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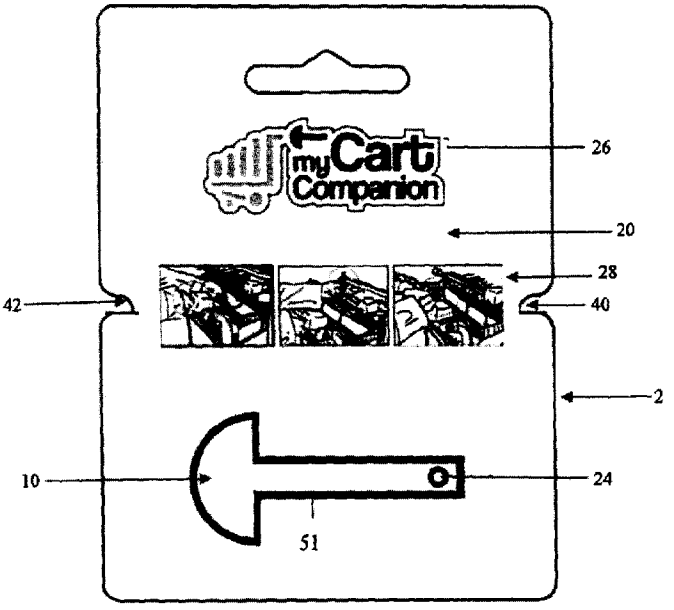
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(54) **Titre : PRESENTOIR DE PIECES DE MONNAIE ET CLES POUR CHARIOT**
(54) **Title: SHOPPING CART COIN KEY DISPLAY**



(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**
The shopping cart coin key system advantageously provides a coin key as part of a card substrate. The card substrate provides an expanded area accommodating an explanation of the use of the coin key to a potential purchaser. The card substrate defines a card body that assists in Point-of-Sale display and optionally can be used as a retainer for storage of the coin key after use.

ABSTRACT

The shopping cart coin key system advantageously provides a coin key as part of a card substrate. The card substrate provides an expanded area accommodating an explanation of the use of the coin key to a potential purchaser. The card substrate defines a card body that assists in Point-of-Sale display and optionally can be used as a retainer for storage of the coin key after use.

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TITLE: SHOPPING CART COIN KEY DISPLAY

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a method of manufacture of a shopping cart key and a system thereof for convenient sale of the product.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Many food retail stores and other retail outlets have found it advantageous to utilize a shopping cart system that requires a refundable coin or token for temporary use of the shopping cart. Basically shopping carts are releasably chained or otherwise fastened together and a shopping cart can be released by inserting a coin in a release mechanism associated with the shopping cart. Typically the insertion of a coin allows a fastening member on one end of a chain to be released from a cart and the person can then use the cart in the normal manner. Upon completion of the shopping, the user returns the cart to a storage area and reattaches the shopping cart to other locked carts. This reattachment process will return a coin of the same value to the user.

This type of system has been used to control shopping carts and is also used to encourage customers to return shopping carts to a particular designated area.

Repeat customers quickly become accustomed to the system and remember to have the appropriate coin for release of a shopping cart. An infrequent user or less prepared user may not have the particular coin required and additional time is required to obtain such a coin.

To partially overcome the inconvenience of these systems and to avoid the necessity of having such a coin,

it is known to have a coin key that can be carried on a key ring. These coin keys, when inserted in the coin slot, effectively release the shopping cart and the coin key can be immediately removed from the mechanism and is not retained in the mechanism in the manner of a coin. Coin keys add convenience for a user as they merely need to carry such a coin key and avoid the necessity of having the appropriate coin with them.

Although coin keys per se are known, this concept is not widely used or recognized by the general public. The present invention provides a preferred presentation of a coin key for purchase by a user which assists in the explanation of the use thereof and preferably also acts as a suitable retainer for such a coin key that can be stored in a manner similar to a credit card.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

A shopping cart coin key system according to the present invention comprises a card body substrate having a hang tag port for display of the coin key system at a point of sale display along one edge thereof. A coin key is releasably retained in a coin key port of the card body substrate. The coin key includes an elongate handle with a coin key head at one end of the handle.

In an aspect of the invention the coin key includes a semicircular coin head of a diameter corresponding to a 25 cent or dollar Canadian coin.

In a further aspect of the invention the card body substrate is of a durable plastic material. Preferably the durable plastic material is of a thickness in the range of 0.5mm to 2mm.

According to an aspect of the invention, the card body is divided into a top portion and a bottom portion separated by a manual fracture region allowing separation of the top portion from the bottom portion, with the coin key being provided as part of the bottom portion.

In a preferred aspect of the invention, the fracture region is defined between two fracture notches provided in side edges of the card body.

In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the coin key is generally centered in the bottom portion with the elongate handle extending in a direction across the bottom portion. Preferably the bottom portion is approximately the size of a credit card.

The card body substrate is preferably a PVC plastic material of a thickness of approximately 1.2mm plus or minus 20 percent.

In an aspect of the invention the top portion and the bottom portion are of generally equal size.

According to an aspect of the invention a series of depictions are provided on one face of the card body substrate illustrating use of the coin key with a shopping cart release system.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Preferred embodiments of the invention are shown in the drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 illustrates a front view of a display card that includes a coin key that is removable therefrom;

Figure 2 is a back view of the display card of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a view similar to Figure 1 of the front of a display card where the coin key has been removed therefrom; and

Figures 4, 5 and 6 illustrate the use of the coin key to release a cart using the coin key.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

In the present invention a card body 2 is provided that is made of a suitable plastic or other thin stiff material that includes in a lower portion thereof a removable coin key 10. The card body 2 is preferably a PVC material with a thickness in the range of 0.5 to 2 mm. A thickness of 1.2 mm plus or minus 20% is both durable and cost effective.

The coin key includes an elongate handle portion 12 and a coin head type shape 14. The coin head type shape 14 could correspond to a specialized token and is not limited to a type of currency. The coin head type shape is often semi circular in shape but is not limited to this configuration. The coin key 10 is removable from the card body 2 merely by pushing thereon as the coin key has been punched and is thus easily removable from the card body. There can be small fragile attachment points initially provided between the card body and the coin key which readily fracture when the coin key is displaced by hand from the card body.

The card body 2 is preferably greatly oversized relative to the coin key 3 to provide a front face

communication space indicated as 20 and a back face communication space 22.

The front face communication space 20 includes a logo and trademark indicated as 26 prominently displayed as well as a series of depictions 28 that provide clear visual instructions regarding the use of the coin key.

The back face communication space 22 includes a verbal description 32 to assist the user in understanding the utility of the coin key. The card body 2 also includes the hang port 34 for effective display of multiple cards at a point of sale display.

The card body 2 further includes the fracture point indents 40 and 42 provided on opposite sides of the card body. These fracture point indents provide a fold line or fracture region that allows a user to fold and fracture the card body between the fracture points 40 and 42. Additional fracture points can be provided along the fracture region and these fracture points need not be located at the edges.

A bottom portion 50 of the card body 2 that is of a credit card size is defined below the fracture region. It can be seen that the coin key 10 is releasably retained in this bottom portion 50 of the card body and is removable therefrom as shown in Figure 3. The removable coin key 10 is pressed out of the card body 2 and if desired, the card body 2 can be thrown away or recycled by the user. In such a case the user would secure the coin key on a key chain or make other suitable arrangements for storing of the coin key 10 for future use.

It is also possible that the user may wish to retain the bottom portion 50 of the card body that

includes the coin key and the coin key port 51. It has been found that the punching of the coin key in the card body allows the coin key to be released and subsequently returned and retained in the original port 51. Basically the coin key and the coin key port 51 have a tight fit such that the coin key can be returned and retained in the bottom portion 50. This is advantageous as the user has the option of storing the bottom portion 50 of the card with the coin key retained in the port 51. The bottom portion 50 of the card with the coin key can then be stored in a wallet similar to storage of a credit card. In this way the bottom portion of the card acts as a suitable wallet sized retainer.

Due to the flexibility of many suitable plastic substrates, it is also possible to have a handle end of the coin key remain attached to the plastic substrate. The coin key can be displaced out of the plane of the substrate for use in releasing a shopping cart lock and returned to this plane for credit card type storage. An oversized coin key recess can be provided.

The coin key 10 is specifically designed for a particular type of coin, for example many of these retaining systems operate based on a 25 cent coin. In Canada it is also known to have systems that operate on a dollar coin. This system is preferably designed for a specific coin rather than a plurality of coins. It is possible to provide a coin key with for example two coins. In this example the coin key could include a double coin head (i.e. a coin head of one size at one end of the elongate handle and a coin key head of a different size at the opposite end of the elongate handle). The elongate handle is of a length of about 4cm and a width of approximately 1cm.

Somewhat surprisingly, it has been found preferable to produce a coin key having a single specific coin head, as many potential purchasers do not initially understand the concept or the use of such a coin key. The present system as described includes the oversized card body 2 that has sufficient space to clearly illustrate the functionality of the coin key to the user and to also provide suitable space to prominently display the trademark of the system. Furthermore, the oversized card body accommodates the product bar code as shown in Figure 2. A series of visual depictions are provided on the front face to communicate the functionality of the coin key. The back face is advantageously used to provide a verbal description of the operation of the coin key to entice potential purchasers.

Figures 4, 5 and 6 are enlargements of the depictions 28 shown in Figure 1 regarding the inserting of the coin key, the unlocking of the shopping cart retention mechanism and the immediate removal of the coin key. The immediate removal of the coin key is in contrast to the original intended use of the coin lock where the coin would be retained by the mechanism until such time as the user returns the cart to the retention system.

The plastic material of the card body can vary depending upon the desired durability of the coin key. It is also possible for limited use applications that a less durable coin key could be made from a laminated paper stock, or other less durable material. By far the most common or practical substrate is a plastic substrate similar to that used in credit cards.

Although the preferred embodiments of the present invention have been described herein in detail, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art, that

variations may be made thereto without departing from the invention described in the application and set out in the appended claims.

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THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

1. A shopping cart coin key system comprising:
a card body substrate including at one edge thereof a hang tag port for display of said coin key system at a point of sale display and a coin key releasably retained in a coin key port of said card body substrate; said coin key including an elongate handle with a coin key head at one end of said handle.

2. A shopping cart coin key system as claimed in claim 1 wherein said coin head is a semicircular coin head of a diameter corresponding to a 25 cent or one dollar Canadian coin.

3. A shopping cart coin key system as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein said card body substrate is of a durable plastic material.

4. A shopping cart coin key system as claimed in claim 3 wherein said durable plastic material is of a thickness in the range of .5mm to 2mm.

5. A shopping cart coin key system as claimed in claim 1, 2, 3 or 4 wherein said card body is divided into a top portion and a bottom portion separated by a manual facture region allowing separation of said top portion from said bottom portion, and wherein said coin key is provided as part of said bottom portion.

6. A shopping cart coin key system as claimed in claim 5 wherein said fracture region is defined between two fracture notches provided in side edges of said card body.

7. A shopping cart coin key system as claimed in claim 6 wherein said coin key is generally centered in said bottom portion with said elongate handle extending in a direction across said bottom portion.

8. A shopping cart coin key system as claimed in claim 8 wherein said bottom portion is approximately the size of a credit card.

9. A shopping cart coin key system as claimed in claim 8 wherein said card body substrate is a PVC plastic material of a thickness of approximately 1.2mm plus or minus 20 percent.

10. A shopping cart coin system as claimed in any one of claims 5 to 9 wherein said top portion and said bottom portion are of generally equal size.

11. A shopping cart coin system as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 10 including a series of depictions on one face of said card body substrate illustrating use of said coin key with a shopping cart release system.

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FIGURE #1

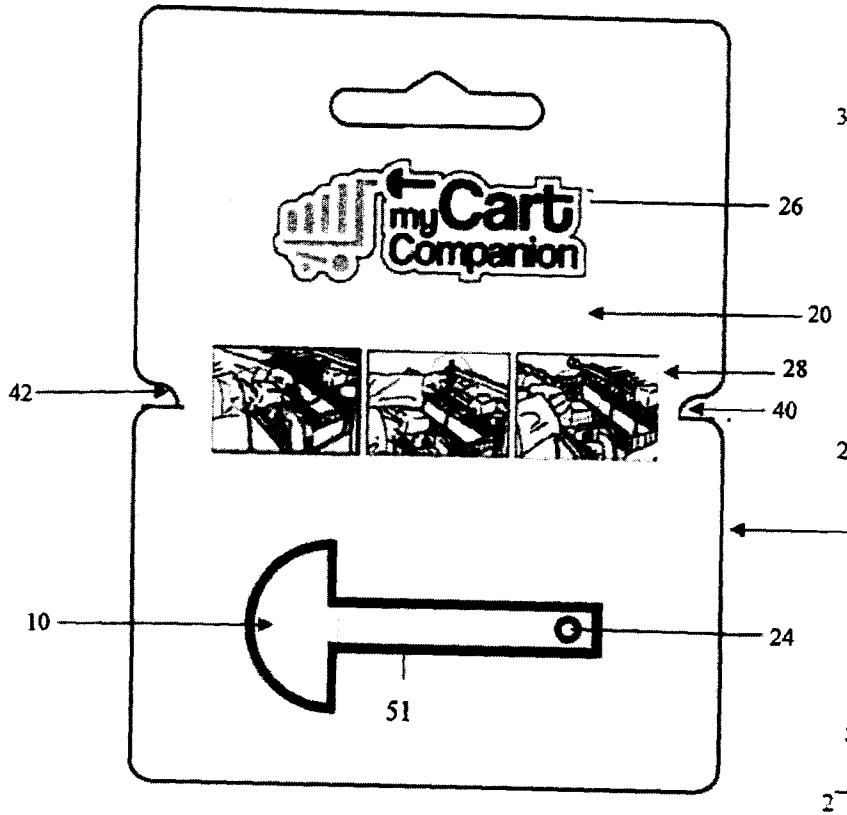


FIGURE #2

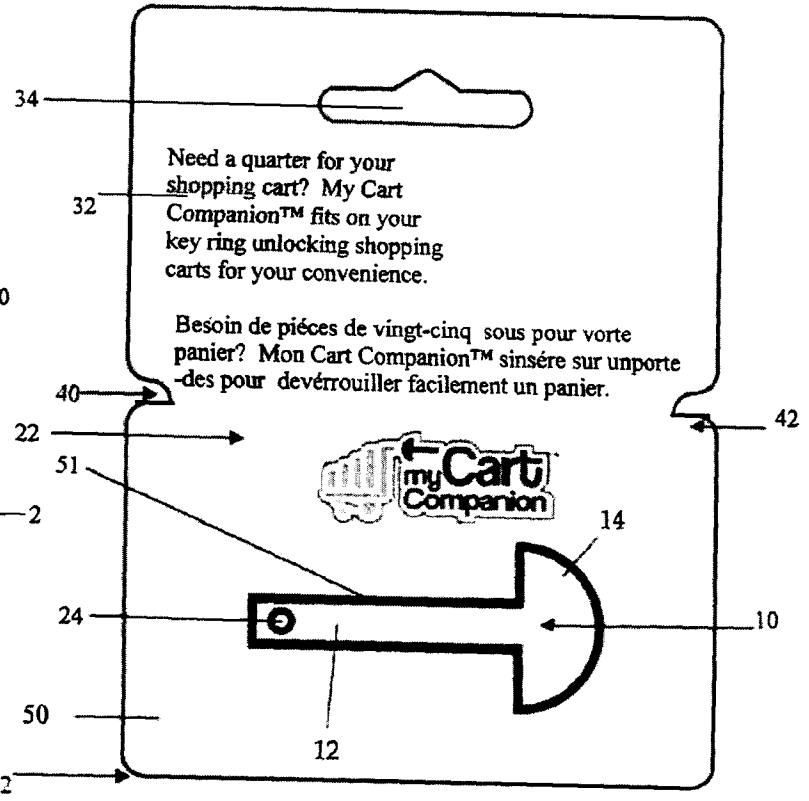


FIGURE 3

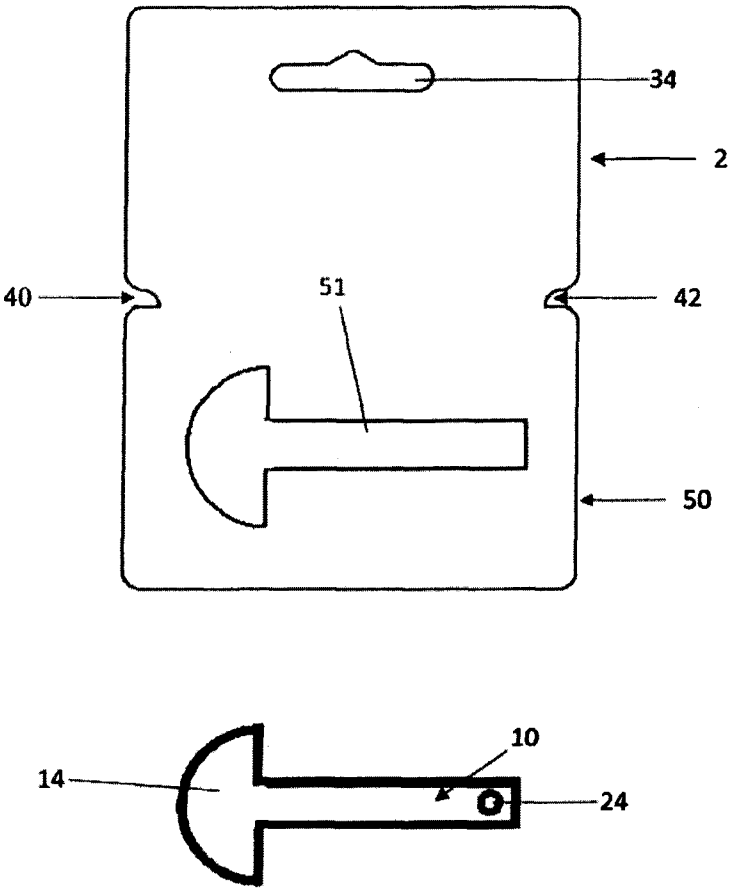


FIGURE #5

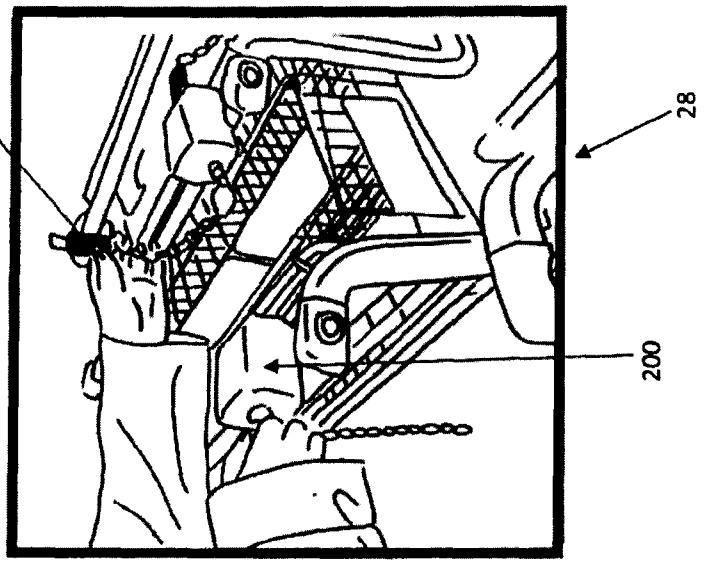


FIGURE #4

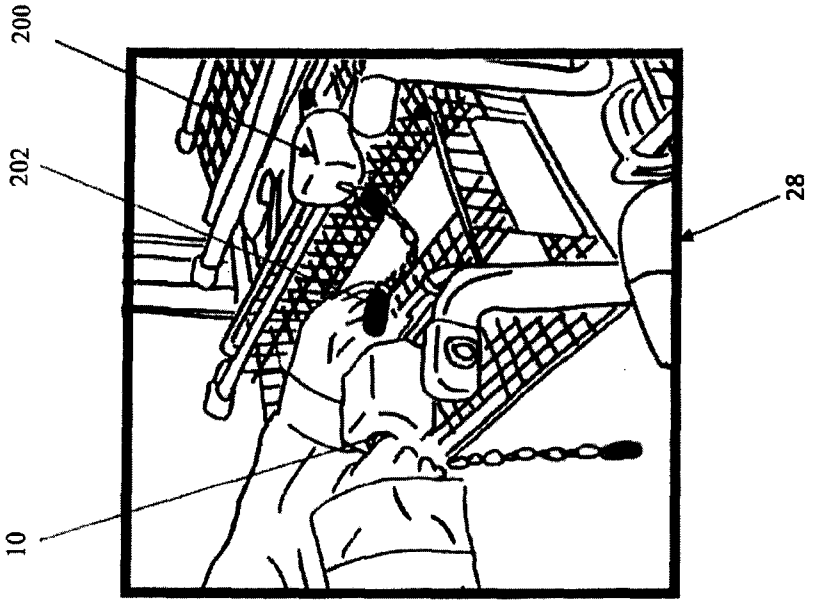
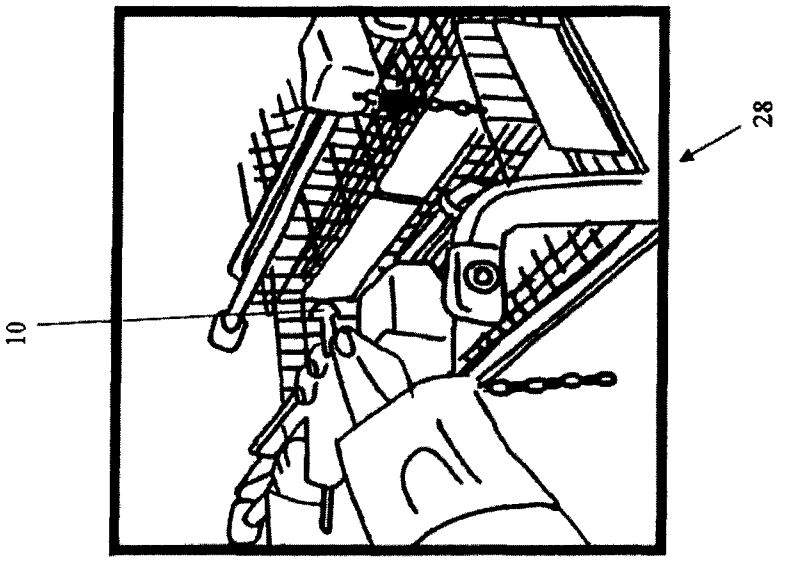
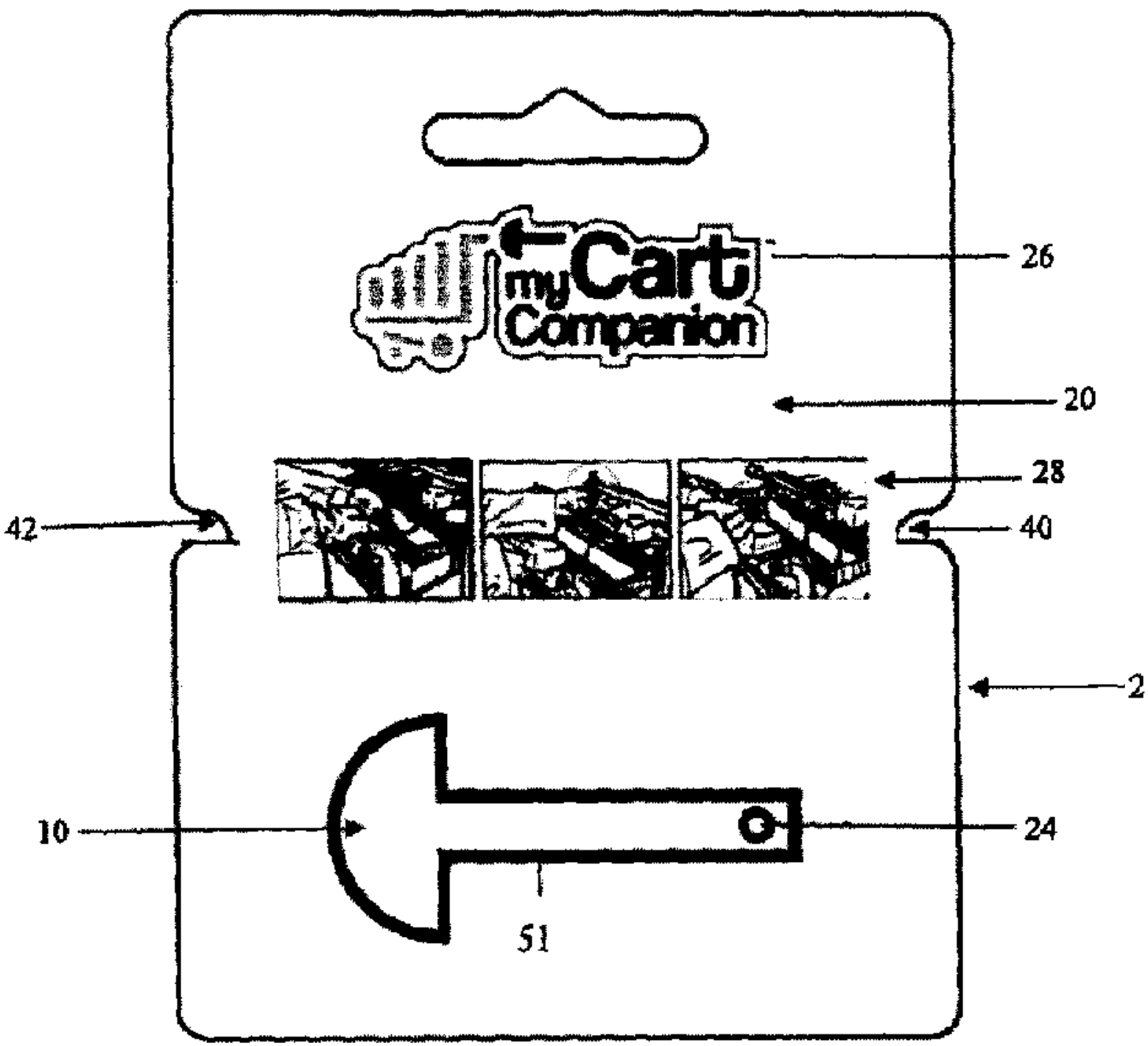


FIGURE #6




myCart
Companion
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