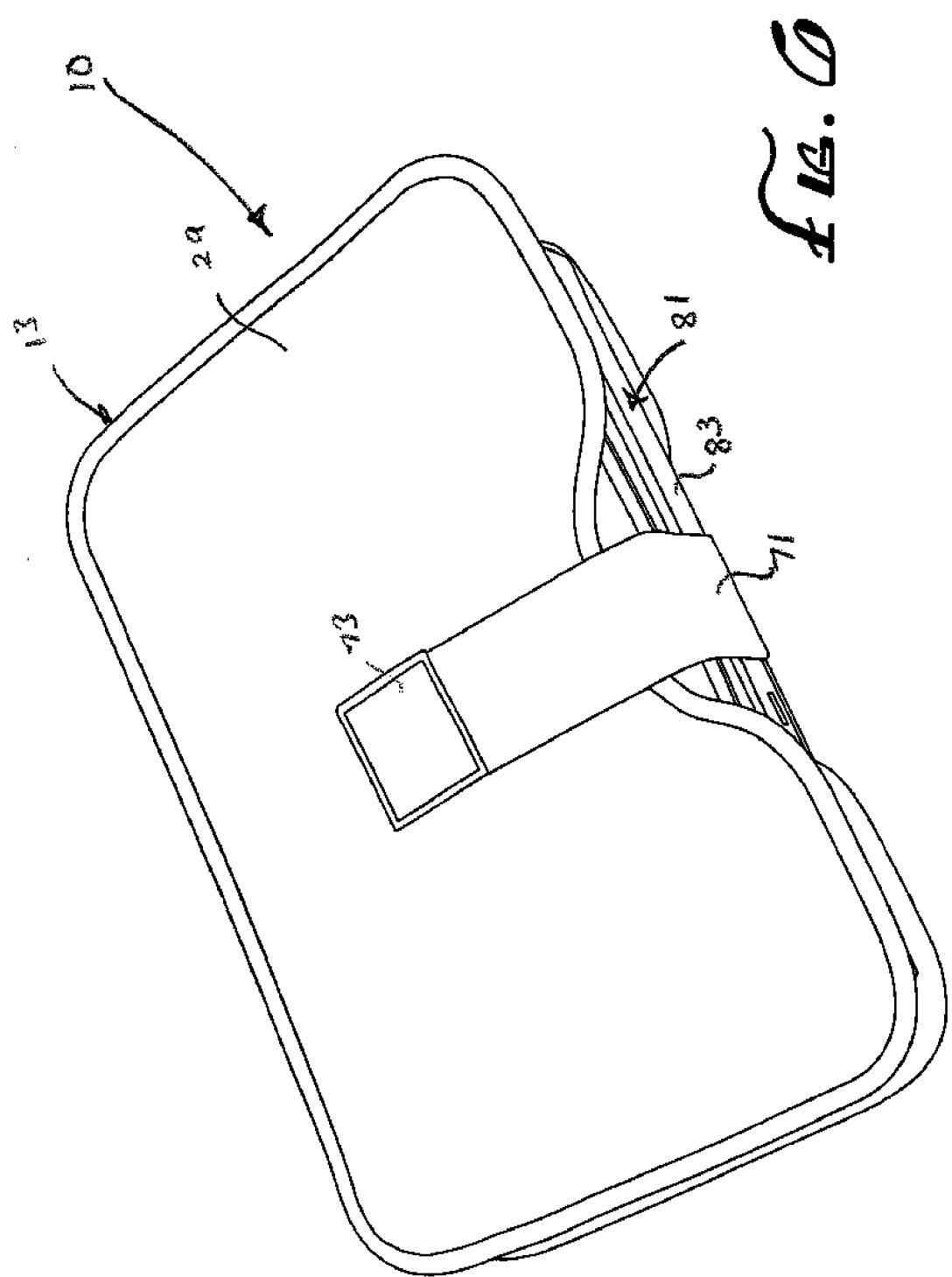


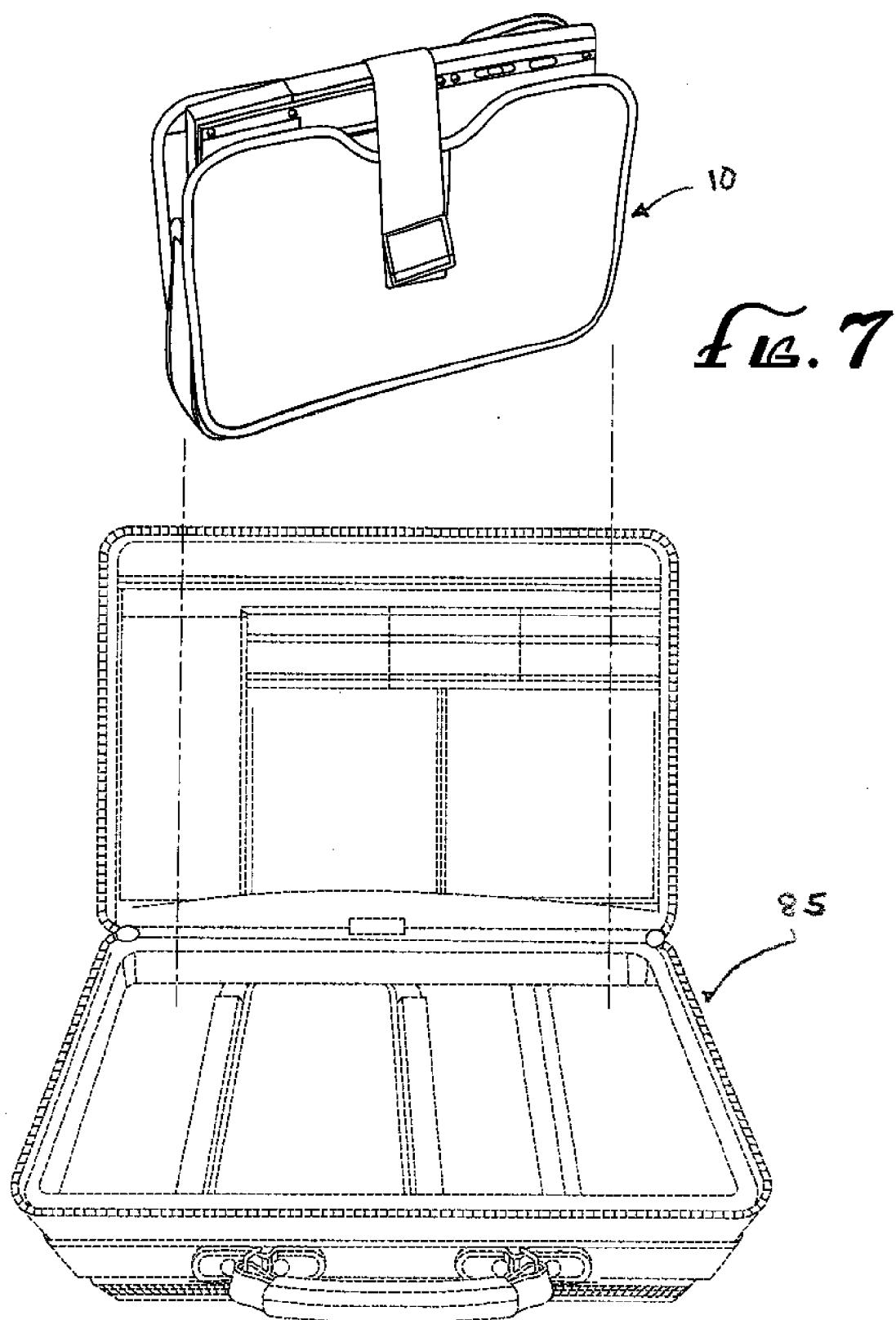












ADJUSTABLE COMPUTER SLEEVE

[0001] The present invention relates to computer sleeves, and more particularly to adjustable computer sleeves.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Computer sleeves are commonly used to protect portable computers, e.g., laptop computers, during transportation. Computer sleeves typically comprise a cushioned or padded inner compartment for receiving a computer to be protectively transported. The cushion provides the computer with cushioned protection from impacts and drops during transportation. The inner compartment of the computer sleeve is typically dimensioned for a particular computer size so that the computer snugly fits in the inner compartment.

[0003] A disadvantage of conventional computer sleeves is that their inner compartments are only dimensioned to snugly fit computers of a particular size. If the computer is too large for the computer sleeve, then the computer will not fit in the computer sleeve. If the computer is too small for the computer sleeve, then the computer will not snugly fit in the computer sleeve and move around in the computer sleeve during transportation.

[0004] Other disadvantages associated with conventional computer sleeves include the following. A person who already owns a computer sleeve for an old computer and purchases a new computer of a different size must also purchase a new computer sleeve instead of reusing the old one. Stores have to stock computer sleeves of varying sizes to accommodate customers with computers of varying sizes. A person purchasing a computer sleeve may not know the size of the computer. This may occur, e.g., when the computer is purchased as a gift or the person has forgotten to write down the dimensions of the computer.

[0005] Some computer sleeves include movable or insertable baffles or fillers for accommodating a limited range of different computer sizes, e.g., medium computer sizes. However, these baffles or fillers can be lost and/or have to be repositioned inside the computer sleeve for different computer sizes.

[0006] Accordingly, there is a need for an adjustable computer sleeve that can be adjusted to snugly fit computers of various sizes in the computer sleeve with shock absorbing material to protect the computer from damage.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] The present invention provides an adjustable computer sleeve that can be adjusted to snugly fit computers of various sizes in the computer sleeve.

[0008] In an exemplary embodiment, the adjustable computer sleeve comprises a first panel, a second panel, and a band. The band has a central portion attached between the first and second panels and two side portions extending from opposite ends of the central portion. The side portions are bendable so that the band can be bent into U-shapes of varying widths to snugly fit computers of various widths in the sleeve. The adjustable computer sleeve further comprises adjustable fasteners, e.g., hook and loop fasteners, for fastening the side portions of the band between the first and second panels when the band's U-shape is adjusted to a

desired width. This enables the adjustable computer sleeve to snugly fit computers of various widths between the side portions of the band.

[0009] In one embodiment, the first and second panels contain the bottom edge of the computer to protect it from shock and impact. The side portions of the band can also protect the sides of the computer.

[0010] In a further embodiment, the adjustable computer sleeve comprises a strap attached to and extending from the top of one of the panels, and an adjustable fastener for adjustably fastening the strap to the other panel. The top of each panel includes a curved in generally U-shaped portion for allowing the strap to pass therethrough. The strap can be adjustably fastened to secure computers of various heights in the adjustable computer sleeve. To secure a computer in the adjustable computer sleeve, the computer is placed in the sleeve. The strap is then warped around an edge, e.g., front edge, of the computer and adjustably fastened to the other panel. The curved in portions on the tops of the panels allow the strap to wrap around computers having heights smaller than the height of the computer sleeve. Therefore, the adjustable computer sleeve is able to secure computers of various heights in the sleeve.

[0011] Another advantage of the adjustable computer sleeve is it does not require movable or insertable baffles or fillers, which may become lost.

[0012] Other systems, methods, features and advantages of the invention will be or will become apparent to one with skill in the art upon examination of the following figures and detailed description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of an adjustable computer sleeve according to the invention in a laid-open configuration.

[0014] FIG. 2 shows the adjustable computer sleeve comprising a band bent into a generally U-shape.

[0015] FIG. 3 shows a computer placed in the adjustable computer sleeve with the band wrapped around the sides of the computer.

[0016] FIG. 4 shows the computer securely strapped in the adjustable computer sleeve.

[0017] FIG. 5 shows another computer placed in the adjustable computer sleeve with the band wrapped around the sides of the computer.

[0018] FIG. 6 shows the other computer securely strapped in the adjustable computer sleeve, wherein the other computer has a height and width smaller than the height and sides of the computer sleeve.

[0019] FIG. 7 shows the adjustable computer sleeve being placed in a briefcase.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0020] Turning now to the drawings, FIG. 1 shows a perspective view of an adjustable computer sleeve 10 according to the invention in a laid-open configuration. The adjustable computer sleeve 10 includes first and second panels 13 and 15, respectively, and a band 17 attached

between the panels **13** and **15**. The panels **13** and **15** and the band **17** may be separate pieces sewn together, a single integral piece or a combination thereof. Each panel **13** and **15** preferably comprises a semi-rigid polyethylene (PE) board and padding. The PE board is preferably resilient so that the PE board is capable of resilient deformation when impacted in order to dissipate and spread out the impact energy and protect the computer inside. The spreading out of impact energy provides puncture protection for the computer inside.

[0021] The first and second panels **13** and **15** and the band **17** include inner surfaces, **23**, **25**, and **27**, respectively. The inner surfaces comprise a cushion for protecting a portable computer, e.g., a laptop computer. The cushion may comprise foam padding, e.g., dense foam padding. The first and second panels **13** and **15** and the band **17** also include outer surfaces (not shown in FIG. 1). The outer surfaces may be covered with nylon, e.g., ballistic nylon, or other protective covering. The outer surface **29** of the first panel **13** is shown in FIG. 4.

[0022] The first panel **13** includes a top edge **31**, two side edges **33a** and **33b**, and a bottom edge **35** attached to the band **17**. The top edge **31** includes a curved in generally U-shaped portion **37**. The second panel **15** includes a top edge **41**, two side edges **43a** and **43b**, and a bottom edge **45** attached to band **17**. The top edge **41** includes a curved in generally U-shaped portion **47**. The band **17** comprises a central portion **53** attached between the first and second panels **13** and **15** and two side portions **55a** and **55b** that extend from opposite ends of the central portion **53**. The two side portions **55a** and **55b** are bendable so that the band **17** can be bent into U-shapes of varying widths, such as the one shown in FIG. 2. The band **17** may comprise separate pieces sewn together or a single integral piece.

[0023] Returning to FIG. 1, the adjustable computer sleeve **10** further comprises loop-hook fasteners, e.g., Velcro fasteners. The fasteners include two loop portions **61a** and **61b** on the inner surface **23** of the first panel **13**, two loop portions **63a** and **63b** on the inner surface **25** of the second panel **15**, and corresponding flexible hook flaps **65a**, **65b**, **67a** and **67b** on the side portions **55a** and **55b** of the band **17**. The loop portions **61a**, **61b**, **63a** and **63b** and the hook flaps **65a**, **65b**, **67a** and **67b** cooperate to fasten the side portions **55a** and **55b** of the band **17** to the panels **13** and **15**, as explained below. Each hook flap **65a**, **65b**, **67a** and **67b** may comprise a nylon strip with minute nylon hooks extending therefrom and each loop portion **61a**, **61b**, **63a** and **63b** may comprise a patch of minute nylon loops. The loops and hooks of the loop-hook fasteners may be interchanged so that the hooks are on the panels **13** and **15** and the loops are on the band **17**.

[0024] The adjustable computer sleeve **10** further includes a strap **71** extending from the top edge **41** of the second panel **15**. The strap **71** is aligned with the curved in portion **47** of the second panel **15**. Each curved in portion **37** and **47** has a width equal to or larger than the width of the strap **71** to allow the strap **71** to pass therethrough. The computer sleeve **10** further includes a loop-hook fastener for adjustably fastening the strap **71** to the first panel **13**. The fastener comprises a hook portion **73** attached to the strap **71** and a loop portion **75** on the outer surface **29** of the first panel **13** (shown in FIG. 4). The loops and hooks may be inter-

changed so that the loops are on the strap **71** and the hooks are on the first panel **13**. Other types of adjustable fasteners may be used including a buckle through which the strap is threaded, a ratcheting fastener or the like.

[0025] The operation of the adjustable computer sleeve **10** will now be described with reference to FIGS. 2-4. FIG. 2 shows the side portions **55a** and **55b** of the band **17** bent into a generally U-shape with the side portions **55a** and **55b** being roughly perpendicular to the inner surface **25** of the second panel **15**. The width of the band's U-shape is adjustable by adjusting the position of the hook flaps **67a** and **67b** on the loop portions **63a** and **63b** of the second panel **15**, respectively. Alternatively, the width may be adjusted by adjusting the position of the hook flaps **65a** and **65b** on the loop portions **61a** and **61b** of the first panel **13**, respectively. Once the hook flaps **67a** and **67b** are positioned according to the desired width, the hook flaps **67a** and **67b** and the loop portions **63a** and **63b** are pressed together to fasten the side portions **55a** and **55b** of the band **17** to the second panel **15**. As shown in FIG. 31 the width of the band's U-shape is adjusted according to the width of a computer **77** that is to be protectively transported in the computer sleeve **10**. FIG. 3 shows the computer **77** inserted between the side portions **55a** and **55b** of the band **17**. Because the width of the band's U-shape is adjusted according to the width of the computer **77**, the computer **77** fits snugly between the side portions **55a** and **55b** of the band **17**.

[0026] FIG. 4 shows the first panel **13** closed over the computer **77**. The first panel **13** is fastened to the side portions **55a** and **55b** of the band by fastening the hook flaps **65a** and **65b** of the band **17** to the loop portions **61a** and **61b** of the first panel **13**, respectively. In this configuration, the band **17** forms a bottom and two sides of the adjustable computer sleeve **10**. The strap **71** is wrapped around an edge **79**, e.g., front edge, of the computer **77** and fastened to the first panel **13** to secure the computer **77** in the computer sleeve **10**. The strap **71** is fastened to the first panel **13** by fastening the hook portion **73** of the strap **71** to the loop portion **75** on the outer surface **29** of the first panel **13**. The strap **71** is adjustably fastened to the first panel **13** by adjusting the position of the hook portion **73** of the strap on the loop portion **75** of the first panel **13**. Because the strap **71** is adjustably fastened to the first panel **13**, the strap **71** can secure computers of varying heights in the computer sleeve **10**. In FIG. 4, the strap **71** is used to secure a computer **77** having a height that is slightly larger than the height of the adjustable computer sleeve **10**. The strap **71** can also secure a computer having a height smaller than the height of the computer sleeve **10**, as explained below.

[0027] FIG. 5 shows the adjustable computer sleeve **10** being used to protectively transport a different computer **81** from the one shown in FIGS. 3 and 4. In this example, the computer **81** has a smaller width and height than the computer **77**. In FIG. 5, the width of the band's U-shape is adjusted to snugly fit the computer **81** between the side portions **55a** and **55b** of the band **17**. The width of the computer **81** may be the same or different from the computer **77** in FIGS. 3 and 4. FIG. 6 shows the strap **71** wrapped around an edge **83**, e.g., front edge, of the computer **81** to secure the computer **81** in the computer sleeve **10**. In this case, the height of the computer **81** is smaller than the height of the computer sleeve **10**. The curved in portions **37** and **47**

of the first and second panels 13 and 15, respectively, allow the strap 71 to wrap around the edge 83 of the computer 81.

[0028] The generally U-shape of the band 17 can form small spaces around the bottom edge and corners of the computer, which provide additional shock and impact absorption. This is illustrated in FIG. 5, in which a generally rectangular-shaped computer 81 fits snugly between the side portions 55a and 55b of the generally U-shaped band 17. The curved bottom corners of the U-shaped band 17 support the bottom edge, corners and sides of the computer 81 such that small protective dead spaces are formed around the bottom edge and corners of the computer 81, and the first and second panels 13 and 15 contain the bottom edge of the computer. When the computer sleeve is impacted at its bottom edge, corners or sides, e.g., due to dropping, the small dead spaces provide additional room for the computer sleeve material to resiliently deform and absorb more of the impact energy.

[0029] As shown in FIG. 7, the adjustable computer sleeve 10 according to the invention can be placed in a briefcase 85 for providing the computer with cushioned protection when transported in the briefcase 85. The adjustable computer sleeve 10 may also be placed in backpacks, carry-on luggage and the like. The adjustable computer sleeve 10 may also be carried by itself. In this case, the computer sleeve 10 may include a carrying strap and/or handle. Further, the computer sleeve may include pockets, e.g., net pockets, for carrying computer accessories, files and the like.

[0030] The adjustable computer sleeve according to the invention advantageously allows a person to adjust the computer sleeve to snugly fit computers of varying sizes in the computer sleeve. Advantages associated with the adjustable computer sleeve include the following. A store can stock the adjustable computer sleeve to accommodate customers with computers of various sizes. The adjustable computer sleeve allows a person to reuse the same computer sleeve when changing to computers of different sizes. The adjustable computer also allows a person to purchase a computer sleeve without having to know the size of the computer. This may occur, e.g., when the computer sleeve is purchased as a gift or the person purchasing the computer sleeve has forgotten to write down the dimensions of the computer.

[0031] While an embodiment of the present invention has been shown and described, various modifications may be made without departing from the scope of the present invention, and all such modifications and equivalents are intended to be covered. For example, the adjustable computer sleeve may comprise more than one strap, e.g., two straps spaced apart. Further, the panels may comprise rigid and/or semi-rigid plastic or other material. Further, the adjustable computer sleeve may comprise a padded flap that goes over the top of the sleeve. Further, the computer may be loaded into the adjustable computer sleeve on its side. In this case, the band is adjusted according to the height of the computer instead of the width of the computer. Further, the computer sleeve may be used to protectively transport

personal digital assistants (PDAs) and other sensitive electronic equipment, e.g., DVD players.

What is claimed is:

1. An adjustable computer sleeve, comprising:
 - a first panel;
 - a second panel;
 - a band having a central portion and two side portions, wherein the central portion is attached between the first and second panels, and the two side portions extend from opposite ends of the central portion and are bendable so that the band can be bent into generally U-shapes of varying widths; and
 - adjustable fasteners for adjustably fastening the two side portions of the band between the first and second panels.
2. The computer sleeve of claim 1, wherein the adjustable fastener comprises hook and loop fasteners.
3. The computer sleeve of claim 2, wherein each of the hook and loop fasteners comprises a flexible hook flap extending from one of the side portions of the band and a loop portion on one of the first and second panels.
4. The computer sleeve of claim 3, wherein each of the flexible hook flaps comprise a nylon strip with hooks extending therefrom.
5. The computer sleeve of claim 1, further comprising:
 - a strap attached to the second panel; and
 - a second adjustable fastener for adjustable fastening the strap to the first panel.
6. The computer sleeve of claim 5, wherein each one of the first and second panels has a curved in generally U-shaped portion aligned with the strap.
7. The computer sleeve of claim 51 wherein the second adjustable fastener comprises a hook and loop fastener.
8. The computer sleeve of claim 7, wherein the second adjustable fastener comprises a hook portion on the strap and a loop portion on the first panel.
9. The computer sleeve of claim 1, wherein each of the first and second panels and the band comprises a cushioned inner surface.
10. The computer sleeve of claim 9, wherein each of the first and second panels and the band comprises an outer surface with a protective nylon covering.
11. The computer sleeve of claim 1, wherein each of the first and second panels comprises a resilient semi-rigid material that is capable of resilient deformation.
12. The computer sleeve of claim 11, wherein the resilient semi-rigid material comprises polyethylene.
13. The computer sleeve of claim 12, wherein the band has curved corners adapted to support the bottom edge, corners and sides of a generally rectangular-shaped computer such that protective dead spaces are formed around the bottom edge and sides of the computer.

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