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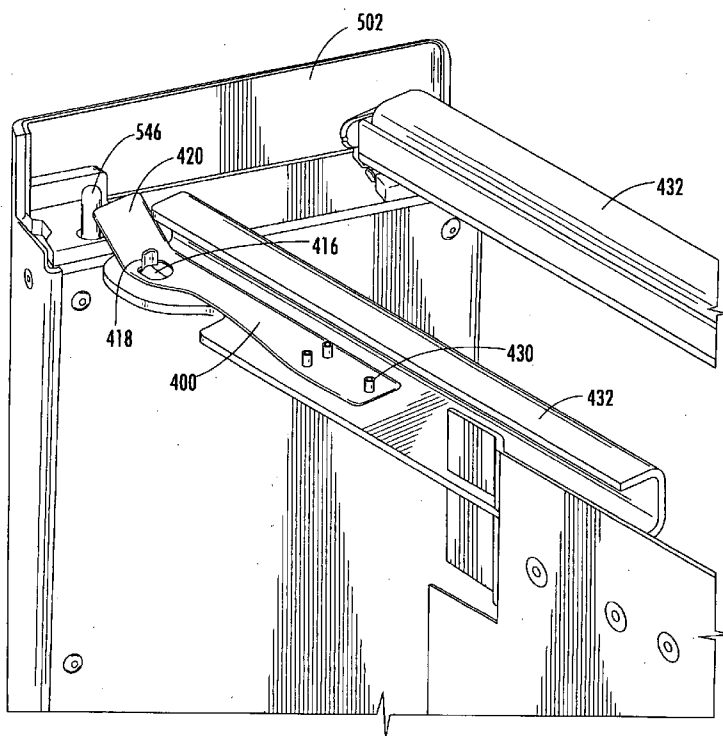


FIG. 23

(57) Abstract: Communications cable management systems include a cable trough and a door that is configured to provide access to the cable trough. A first latch structure is attached to the door that includes a first latch and a second latch. A second latch structure is attached to the door that includes a third latch and a fourth latch. The systems also include a support structure that has first through fourth latch receiving assemblies that are configured to receive the respective first through fourth latches. The first through fourth latch receiving assemblies may comprise hinge brackets and/or pivotable latch members. The first and second latches and their corresponding first and second latch receiving assemblies are each configured to act as a hinge when the third and fourth latches are removed from their corresponding latch receiving assemblies. Similarly, the third and fourth latches and their corresponding third and fourth latch receiving assemblies are each configured to act as a hinge when the first and second latches are removed

from their corresponding latch receiving assemblies.

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CABLE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS HAVING ACCESS DOORS CONNECTED THERETO VIA LATCH/HINGE ASSEMBLIES

Cross Reference to Related Application

[0001] This application claims priority from U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/987,140, filed November 12, 2007, entitled LATCH BAR AND PIN ASSEMBLY, the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

Field of the Invention

[0002] The present invention relates generally to cable management systems and, more particularly, to cable management systems that include access doors.

Background

[0003] Communications cable management systems are commonly used to route, arrange and manage communications cables. Such communications cable management systems may be used on, or in conjunction with, communications racks, cabinets, terminal block panels and the like. Terminal block panels (e.g., modular patch panels, IDC based patch panels and/or 110 style systems) are hardware devices that are used in the communication equipment industry to connect cables to terminal equipment. These terminal block panels are typically mounted on a wall of a communications closet or computer room. Exemplary panels contain a securing surface that is affixed to the wall, and a mounting surface upon which connecting devices such as connecting blocks are secured. The connecting blocks interface with data carrying cables, such as exterior cables that route data to and from the communications closet/computer room, to cables connected to, for example, the terminal devices.

[0004] In some cases, two or more back panels are mounted in a side-by-side, spaced apart arrangement. A spacer bracket is mounted in the space between the back panels. The spacer bracket may be secured to the wall and/or to one or both of the back panels. The spacer bracket defines a cord trough through which cords may be routed that connect connection blocks of one of the back panels with connection blocks of the other back panel. In some cases, a door panel is mounted on the spacer bracket to protect and hide the cords in the cord trough. Stand alone communications cable management cabinets are also provided

that may similarly include one or more door panels that protect and hide the cords and cables that are routed through a cord trough in the interior of the cabinet.

[0005] According to one known construction available from Chatsworth Products, Inc., the door panel is secured to the spacer bracket by four plastic quarter turn fasteners located along each side edge of the door panel. The door panel can be removed by releasing (*i.e.*, by turning to an open position) all four fasteners. Alternatively, the user may release the two fasteners on either side, and pivot the door panel about the other two plastic fasteners. U.S. Patent No. 7,385,141, which is assigned to the assignee of the present application, discloses further door panel arrangements for communications cable management systems.

Summary

[0006] Pursuant to embodiments of the present invention, communications cable management systems are provided which comprise a cable trough that has a front side that is at least partially exposed. A door is provided that covers at least a portion of the exposed front side of the cable trough. First and second latches are attached to the door, and a support structure on which the door is mounted includes corresponding first and second latch receiving assemblies. Each of the latch receiving assemblies may be at least partially moveable (*e.g.*, a portion of the latch receiving assembly may move when engaged by its corresponding latch). The first and second latches are each selectively positionable between a latched position in which the latch is received in its respective latch receiving assembly to secure the door to the support structure for pivotal movement about respective first and second pivot axes, and an unlatched position in which the latch is removed from its respective latch receiving assembly to permit the respective edge of the door to be separated from the support structure.

[0007] In some embodiments, the first latch receiving assembly may comprise a first hinge bracket that includes a first opening that is configured to receive the first latch, and the second latch receiving assembly may comprise a second hinge bracket that includes a second opening that is configured to receive the second latch. In such embodiments, the first and second hinge brackets may each have a mounted portion that is fixedly mounted to the support structure and an elastically mobile portion that includes an opening. Each hinge bracket may also include a striker plate that is positioned between a front surface of the door and the opening on the hinge bracket. These striker plates may be positioned so as to define an acute angle with respect to a longitudinal axis of the latch that is to be received within the hinge bracket. The striker plates may be part of the elastically mobile portion of each hinge

bracket so that the mating latch forces the striker plate upwardly until the mating latch is received within the opening in the hinge bracket when the door is moved from an open position to a fully closed position.

[0008] In other embodiments, each latch receiving assembly may comprise a support member (which may, for example, be part of the support structure) that includes a slot that has an opening that is configured to receive its mating latch and a latch member that is pivotable between a first position in which the latch member captures the mating latch within the slot and a second position in which the latch member pivots away from the slot opening. These latch receiving assemblies may also include a spring that biases the latch member toward the first position.

[0009] In the above-described systems, the support structure may further include third and fourth latch receiving assemblies and third and fourth latches (so that at least a total of four latch receiving assemblies are provided per door). The third and fourth latches may each be selectively positionable between a latched position in which the latch is received in its respective latch receiving assembly to secure the door to the support structure for pivotal movement about the respective first and second pivot axes, and an unlatched position in which the latch is removed from its respective latch receiving assembly to permit the respective edge of the door to be separated from the support structure. Accordingly, when the first, second, third and fourth latches are in their latched positions, the door is secured in a closed position on the support structure. When the first, second, third and fourth latches are in their unlatched positions, the door can be removed from the support structure. When the first and third latches are in their latched positions and the second and fourth latches are in their unlatched positions, the door can be pivoted open about the first pivot axis. Finally, when the second and fourth latches are in their latched positions and the first and third latches are in their unlatched positions, the door can be pivoted open about the second pivot axis.

[0010] The systems may also include a first actuator that is operable by a user to selectively move the first and third latches from their latched positions to their unlatched positions and a second actuator that is operable by a user to selectively move the second and fourth latches from their latched positions to their unlatched positions.

[0011] Pursuant to further embodiments of the present invention, communications cable management systems are provided that include a cable trough and a door that is configured to provide access to the cable trough. A first latch structure is attached to the door that includes a first latch and a second latch. A second latch structure is likewise attached to the door that includes a third latch and a fourth latch. The system also includes a support

structure that includes first through fourth latch receiving assemblies that are configured to receive the respective first through fourth latches. The first and second latches and their corresponding first and second latch receiving assemblies are each configured to act as a hinge when the third and fourth latches are removed from their corresponding latch receiving assemblies. Similarly, the third and fourth latches and their corresponding third and fourth latch receiving assemblies are each configured to act as a hinge when the first and second latches are removed from their corresponding latch receiving assemblies.

[0012] In some embodiments, each latch receiving assembly may comprise a hinge bracket that includes an opening that is configured to receive a mating latch. Each hinge bracket may include a mounted portion that is fixedly mounted to the support structure and an elastically mobile portion that includes the opening. Each of the hinge brackets may include a striker plate that is positioned so as to define an acute angle with respect to a longitudinal axis defined by its mating latch. In other embodiments, each of the first through fourth latch receiving assemblies may comprise a bracket that includes a slot that has an opening that is configured to receive a respective one of the first through fourth latches and a latch member that has an arm that is moveable between a first position in which the arm captures the respective one of the first through fourth latches within the slot and a second position in which the arm allows access to the slot. In such embodiments, each latch receiving assembly may also include a spring that biases the arm of the latch member toward the first position.

Brief Description of the Figures

[0013] FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of a door assembly for a communications rack, cabinet or wall-mounted system according to embodiments of the present invention.

[0014] FIG. 2 is a rear perspective view of the door assembly of FIG. 1.

[0015] FIG. 3 is an enlarged rear perspective view of the door assembly of FIG. 1 showing the handle and surrounding area.

[0016] FIG. 4 is a rear perspective view of a backplate of the door assembly of FIG. 1.

[0017] FIG. 5 is a rear perspective view of a latch bar of the door assembly of FIG. 1.

[0018] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of the door assembly of FIG. 1 in position in a wall-mounted communications system.

[0019] FIG. 7 is a front perspective view of a handle of the door assembly or FIG. 6 in an extended position.

[0020] FIG. 8 is a rear perspective view of the door assembly of FIG. 7 with the handle in an extended position.

[0021] FIG. 9 is an enlarged rear perspective view of the door assembly of FIG. 7 with the handle in an extended position.

[0022] FIG. 10 is an enlarged front perspective view of the door assembly of FIG. 7 showing that extension of the left side handle allows the door to pivot about an axis extending through its right side.

[0023] FIG. 11 is an enlarged front perspective view of the door assembly of FIG. 7 showing that extension of the right side handle allows the door assembly to pivot about an axis extending through its left side.

[0024] FIG. 12 is an enlarged front perspective view of the door assembly of FIG. 7 showing that extension of both handles allows the door assembly to be removed from its mounted position.

[0025] FIG. 13 is a top view of a latch receiving assembly according to embodiments of the present invention with a latch pin of the door assembly of FIG. 1 captured therein.

[0026] FIG. 14 is a top view of a latch receiving assembly of FIG. 13 with the latch pin of the door assembly of FIG. 1 outside of the latch receiving assembly.

[0027] FIG. 15 is a top view of a latch receiving assembly of FIG. 13 with the latch pin of the door assembly of FIG. 1 in the process of being received within the latch receiving assembly.

[0028] FIG. 16 is a schematic force diagram illustrating how the positive offset of the latch member of the latch receiving assembly of FIG. 14 encourages the latch member to remain closed under load.

[0029] FIG. 17 is an exploded front perspective view of a door assembly for a communications rack, cabinet or wall-mounted system according to further embodiments of the present invention.

[0030] FIG. 18 is a rear view of the center portion of the door assembly of FIG. 17.

[0031] FIG. 19 is a rear view of the top portion of the door assembly of FIG. 17.

[0032] FIG. 20 is a side view of the center portion of the door assembly of FIG. 17.

[0033] FIG. 21 is a partial perspective view of the door assembly of FIG. 17 mounted on a support structure that includes a latch receiving assembly according to certain embodiments of the present invention.

[0034] FIG. 22 is a top view of the door assembly and support structure of FIG. 21.

[0035] FIG. 23 is a partial perspective view of the door assembly and support structure of FIG. 21 with the door partially opened.

[0036] FIG. 24 is a side perspective view of a cable management system that includes two of the door assemblies of FIG. 17.

[0037] FIG. 25 is an enlarged partial side perspective view of a portion of the cable management system of FIG. 24.

[0038] FIG. 26 is a front perspective view of a terminal block panel system according to embodiments of the present invention including the door assembly of FIG. 1.

Detailed Description

[0039] The present invention will now be described more fully hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which preferred embodiments of the invention are shown. This invention may, however, be embodied in different forms and should not be construed as limited to the embodiments set forth herein. Rather, these embodiments are provided so that this disclosure will be thorough and complete, and will fully convey the scope of the invention to those skilled in the art. In the drawings, like numbers refer to like elements throughout. Thicknesses and dimensions of some components may be exaggerated for clarity.

[0040] Unless otherwise defined, all terms (including technical and scientific terms) used herein have the same meaning as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art to which this invention belongs. It will be further understood that terms, such as those defined in commonly used dictionaries, should be interpreted as having a meaning that is consistent with their meaning in the context of the relevant art and will not be interpreted in an idealized or overly formal sense unless expressly so defined herein.

[0041] The terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only and is not intended to be limiting of the invention. As used herein, the singular forms "a", "an" and "the" are intended to include the plural forms as well, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. It will be further understood that the terms "comprises," "comprising," "includes" and "including" when used in this specification, specify the presence of stated features, elements, and/or components, but do not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, elements, components, and/or groups thereof. As used herein the expression "and/or" includes any and all combinations of one or more of the associated listed items.

[0042] It will be understood that when an element is referred to as being "coupled," "connected," "attached" or "mounted" to another element, it can be directly coupled, connected attached or mounted to the other element or intervening elements may also be present. In contrast, when an element is referred to as being "directly" coupled, connected, attached or mounted to another element, there are no intervening elements present.

[0043] In addition, spatially relative terms, such as "under", "below", "lower", "over", "upper" and the like, may be used herein for ease of description to describe one element or feature's relationship to another element(s) or feature(s) as illustrated in the figures. It will be understood that the spatially relative terms are intended to encompass different orientations of the device in use or operation in addition to the orientation depicted in the figures. For example, if the device in the figures is turned over, elements described as "under" or "beneath" other elements or features would then be oriented "over" the other elements or features. Thus, the exemplary term "under" can encompass both an orientation of over and under. The device may be otherwise oriented (rotated 90 degrees or at other orientations) and the spatially relative descriptors used herein interpreted accordingly.

[0044] In accordance with embodiments of the present invention, communications cable management systems are provided that include door assemblies. The communications cable management systems may comprise, for example, one or more communications racks, cabinets or wall-mounted systems upon which one or more door assemblies are mounted.

[0045] FIGS. 1-12 illustrate a door assembly 10 that may be part of a communications rack, cabinet or wall-mounted system according to certain embodiments of the present invention. As shown in FIG. 1, the door assembly 10 may include a substantially planar door body 12 that has a top lip 13a, a bottom lip 13b, and side lips 14. Some or all of the lips 13a, 13b, 14 could alternatively be side edges of the door body 12. Handles 16a, 16b may be attached at the side lips 14 and fit within recesses 17 in the door body 12. The handles 16a, 16b may be generally U-shaped, having two arms 18 that are bridged by a bi-arcuate grasping portion 19 that protrudes away from the door body 12 to facilitate grasping by a user. The handles 16a, 16b may be mirror images of each other, and hence only handle 16a is described below.

[0046] As shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, handle 16a includes a pivot base 20a, 20b at the end of each respective arm 18. The pivot bases are located in recesses 14c in the side lips 14. Each pivot base 20a, 20b includes a cammed surface 22 that wraps helically around the pivot base 20a, 20b to form a helical ramp that faces downwardly. Handle pins 24a, 24b extend vertically from opposite ends of the pivot base 20a, and handle pins 24c, 24d extend from

opposite ends of the pivot base **20b**; together, the handle pins **24a, 24b, 24c, 24d** define a door pivot axis **A1** (a second pivot axis **A2** is defined by the handle pins **24a, 24b, 24c, 24d** on the opposite side handle **16b**). In the illustrated embodiment, the handle **16a** is formed as a unitary member, with the pivot bases **20a, 20b** and the handle pins **24a-24d** being formed integrally with the remainder of the handle **16a**.

[0047] Referring now to **FIGS. 2 and 4**, two mirror image back plates **26a, 26b** (only back plate **26a** will be described in detail herein) are mounted on and/or adjacent the rear surface of the door body **12** (typically to the rear surface of the door body **12** or to the side lips **14**) via adhesive, threaded fasteners or the like. The back plates **26a, 26b**, which can help to provide stiffness to the door assembly **10**, may be generally planar. The back plates **26a, 26b** may include a number of projections, flanges, bosses, and the like. In some embodiments, a single back plate may be employed, or the back plates may be omitted entirely.

[0048] Referring again to **FIGS. 2 and 4**, near its lateral edge, the back plate **26a** includes a series of ribs **27** that have apertures (not shown) that receive the handle pins **24a-24d** of the associated handle **16a**. Also, two stops **29** are positioned to rest against the ends of the handle pins **24a, 24d** to maintain the handle **16a** in place. A spring **30** (**FIG. 3**) surrounds each of the handle pins **24a, 24c** and is mounted to a rib **27** to bias the handle **16a** toward a closed position, in which the handle **16a** resides in the recess **17** of the door body **12**.

[0049] Referring back to **FIGS. 2 and 3**, each of two toggle arms **32a, 32b** are pivotally attached to a mounting platform **31** on each back plate **26a, 26b** at, respectively, pivots **34a, 34b**, such that the toggle arms **32a, 32b** can rotate about respective axes **A3, A4** that are normal to the door body **12**. At its lateral end, each toggle arm **32a, 32b** includes a cam interface post **36** that extends toward and contacts the cammed surface **22** of the adjacent pivot base **20a, 20b** of the handle **16a**.

[0050] Referring now to **FIGS. 2 and 5**, two generally vertically-disposed mirror image latch bars **40a, 40b** (only one of which, latch bar **40a**, will be described herein) are positioned inboard of the handles **16a, 16b**, each overlying a portion of its respective back plate **26a, 26b**. The latch bar **40a** includes mounting apertures **41** that receive latch bar retainers **42** that project from the back plate **26a**. The mounting apertures **41** are of sufficient length that the latch bar **40a** can move vertically over a short distance along an axis **A5**. The latch bar **40a** includes a top flange **45** that extends laterally from the upper end of the latch bar **40a**. A latch structure in the form of a latch pin **46** extends downwardly from the top

flange 45. The latch pin 46 is received in an aperture or compartment defined in a locator or guide feature 46a that protrudes from the back of the back plate 26a. Similarly, a bottom flange 47 extends laterally from the lower end of the latch bar 40a, and a latch structure in the form of a latch pin 48 extends downwardly therefrom through an aperture or compartment in a locator feature 48a that protrudes from the back of the back plate 26b. Together the pins 46, 48 define a pivot axis A6 on which the door assembly 10 can pivot (the pins 46, 48 connected to the latch bar 40b define a pivot axis A7 on the opposite side of the door assembly 10). The upper surface of the bottom flange 47 contacts a spring (not shown) that also contacts a rib 49. The spring is in compression and urges the latch bar 40a downwardly. The latch bar 40a is pivotally attached to each of the toggle arms 32a, 32b at respective pivots 44a, 44b.

[0051] Referring now to FIG. 6, in accordance with some embodiments of the present invention, the door assembly 10 may be mounted via the pins 46, 48 on two communications racks 100, 102 in order to cover a cable trough 104 between the racks 100, 102. The cable trough 104 may be any channel or partially enclosed area that houses communications cables/cords. For example, in the embodiment of FIG. 6, the sides of the racks 100, 102 define a cable trough 104 therebetween. The presence of the latch pins 46, 48 prevents the door assembly 10 from opening inadvertently. In this position (the "closed position") as shown in FIG. 7, the door assembly 10 is latched closed on both the left and right sides and serves as a fixed front wall for a portion of the trough 104. The door assembly 10 thus serves to hide, protect and/or contain cords in the trough 104. More particularly, the latch pins 46, 48 of the latch bar 40a are disposed in a latched position wherein they engage respective mating latch receiving assemblies that are mounted on the rack 100 and the latch pins 46, 48 of the latch bar 40b are disposed in a latched position wherein they engage respective latch receiving assemblies that are mounted on the rack 102. Latch receiving assemblies 450 according to embodiments of the present invention that may be used to receive the latch pins 46, 48 are described below with respect to FIGS. 13-16.

[0052] When the door assembly 10 is closed as in FIG. 6, the handles 16a, 16b are in a retracted position in which the arms 18 of each handle 16a, 16b reside in their respective recesses 17 and are generally parallel with the door body 12. With the handles 16a, 16b retracted, the pivot bases 20a, 20b of the handles 16a, 16b are oriented such that the upper ends of the cammed surfaces 22 face rearwardly and contact the cam interface pins 36 of the toggle arms 32a, 32b (see FIG. 2). The handles 16a, 16b are urged toward this retracted position by the springs 30 acting on the handle pins 24a, 24c.

[0053] Referring to **FIGS. 2 and 3**, when the cam interface pins **36** contact the upper ends of the cammed surfaces **22**, the toggle arms **32a, 32b** are generally horizontally disposed in a lowered position ("the latched position"). In their respective latched positions, the pins **46, 48** of each latch bar **40a, 40b** are inserted through and protrude downwardly from their respective compartments **46a, 48a** into their mating latch receiving assemblies on the racks **100, 102**. As noted above, the latch bars **40a, 40b** are urged downwardly by the spring acting on the ribs **49** and the bottom flange **47**.

[0054] An operator can open the door assembly **10** from either the left side or the right side to access the trough **104** without removing the door assembly **10** from the racks **100, 102**. To open the door assembly **10** from either side, a user simply grasps the appropriate handle **16a, 16b** and rotates it so that the grasping portion **19** moves away from the center of door body **12** toward a side edge of door body **12**. The handle **16a** and the linkage between the handle **16a** and the pins **46, 48** serve as an actuator to transition the pins **46, 48** from their latched positions to their unlatched positions. More particularly, as is apparent from **FIGS. 2-3 and 7-9**, rotation of the handle **16a** causes the pivot bases **20a, 20b** and handle pins **24a, 24b, 24c, 24d** to rotate about the axis **A1**. As the pivot bases **20a, 20b** rotate, the cammed surface **22** of each rotates also, such that eventually the lower end of each cammed surface **22** faces rearwardly and is in contact with the cam interface pin **36** (rotation of the handle **16a** ceases when a stepped surface **37** on the pivot base **20a** contacts the cam interface pin **36**). This interaction drives the cam interface pin **36** upwardly, which in turn causes the toggle arms **32a, 32b** to rotate about the pivots **34a, 34b** (clockwise from the vantage point of **FIGS. 8 and 9**). The rotation of the toggle arms **32a, 32b** drives the inboard ends of the toggle arms **32a, 32b** upwardly along the axis **A5**, which consequently drives the latch bar **40a** upwardly. This action slides or lifts the pins **46, 48** out of the latch receiving assemblies in the rack **100** and into their respective unlatched positions, thereby freeing the left side of the door assembly **10** (from the vantage point of **FIG. 10**) from the rack **100**. Moreover, as the pins **46, 48** of the latch bar **40b** are still pivotally engaged with their respective latch receiving assemblies of the rack **102**, the door assembly **10** can be pivoted about the axis **A7** (*i.e.*, the axis of the pins **46, 48** of the latch bar **40b**) on the right side of the door assembly **10** to an open position (*see FIG. 10*). In this manner, the pins **46, 48** of the latch bar **40b** and the latch receiving assemblies of the rack **102** in which the pins **46, 48** are received serve as a hinge assembly, and the door assembly **10** can be opened as a right side hinged door.

[0055] Alternatively, with the handle **16a** released (closed) and the pins **46, 48** of the latch bar **40a** inserted in the latch receiving assemblies of the rack **100**, the right side handle **16b** can be grasped and rotated to lift the latch bar **40b** via the toggle arms **32a, 32b**. This action slides the pins **46, 48** of the latch bar **40b** into their unlatched positions, and the door assembly **10** is thereby freed to rotate about the axis **A6** and move to an open position (see **FIG. 11**). In this manner, the door assembly **10** can be opened as a left side hinged door. Thus the pins **46, 48** can serve as both latches and hinges for the door assembly **10** on either side.

[0056] As shown in **FIG. 12**, an operator can also completely remove the door assembly **10** by simultaneously moving both handles **16a, 16b** to their respective extended positions. Extension of both handles **16a, 16b** draws the pins **46, 48** on both sides of the door assembly **10** from their respective latch receiving assemblies **450** (*i.e.*, into their unlatched positions). The completely removed door assembly **10** can be returned to its closed position (**FIG. 6**) by pushing the door body **12** back into place so that the latch pins **46, 48** are received by their respective latch receiving assemblies on racks **100, 102**.

[0057] As noted above, the racks **100, 102** may each include a pair of latch receiving assemblies that receive respective ones of the pins **46, 48** of the door assembly **10**. **FIGS. 13-15** illustrate latch receiving assemblies **450** according to certain embodiments of the present invention that may be used to mount the door assembly **10** to, for example, the racks **100, 102** or to another support structure **435** such as, for example, a communications cabinet or wall-mounted system. Typically, four of the latch receiving assemblies **450** would be provided on the support structure to mount the door assembly **10** onto the support structure. It will also be appreciated that the latch receiving assemblies **450** may be mounted on the support structure **435** or that, alternatively, at least part of the latch receiving assembly **450** may be formed integrally with the support structure **435**.

[0058] As illustrated in **FIGS. 13-15**, the latch receiving assembly **450** may comprise a latch member **460**. The latch member **460** includes a rear portion **462** and a forward portion **464**. The rear portion **462** is mounted to a support member **440** of support structure **435** via a rivet, pin, or other fastener **480** that may act as a pivot. The forward portion **464** includes a hook **466**. The support member **440** includes a slot **445** at one end thereof that is configured to receive a respective one of the latch pins **46** of door assembly **10**. The latch member **460** is pivotally mounted to the support member **440** so as to be pivotable between a closed position in which the hook **466** of latch member **460** captures the latch pin **46** within the slot **445** and an open position in which the hook **466** of latch member **460**

pivots away from the slot 445 opening. The latch member 460 may be formed from a unitary piece of material such as, for example, a stamped metal plate.

[0059] The latch receiving assembly 450 further comprises a spring 470. In the illustrated embodiment, the spring 470 is connected between the support member 440 and the latch member 460, and is configured to bias the forward portion 464 of the latch member 460 toward the closed position in which the hook 466 of latch member 460 captures the latch pin 46 within the slot 445. The spring 470 may merely operate as a return system that returns the latch member to its closed position, and need not be configured to help hold the latch member 460 in its closed position. Accordingly, in some embodiments, a light spring can be used that has a low resistance level.

[0060] As can be seen, for example, in FIG. 13, when the latch member 460 is in the closed position, the front edge 468 of hook 466 is angled with respect to the longitudinal axis of slot 445. As will be discussed in further detail below, the latch pin 46 may engage the angled front edge 468 of hook 466 when door assembly 10 is moved to its closed position.

[0061] Operation of the latch receiving assembly 450 will now be explained with reference to FIGS. 13-15. FIG. 13 illustrates the latch member 460 in its closed position with the latch pin 46 captured within the slot 445 of support member 440. As shown in FIG. 13, the forward portion 464 of the latch member 460 is positioned so that the hook 466 extends across the opening of the slot 445 in support member 440, thereby capturing the latch pin 46 within the slot 445. In this position, the combination of the pin 46 and the latch receiving assembly 450 can operate as either a latch or as a hinge. As is shown in FIG. 16, the positive offset between the hook 466 and the pivot 480 urges the latch member 460 to remain in the closed position under a load from the latch pin 46.

[0062] As discussed above with respect to FIGS. 7-9, rotation of one of the handles 16a, 16b (e.g., handle 16b) on the door assembly 10 causes latch pins 46, 48 to move from their latched positions to their unlatched positions (i.e., each of the latch pins 46, 48 are moved upwardly so as to no longer be captured by the hook 466 within the slot 445). Each latch member 460 remains in its closed position of FIG. 13 as the handle 16b is rotated and the latch pins 46, 48 are retracted. Once the latch pins 46, 48 at one edge of the door body 12 are retracted, that edge of the door body 12 is disengaged from the latch member 460, thereby enabling the door body 12 to be opened. The coupling structure between the handles 16a, 16b and the latch pins 46, 48 is configured so that the latch pins 46, 48 are biased toward their latched positions. Thus, when the handles 16a, 16b are not rotated, the latch pins 46, 48 are in their latched positions where they engage their corresponding latch members 460.

[0063] FIG. 14 illustrates the latch member 460 in its closed position, except in FIG. 14, the latch pin 46 is outside of the slot 445 of support member 440, as would be the case when the door body 12 is open. When the door body 12 is to be closed, the latch pins 46, 48 are likely to be in their latched (lowered) positions (because typically an operator will not be holding the handle 16b open when closing the door body 12). As shown in FIG. 14, as each latch pin 46, 48 approaches the hook 466 of its respective latch member 460, the latch member 460 is in its closed position. As shown in FIG. 15, as the door 10 is closed, the latch pin 46 engages the angled front edge 468 of hook 466. As it does so, the latch pin 46 forces the forward portion 464 of latch member 460 to pivot away from the slot 445, thereby providing access to the slot 445 for the respective latch pin 46, 48. The latch pin 46, 48 can then slide into the slot 445 (FIG. 15). Once the latch pin 46, 48 has cleared the end of the hook 466, the hook 466, biased by the spring 470, returns to the closed position of FIG. 13, where the latch pin 46 and the latch receiving assembly 450 can operate as either a latch or as a hinge. It can thus be seen that, in this configuration, the latch member 460 allows the door body 12 to be closed without any manipulation of the handle 16b required.

[0064] The door assembly 10 includes two upper latch pins 46 and two lower latch pins 48, with a latch pin 46 and a latch pin 48 provided on both the left and right side of door body 12. Accordingly, a pair of mating latch receiving assemblies 450 are provided on both the left and right sides of the support structure 435 (e.g., two latch receiving assemblies 450 would be provided on rack 100, and another two latch receiving assemblies 450 would be provided on rack 102). The latch receiving assemblies 450 may act as either a latch or a hinge. In particular, when the door assembly 10 is operated so that the right side of the door opens, the latch pins 46, 48 and their mating latch receiving assemblies 450 on the left side of the door assembly 10 act as hinges, allowing the door to swing open. In this configuration, the latch pins 46, 48 and mating latch receiving assemblies 450 on the right side of the door assembly 10 act as a latch mechanism. By pulling on the handle 16b, an operator can activate the latch mechanism to disengage the latch (i.e., pins 46, 48), thereby freeing the right side of door assembly 10 so that the door can swing open. When the operator closes the door, the latch pins 46, 48 displace their respective latch members 460 so that the latch pins 46, 48 can be received fully within their respective slots 445, at which point the latch members 460 spring back into their closed positions so as to hold the latch pins 46, 48 within their slots 445.

[0065] Those skilled in this art will appreciate that the door assembly 10 and components thereof may take different forms from those illustrated and described herein. For

example, the door body **12** need not be planar. It may include a window. The handles **16a**, **16b** may be configured differently, and/or may be configured to open "out-to-in" rather than "in-to-out", or to not be mirror images. The cammed surfaces **22** of the pivot bases **20a**, **20b** may be configured similar to a lead screw or a worm gear. The grasping portions **19** may be straight or arcuate in only one direction. The latching components may also take different forms. For example, in some embodiments the toggle arms **32a**, **32b** may have a different length or shape, or may be omitted entirely, such that the latch bar interacts directly with the cammed surface **22**. The latch bars **40a**, **40b** may be of different lengths and may take a different form. The latch bars **40a**, **40b** may rely on gravity rather than springs to remain in place, and may be identical rather than mirror images of each other.

[0066] **FIGS. 17-20** illustrate a door assembly **500** for a communications rack, cabinet or wall-mounted system according to further embodiments of the present invention. As shown in **FIG. 20**, the door assembly **500** may include a substantially planar door body **502** that has side lips or edges **504**. The door assembly **500** further includes a center back panel **505**, top and bottom back panels **506**, **507**, and two pairs of latch bars **540a**, **540b**, **541a**, **541b**. The door assembly **500** further includes handle/latch mechanisms **508**, **509**. Center back panel **505** covers and protects handle mechanisms **508**, **509**, while the top and bottom back panels **506**, **507** act to hold the latch bars **540a**, **540b**, **541a**, **541b** in their proper positions. Center back panel **505** and top and bottom back panels **506**, **507** may be mounted onto and/or adjacent the rear surface of the door body **502** via rivets, adhesive, threaded fasteners or the like.

[0067] A handle **516a**, **516b** is associated with each respective handle mechanism **508**, **509**. The handles **516a**, **516b** each fit within a respective recess **517** in the door body **502**. The handles **516a**, **516b** may be generally U-shaped, having two arms **518** that are bridged by a grasping portion **519**. The handles **516a**, **516b** may be mirror images of each other, and hence only handle **516a** is described below.

[0068] Referring to **FIGS. 17-19**, handle **516a** includes a pivot base **520a**, **520b** at the end of each respective arm **518**. Pivot base **520a** includes a cammed surface (not visible in **FIGS. 17-18**) that forms a helical ramp that faces downwardly, while pivot base **520b** includes a cammed surface (not visible in **FIGS. 17-18**) that forms a helical ramp that faces upwardly. A handle pin **524** (see **FIG. 20**) extends vertically through the pivot bases **520a**, **520b**. The pivot bases **520a**, **520b** may be formed integrally with the remainder of the handle **516a**. First and second hinges **526** are mounted to the back of door body **502** and or to the side lip **504**. Each hinge **526** receives an end of the handle pin **524** of handle **516a**. Stops

(not shown in **FIG. 17**) may also be provided that are positioned to rest against each end of the handle pin **524** to maintain the handle **516a** in place. A spring **530** (see **FIG. 20**) is mounted between each end of the handle pin **524** and the door body **502** or other structure to bias the handle **516a** toward a closed position, in which the handle **516a** resides in the recess **517** of the door body **502**.

[0069] Still referring to **FIGS. 17** and **18**, a pair of cams **532a**, **532b** are mounted to the back of door body **502** and/or to the side lip **504**. A first end of cam **532a** extends toward and contacts the cammed surface of the adjacent pivot base **520a** of handle **516a**. A first end of cam **532b** similarly extends toward and contacts the cammed surface of the adjacent pivot base **520b** of handle **516b**.

[0070] Referring now to **FIGS. 17** and **19**, two pairs of generally vertically-disposed latch bars **540a**, **540b**, **541a**, **541b** are provided (only the pair of latch bars **540a**, **540b** will be described herein). The first end of latch bar **540a** is mounted to a second end of cam **532a**, while the second end of latch bar **540a** is received within a corner bushing **534** that is attached to the top back plate **506**. Similarly, the first end of latch bar **540b** is mounted to a second end of cam **532b**, while the second end of latch bar **540b** is received within a corner bushing **534** that is attached to the bottom back plate **507**.

[0071] As shown in **FIGS. 17** and **19**, the second end of latch bar **540a** comprises a latch structure in the form of an upwardly extending latch pin **546** (note that latch pin **546** may simply comprise the end portion of a rod that forms the latch bar **540a**). The pin **546** is received in an aperture in corner bushing **534**. Similarly, the second end of latch bar **540b** comprises a latch structure in the form of a downwardly extending latch pin **548** (note that latch pin **548** may simply comprise the end portion of a rod that forms the latch bar **540b**). The pin **548** is received in an aperture in corner bushing **534**. The latch bars **540a**, **540b** are configured to move a short distance along the vertical axis **B1** that is defined by the latch bars **540a**, **540b** to transition between respective latched and unlatched positions. Each latch bar **540a**, **540b** is in its latched position when its respective latch pin **546**, **548** is extended away from the center of door body **502**. The latch bars **540a**, **540b** are in their unlatched positions when their respective latch pins **546**, **548** have been moved a short distance along the axis **B1** toward the center of door body **502**.

[0072] Each handle **516a**, **516b** includes a torsion spring **521a**, **521b** (see **FIG. 17**). Torsion spring **521a** applies a return force to pivot bases **520a**, **520b** that acts to hold the latch bars **540a**, **540b** in their latched (extended) positions. When the handle **516a** is rotated, cams **532a**, **532b** are driven toward the center via the action of pivot bases **520a**, **520b**

thereon, which acts to move the latch bars **540a**, **540b** to their unlatched positions. Rotation of the handle **516a** also acts to load the torsion spring **521a**. When the handle **516a** is released, the torsion spring **521a** provides a force that returns the latch bars **540a**, **540b** to their latched positions. Handle **516b** works in the same way as handle **516a**, and hence discussion of the operation of handle **516b** will be omitted.

[0073] The axis B1 defined by the latch bars **540a**, **540b** comprises a pivot axis on which the door assembly **500** can pivot (the latch bars **541a**, **541b** define a second pivot axis **B2** on the opposite side of the door assembly **500**). A spring **532** (see FIG. 19) may be mounted to the top back plate **506**. The spring **532** may be in compression to urge the latch bar **540a** downwardly. Another spring **532** (not shown) may be mounted to the bottom back plate **507** that is in compression and urges the latch bar **540b** upwardly.

[0074] The door assembly **500** may be mounted onto a support structure **432** by mating each of the latch pins **546**, **548** with respective latch receiving assemblies that are provided on the support structure **432**. FIGS. 21-23 illustrate a support structure **432** for the door assembly **500** that includes latch receiving assemblies **400** according to certain embodiments of the present invention. The support structure **432** may comprise, for example, a communications rack, cabinet or wall-mounted system. While for purposes of simplicity, FIGS. 13-15 each illustrate only one or two such latch receiving assemblies **400**, it will be appreciated that typically four latch receiving assemblies **400** would be used to mount the door assembly **500** to the support structure **432**, as will be illustrated below with respect to FIGS. 24-25. The latch receiving assemblies **400** may be mounted on, or formed integrally with, the support structure **432**.

[0075] As can best be seen in FIG. 21, the latch receiving assembly **400** is mounted on the support structure **432**. In the embodiment of FIGS. 21-23, the latch receiving assembly **400** comprises a hinge bracket **410** that is mounted to the support structure **432** via several rivets, screws or other fasteners **430**. Herein, the term "hinge bracket" refers to a structure that is configured to receive a latch so that the latch and the hinge bracket together can operate as a hinge. The illustrated embodiment of hinge bracket **410** includes a rear portion **412** that is fixedly mounted to the support structure **432** via the fasteners **430** and a forward portion **414** that is elastically mobile. In the pictured embodiment, the hinge bracket **410** may be formed from a unitary piece of material such as, for example, a stamped metal plate. The forward portion **414** includes an aperture **416** that is configured to receive a respective one of the latch pins **546** of door assembly **500**. As shown best in FIG. 23, some or all of the material that is removed to form the aperture **416** may be retained and bent

upwardly to form a projection **418**. As will be explained in further detail below, this projection **418** may provide additional structural support to facilitate keeping latch pin **546** within the hinge bracket **410** when the right side of the door assembly **500** (when door assembly **500** is viewed from the front) is in its closed position.

[0076] As can also be seen in **FIG. 21**, the forward portion **414** of hinge bracket **410** includes a ramped portion **420**. The ramped portion **420** may be positioned so as to form an acute angle with respect to the longitudinal axis of latch pin **546**. As will be discussed below, the ramped portion **420** acts as a striker plate that is engaged by the latch pin **546** when door assembly **10** is closed. The forward edge of the support structure **432** includes a slot **436** (partially visible in **FIG. 21**) that is aligned with and positioned underneath the aperture **416** of hinge bracket **410**. As will be explained in further detail below, the slot **436** provides the latch pin **546** of door assembly **500** access to the aperture **416**.

[0077] Operation of the hinge bracket **410** will now be explained. As discussed above, and shown in **FIGS. 21-23**, the latch pin **546** of latch bar **540b** may be disengaged from the hinge bracket **410** in order to open the right side of door assembly **500**. Thereafter, an operator may return the right side of door assembly **500** to its closed position by pushing the right side of door body **502** toward the support structure **432**. As shown best in **FIG. 23**, the latch pin **546** will be in its raised position once the operator releases the handle **516b**. As the door assembly **500** closes, the latch pin **546** of latch bar **540b** eventually comes into contact with the striker plate **420**. When this occurs, the striker plate **420**, which is part of the elastically mobile portion of hinge bracket **410**, is forced upward by the latch pin **546**. The top of the latch pin **546** slides down the striker plate **420** as the striker plate moves upward, until eventually the latch pin **546** slides underneath the striker plate **420** and into the aperture **416**. When this occurs, the latch pin **546** ceases to provide an upward force on the hinge bracket **410**, and thus the elastically mobile portion of the hinge bracket **410** snaps back into its resting position, thereby capturing the latch pin **546** in the aperture **416** as is illustrated in **FIG. 21**. The closing operation is the same for each of the left and right sides of the door assembly **500**. It will be understood that this description likewise applies to closing of the right side of the door assembly **500**.

[0078] As should be clear from the above description, the combination of the latch pin **546** and the hinge bracket **410** can act as both a latch and as a hinge. For example, as shown in **FIGS. 21-23**, a latch pin **546** is provided on both the left and right side of door assembly **500**. Similarly, a mating hinge bracket **410** is provided on both the left and right sides of the support structure **432**. As shown in **FIGS. 22-23**, when the door assembly **500** is

operated so that the right side of the door opens, the latch pin **546** and mating hinge bracket **410** on the left side of the door assembly act as a hinge, allowing the door to swing open. In this configuration, the latch pin **546** and mating hinge bracket **410** on the right side of the door assembly act as a latch mechanism. By pulling on the handle **516b**, an operator can activate the latch mechanism to disengage the latch (i.e., pin **546**), thereby freeing the right side of door assembly **500** so that the door can swing open. When the operator closes the door, the latch pin **546** upwardly displaces the hinge bracket **410** until the latch pin **546** is received within the aperture **416**, at which point the hinge bracket **410** falls back into place where the latch pin **546** and hinge bracket **410** can operate as either a closed latch or as a hinge.

[0079] Each of the latch pins **548** cooperate with its respective latch receiving assembly **400** in the same fashion as is discussed above with respect to the latch pins **546**. However, the latch receiving assemblies **400** that cooperate with the latch pins **548** will be mounted upside down as compared to the mounting orientation of the latch receiving assemblies **400** that cooperate with the latch pins **546**.

[0080] It will also be appreciated that pursuant to further embodiments of the present invention, the hinge bracket **410** may comprise a fixed member, while the latch pin **546** may be spring loaded. In such embodiments, when the pin **546** engages the striker plate **420** as the door assembly **500** is closed, the hinge bracket **410** remains fixed, and the striker plate **420** imparts a downward force on the spring loaded pin **546**. This downward force forces the pin down until the latch pin **546** is able to slide past and under the striker plate **420**, at which point the latch pin **546** is received within the aperture **416**. When this occurs, the compressive force is removed and the latch pin **546** returns to its latched position where it is captured within the aperture **416** where the latch pin **546** can operate as either a closed latch or as a hinge.

[0081] **FIGS. 24** and **25** illustrate a cable management system **600** that uses a pair of the door assemblies **500**. The cable management system **600** comprises a pair of cable management towers **602, 604**. Each cable management tower **602, 604** includes four of the latch receiving assemblies **400** that are discussed above with respect to **FIGS. 21-23**. Each latch receiving assembly **400** receives a respective one of the four latch pins **546, 548** of one of the door assemblies **500** to mount that door assembly **500** on each respective cable management tower **602, 604**.

[0082] Referring now to **FIG. 25**, the door body **502** on the assembly **500** that is mounted on cable management tower **602** is closed. When the door body **502** is in this closed

position, the door handles **516a**, **516b** are in their retracted positions in which the arms **518** of each handle **516a**, **516b** reside in their respective recesses **517** and are generally parallel with the door body **502**. As discussed above, the handles **516a**, **516b** are urged toward this retracted positions by the springs **530** that act on the handle pins **524**. With the handles **516a**, **516b** retracted, the pivot bases **520a**, **520b** contact the cams **532a**, **532b** so as to hold the cams **532a**, **532b** in their extended positions. As the latch bars **540a**, **540b**, **541a**, **541b** are attached to respective of the cams **532a**, **532b**, each latch bar **540a**, **540b**, **541a**, **541b** is likewise held in its extended position when the handles **516a**, **516b** are in their retracted positions. When the latch bars **540a**, **540b**, **541a**, **541b** are in their extended positions, the latch pins **546**, **548** of each latch bar are received within the aperture **416** of their respective latch receiving assemblies **400**, thereby firmly holding the door assembly **500** closed on the cable management tower **602**.

[0083] An operator can open the door assembly **500** from either the left side or the right side to access the interior of the cable management tower **602** without removing the door assembly **500** from its cable management tower **602**. This is illustrated in **FIG. 25** with respect to the door assembly **500** that is mounted to cable management tower **604**. To open the door assembly **500** from either side, the operator simply grasps the appropriate handle **516a**, **516b** and rotates it so that the grasping portion **519** moves away from the center of door body **502** toward a side edge of door body **502**. The handle **516a** and the linkage between the handle **516a** and the pins **546**, **548** serve as an actuator to transition the latch pins **546**, **548** from their latched positions to their unlatched positions. For example, as shown in **FIG. 25**, rotation of the handle **516a** causes the pivot bases **520a**, **520b** having cammed surfaces to rotate. As the cammed surfaces on the pivot bases **520a**, **520b** rotate, they interact with their respective cams **532a**, **532b**, allowing the respective cams **532a**, **532b** to move toward the center of the door body **502** under the compressive force provided by springs **532**. As the respective cams **532a**, **532b** move toward the center of the door body **502**, the latch bar **540a** that is attached to cam **532a** and the latch bar **540b** that is attached to cam **532b** likewise move toward the center of the door body **502** (i.e., toward their unlatched positions). Consequently, the latch pins **546**, **548** on the left side of the door assembly **500** are moved out of the apertures **416** of their respective latch receiving assemblies **400** of cable management tower **604** (i.e., into their respective unlatched positions), thereby freeing the left side of the door body **502** (from the vantage point of **FIG. 25**) from the cable management tower **604**.

[0084] With the pins **546**, **548** of the latch bars **540a**, **540b** free and the pins **546**, **548** of the latch bars **541a**, **541b** still pivotally engaged with the latch receiving assemblies

400 on the right side of cable management tower **604**, the door assembly **500** on cable management tower **604** can be pivoted about the vertical axis defined by the latch bars **541a**, **541b** on the right side of the door assembly **500** to the open position shown in **FIG. 25**. In this manner, the pins **546**, **548** and the respective latch receiving assemblies **400** in which the pins **546**, **548** are received serve as a hinge assembly, and the door assembly **500** can be opened as a right side hinged door. It will likewise be appreciated that, alternatively, the right side handle **516b** can be grasped and rotated to open the door assembly as a left side hinged door, or both handles **516a**, **516b** can be grasped and rotated to completely remove door assembly **500**, in a manner similar to the operations discussed above with respect to door assembly **10**.

[0085] While in **FIGS. 24-25**, latch receiving assemblies **400** are provided on the support structure **432**, it will be appreciated that in other embodiments, the latch receiving assemblies **450** discussed above with respect to **FIGS. 13-16** may be used instead on the support structure **432**.

[0086] Likewise, the support structure **432** could include, for example, two of the latch receiving assemblies **400** and two of the latch receiving assemblies **450**. Additionally, other combinations and/or other types of latch receiving assemblies could also be used.

[0087] **FIG. 26** illustrates a terminal block panel system **201** in accordance with further embodiments of the present invention. The system **201** includes a spacer bracket assembly **300** and a pair of terminal block panels or patch panel assemblies **200**. The panel assemblies **200** may be mounted, for example, on a wall in side-by-side, spaced apart arrangement. The spacer bracket assembly **300** is mounted between the panel assemblies **200**. The spacer bracket assembly **300** may be secured to the wall and/or one or both of the back panel assemblies **200**. The spacer bracket assembly **300** defines a cable trough **328** through which cords may be routed for connecting connection blocks **229** mounted on the back panel assemblies **100**, **200**. A door assembly **10** (see **FIG. 1**) is mounted on the spacer bracket assembly **300** (or, alternatively, on the panel assemblies **200**). The door assembly **10** protects and hides cords in the trough **328**, and the latch system thereof permits selective access to the trough **328** in the manner described above.

[0088] The panel assemblies **200** are exemplary, and thus it will be appreciated that one or both panel assemblies **200** may be configured differently than illustrated and described herein. Each panel assembly **200** may comprise, for example, a 900 pair device, a 300 pair device, a 100 pair device, or any other configuration as is known in the art. In some

embodiments, the panel assemblies **200** may be panel assemblies as disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,106,329 to Baker, III et al.

[0089] The panel assembly **200** includes a C-shaped back panel **210**. The back panel **210** may comprise, for example, a nonconductive material such as a foamed plastic or polymeric material. The back panel **210** may include a rear or securing wall **220**, a pair of opposed side walls **222**, and a series of mounting structures **218** extending along the front edge of each side wall **222**. A plurality of connection blocks **229** may be mounted on the mounting structures **218**. In some embodiments, the back panel **210** may comprise a first panel member **212** and a second panel member **214** that are attached together to form the back panel **210**.

[0090] A cable trough **228** is formed in the area between the side walls **222**, the securing wall **220** and the mounting structures **218**. The trough **228** may receive a plurality of communication cables (not shown), some of which may simply extend through the trough, while others are connected to devices such as connection blocks **229** that are mounted to mounting structures **218**. Cable management structures such as loop members may be secured to the back panel **210** to hold or guide the cables in the trough **228**. Each securing wall **220** may have cut-outs or fastener holes **221** or other features for mounting the back panel **210** to hooks or fasteners, such as a screw, nails, clips or the like that are secured to a wall.

[0091] The spacer bracket **310** may be C-shaped and formed of the same materials and in the same manner as the back panel **210**. The spacer bracket **310** includes a rear wall and opposed, spaced apart side walls that define the cord trough **328**. Cable management structures such as retention bars may be secured to the spacer bracket **310** to hold the communications cords in the trough **328**. The rear wall may have one or more cut-outs or fastener holes or other features for mounting the spacer bracket **310** on an adjacent back panel **200** or a hook or fastener, such as a screw secured to or mounted on a wall or backboard. Other securing devices such as nails, clips, etc. may be used for securing the spacer bracket **310** to a wall or other structure.

[0092] A pair of left side latch receiving assemblies **450** and a pair of right side latch receiving assemblies **450** (not visible in FIG. 26) are provided on the front of the spacer bracket **310**. As discussed above, the latch receiving assemblies **450** define pivot holes or slots within which the respective pins **46**, **48** of the latch bars **40a**, **40b** are slidably and pivotably mounted for vertical reciprocation and rotation about a vertical axis.

[0093] The door assembly **10** can be mounted on, opened and removed from the spacer bracket **310** in substantially the same manner as described above with regard to the rack system of **FIG. 6**. More particularly, with each of the latch bars **40a**, **40b** in the latched position, the upper and lower pins **46**, **48** of the latch bar **40a** are received in the upper and lower left side latch receiving assemblies **450** and the upper and lower pins **46**, **48** of the latch bars **40b** are received in the upper and lower right side latch receiving assemblies **450** so that the door assembly **10** is supported by the latch receiving assemblies **450** in the closed position (**FIG. 21**). The left handle **16a** can be rotated to lift and withdraw the pins **46**, **48** of the latch bar **40a** out of the latch receiving assemblies **450** (*i.e.*, into their unlatched positions), whereupon the operator can pivot the door assembly **10** about the pivot pins **46**, **48** of the latch bar **40a** to open the door assembly **10** from the left side. Alternatively, the right side handle **16b** can be operated to pivot the door assembly **10** about the pivot pins **46**, **48** of the latch bar **40b** to release the pins **46**, **48** from the latch receiving assemblies **450** and thereby permit the operator to open the door assembly from the right side. Alternatively, both handles **16a**, **16b** can be rotated to release the pins **46**, **48** of both latch bars **40a**, **40b** from the latch receiving assemblies **450** to permit full removal of the door assembly **10** from the spacer bracket **310**.

[0094] It will be appreciated that door assemblies according to embodiments of the present invention may be operably mounted on various types or configurations of support structures to form communications cable management systems. The support structure may be comprised of a single or integral unit (like the spacer bracket **310**) including the mount structures for both sides of the door assembly. Alternatively, the support structure may be two or more physically separated units (*e.g.*, like the racks **100**, **102**) including the mount structures for respective sides of the door assembly. According to some embodiments, a door assembly according to the present invention, the door assembly may be mounted on a terminal block panel such as the terminal block panel **200** modified to include suitable mount structures such as the latch receiving assemblies **400** or **450**.

[0095] The foregoing is illustrative of the present invention and is not to be construed as limiting thereof. Although a few exemplary embodiments of this invention have been described, those skilled in the art will readily appreciate that many modifications are possible in the exemplary embodiments without materially departing from the novel teachings and advantages of this invention. Accordingly, all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of this invention. Therefore, it is to be understood that the foregoing is illustrative of the present invention and is not to be construed as limited to the

specific embodiments disclosed, and that modifications to the disclosed embodiments, as well as other embodiments, are intended to be included within the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A communications cable management system comprising:
 - a cable trough having an at least partially exposed side;
 - a door having first and second opposed side edges that covers at least a portion of the exposed side of the cable trough;
 - a first latch that is attached to the door;
 - a second latch that is attached to the door; and
 - a support structure that includes a first latch receiving assembly that is at least partially moveable and a second latch receiving assembly that is at least partially moveable;

wherein the first latch is selectively positionable between a latched position in which the first latch is received in the first latch receiving assembly to secure the door to the support structure for pivotal movement about a first pivot axis proximate the first side edge of the door, and an unlatched position in which the first latch is removed from the first latch receiving assembly to permit the first side edge of the door to be separated from the support structure; and

wherein the second latch is selectively positionable between a latched position in which the second latch is received in the second latch receiving assembly to secure the door to the support structure for pivotal movement about a second pivot axis proximate the second side edge of the door, and an unlatched position in which the second latch is removed from the second latch receiving assembly to permit the second side edge of the door to be separated from the support structure.
2. The communications cable management system of Claim 1, wherein the first latch receiving assembly comprises a first hinge bracket that includes a first opening that is configured to receive the first latch, and the second latch receiving assembly comprises a second hinge bracket that includes a second opening that is configured to receive the second latch.
3. The communications cable management system of Claim 2, wherein the first hinge bracket includes a mounted portion that is fixedly mounted to the support structure and an elastically mobile portion that includes the first opening, and the second hinge bracket includes a mounted portion that is fixedly mounted to the support structure and an elastically mobile portion that includes the second opening.

4. The communications cable management system of Claim 2, wherein the first hinge bracket includes a first striker plate that is positioned between a front surface of the door and the first opening, and the second hinge bracket includes a second striker plate that is positioned between the front surface of the door and the second opening.

5. The communications cable management system of Claim 4, wherein the first striker plate is positioned so as to define an acute angle with respect to a longitudinal axis of the first latch.

6. The communications cable management system of Claim 5, wherein the first hinge bracket includes a mounted portion that is fixedly mounted to the support structure and an elastically mobile portion that includes the first opening, wherein the first striker plate is part of the elastically mobile portion of the hinge bracket so that the first latch forces the striker plate upwardly until the first latch is received within the first opening when the door is moved from an open position to a fully closed position.

7. The communications cable management system of Claim 1, wherein the first latch receiving assembly comprises:

a support member that includes a slot that has an opening that is configured to receive the first latch; and

a latch member that is pivotable between a first position in which the latch member captures the first latch within the slot and a second position in which the latch member pivots away from the slot opening.

8. The communications cable management system of Claim 7, wherein the support member is part of the support structure.

9. The communications cable management system of Claim 8, further comprising a spring that biases the latch member toward the first position.

10. The communications cable management system of Claim 1, wherein:
the support structure further includes a third latch receiving assembly and a fourth latch receiving assembly, the system further comprising:

a third latch that is selectively positionable between a latched position in which the third latch is received in the third latch receiving assembly to secure the door to the support structure for pivotal movement about the first pivot axis, and an unlatched position in which

the third latch is removed from the third latch receiving assembly to permit the first side edge of the door to be separated from the support structure;

a fourth latch that is selectively positionable between a latched position in which the fourth latch is received in the fourth latch receiving assembly to secure the door to the support structure for pivotal movement about the second pivot axis, and an unlatched position in which the fourth latch is removed from the fourth latch receiving assembly to permit the second side edge of the door to be separated from the support structure.

11. The communications cable management system of Claim 10, wherein:

when the first, second, third and fourth latches are in their latched positions, the door is secured in a closed position on the support structure;

when the first, second, third and fourth latches are in their unlatched positions, the door can be removed from the support structure;

when the first and third latches are in their latched positions and the second and fourth latches are in their unlatched positions, the door can be pivoted open about the first pivot axis; and

when the second and fourth latches are in their latched positions and the first and third latches are in their unlatched positions, the door can be pivoted open about the second pivot axis.

12. The communications cable management system of Claim 11, further comprising:

a first actuator operable by a user to selectively move the first and third latches from their latched positions to their unlatched positions; and

a second actuator operable by a user to selectively move the second and fourth latches from their latched positions to their unlatched positions.

13. The communications cable management system of Claim 12, wherein:

the first latch receiving assembly comprises a first hinge bracket that includes a first opening that is configured to receive the first latch, the second latch receiving assembly comprises a second hinge bracket that includes a second opening that is configured to receive the second latch, the third latch receiving assembly comprises a third hinge bracket that includes a third opening that is configured to receive the third latch, and the fourth latch receiving assembly comprises a fourth hinge bracket that includes a fourth opening that is configured to receive the fourth latch;

the first, second, third and fourth latches comprise a first latch pin, a second latch pin, a third latch pin and a fourth latch pin, respectively;

the first actuator is operable to slide the first latch pin out of the first opening and to slide the third latch pin out of the third opening along a first slide axis that is substantially parallel to the first pivot axis; and

the second actuator is operable to slide the second latch pin out of the second opening and to slide the fourth latch pin out of the fourth opening along a second slide axis that is substantially parallel to the second pivot axis.

14. The communications cable management system of Claim 1, wherein the support structure comprises a spacer bracket assembly that is configured to be mounted between a pair of terminal block panel assemblies.

15. A communications cable management system comprising:

a cable trough;

a door that is configured to provide access to the cable trough;

a first latch structure that is attached to the door, the first latch structure including a first latch and a second latch;

a second latch structure that is attached to the door, the second latch structure including a third latch and a fourth latch; and

a support structure that includes a first latch receiving assembly that is configured to receive the first latch, a second latch receiving assembly that is configured to receive the second latch, a third latch receiving assembly that is configured to receive the third latch and a fourth latch receiving assembly that is configured to receive the fourth latch;

wherein the first latch and the first latch receiving assembly are configured to act as a first hinge and the second latch and the second latch receiving assembly are configured to act as a second hinge when the third latch is removed from the third latch receiving assembly and the fourth latch is removed from the fourth latch receiving assembly, and the third latch and the third latch receiving assembly are configured to act as a third hinge and the fourth latch and the fourth latch receiving assembly are configured to act as a fourth hinge when the first latch is removed from the first latch receiving assembly and the second latch is removed from the second latch receiving assembly;

wherein each of the first through fourth latch receiving assemblies are at least partially moveable.

16. The communications cable management system of Claim 15, wherein:
the first latch receiving assembly comprises a first hinge bracket that includes a first opening that is configured to receive the first latch;
the second latch receiving assembly comprises a second hinge bracket that includes a second opening that is configured to receive the second latch;
the third latch receiving assembly comprises a third hinge bracket that includes a third opening that is configured to receive the third latch; and
the fourth latch receiving assembly comprises a fourth hinge bracket that includes a fourth opening that is configured to receive the fourth latch.

17. The communications cable management system of Claim 16, wherein:
the first hinge bracket includes a mounted portion that is fixedly mounted to the support structure and an elastically mobile portion that includes the first opening;
the second hinge bracket includes a mounted portion that is fixedly mounted to the support structure and an elastically mobile portion that includes the second opening;
the third hinge bracket includes a mounted portion that is fixedly mounted to the support structure and an elastically mobile portion that includes the third opening; and
the fourth hinge bracket includes a mounted portion that is fixedly mounted to the support structure and an elastically mobile portion that includes the fourth opening.

18. The communications cable management system of Claim 16, wherein each of the first through fourth hinge brackets includes a striker plate that is positioned so as to define an acute angle with respect to a longitudinal axis defined by a respective one of the first through fourth latches.

19. The communications cable management system of Claim 15, wherein each of the first through fourth latch receiving assemblies comprises a bracket that includes a slot that has an opening that is configured to receive a respective one of the first through fourth latches, a latch member that has an arm that is moveable between a first position in which the arm captures the respective one of the first through fourth latches within the slot and a second position in which the arm allows access to the slot, and a spring that biases the arm of the latch member toward the first position.

20. The communications cable management system of Claim 19, wherein:

- when the first, second, third and fourth latches are in their latched positions, the door is secured in a closed position on the support structure;
- when the first, second, third and fourth latches are in their unlatched positions, the door can be removed from the support structure;
- when the first and second latches are in their latched positions and the third and fourth latches are in their unlatched positions, the door can be pivoted open about the first pivot axis; and
- when the third and fourth latches are in their latched positions and the first and second latches are in their unlatched positions, the door can be pivoted open about the second pivot axis.

21. A communications cable management system comprising:

- a cable trough having an at least partially exposed side;
- a door having first and second opposed side edges that covers at least a portion of the exposed side of the cable trough;
- a first latch that is attached to the door;
- a second latch that is attached to the door; and
- a support structure that includes:
 - a first hinge bracket that includes a first opening that is configured to receive the first latch and a first striker plate that is positioned between a front surface of the door and the first opening; and
 - a second hinge bracket that includes a second opening that is configured to receive the second latch and a second striker plate that is positioned between the front surface of the door and the second opening;

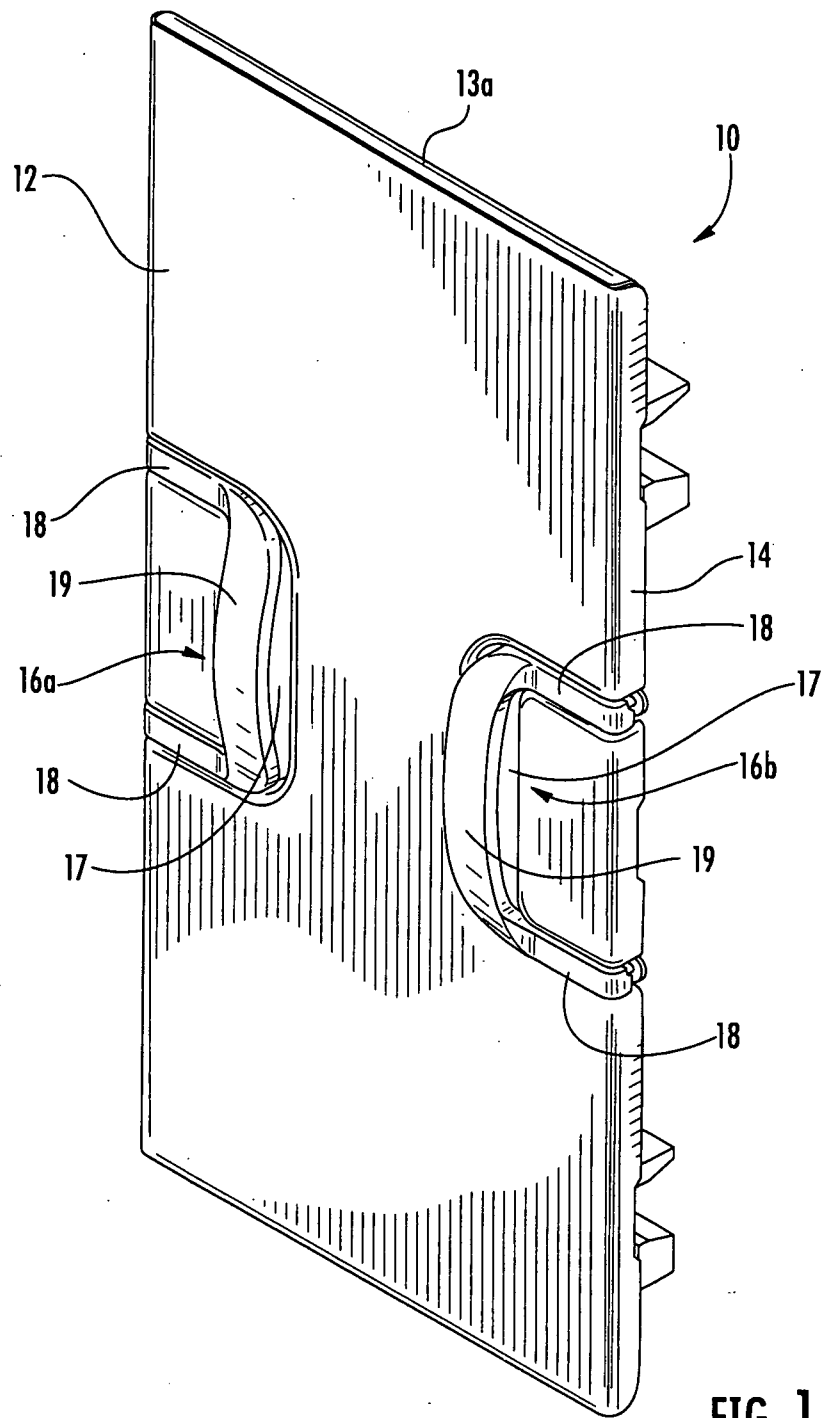
wherein the first latch is selectively positionable between a latched position in which the first latch is received in the first opening in the first hinge bracket to secure the door to the support structure for pivotal movement about a first pivot axis proximate the first side edge of the door, and an unlatched position in which the first latch is removed from the first opening in the first hinge bracket to permit the first side edge of the door to be separated from the support structure; and

wherein the second latch is selectively positionable between a latched position in which the second latch is received in the second opening in the second hinge bracket to secure the door to the support structure for pivotal movement about a

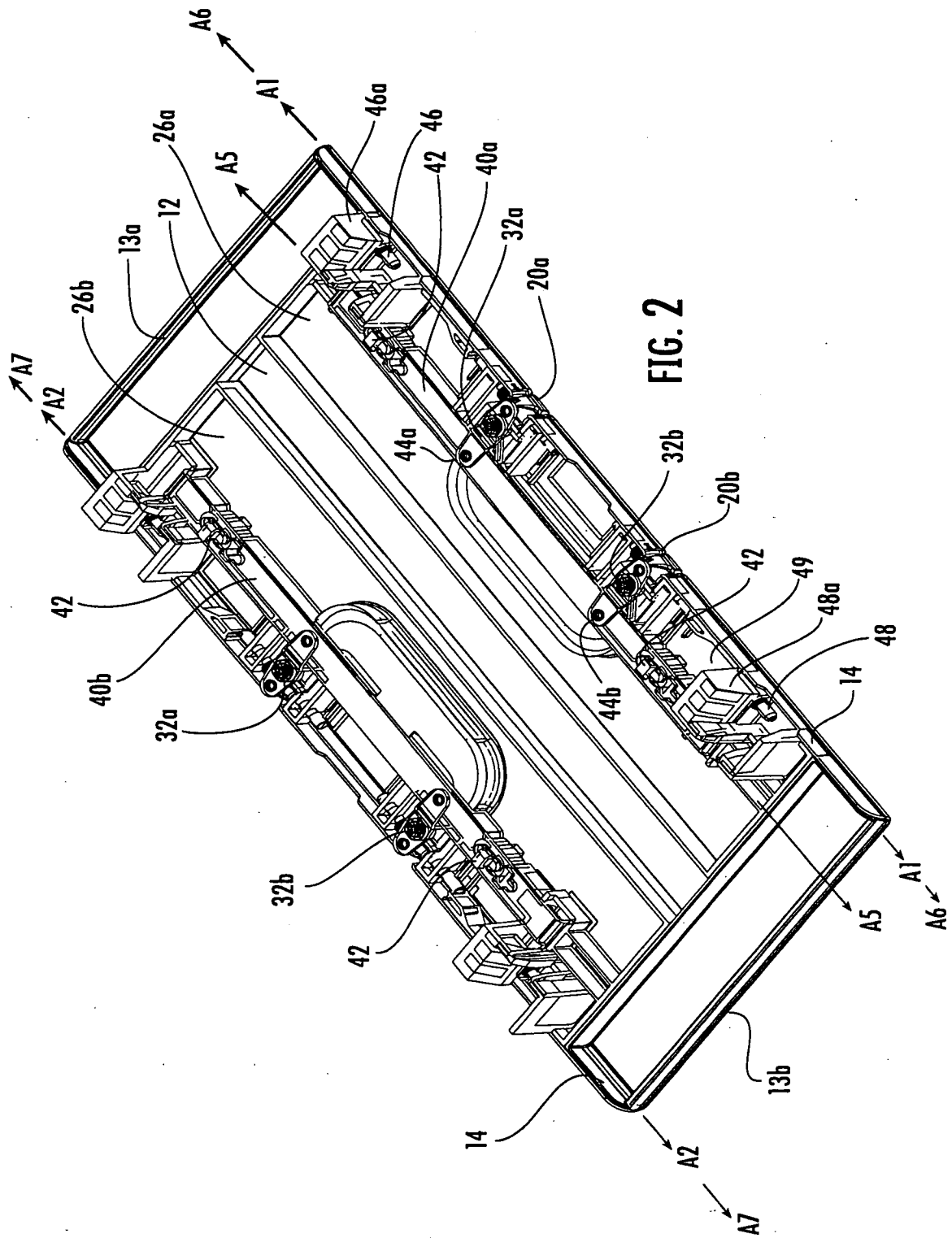
second pivot axis proximate the second side edge of the door, and an unlatched position in which the second latch is removed from the second opening in the second hinge bracket to permit the second side edge of the door to be separated from the support structure.

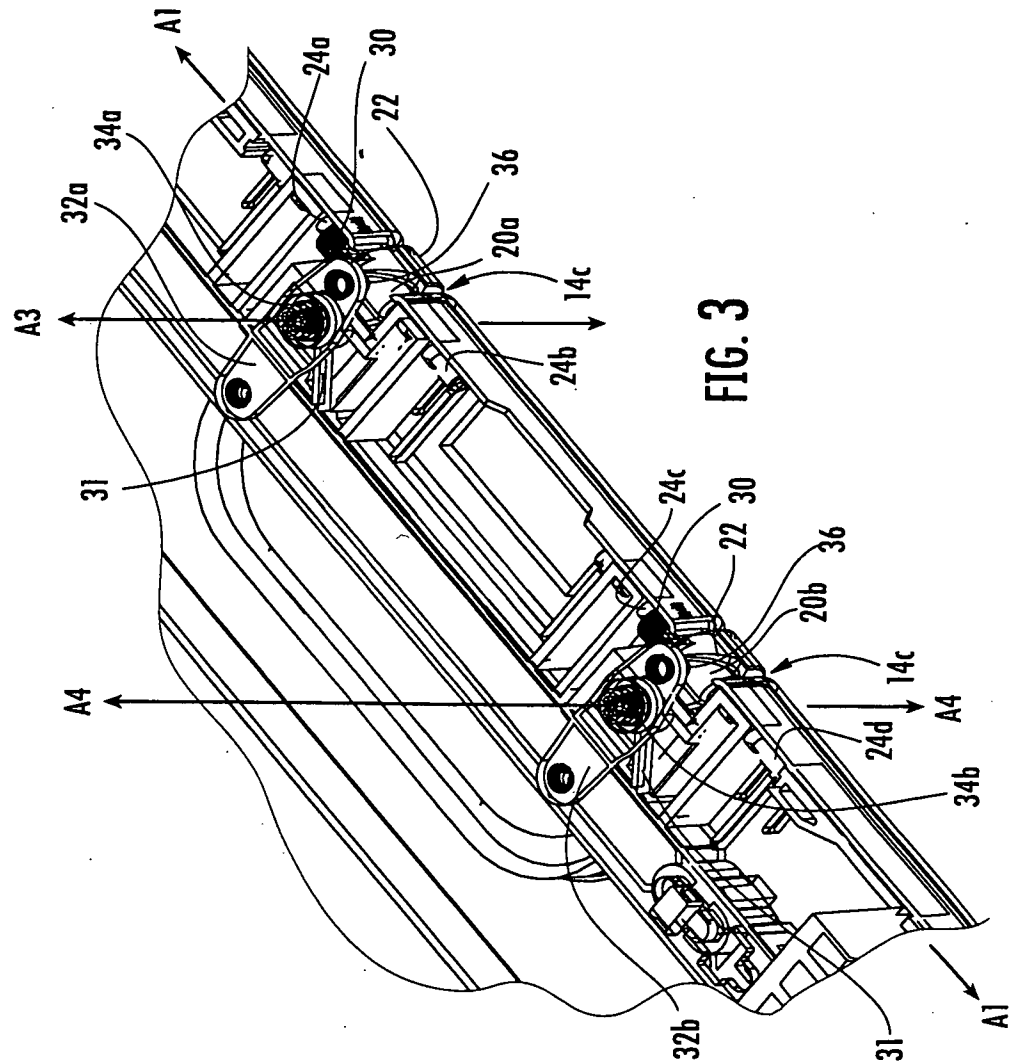
22. The communications cable management system of Claim 21, wherein the first hinge bracket includes a mounted portion that is fixedly mounted to the support structure and an elastically mobile portion that includes the first opening, wherein the first striker plate is part of the elastically mobile portion of the hinge bracket, and wherein the first striker plate is positioned so as to define an acute angle with respect to a longitudinal axis of the first latch.

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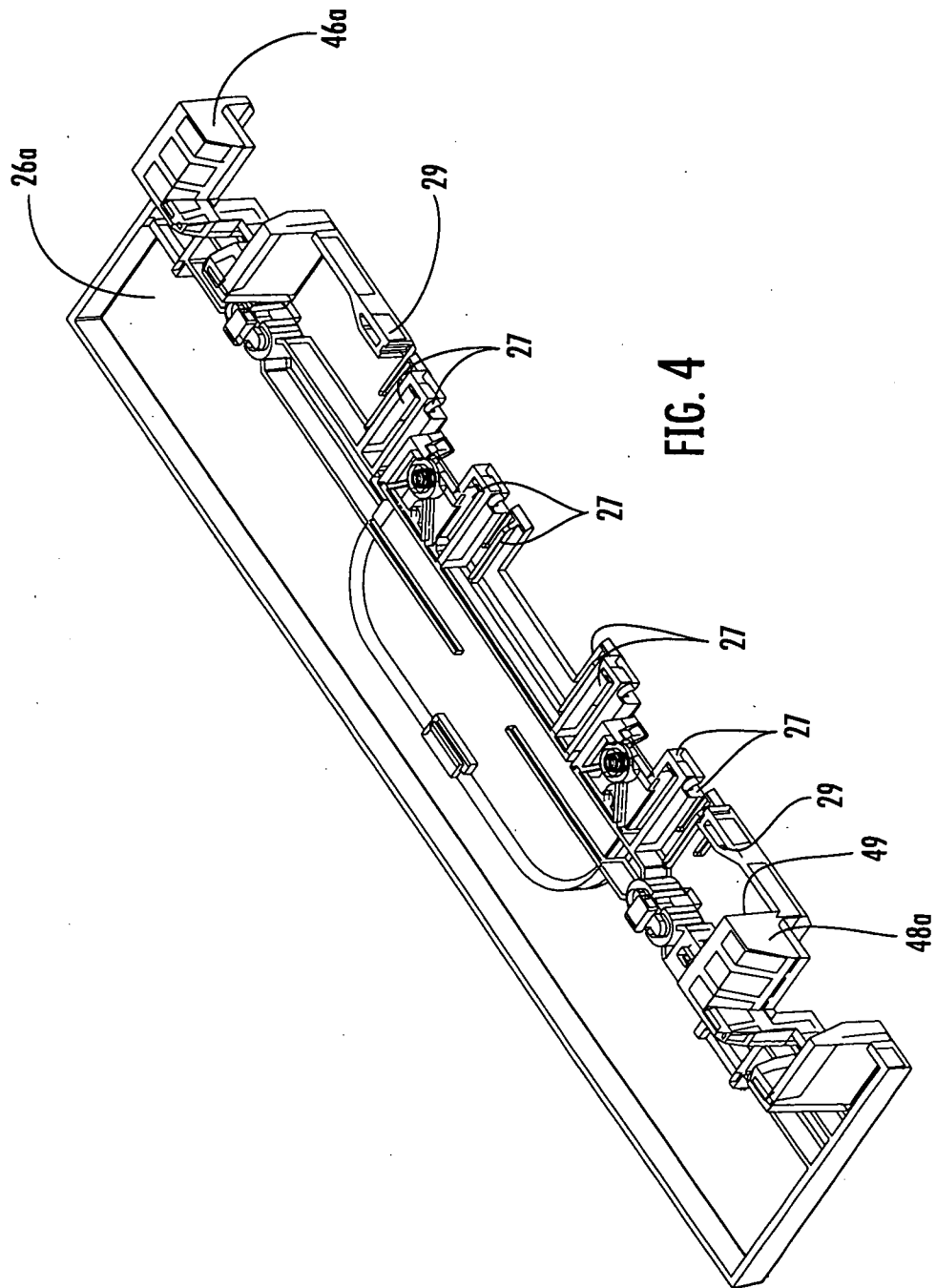


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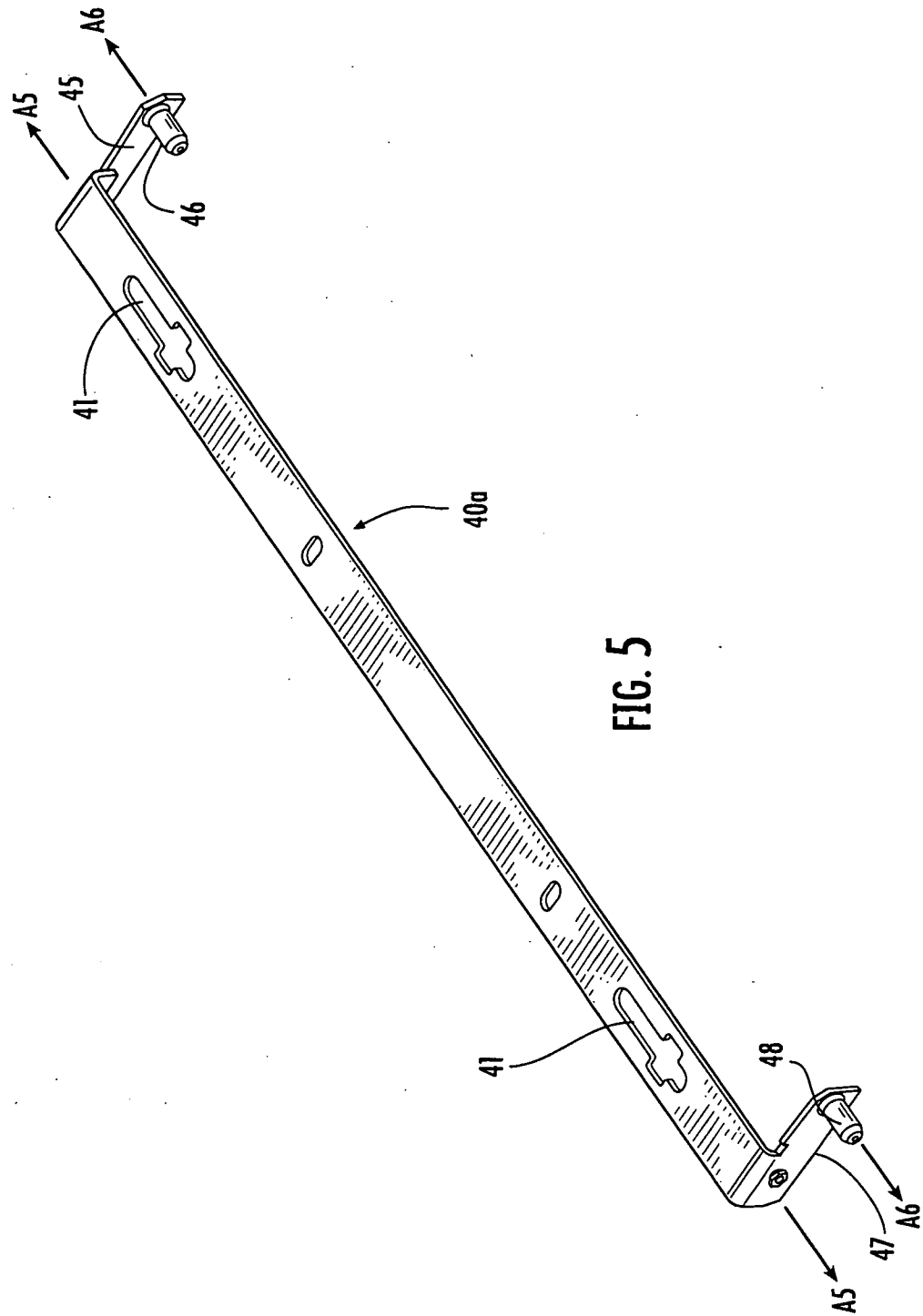




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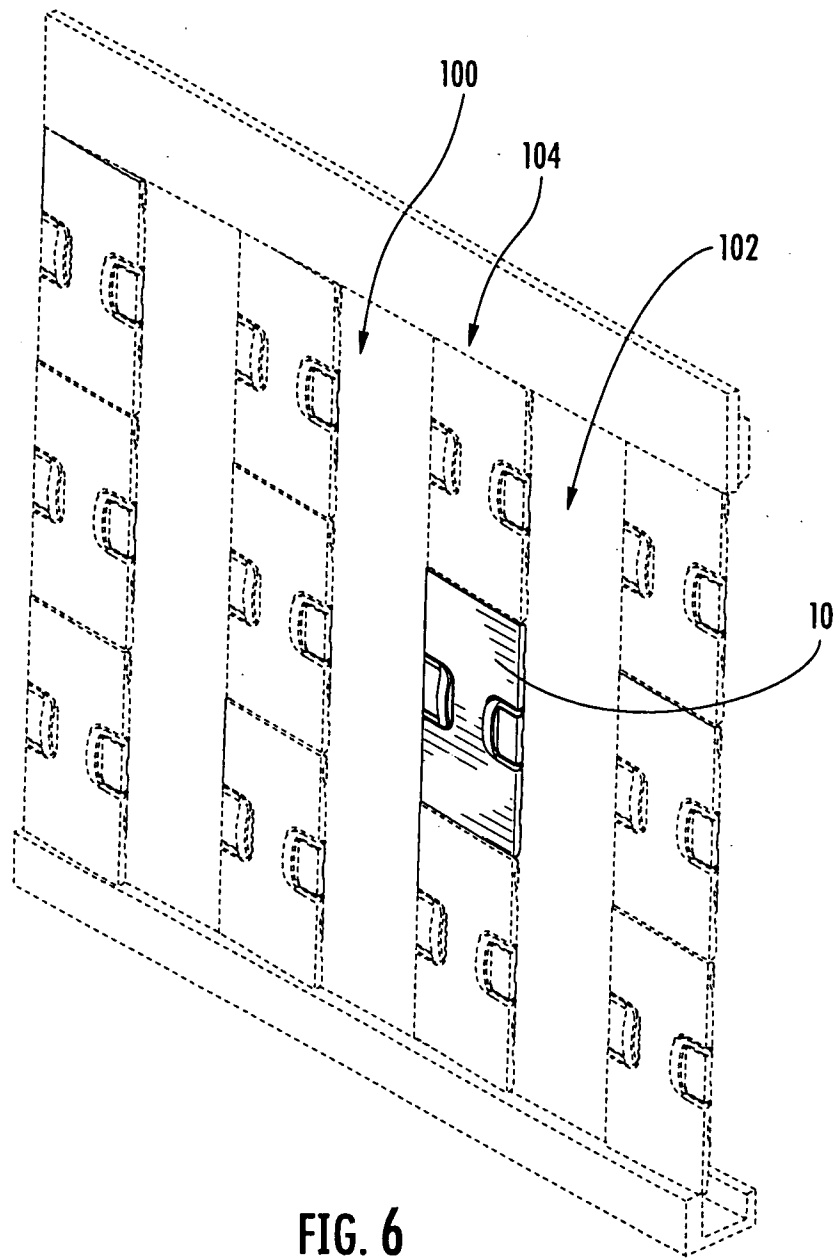


FIG. 6

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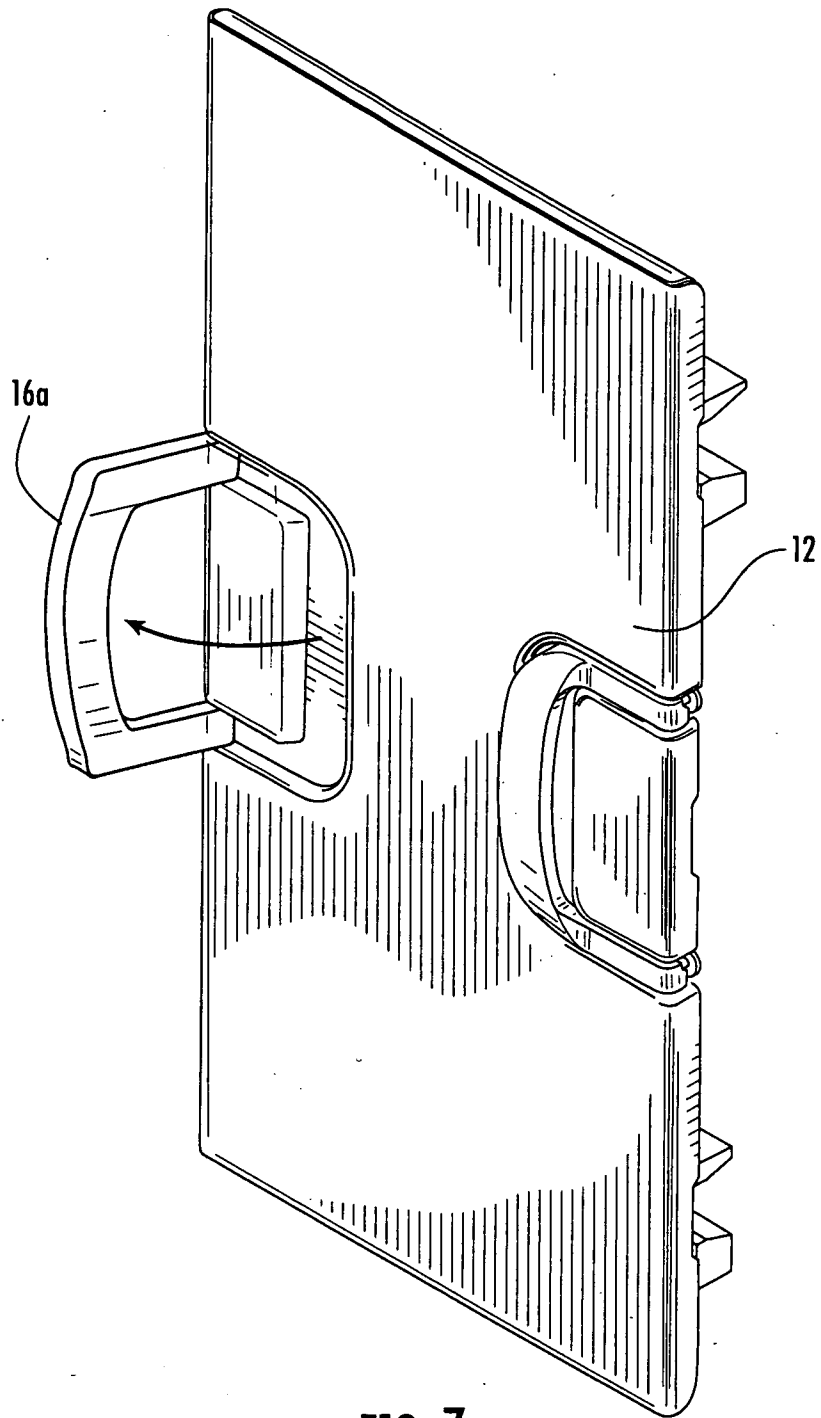
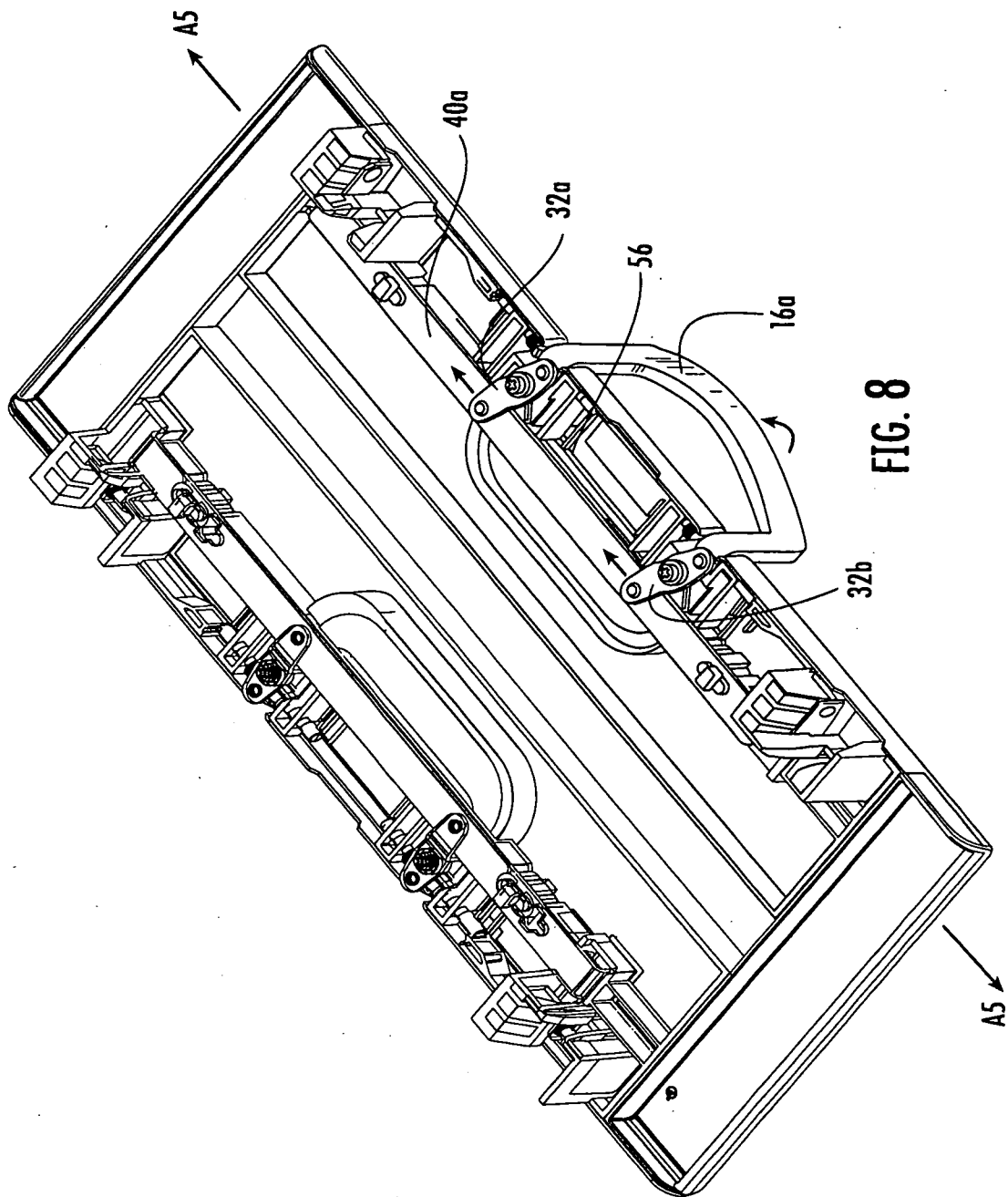
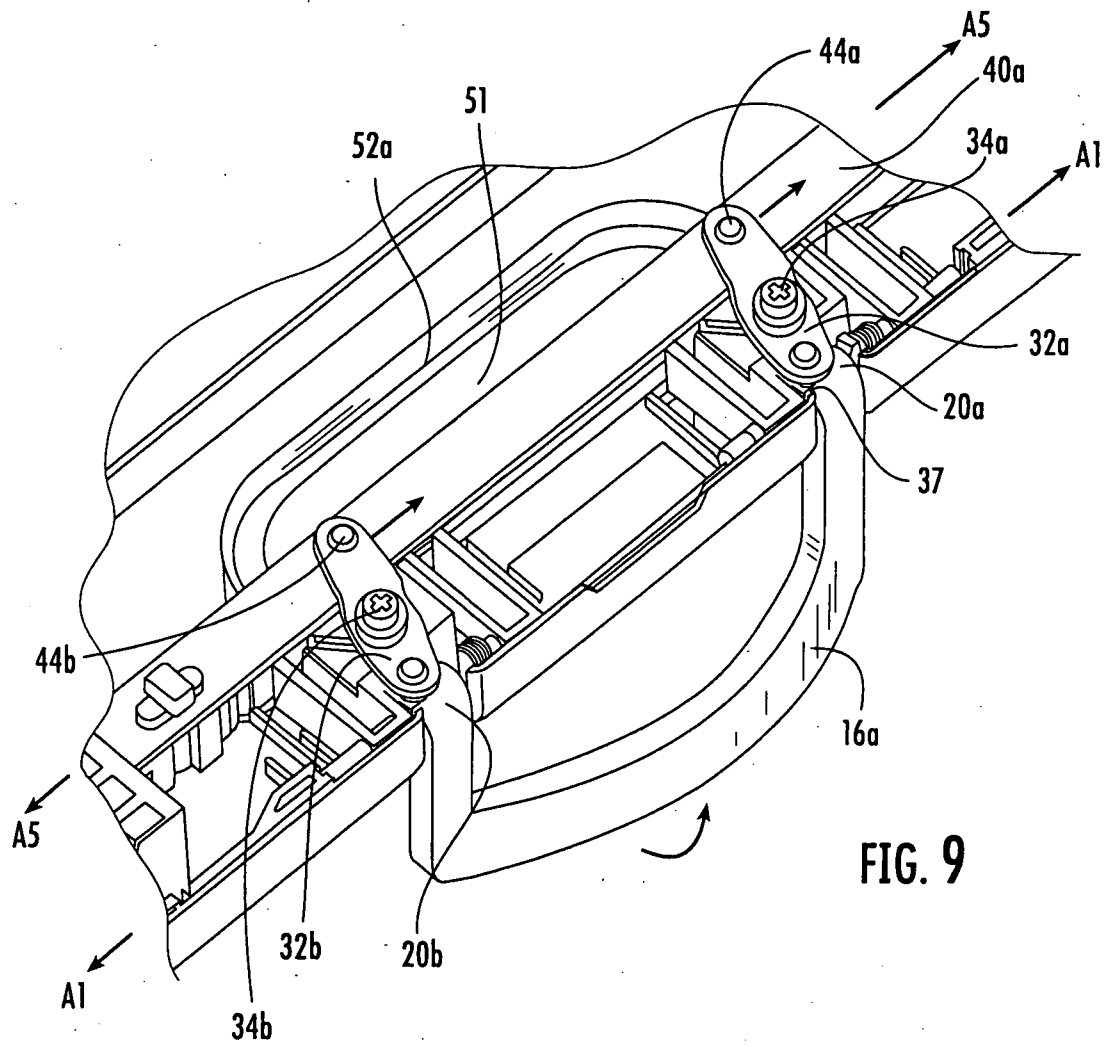


FIG. 7

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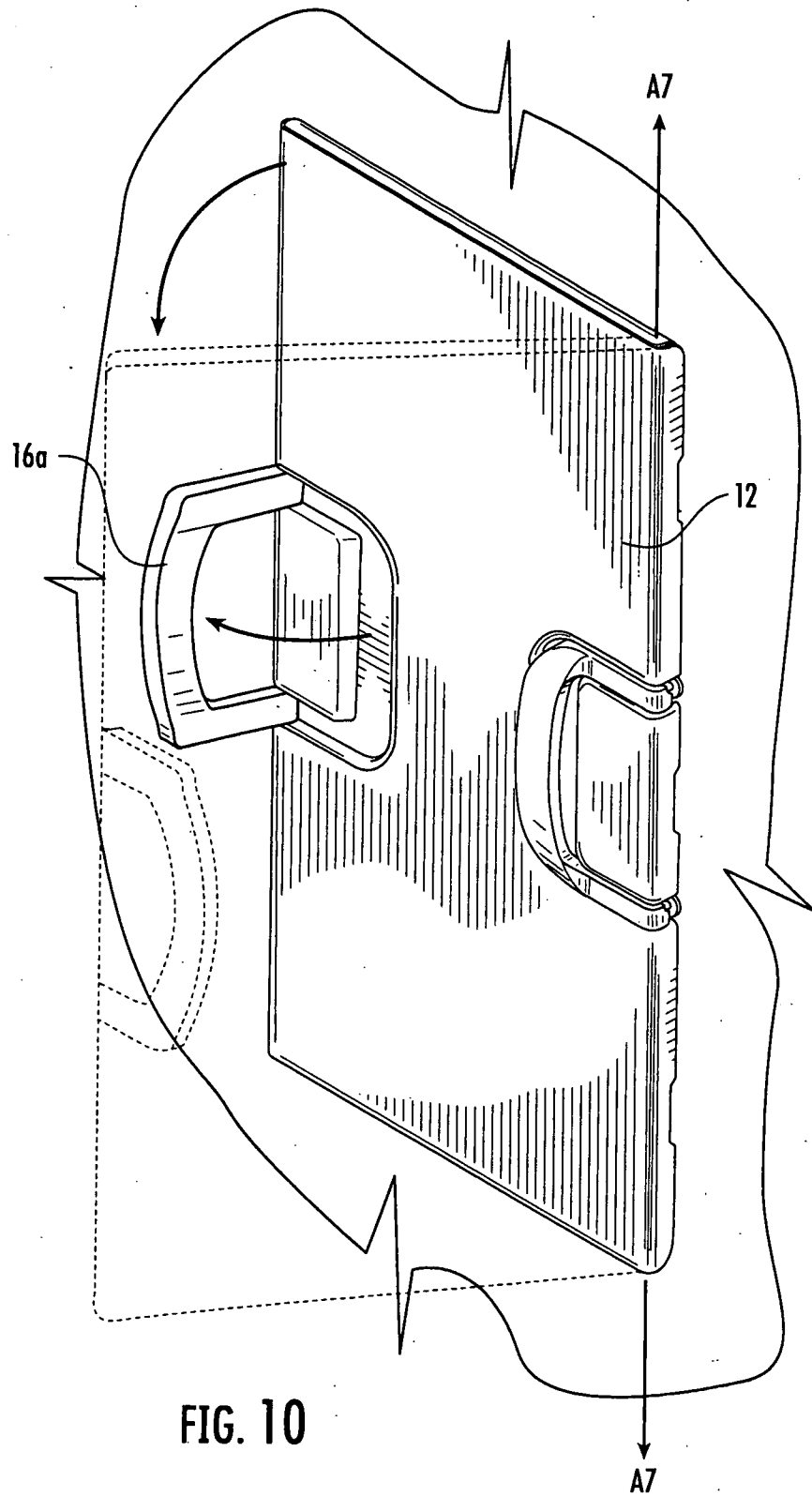


FIG. 10

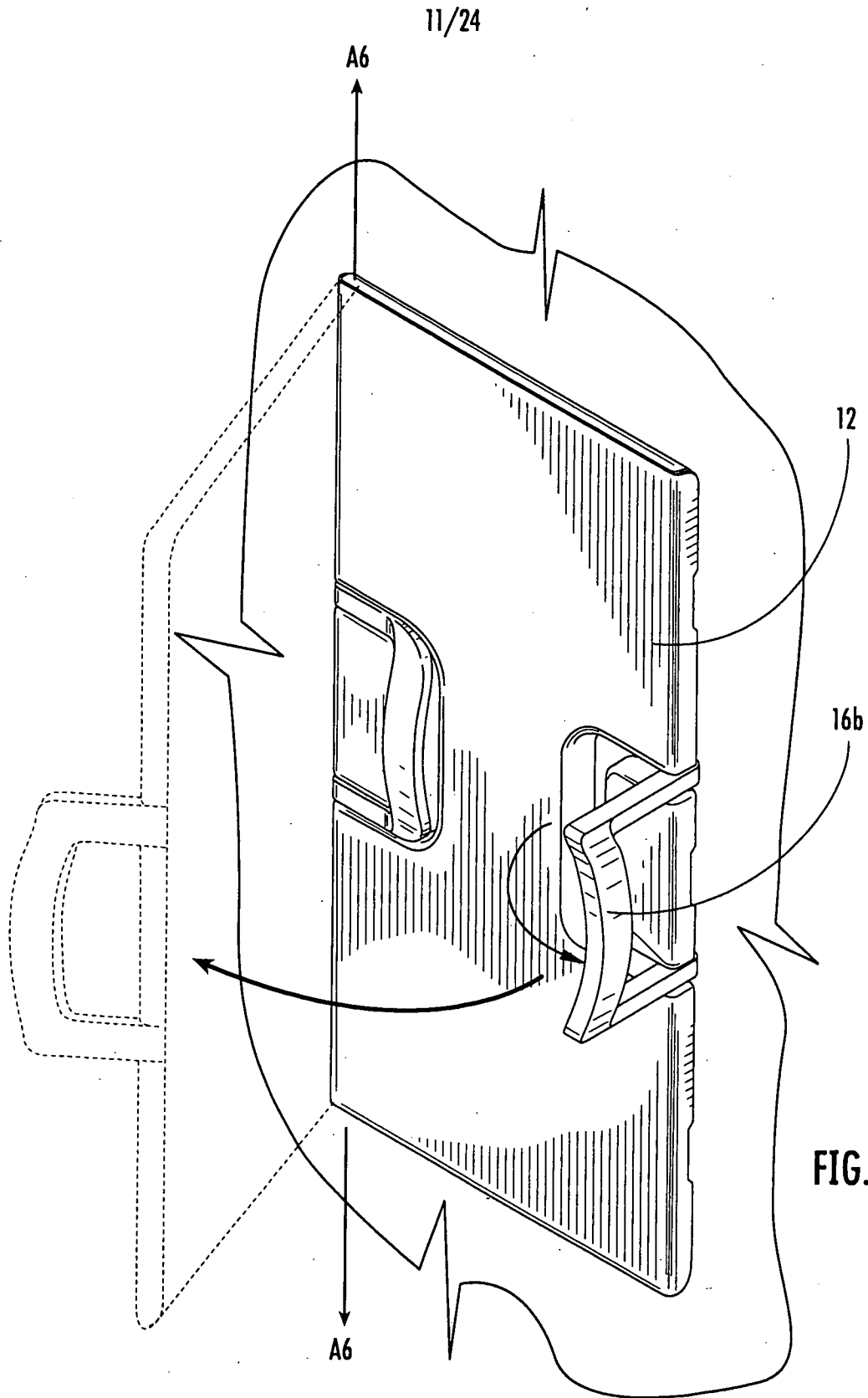
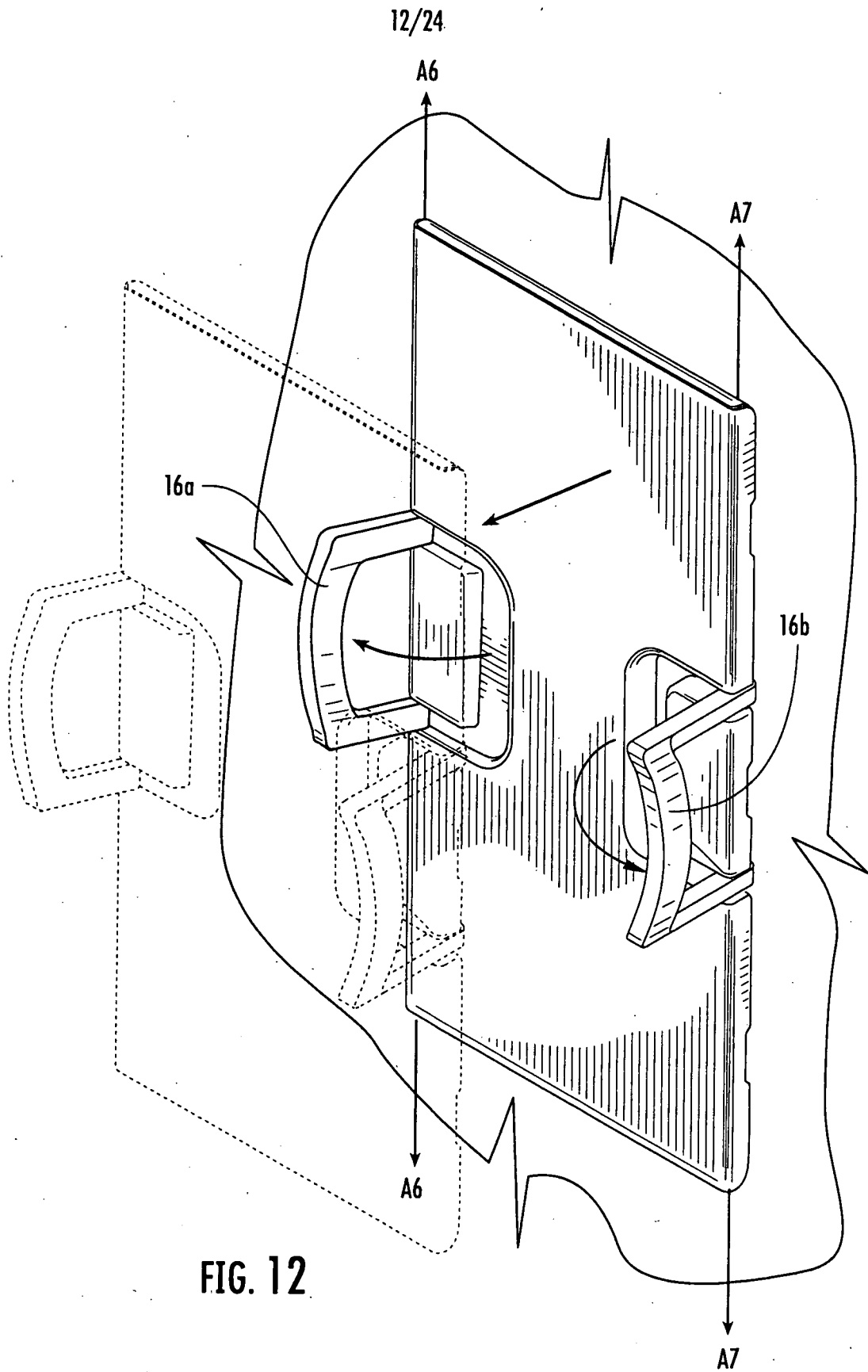


FIG. 11



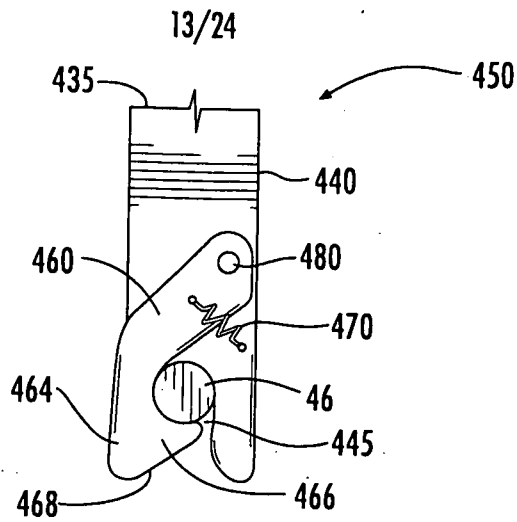


FIG. 13

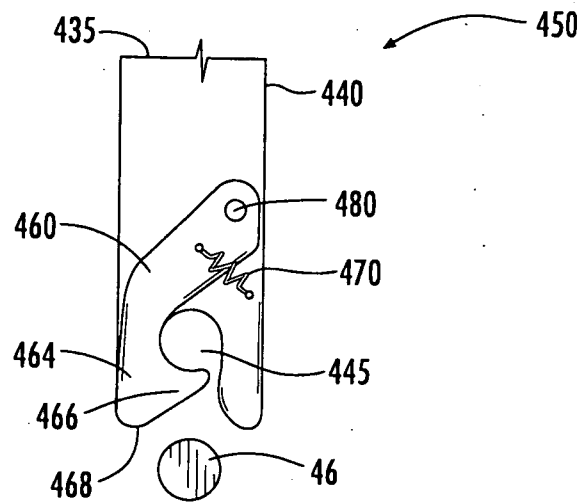


FIG. 14

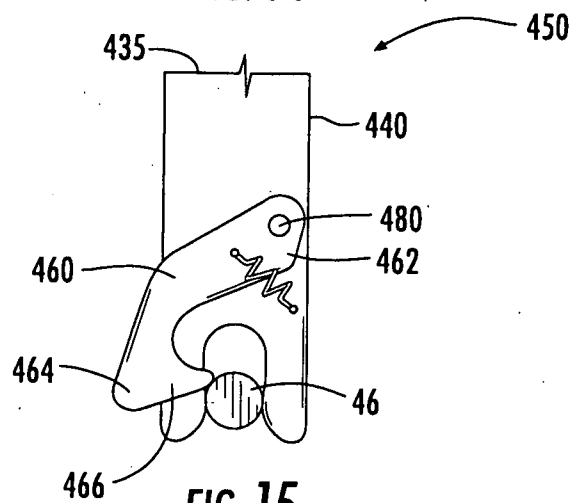


FIG. 15

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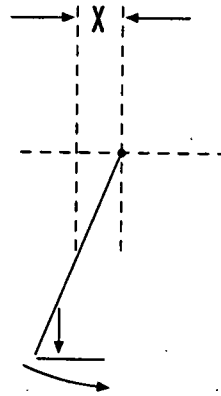
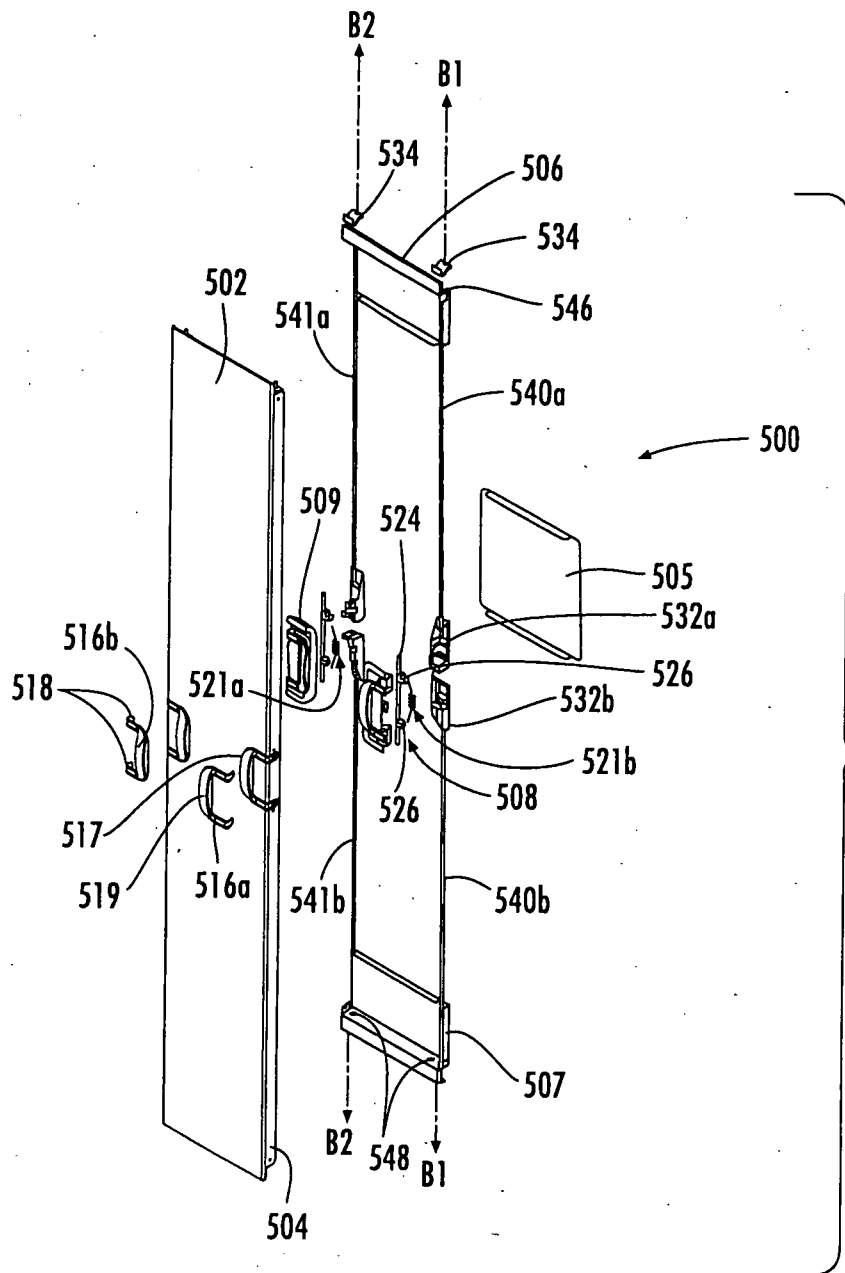


FIG. 16

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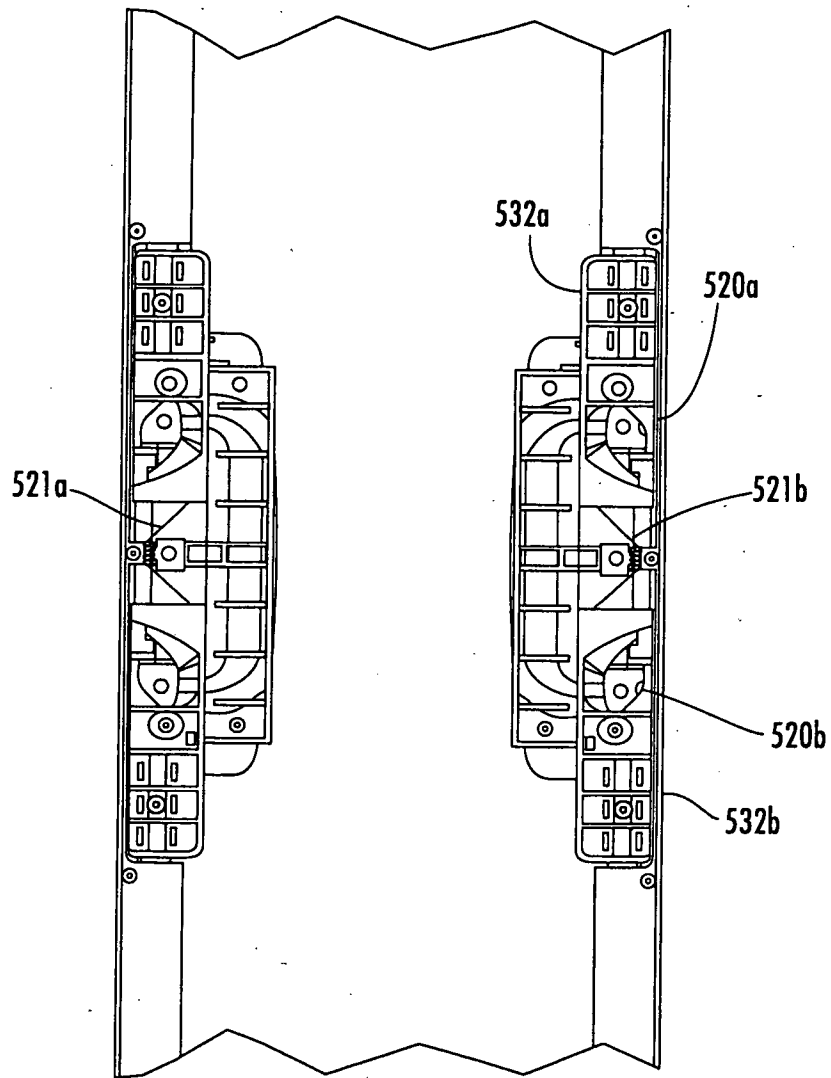


FIG. 18

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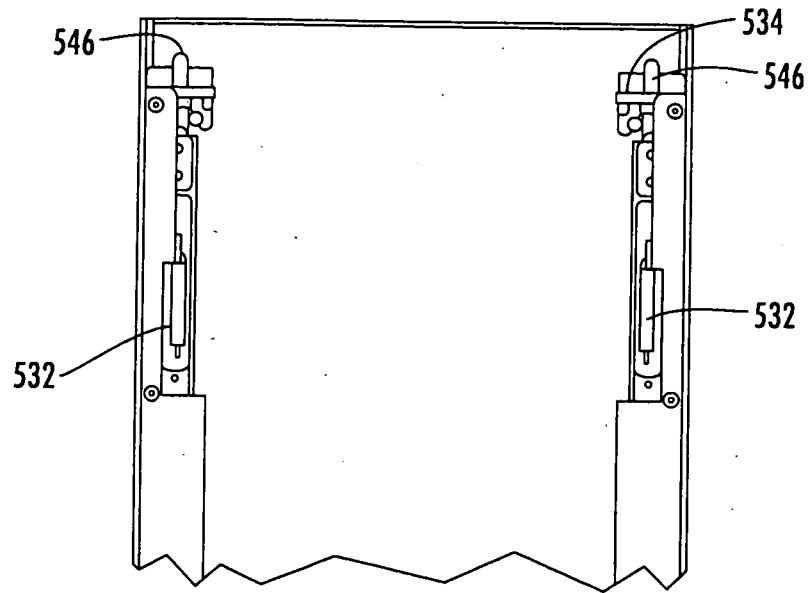


FIG. 19

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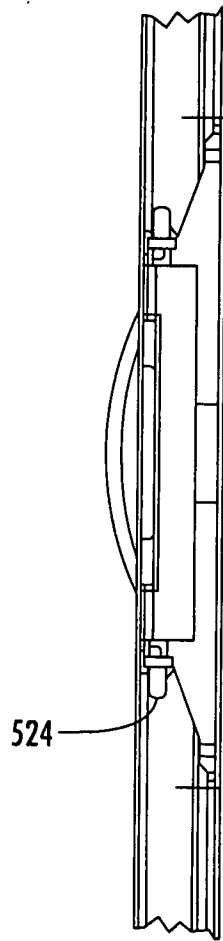


FIG. 20

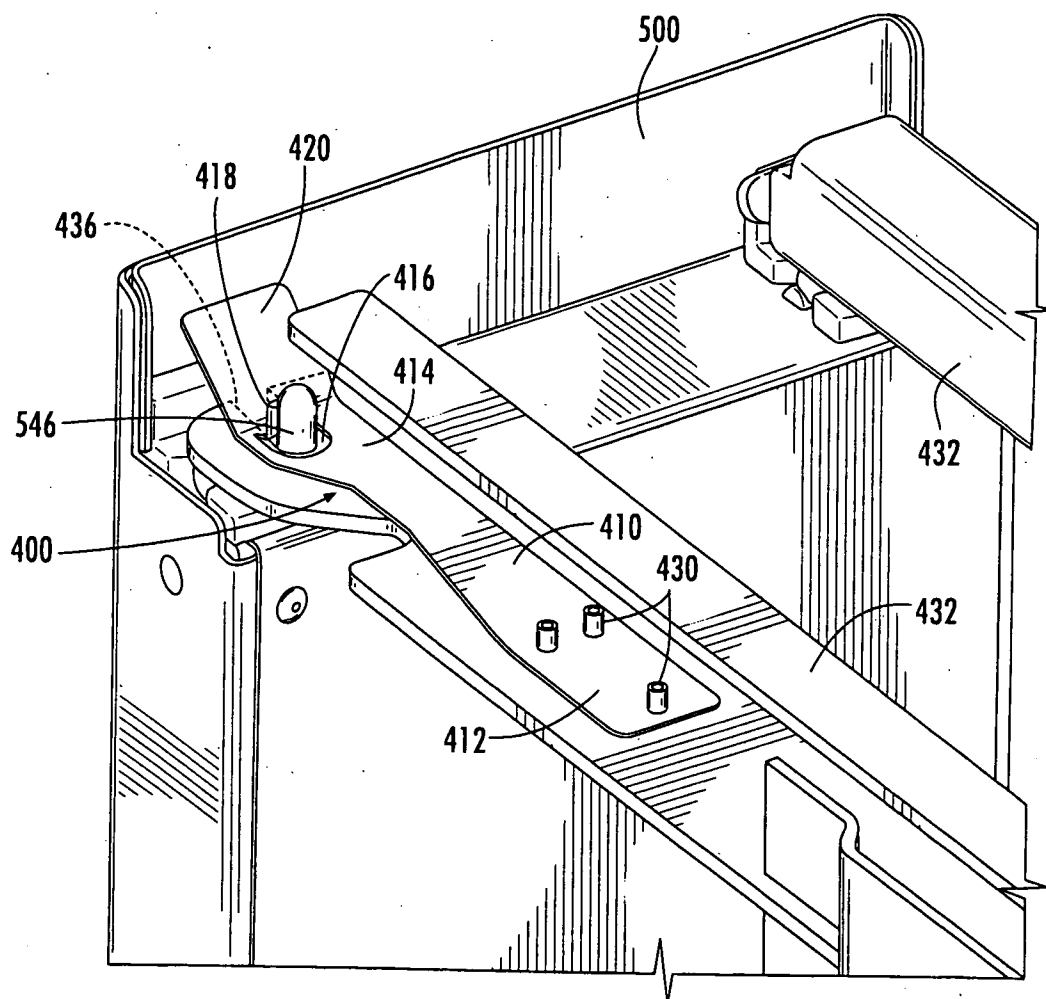


FIG. 21

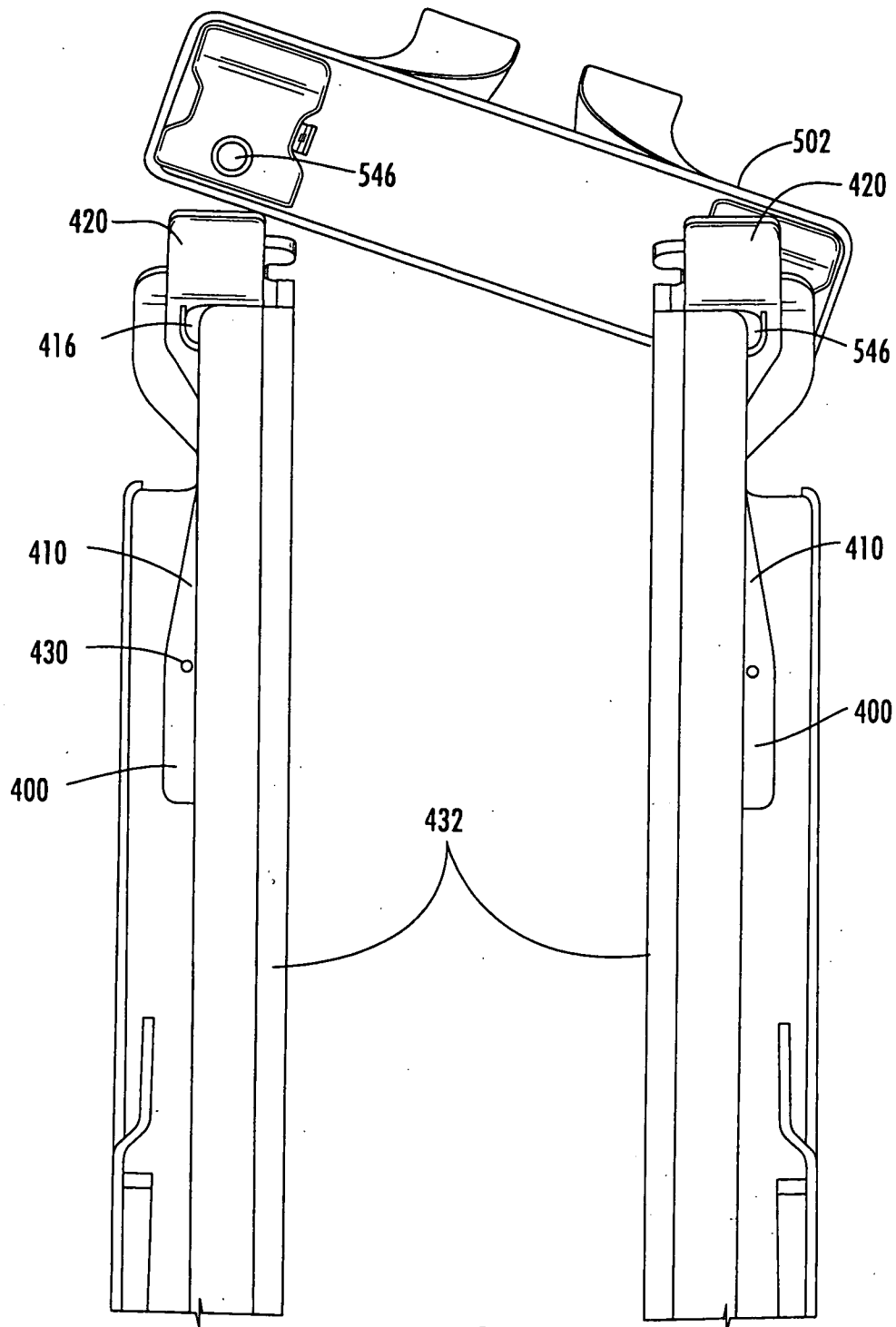
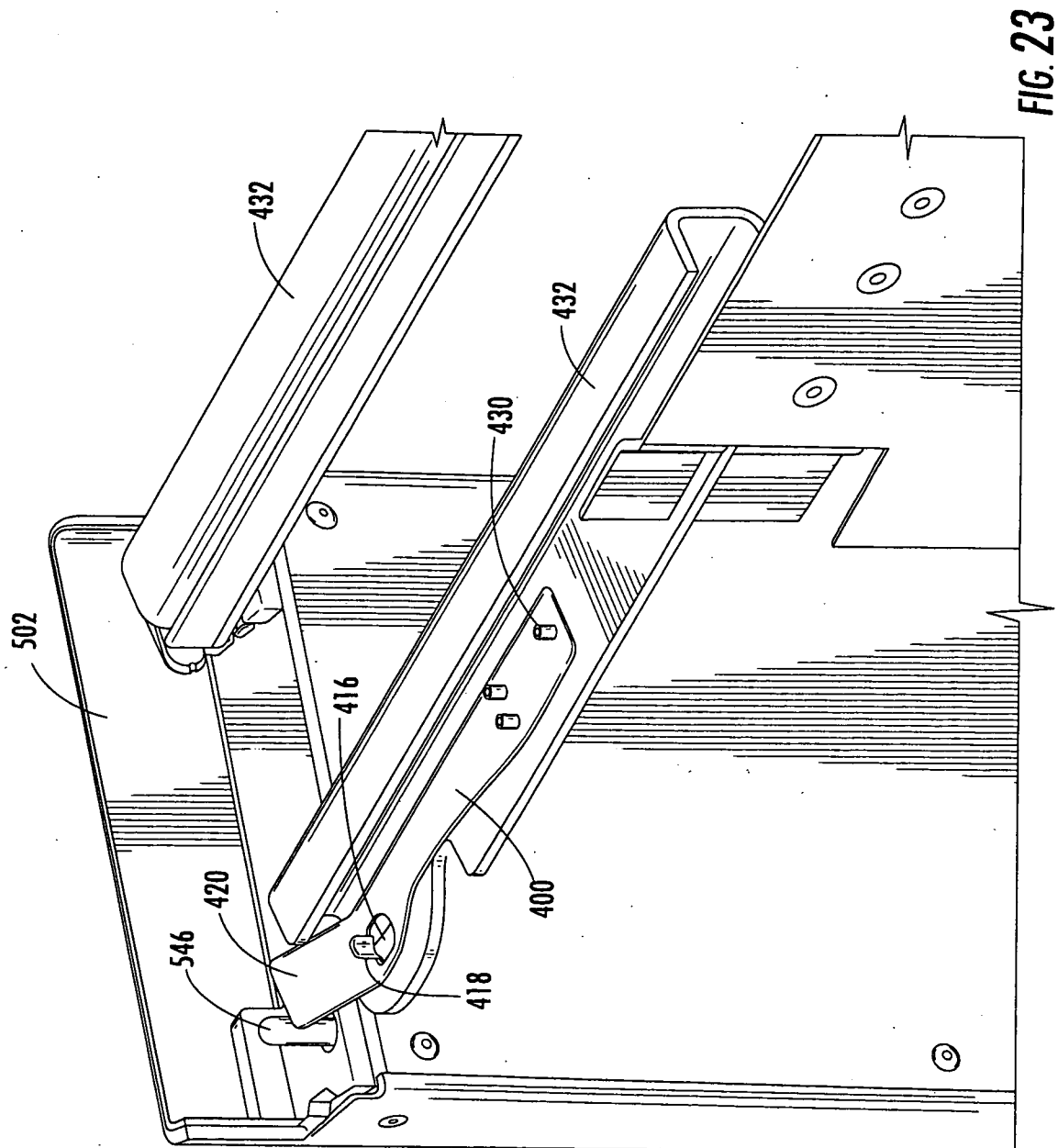


FIG. 22



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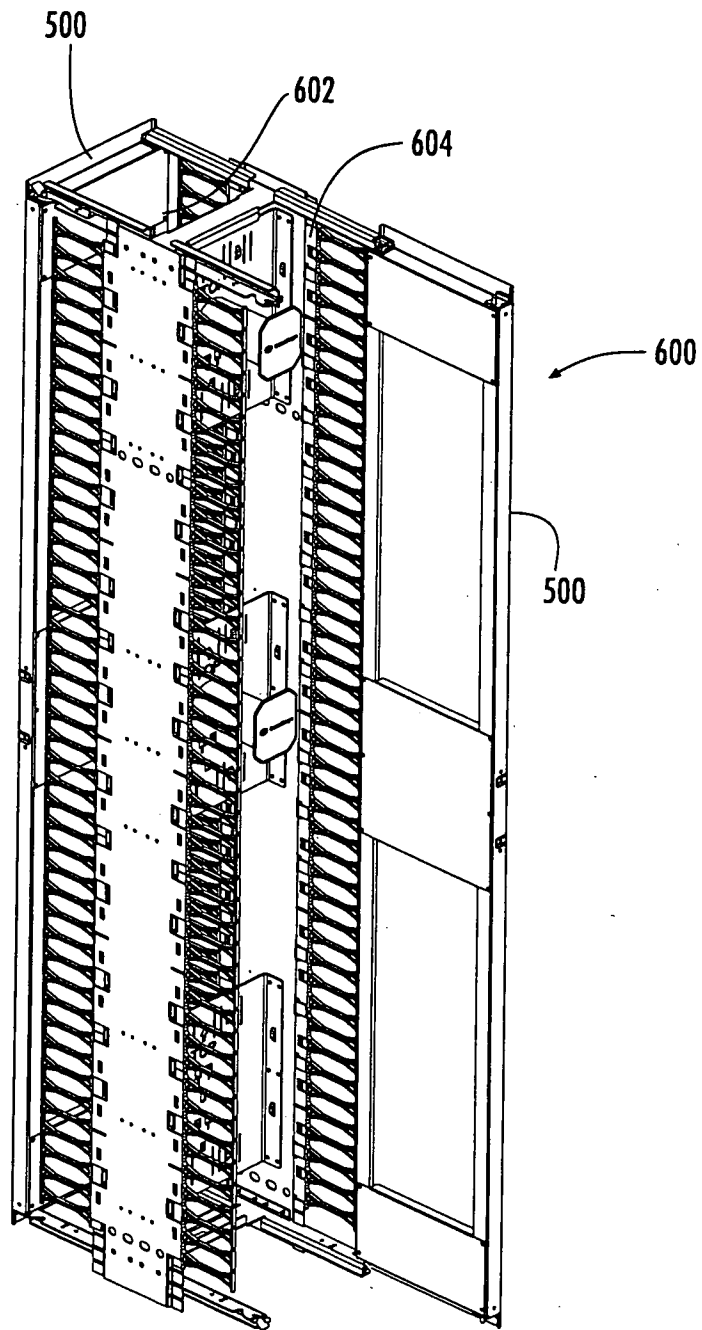


FIG. 24

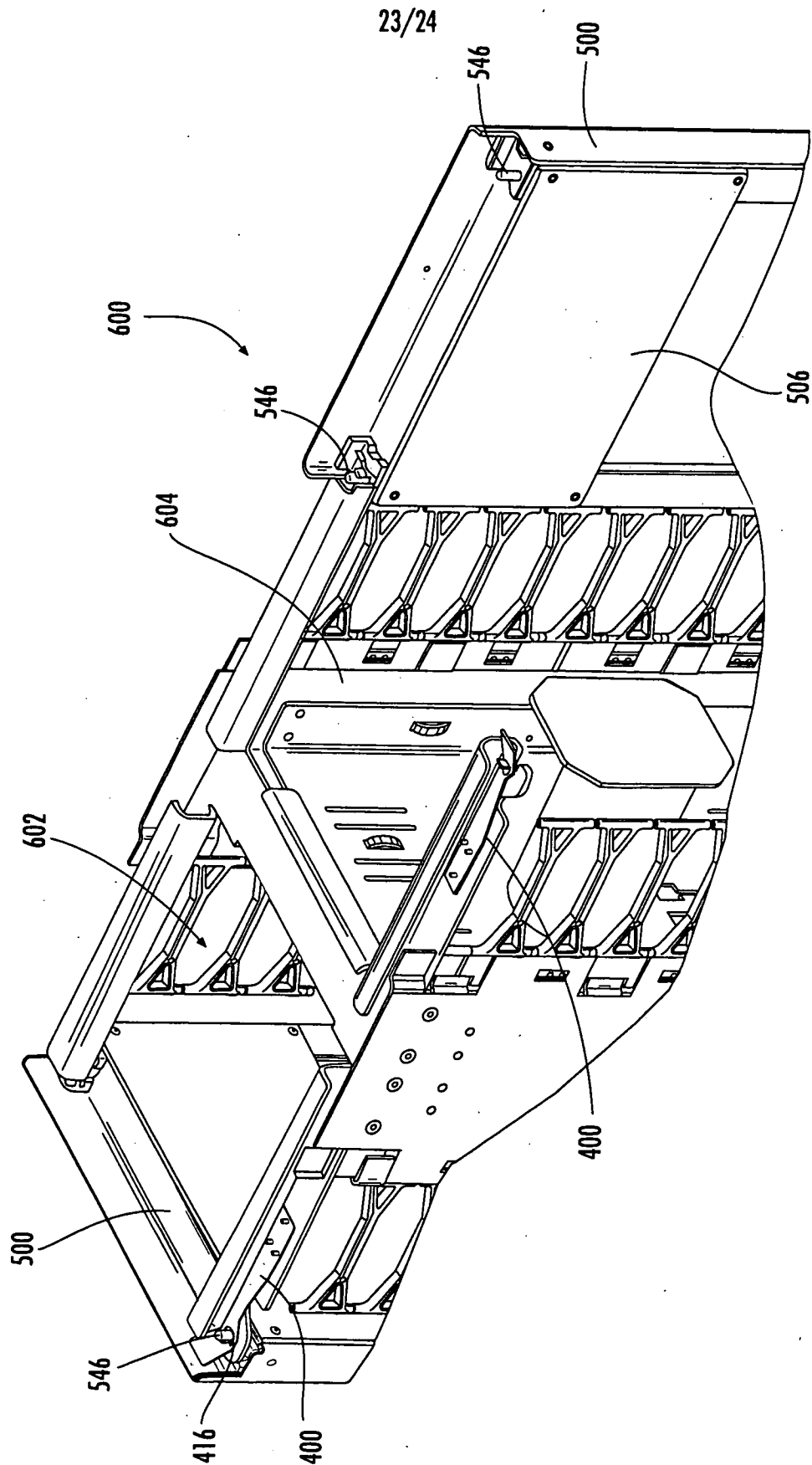
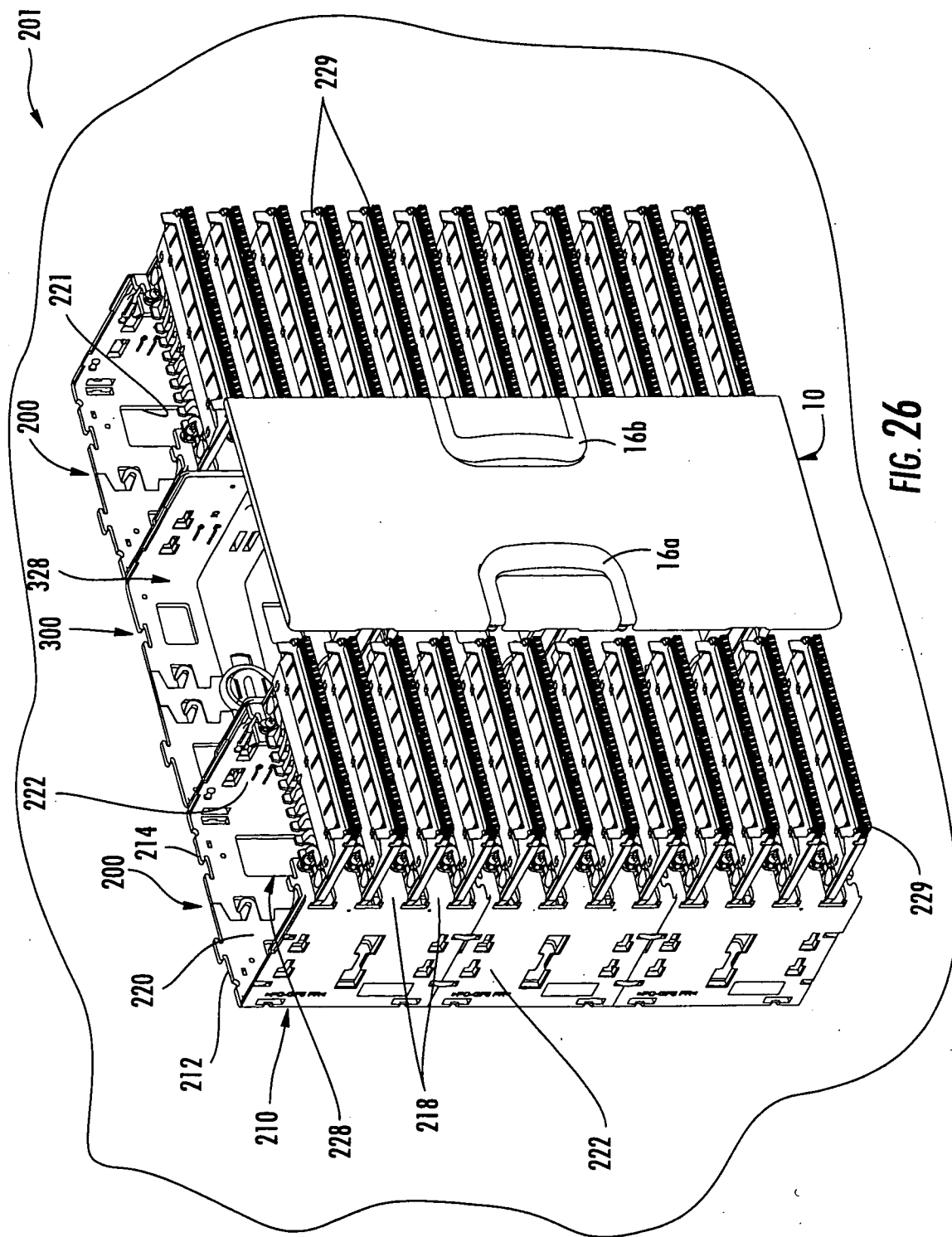


FIG. 25

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/US2008/012690

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

INV. H05K7/18

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

H05K H02B H04Q E05D

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, IBM-TDB, COMPENDEX, INSPEC

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 2007/175654 A1 (KEITH SCOTT M [US] ET AL KEITH SCOTT MARTIN [US] ET AL) 2 August 2007 (2007-08-02) cited in the application figure 7 paragraph [0072] - paragraph [0080]; figures 15-18	1-22
Y	US 5 911 264 A (SMRKE GREGORY M [CA] ET AL) 15 June 1999 (1999-06-15) column 3, line 3 - line 34; figures 6A-6C column 2, line 11 - line 32; figure 3a	1-22
A	US 2003/020379 A1 (LARSEN LARS R [US] ET AL) 30 January 2003 (2003-01-30) paragraph [0032] - paragraph [0041]; figures 4-6	1-22
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☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

☒ See patent family annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

11 February 2009

Date of mailing of the international search report

25/02/2009

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/US2008/012690

C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 2007/210681 A1 (ADDUCCI SAMUEL J [US] ET AL) 13 September 2007 (2007-09-13) paragraph [0085] - paragraph [0100]; figure 12 -----	1-22

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

PCT/US2008/012690

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 2007175654	A1	02-08-2007	NONE	
US 5911264	A	15-06-1999	NONE	
US 2003020379	A1	30-01-2003	NONE	
US 2007210681	A1	13-09-2007	NONE	