



US 20130043285A1

(19) **United States**
(12) **Patent Application Publication**
CORDRAY

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2013/0043285 A1**
(43) **Pub. Date: Feb. 21, 2013**

(54) **VENDING BACKPACK**

(52) **U.S. Cl. 224/148.3**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

(21) **Appl. No.: 13/567,431**

(22) **Filed: Aug. 6, 2012**

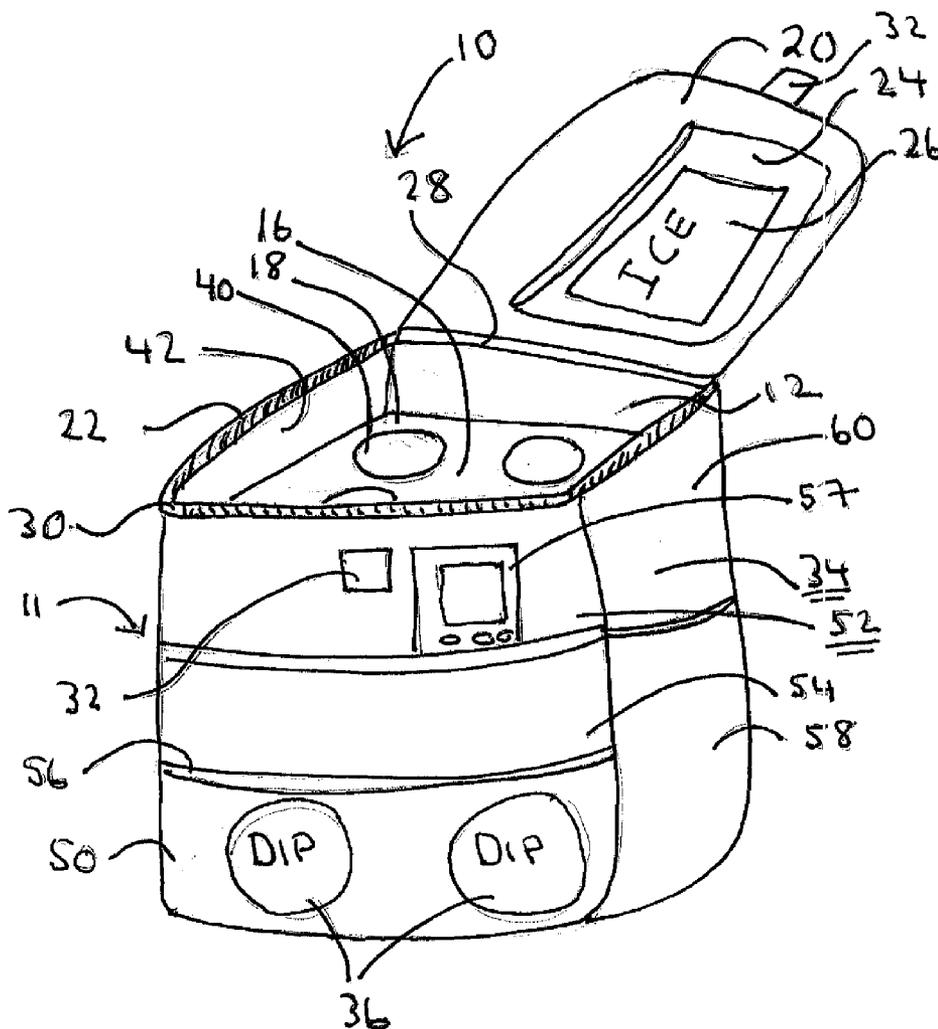
Related U.S. Application Data

(60) **Provisional application No. 61/525,731, filed on Aug. 20, 2011.**

Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A45C 15/00 (2006.01)
B65D 81/38 (2006.01)

A vending bag or backpack is provided for carrying and displaying drinks and food. The body and lid of the pack are insulated and have a temperature reflective inner surface. A hammock is centrally located in a central compartment to both carry food containers and to locate drink containers. An outer pocket holds and displays containers of condiments or dips. Other pockets are designed to hold a debit machine, napkins and menus. A pocket in the lid is sized to accept a hot or cold pad. A combination comprising the vending backpack and a debit machine bag is also provided.



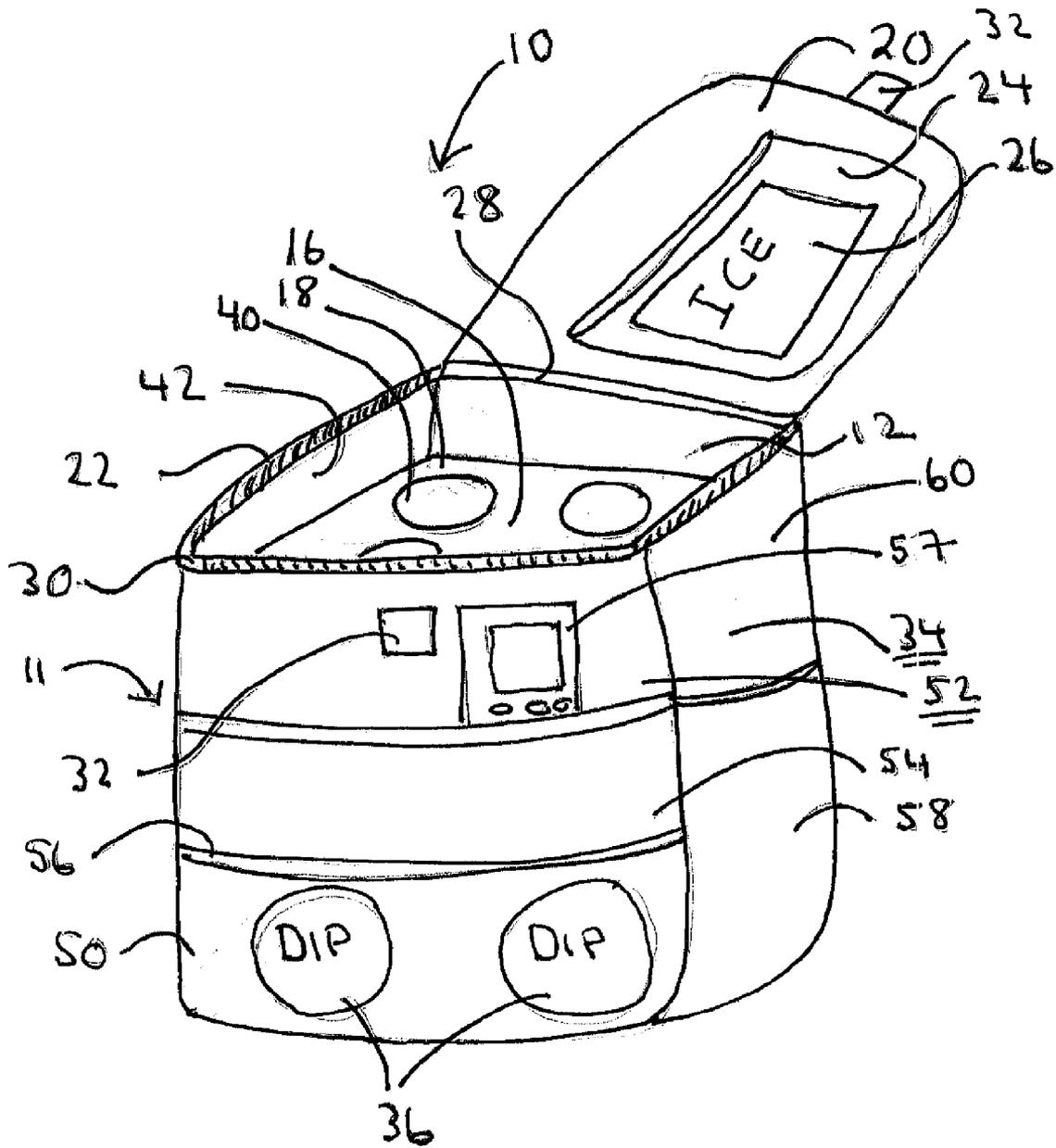


Fig. 1

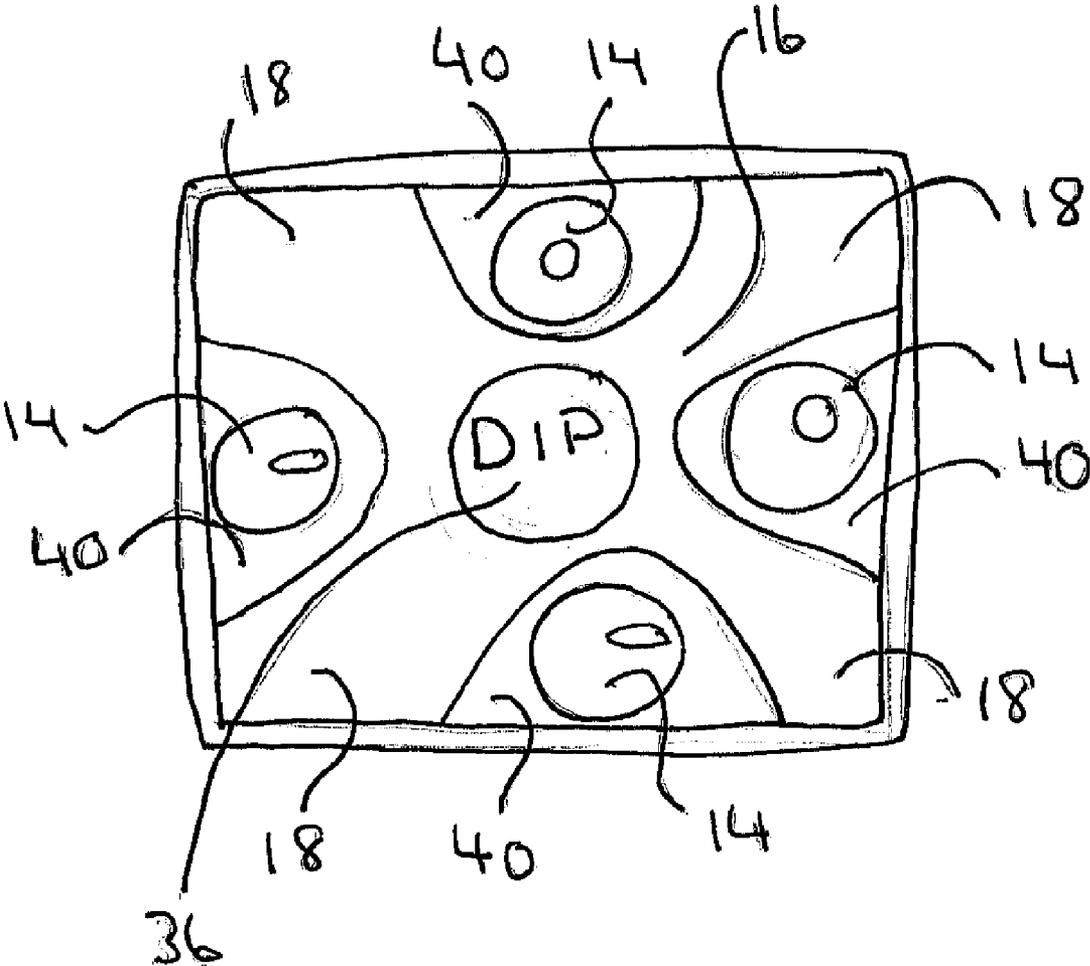


Fig. 2

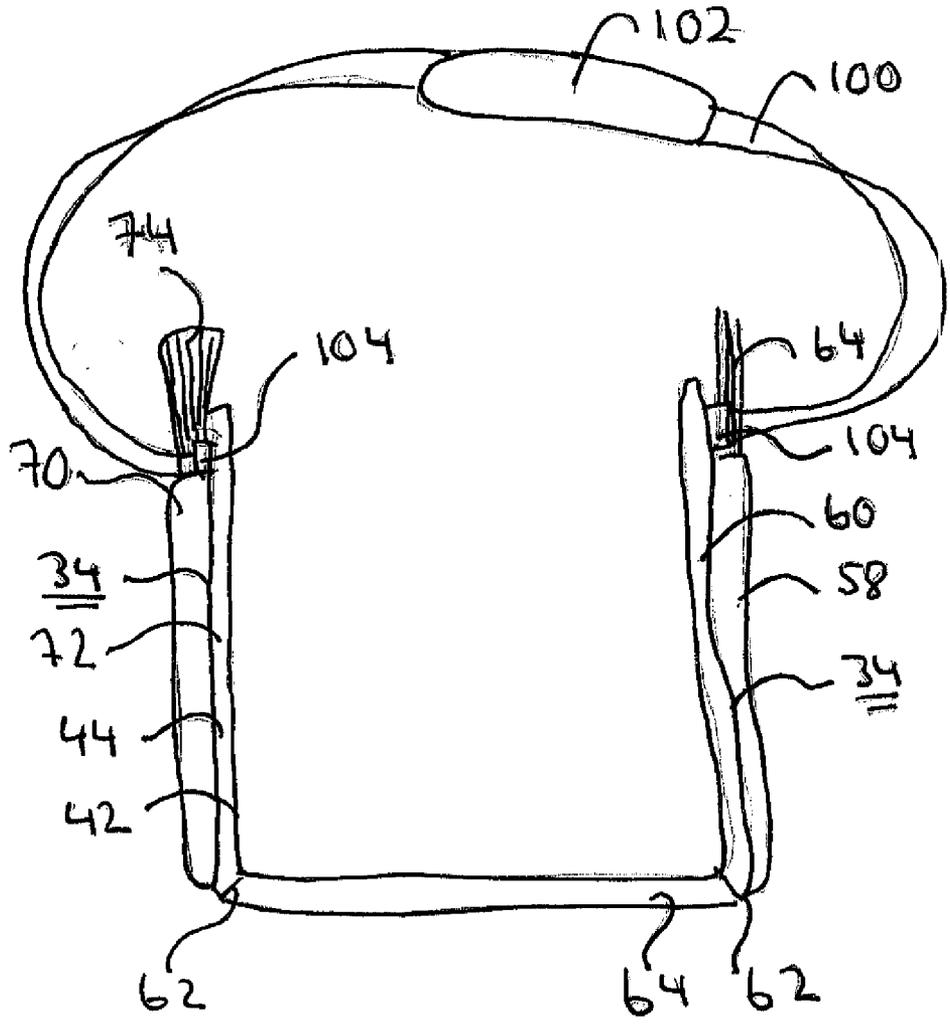


Fig. 3A

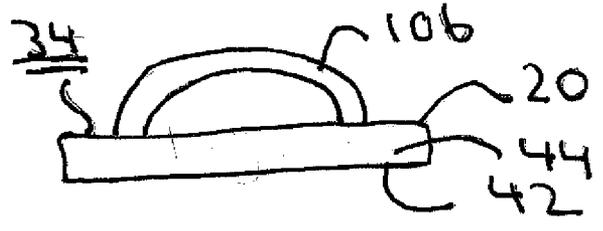


Fig. 3B

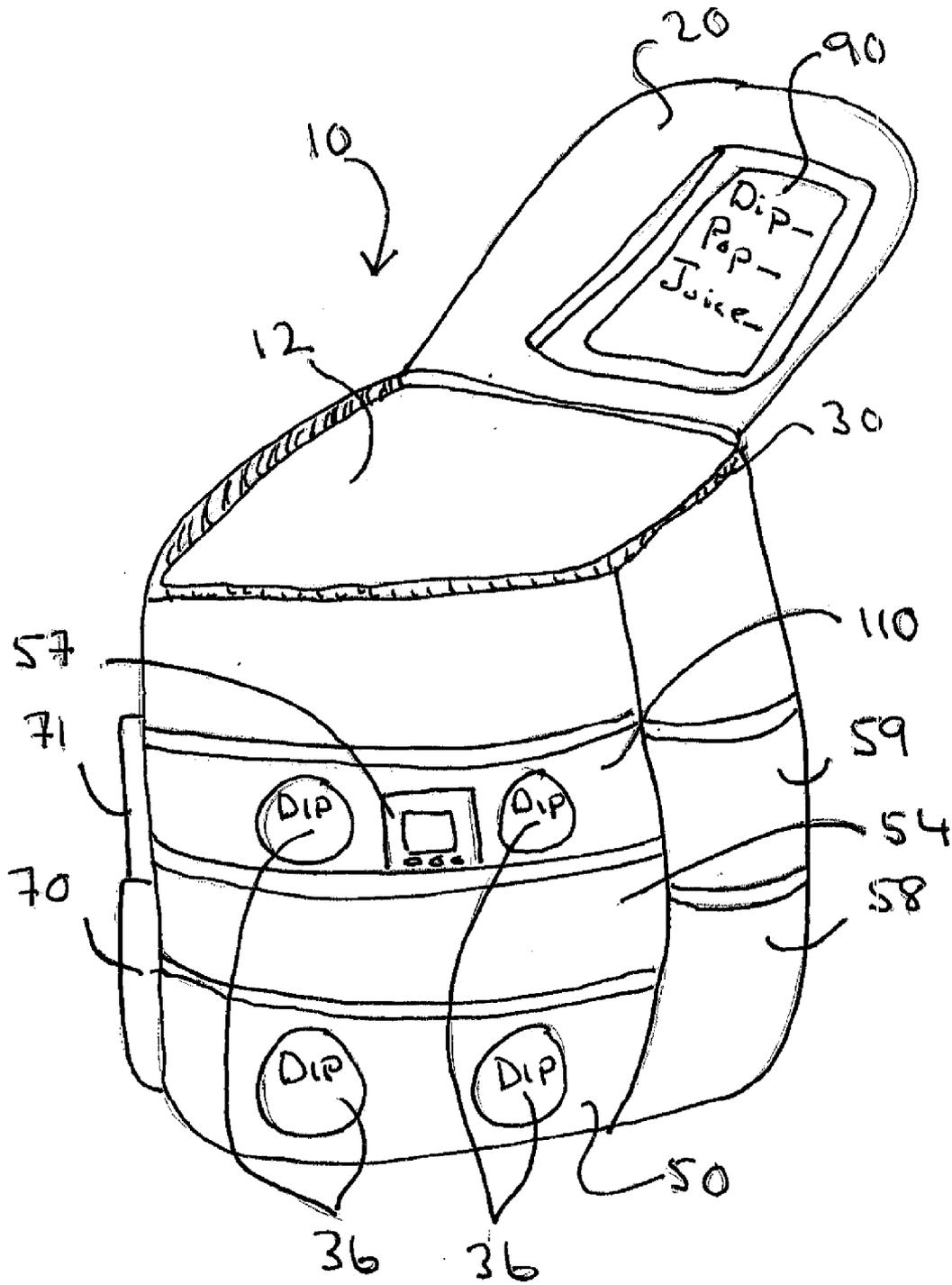


Fig. 4

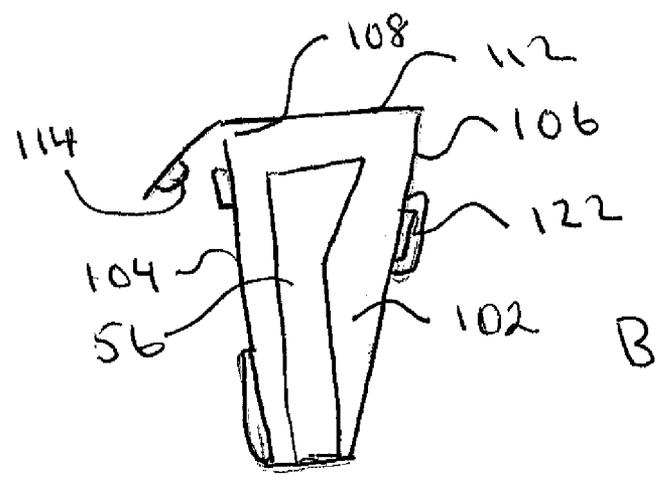
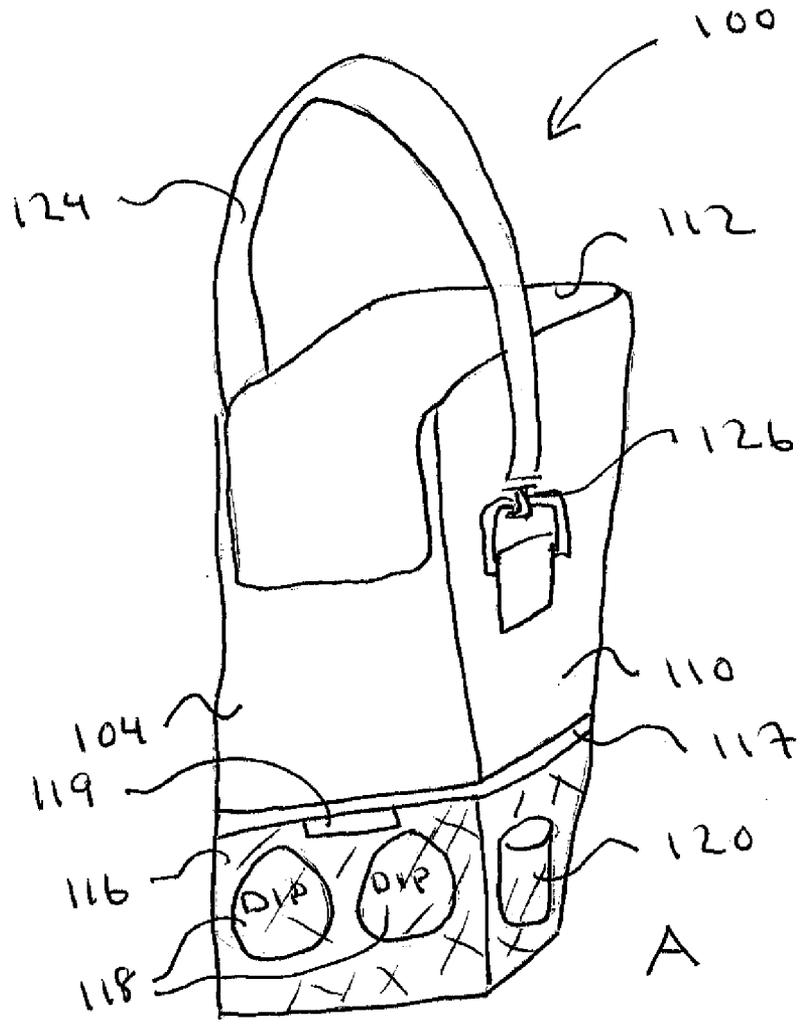


Fig. 5A + B

VENDING BACKPACK

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 61/525,731, filed Aug. 20, 2011, the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD

[0002] The present technology is related to a bag designed to hold and display food and drinks for marketing to customers. More specifically, the technology is a backpack to hold and display dips, condiments, and drinks, while holding a debit or credit machine, menus and napkins.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Backpacks are used to carry a wide range of goods, such as books, camping gear, and food. When food is being carried, it is preferable to have a means of keeping it cool. An example of such a pack is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,509,279.

[0004] U.S. Pat. No. 5,509,279 discloses a cooler backpack with compartments. The cooler backpack includes two or more separate storage compartments adjoining a central ice container. One of the compartments may be adapted to store cans or bottles of beverages in a plurality of recesses formed in one side of the ice container. Another of the compartments may be used for food storage and includes an insulated hard shell container having one or more shelves. The storage compartments and ice container fit within a durable insulated backpack. Apertures in the side of the backpack provide separate access to each of the storage compartments.

[0005] Another example is disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 4,673,117. The backpack cooler utilizes an insulated foam core that is covered on the outside with a cloth sheath and has a rigid reinforcing liner which defines a well to hold two stacked six packs of 12 ounce containers. The cloth jacket is retained to the rest of the cooler body by means of a retainer cord that fits into a peripheral retainer groove defined in the foam core, and a pair of shoulder straps fasten to the cloth jacket by means of a lateral pin that engages in a looped channel defined in the upper edge of the cloth jacket. The pin lies in a cavity defined in the foam core of the cooler body adjacent the retainer groove to prevent axial migration of the pin. The entire structure is strong enough to support the weight of a person, so that it doubles as a seat. Also, whereas the primary thrust of the invention is the accommodation of six packs of beer or sodas in twelve ounce cans, there is also an uninsulated accessory pouch defined by the jacket of the preferred embodiment to carry miscellaneous items.

[0006] Means for displaying items for sale are configured to ensure ease of both viewing and picking out. When items are to be kept cold, this usually means glass cases with refrigeration and shelving.

SUMMARY

[0007] The present technology is designed to meet the goals of both carrying and displaying packaged food and drinks, while keeping them either hot or cold. The folding, vending backpack of the present technology comprises:

(a) an insulated, soft-cover body defining a central compartment having an open end, the central compartment being lined with a thermally reflective layer;

(b) a hammock having dividers to define segments, the segments separating and retaining drink containers such that the drink containers can be viewed by a vendor or purchaser, the hammock suspended by the dividers in the central compartment, the hammock for carrying and displaying food containers between the drink containers;

(c) an insulated, soft-cover lid hingeably connected to the body at the open end for covering the open end, the lid being lined with a thermally reflective layer and comprising a pocket for accepted a cold pack or a hot pack;

(d) a zipper disposed between the lid and the body;

(e) a front pocket for holding and displaying containers of food, the front pocket comprising a mesh or transparent, flexible material;

(f) a middle pocket for holding a debit or credit machine;

(g) side pockets for holding menus and napkins; and

(h) a shoulder strap connected to the body, the shoulder strap being adjustable and enabling a vendor to carry the backpack, such that in use, containers of food and drinks are displayed for purchase.

[0008] Preferably the backpack comprises an erasable surface for displaying pricing information, the erasable surface located on the pocket in the lid.

[0009] The hammock and dividers advantageously define four segments for retaining and displaying drink containers.

[0010] The hammock and dividers preferably comprises a single unit as this reduces manufacturing costs.

[0011] The front pocket preferably comprises a mesh material as this is flexible and washable.

[0012] The front pocket is sized to hold about four to about six food containers each having a volume of about 100 mL to about 250 mL.

[0013] The vending backpack may comprise a hand grip.

[0014] Preferably, the segments are circular apertures.

[0015] Also provided is a folding, vending backpack for carrying and displaying containers of food and drinks is also provided that comprises:

(a) an insulated, soft-cover body defining a central compartment having an open end, the central compartment being lined with a thermally reflective layer;

(b) a hammock having integral dividers to define round or semi-circular segments, the segments for separating and retaining drink containers such that the drink containers can be viewed by a vendor or purchaser, the hammock suspended by the dividers in the central compartment, the hammock for carrying and displaying food containers between the drink containers;

(c) an insulated, soft-cover lid hingeably connected to the body at the open end, the lid being lined with a thermally reflective layer and comprising a pocket for accepted a cold pack or a hot pack;

(d) an erasable surface for displaying pricing information, the erasable surface located on the pocket in the lid;

(e) a zipper disposed between the lid and the body;

(f) a front pocket for holding and displaying containers of food, the front pocket comprising a mesh material;

(g) a middle pocket for holding a debit or credit machine;

(h) side pockets for holding menus and napkins; and

(i) a shoulder strap connected to the body, the shoulder strap being adjustable and enabling a vendor to carry the backpack, such that in use, containers of food and drinks are displayed for purchase.

[0016] A combination for selling drinks and food is also provided, the combination comprising a vending backpack,

three or four drink containers, a cold or hot pack and from three to seven containers of one or more of condiments and dips. The combination preferably includes menus, napkins, a cold pack and a debit machine.

[0017] A separate debit machine bag may be included in the combination for holding the debit machine. The debit machine bag comprises:

- (a) a soft-cover central compartment, defined by a front, a back, an open end, and two sides, the front having a first loop and hook fastener member;
- (b) a soft-cover top extending from the back and having a second loop and hook fastener member for releasably attaching to the first loop and fastener member;
- (c) a mesh outer pocket extending along the front and two sides;
- (d) a belt loop attached to the back;
- (e) a debit machine; and
- (f) an adjustable shoulder strap.

FIGURES

[0018] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of an embodiment of the technology.

[0019] FIG. 2 is a top view of the central compartment of the technology of FIG. 1.

[0020] FIG. 3 is a longitudinal sectional view of the embodiment of FIG. 1.

[0021] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the technology.

[0022] FIG. 5A is a front perspective view of the debit machine bag of the combination of the present technology.

[0023] FIG. 5B is a longitudinal sectional view of the debit machine bag of the combination of the technology of FIG. 5A.

DESCRIPTION

[0024] A vending backpack, generally referred to as 10 is shown in FIG. 1. The backpack 10 has a body 11 that defines a central compartment 12, sized to accept three, preferably four, drink containers 14. The body 11 is soft-covered and foldable. A hammock 16 is centrally located in the central compartment 12 and has dividers 18 extending to an inner thermally reflective layer 42 of the body 11. The dividers 18 function to both support and locate the hammock 16 and to separate and retain drink containers 14. The spacing of the dividers 18 is such that either four bottles or cans of about 375 mL to about 750 mL, preferably about 400 mL to about 700 mL and most preferably about 500 mL to about 600 mL are retained. The dividers 18 retain the drink containers 14 such that they remain upright, thereby ensuring that any advertising displayed on the tops of the drink containers is readily viewed by the vendor or purchaser. The hammock 16 and dividers 18 are preferably a single unit as this provides more positive retention of the drink containers 14. A lid 20 is disposed on an upper end 22 of the backpack. A pocket 24 in the lid 20 is sized to accept an ice pack 26. A hinge 28 is disposed between the lid 20 and the open end 22 of the backpack 10 on one side and a zipper 30 is disposed on the other sides of the upper end 22. A Velcro® closure (a hook and loop pair) 32, or other such releasable, straplike closure, such as a strap with a snap or buckle extends between the lid 20 and an outer surface 34 of the backpack.

[0025] The hammock 16 is preferably mesh, webbing or a similar lightweight flexible material. It is sized such that a

container or package 36 such as condiment container or a dip container or package can be placed on the hammock 16 and can be readily viewed by the vendor or purchaser. The container 36 is about 100 mL to about 400 mL, preferably about 125 mL to about 250 mL with advertising or identification on the lid 37. As shown in FIG. 1, the hammock 16 and dividers 18 are preferably shaped to define segments 40 that are round apertures or, as shown in FIG. 2 are curved to define semi-circular shaped segments 40 that the drink containers 36 fit into. There are three, preferably four segments 40 in the central compartment 12.

[0026] As can be seen in FIG. 3, the body 11 and the lid 20 of the backpack 10 are lined with the thermally reflective layer 42. This layer 42 is preferably water proof or water resistant and is made of a material that is easily cleaned should a spill occur. An insulating layer 44 is adjacent the reflective layer 42. The outer surface 34 is a flexible material such as canvas, Cordura™, Goretex™, 600D polyester or the like. Both the lid 20 and the body 11 are soft-cover and foldable.

[0027] Returning to FIG. 1, pockets are disposed on the outer surface 34. A front pocket 50 is disposed on the middle pocket 54. The front pocket 50 is sized to accept and display multiples of two containers 36, for example, two or four or six containers. Each container 36 is about 100 mL to about 400 mL, preferably about 125 mL to about 250 mL with advertising or identification on the lid 37. The containers 36 slide into the front pocket 50 so that the lids 37 are facing outwards and the containers 36 are on their sides, as shown in FIG. 1. They are held snugly in place to ensure that the vendor and purchaser can easily view the lids 37 of the containers 36. The front pocket 50 is mesh, or a flexible transparent material, such as a plastic polymer or any such material that allows for easy viewing of the containers 36. The top margin 56 of the front pocket 50 defines a slightly smaller opening than the interior space defined by the mesh, whether extended or otherwise, to ensure that the contents of the front pocket 50 are held in place. The middle pocket 54 is sized to accept a debit or credit machine 56. This is located between the front pocket 50 and the front outer surface 52 and extends beyond the top margin 56 of the front pocket 50. It is preferably of the same material as the outer surface 34.

[0028] As shown in FIG. 3, a first side pocket 58 extends the width of the first side 60 and is, for ease of construction, adjacent or abutting the seam 62 between the bottom 64 of the backpack 10 and the first side 60. This pocket 58 is sized to accept menus 64.

[0029] Also shown in FIG. 3 is the second side pocket 70. It similarly extends the width of the second side 72 and is, for ease of construction, adjacent or abutting the seam 62 between the bottom 64 of the backpack 10 and the second side 72. This pocket 70 is sized to accept napkins 74.

[0030] As shown in FIG. 4, the pocket 24 in the lid 20 has a dry erase surface 90. This allows the vendor to display pricing information prominently and allows for price changes to be made easily. Further, this allows for the menus to list only the product offering and not the prices. The first side pocket 58 and the second side pocket 70 may be replaced with a lower first and second side pockets 58, 70 and an upper first and second side pockets 59, 71. A multi-purpose pocket 110 is constructed of mesh and is located between the middle pocket 54 and the front outer surface 52.

[0031] Also shown in FIG. 3 is a removable shoulder strap 100. The shoulder strap 100 has a padded section 102 and is

removably affixed by means of buckles **104** or the like. The shoulder strap **100** is adjustable. A hand grip **106** is also provided and can be removable or can be stitched or otherwise affixed to the lid **20**.

[0032] The dimensions of the backpacks are as follows: The smaller backpack is 15 cm wide×15 cm long×25.4 cm high; and

the larger backpack is 15 cm wide×15 cm long×38 cm high.

[0033] The dimensions of the pockets on the smaller backpack are as follows:

the middle pocket **54** is 15 cm wide×15 cm high;

the front pocket **50** is 9.5 cm high by 15 cm wide;

the first side pocket **58** is 15 cm high by 15 cm wide;

the second side pocket **70** is 15 cm wide by 8 cm high;

the pocket **24** in the lid is 15 cm wide by 11 cm high;

[0034] The dimensions of the pockets on the larger bag are as follows:

the middle pocket **54** is 15 cm wide and 20.5 cm high;

the front pocket **50** is 15 cm high and 16 cm wide;

the multi-purpose pocket **110** is 15 cm wide by 25 cm high;

the lower first and second side pockets **58, 70** are 20.5 cm high and 15 cm wide; and

the upper first and second side pockets **59, 71** are 15 cm wide and 14 cm high.

[0035] In use, the backpack **10** is loaded with the drink containers **14**, the ice pack **26** and the food containers **36**. Menus **64**, debit machine **56** and napkins **74** are also loaded into the backpack **10**. Pricing is listed on the dry erase surface **90**. The backpack **10** is then ready to be used by the vendor. When not in use, the backpack **10** can be folded, as there are no hard materials used in the construction. This allows for the backpack **10** to take up very little space when stored.

[0036] As shown in FIG. 5, the backpack **10** may be used with a separate debit machine bag **100**. The debit machine bag **100** has a soft-cover central compartment **102**, defined by a front **104**, a back **106**, an open end **108**, and two sides **110**. The central compartment **102** is sized to accept a debit or credit machine **56**. A soft-cover top **112** extends from the back **106** and covers the open end **108**. It releasably attaches to the front **104** with a Velcro® closure **114**. There is a mesh outer pocket **116** extending along the front **104** and two sides **110**. An elasticized band **117** forms the upper margin of the mesh outer pocket **116**. In this manner the upper margin of the outer pocket **116** defines a slightly smaller opening than the interior space defined by the mesh to ensure that the contents are held in place. The pocket **116** is sized to hold 2 dipping sauce containers **118** and an extra debit paper roll **120**. It releasably attaches to the front **104** with a Velcro® closure **119**. The containers **118** are about 100 mL to about 250 mL, with advertising or identification on the lid. The containers **118** slide into the outer pocket **116** so that the lids are facing outwards and the containers **118** are on their sides, as shown in FIG. 5. They are held snugly in place to ensure that the vendor and purchaser can easily view the lids of the containers **118**. As shown in FIG. 5B, a belt loop **122** is attached to the back **106**. As shown in FIG. 5A, there is an adjustable shoulder strap **124** retained with releasable fasteners **126**. The adjustable shoulder strap **124** can be used as a belt.

[0037] The dimensions of the debit bag **100** are as follows: 18 cm high×7.5 cm wide×2 cm deep at the bottom and 6 cm deep at the top;

the top extends down the front 5 cm; and

the pocket extends up the sides and front 8 cm.

[0038] The foregoing is a description of an embodiment of the technology. As would be known to one skilled in the art, variations are contemplated that do not alter the scope of the technology. For example, the central compartment may be sized to accept a combination of two 591 mL drink containers and one 2 L (31 cm tall by 10 cm in diameter), or 1.5 L drink container. In this case, there are three segments for accepting the drink containers. By retain it is meant that the drink containers will remain upright in the compartment in the absence of other drink containers, i.e. they will remain oriented so that the vendor and purchaser can readily see the lid. The shoulder strap can be replaced with two adjustable shoulder straps. The ice pack could be replaced by a heating bag or hot pack to keep the contents warm.

1. A folding, vending backpack for carrying and displaying containers of food and drinks, the vending backpack comprising:

- (a) an insulated, soft-cover body defining a central compartment having an open end, the central compartment being lined with a thermally reflective layer;
- (b) a hammock having dividers to define segments, the segments for separating and retaining drink containers such that the drink containers can be viewed by a vendor or purchaser, the hammock suspended by the dividers in the central compartment, the hammock for carrying and displaying food containers between the drink containers;
- (c) an insulated, soft-cover lid hingeably connected to the body at the open end for covering the open end, the lid being lined with a thermally reflective layer and comprising a pocket for accepted a cold pack or a hot pack;
- (d) a zipper disposed between the lid and the body;
- (e) a front pocket for holding and displaying containers of food, the front pocket comprising a mesh or transparent, flexible material;
- (f) a middle pocket for holding a debit or credit machine;
- (g) side pockets for holding menus and napkins; and
- (h) a shoulder strap connected to the body, the shoulder strap being adjustable and enabling a vendor to carry the backpack, such that in use, containers of food and drinks are displayed for purchase.

2. The vending backpack of claim **1**, further comprising an erasable surface for displaying pricing information, the erasable surface located on the pocket in the lid.

3. The vending backpack of claim **2** wherein hammock and dividers define four segments for retaining drink containers.

4. The vending backpack of claim **3**, wherein the hammock and dividers comprise a single unit.

5. The vending backpack of claim **4** wherein the front pocket comprises a mesh material.

6. The vending backpack of claim **5**, wherein the front pocket is sized to hold about four to about six food containers each having a volume of about 100 mL to about 250 mL.

7. The vending backpack of claim **6**, further comprising a hand grip.

8. A folding, vending backpack for carrying and displaying containers of food and drinks, the vending backpack comprising:

- (a) an insulated, soft-cover body defining a central compartment having an open end, the central compartment being lined with a thermally reflective layer;
- (b) a hammock having integral dividers to define round or semi-circular segments, the segments for separating and retaining drink containers such that the drink containers

can be viewed by a vendor or purchaser, the hammock suspended by the dividers in the central compartment, the hammock for carrying and displaying food containers between the drink containers;

- (c) an insulated, soft-cover lid hingeably connected to the body at the open end, the lid being lined with a thermally reflective layer and comprising a pocket for accepted a cold pack or a hot pack;
- (d) an erasable surface for displaying pricing information, the erasable surface located on the pocket in the lid;
- (e) a zipper disposed between the lid and the body;
- (f) a front pocket for holding and displaying containers of food, the front pocket comprising a mesh material;
- (g) a middle pocket for holding a debit or credit machine;
- (h) side pockets for holding menus and napkins; and
- (i) a shoulder strap connected to the body, the shoulder strap being adjustable and enabling a vendor to carry the backpack, such that in use, containers of food and drinks are displayed for purchase.

9. The vending backpack of claim **8**, wherein the hammock and dividers define four segments for retaining and displaying drink containers.

10. A combination for selling drinks and food, the combination comprising the vending backpack of claim **7**, three or

four drink containers, a cold or hot pack and from three to seven containers of one or more of condiments and dips.

11. The combination of claim **10** further comprising menus and napkins.

12. The combination of claim **11** further comprising a cold pack.

13. The combination of claim **12**, further comprising a debit machine.

14. The combination of claim **12**, further comprising a debit machine bag, the debit machine bag comprising:

- (a) a soft-cover central compartment, defined by a front, a back, an open end, and two sides, the front having a first loop and hook fastener member;
- (b) a soft-cover top extending from the back and having a second loop and hook fastener member for releasably attaching to the first loop and fastener member;
- (c) a mesh outer pocket extending along the front and two sides;
- (d) a belt loop attached to the back;
- (e) a debit machine; and
- (f) an adjustable shoulder strap.

15. The vending backpack of claim **9** wherein the segments are circular apertures.

* * * * *