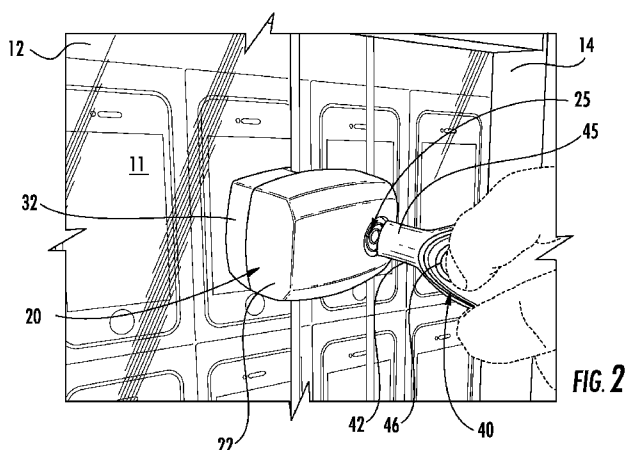




- (51) **International Patent Classification:**
E05B 65/46 (2006.01) *E05B 47/00* (2006.01)
- (21) **International Application Number:**
PCT/US2012/057784
- (22) **International Filing Date:**
28 September 2012 (28.09.2012)
- (25) **Filing Language:** English
- (26) **Publication Language:** English
- (30) **Priority Data:**
61/540,577 29 September 2011 (29.09.2011) US
61/625,054 16 April 2012 (16.04.2012) US
- (71) **Applicant (for all designated States except US):** INVUE SECURITY PRODUCTS INC. [US/US]; 15015 Lancaster Highway, Charlotte, North Carolina 28277 (US).
- (72) **Inventors; and**
- (74) **Agent:** KIRK, Trent, A.; Invue Security Products Inc., 15015 Lancaster Highway, Charlotte, North Carolina 28277 (US).
- (81) **Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available):** AE, AG, AL, AM, AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BN, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CL, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KN, KP, KR, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PA, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, QA, RO, RS, RU, RW, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.
- (84) **Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available):** ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LR, LS, MW, MZ, NA, RW, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, RU, TJ, TM), European (AL, AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MK, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, RS, SE, SI, SK, SM, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
- Declarations under Rule 4.17:**
— of inventorship (Rule 4.17(iv))
- Published:**
— with international search report (Art. 21(3))

(54) **Title:** CABINET LOCK FOR USE WITH PROGRAMMABLE ELECTRONIC KEY



(57) **Abstract:** A cabinet lock (20) for protecting merchandise (11) within a merchandise display cabinet (10) having an inner door (12) and an outer door (14). The cabinet lock includes a strike plate (32) affixed to the inner door and a lock housing (22) affixed to the outer door such that the cabinet is in a locked configuration that prevents access to the merchandise when the lock housing is operably engaged with the strike plate. A programmable electronic key (40) communicates a security code with the cabinet lock and transfers electrical power to the cabinet lock to operate a lock mechanism (23) between the locked configuration and an unlocked configuration. An indicator (30) is provided for indicating whether the cabinet lock is in the locked configuration or the unlocked configuration. The indicator includes a first segment (A) and a second segment (B) that can be energized to visually indicate the status of the cabinet lock.

CABINET LOCK FOR USE WITH PROGRAMMABLE ELECTRONIC KEY

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to merchandise display security systems and methods for displaying and protecting items of merchandise from theft. More particularly, the invention relates to a merchandise security device and a merchandise security key. In exemplary embodiments, the invention is a cabinet lock for use with a programmable electronic key that communicates a security code with the cabinet lock and transfers electrical power to the cabinet lock. In an exemplary embodiment, the programmable electronic key and the cabinet lock communicate the security code via wireless communication, while the key transfers electrical power to the cabinet lock via inductive transfer.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] It is common practice for retailers to store and/or display relatively expensive items of merchandise that are subject to theft on or within a merchandise fixture, such as a security display (e.g. alarm stand), security fixture (e.g. display hook, cabinet, shelf, etc.) or security packaging. In most instances, the merchandise fixture openly displays the merchandise so that a potential purchaser may view, and in some instances, operate the merchandise before making a purchase. At the same time, the merchandise is secured by a merchandise security device so as to prevent, or at least deter, theft of the merchandise. The value of the merchandise, however, may nevertheless make the merchandise an attractive target for a shoplifter despite the presence of the merchandise security device. Thus, a determined shoplifter may still attempt to detach or remove the merchandise from the merchandise security device.

[0003] In the case of a security fixture, and in particular a merchandise display cabinet, the merchandise security device is oftentimes closed or

locked with a lock to prevent merchandise from being removed from the cabinet without the assistance of an authorized person, such as a sales associate. In most instances, the lock includes a conventional tumbler or spring-biased lock mechanism operated by a non-programmable, manually operated mechanical or magnetic key. In certain instances, however, the merchandise security device is secured by a lock including a lock mechanism that is operated by a merchandise security key in the form of a programmable electronic key. An example of a merchandise security device including a lock mechanism operated by a programmable electronic key is the programmable electronic cabinet lock and associated programmable electronic key available from InVue Security Products Inc. of Charlotte, North Carolina, USA. The programmable electronic cabinet lock and key available from InVue Security Products is shown and described in co-owned United States Application No. 13/222,225 filed on August 31, 2011, entitled ELECTRONIC KEY FOR MERCHANDISE SECURITY DEVICE, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

[0004] The aforementioned cabinet lock presents a potential security concern for retailers in certain applications. More specifically, the cabinet lock must be completely separated from the conventional saw-tooth lock arm that is affixed to one of the cabinet doors in order to open the door and access the merchandise within the cabinet. As a result, the sales associate must hold the cabinet lock in one hand while removing the merchandise from the cabinet for the potential purchaser. The lock arm is typically disposed on the innermost door, and thus, is not available to replace the cabinet lock on the lock arm when the doors are overlapped to access the merchandise within the cabinet. If the sales associate temporarily places the cabinet lock behind or on a display counter, the lock may become lost or stolen while the sales associate's attention is focused on the potential sale. On the other hand, if the sales associate temporarily places the cabinet lock within a pocket of clothing, he or she may become distracted and neglect to replace the cabinet lock onto the cabinet.

[0005] Alternatively, the sales associate must close the cabinet doors and replace the cabinet lock on the lock arm immediately after retrieving the desired merchandise from within the cabinet. Replacing the cabinet lock each time merchandise is retrieved from the cabinet is both time consuming and distracting to the customer, especially when the customer desires to examine and evaluate multiple items of merchandise stored and secured within the same cabinet. In any event, separating the cabinet lock from the lock arm presents a potential security breach that must be addressed by the retailer. The merchandise security key for the cabinet lock likewise is typically separated from the cabinet lock after opening the cabinet. However, the key is oftentimes tethered to a conventional recoiler mechanism worn by the sales associate. Thus, when tethered to the sales associate, the merchandise security key for use with the cabinet lock does not present an additional security breach to be addressed by the retailer.

[0006] Accordingly, there exists a need for a merchandise security device for displaying and protecting items of merchandise from theft including a lock that can be unlocked using a merchandise security key to provide access to the merchandise without having to remove a portion of the lock from the security device. There exists a particular unresolved need for a merchandise security fixture, namely a merchandise display cabinet, including a cabinet lock that remains attached to the cabinet after being unlocked to access merchandise within the cabinet. There exists a more specific need for such a cabinet lock and a programmable electronic key that communicates data, for example a security code, with the cabinet lock and transfers electrical power from the key to the cabinet lock to unlock the cabinet.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] The detailed description of the invention provided below may be better understood with reference to the accompanying drawing figures, which depict one or more exemplary embodiments of a merchandise security device and a merchandise security key for use with the merchandise security device

in a merchandise display security system and method according to the invention.

[0008] FIG. 1 illustrates a merchandise display security device for displaying and protecting items of merchandise from theft, namely a merchandise display cabinet including a cabinet lock according to the invention with the cabinet lock mounted on the cabinet in a locked configuration.

[0009] FIG. 2 illustrates an electronic merchandise security key according to the invention configured for use with the cabinet lock of FIG. 1 with the electronic key positioned to unlock the cabinet lock and thereby access merchandise stored within the cabinet.

[0010] FIG. 3 illustrates the cabinet lock of FIG. 1 in an unlocked configuration with the left-hand door and the right-hand door of the cabinet partially opened.

[0011] FIG. 4 illustrates the cabinet lock of FIG. 1 in an unlocked configuration with the left-hand door of the cabinet partially opened and the right-hand door of the cabinet further opened.

[0012] FIG. 5 shows an exemplary embodiment of a lock housing of the cabinet lock of FIG. 1.

[0013] FIG. 6 shows an exemplary embodiment of a strike plate of the cabinet lock of FIG. 1.

[0014] FIG. 7 shows an exemplary embodiment of an optional metal strap having through reliefs for use with the strike plate of FIG. 6.

[0015] FIG. 8 shows the underside of the lock housing of FIG. 5.

[0016] FIG. 9 illustrates various operational states of the cabinet lock as indicated by an indicator provided on the lock housing of FIG. 5.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

[0017] Referring now to the accompanying drawing figures wherein like reference numerals denote like elements throughout the various views, one or more exemplary embodiments of a merchandise display security device for protecting merchandise from theft are shown. A merchandise display security device according to the invention is operable for use with a merchandise fixture that stores and/or displays merchandise, for example, in a retail store. In the exemplary embodiments shown and described herein, a merchandise display cabinet, indicated generally at **10**, is provided with a cabinet lock, indicated generally at **20**, in accordance with the invention. A merchandise security key, indicated generally at **40**, is provided to unlock the cabinet lock **20** and thereby access one or more items of merchandise **11** stored within the cabinet **10**. The cabinet lock **20** does not contain an internal source of electrical power, and as such, is herein termed an “electrically passive” security device for purposes of describing the invention. The merchandise security key **40** contains an internal source of electrical power, such as a conventional extended-life or rechargeable battery, capacitor or the like, and transfers electrical power to the cabinet lock **20** for at least the purpose of unlocking the cabinet **10**, as will be described in greater detail hereafter.

[0018] In particularly advantageous embodiments, the merchandise security key is a programmable electronic key **40** with inductive transfer capability and the cabinet lock **20** is provided with cooperating inductive receiving capability to both unlock and lock the cabinet **10**. However, it should be noted that the invention is applicable to any merchandise display cabinet including a cabinet lock that remains attached to the cabinet while the cabinet lock is unlocked to access items of merchandise stored within the cabinet. Furthermore, merchandise display security devices suitable for use with the invention are not limited to a display cabinet and include, but are not limited to, a security display (e.g. alarm stand) as well as other security fixtures (e.g. display hook, shelf, rack, etc.), as well as security packaging for an item of merchandise. The broad concepts of the invention may also be applied to, for

example, a door lock, a drawer lock or a shelf lock, as well as any two-piece locking device that prevents an unauthorized person from accessing, removing or detaching an item from a secure location or position. It is important to note that the cabinet lock **20** shown and described herein is self-contained and “universal” in the sense that it may be attached to any pair of overlapping doors without the need to provide a hole, opening, recess or the like in one or more of the doors in a conventional manner.

[0019] An exemplary embodiment of a merchandise display security device according to the invention is illustrated in FIGS. 1-4. The merchandise display security device depicted therein is operable for use with a merchandise fixture, namely a merchandise display cabinet **10** adapted for displaying and protecting items of merchandise **11** stored within the cabinet. The cabinet **10** includes a pair of overlapping doors that prevent access to the items of merchandise **11** when the doors are in a closed and locked configuration. As shown herein, the doors comprise an inner door **12** and an outer door **14** that are each substantially transparent so that the items of merchandise **11** can be viewed from outside the cabinet **10**. However, the doors **12**, **14** may be semi-translucent, translucent or opaque as desired to partially obscure or conceal the items of merchandise **11** from view. Regardless, the inner door **12** is positioned to the farthest left-hand side of the cabinet **10** and the overlapping outer door **14** is positioned to the farthest right-hand side of the cabinet in the closed and locked position depicted in FIG. 1. In this position, the cabinet lock **20** may be engaged in a locked configuration to prevent access to the items of merchandise **11** stored within the cabinet **10**, while still permitting a potential purchaser to view the items. As will be readily understood by one skilled in the art, the “inner” and “outer” relative positions of the doors **12**, **14** may be reversed, if desired.

[0020] As illustrated in FIG. 2, a programmable electronic key **40** is used with the doors **12**, **14** in the closed and locked position depicted in FIG. 1 to at least unlock the cabinet lock **20** from the locked configuration. In other words, the cabinet lock **20** may be automatically placed into a locked configuration

when the doors **12**, **14** are moved to the closed positions shown in FIG. 1, for example by a biasing mechanism, such as an elastic spring. Alternatively, and as shown and described in the exemplary embodiments herein, the programmable electronic key **40** may be required to place the cabinet lock **20** into the locked configuration after the doors **12**, **14** are moved to the closed positions shown in FIG. 1. It may be desirable that the programmable electronic key **40** is required to both unlock and lock (or re-lock) the cabinet lock **20** so that the authorized person responsible for unlocking the cabinet is held accountable for locking the cabinet **10** after each time his or her key is used to unlock the cabinet. For example, electronics disposed within the programmable electronic key **40** may be used to assign a unique identifier corresponding to the user of the key to a memory, and to thereafter record the date and time of each activation of the key into the memory. As will be described hereafter in greater detail with respect to exemplary embodiments of the invention, a successful activation of the key **40** occurs, for example, when a security code of the key matches a security code assigned to the cabinet lock **20**, and the key subsequently transfers electrical power to the cabinet lock to operate a lock mechanism of the cabinet lock between a locked configuration and an unlocked configuration or between an unlocked configuration and a locked configuration.

[0021] Regardless, an elongate end of the programmable electronic key **40**, referred to herein as transfer probe **45**, is positioned over a location, such as a visual guide, indentation or recess, on an outward-facing exterior surface of the cabinet lock **20**, referred to herein as transfer port **25**. The key is then activated, for example as illustrated in FIG. 2, by depressing an actuator button **46** provided on the exterior of a housing **42** of the key. As will be explained further hereafter, activation of the actuator button **46** in the locked configuration causes a lock mechanism of the cabinet lock **20** to disengage (i.e. unlock), such that the doors **12**, **14** of the cabinet **10** are permitted to be moved (i.e. slid) relative to one another to access the merchandise **11** stored within the cabinet. In particular, inner door **12** may be slid in the direction of the right-hand side of the cabinet **10** using a semi-circular recess **13** formed in

the inner door, and/or outer door **14** may be slid in the direction of the left-hand side of the cabinet using a similar semi-circular recess (not shown) formed in the outer door.

[0022] As depicted in FIG. 3, the inner door **12** has been moved in the direction of the outer door **14**, while the outer door has been moved in the direction of the inner door. As depicted in FIG. 4, the outer door **14** has been moved further in the direction of the inner door **12** (i.e. towards the left) so that merchandise **11** disposed within the right-hand side of the cabinet **10** can be accessed and removed from the cabinet. Once the merchandise **11** has been accessed, for example by an authorized person, such as a sales associate, inner door **12** and outer door **14** may be returned to the farthest left-hand side and to the farthest right-hand side, respectively, of the cabinet to the closed position depicted in FIG. 1, for example using a grommet **13A** provided on the inner door and/or a similar grommet (not shown) provided on the outer door. Thereafter, the cabinet lock **20** may be returned from the unlocked configuration to the locked configuration by repositioning the transfer probe **45** of the key **40** over the transfer port **25** on the cabinet lock **20** and depressing actuator button **46** again to cause the lock mechanism to engage (i.e. re-lock) with the doors **12**, **14** of the cabinet **10** in the closed and locked position and thereby prevent access to the merchandise **11** stored within the cabinet.

[0023] As shown and described herein, the cabinet lock **20** comprises a lock housing **22** and a complimentary strike plate **32**. An exemplary embodiment of a lock housing **22** suitable for use with the invention is shown in FIG. 5 and a corresponding exemplary embodiment of a strike plate **32** likewise suitable for use with the invention is shown in FIG. 6. The underside (i.e. backside) of the lock housing **22** is shown in FIG. 7. The lock housing **22** defines a generally hollow interior cavity or compartment that houses, among other things, electronics including a memory and a lock mechanism that is controlled by the electronics. The electronics may be disposed within the lock housing **22** in any known manner, for example, on a conventional printed circuit board **PCB**. It should be noted that the cabinet lock **20** is an

“electrically passive” device, meaning that the lock housing **22** and the strike plate **32** do not comprise an internal source of electrical power for operating the lock mechanism. Furthermore, as shown and described herein, the lock housing **22** and/or the strike plate **32** do not comprise means for generating or storing potential energy sufficient to operate the lock mechanism. Accordingly, the cabinet lock **20** requires an external source of power to operate the lock mechanism, and more particularly, to move the lock mechanism between a locked configuration and an unlocked configuration.

[0024] The lock housing **22** may be affixed to the outer door **14** in any convenient manner. Preferably, lock housing **22** is affixed to the outer door **14** in a manner that does not require alteration to the outer door, and more specifically, does not require a hole, opening, recess or the like to be formed on, in or through the outer door. In the exemplary embodiment shown and described herein, the lock housing **22** is affixed to the exterior surface of the outer door **14** using a pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA), such as double-sided adhesive tape (not shown), in a conventional manner that is well known in the art. Similarly, strike plate **32** is affixed to the inner door **12** in a manner that does not require alteration to the inner door. In the exemplary embodiment shown and described herein, a strap **34** depends from the strike plate **32** towards the right-hand side of the cabinet **10** on the exterior surface of the inner door and wraps around an edge **13B** of the inner door to the interior surface of the inner door. The strap **34** may be, for example, affixed to the exterior surface of the inner door **12** and to the opposite interior surface of the inner door using a pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA), such as double-sided adhesive tape (not shown), in a conventional manner that is well known in the art.

[0025] The strap **34** portion of the strike plate **32** may be made of a thin sheet of a relatively flexible material, such as fabric, soft plastic or composite (e.g. polyethylene, polypropylene, silicone, etc.) or rubber, so that the strap is readily formable around the edge **13B** of the inner door **12** of the cabinet **10** from the exterior surface of the inner door to the interior surface of the inner

door. However, it has been determined that the strap **34** may be vulnerable to an attempt by a potential thief to separate the strike plate **32** from the inner door **12** by cutting through the strap, and thereby gain access to the merchandise **11** stored within the cabinet **10**. The strap **34** portion of the strike plate **32** may also be made of a thin sheet of a solid, yet relatively formable metal, such as soft aluminum, copper or the like. It has been further determined, however, that a strap **34** made of a pliable metal is subject to fatigue and may be vulnerable to an attempt by a potential thief to separate the strike plate **32** from the inner door **12** by first bending and then peeling the strap off the inner door, and thereby gain access to the merchandise **11** stored within the cabinet **10**. As a result, it has been found advantageous to make a strap **34** portion of the strike plate **32** from a thin sheet of a relatively rigid, yet formable metal provided with one or more through reliefs. The through reliefs initially facilitate forming (i.e. bending) the strap **34** around the edge **13B** of the inner door **12** of the cabinet **10**. Thereafter, the reliefs frustrate and defeat tampering with the strap **34** by a potential thief attempting to separate the strike plate **32** from the inner door **12** of the cabinet **10** to thereby gain access to the merchandise **11** stored within the cabinet.

[0026] FIG. 7 shows an exemplary embodiment of a strap **54** portion of a strike plate **32** configured for use with the cabinet lock **20** of the present invention. The strap **54** is made of a relatively rigid, yet formable metal, such as soft steel, aluminum, copper or the like. In this exemplary embodiment, the strap **54** is made of 304 Stainless Steel dead soft, or an engineering equivalent material. The strap **54** has at least one, and preferably at least a pair of through holes **52** for securing the strap to the strike plate **32** with suitable fasteners (not shown). The strap **54** further has one or more through reliefs **56** for assisting in forming (i.e. bending) the end of the strap opposite the holes **52**. As shown in FIG. 7, the strap **54** has a pair of through reliefs **56** in the form of elongated slots extending with the grain of the metal in the lengthwise direction of the strap. As previously mentioned, the slots **56** are configured and adapted to assist in forming the strap **54**, and more particularly, for bending the end of the strap distal from the holes **52** around

the edge **13B** of the inner door **12** of the merchandise display cabinet **10** for use in a strike assembly of a cabinet lock **20** in the manner shown and described herein. If desired, the distal end of the strap **54** may be formed with an angled portion **57** relative to the remainder of the strap.

[0027] The strap **54** is also provided with a strap adhesive **58** for securing the strap to the interior surface of the inner door **12** of the merchandise display cabinet **10**. In this exemplary embodiment, the strap adhesive **58** is a relatively thin layer of a pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA) commonly referred to in the art as double-sided tape. Strap adhesive **58** may be transparent, as indicated, or may be semi-transparent, translucent or opaque, as desired. A first side of the double-sided tape of the strap adhesive **58** is adhered to the distal end of the strap **54** on an interior side of the strap that is opposite the optional angled portion **55**. The strap adhesive **20** is positioned adjacent the through reliefs **14** and extends away from the reliefs in the direction of the angled portion **55** and beyond the distal end of the strap. As best shown in FIG. 6, the strap **34**, or optionally strap **54**, is secured behind the strike plate **32** by the mechanical fasteners (not shown) that extend through the holes **52** provided in the strap. The strike plate **32**, including the strap **54**, is then adhered to an exterior surface of the inner door **12** of the merchandise display cabinet **10** using a like PSA, such as double-sided tape. The strap **54**, including strap adhesive **58** adhered to the distal end of the strap is then formed (i.e. bent) around the edge **13B** of the inner door **12** of the cabinet **10** and adhered to the interior surface of the inner door using the free side of the double-sided tape of the strap adhesive **58**.

[0028] The through reliefs **56** disposed between the holes **52** used to secure the strap **54** to the strike plate **32** and the strap adhesive **58** serve to facilitate forming (i.e. bending) the strap **54** sufficiently, and more particularly, approximately one hundred eighty degrees (180°) around the edge **13B** of the inner door **12** of the merchandise display cabinet **10**. It should be noted that the reliefs **56** thereafter serve to defeat an attempt by a potential thief to tamper with the strap **54** and thereby separate the strike plate **32** from the

inner door **12** of the cabinet **10** to thereby gain access to the merchandise **11** stored within the cabinet. Unlike a strap made of a relatively flexible material, or a strap made of a solid metal, the strap **54**, being made of a relatively rigid, yet formable material due to through reliefs **56** tends to deform in the vicinity of the reliefs into geometry that defeats tampering efforts when a potential thief attempts to cut, rip, tear through, or otherwise separate the strap from the strike plate **32**. More particularly, the strap **54** tends to collapse upon itself in the vicinity of the through reliefs **56**, and thereby deform into an irregular shape that is resistant to further attempts to cut, rip, tear through, or otherwise separate the strap from the strike plate **32**.

[0029] As previously mentioned, transfer port **25** of cabinet lock **20** is provided on the outward-facing exterior surface of lock housing **22** for receiving the transfer probe **45** of the programmable electronic key **40**. In the exemplary embodiments shown and described herein, transfer probe **25** is a stepped recess formed in the exterior surface of lock housing **22** and comprises a thin film or screen **28** made of a durable plastic. Screen **28** has a circular center portion **29** surrounded by an annular portion **30**. Center portion **29** is optically transparent for a purpose to be described. Annular portion **30** is preferably segmented, as will be described hereafter, to indicate various operational states of the cabinet lock **20**, such as a locked configuration and an unlocked configuration. One or more segments of the annular portion **30** may be energized (e.g. illuminated) in a suitable manner to visually indicate a predetermined operational state of the cabinet lock **20**. The center portion **29** of the transfer port **25** is optically transparent to permit electronics disposed within the programmable electronic key **40** to wirelessly communicate with the electronics (i.e. printed circuit board **PCB**) disposed within the lock housing **22** of the cabinet lock **20** in the manner shown and described in the aforementioned United States Application No. 13/222,225. By way of example, the cabinet lock **20** and the programmable electronic key **40** may each be provided with an optical transceiver, for example an Infrared (IR) transceiver, for transmitting and receiving infrared (IR) signals therebetween. Alternatively, the transfer port **25** need not be optically transparent and the

electronics disposed within the programmable key **40** may wirelessly communicate with the electronics (i.e. printed circuit board **PCB**) disposed within the lock housing **22** of the cabinet lock **20**, for example via radio frequency (RF) transceivers transmitting and/or receiving RF signals therebetween.

[0030] In the exemplary embodiment shown and described herein, the programmable electronic key **40** may be programmed with a security code and the cabinet lock **20** may be programmed with the same security code, for example by the key or by the same security device that programmed the key. Thereafter, the transfer probe **45** of the key **40** is positioned within the transfer port **25** of the cabinet lock **20** and the actuator button **46** is pressed to activate communication of the security code between the cabinet lock and the key. In one example, the electronics of the key **40** verify that the cabinet lock **20** has a security code, and the electronics (i.e. printed circuit board **PCB**) disposed within the lock housing **22** of the cabinet lock then query the key for its security code. As previously described herein, the security code is wirelessly communicated between the cabinet lock **20** and the key **40** by Infrared (IR) optical transmission. Alternatively, the security code may be transmitted and received (i.e. transferred) by electrical contacts, acoustic transmission (e.g. RF signals) or magnetic induction. In the event that the security code of the key **40** matches the security code of the cabinet lock **20**, the key is then permitted to transfer electrical power to the cabinet lock, for example, to operate the lock mechanism of the cabinet lock. The key **40** may transfer electrical power to the cabinet lock **20** in any suitable manner, such as by electrical contacts, acoustical transmission (e.g. RF signals) or magnetic induction. In exemplary embodiments, the programmable electronic key **40** transfers sufficient electrical power to the cabinet lock **20** to at least operate the lock mechanism by inductive transfer in the manner shown and described in the aforementioned United States Application No. 13/222,225.

[0031] As best shown in FIG. 8, lock housing **22** further comprises a plunger pin **23** that protrudes outwardly (i.e. towards the interior of the cabinet

10, and thus, in the direction of strike plate **32**) from an underside **21** of the lock housing. A lock mechanism, such as conventional servo motor (not shown), disposed within the lock housing **22** is electrically operated by the electronics (i.e. printed circuit board **PCB**) disposed within the lock housing to move the plunger pin **23** between an extended (locked) position and a retracted (unlocked) position. In the retracted (unlocked) position, a movable blocking member **24** covers the plunger pin **23** to thereby prevent the plunger pin from being moved by the lock mechanism from the retracted (unlocked) position to the extended (locked) position. As best shown in FIG. 6, strike plate **32** has a hole, opening, recess or the like feature **33** formed in a topside **31** of the strike plate to receive the plunger pin **23** of the lock housing **22** in the extended (locked) position. Strike plate **32** further comprises opposed outwardly depending arms **36** that engage corresponding grooves **26** formed in the underside **21** of the lock housing **22**. When cabinet lock **20** moves from the unlocked configuration (FIG. 4) to the locked configuration (FIG. 1), grooves **26** of the lock housing **22** are aligned in receiving relationship with arms **36** of the strike plate **32**.

[0032] As lock housing **22** passes over the strike plate **32** going from the unlocked configuration to the locked configuration, a leading edge **37** (FIG. 6) of the strike plate **32** contacts a protrusion **28** to move the blocking member **24** on the underside **21** of the lock housing **22** away from plunger pin **23** so that the lock mechanism is thereafter permitted to move the plunger pin from the retracted (unlocked) position to the extended (locked) position. When arms **36** of the strike plate **32** are fully received within grooves **26** of the lock housing **22**, feature **33** is aligned with plunger pin **23** so as to receive the plunger pin in the extended (locked) position. As previously mentioned, the cabinet lock **20** is required to receive electrical power transferred from the programmable electronic key **40** before the electronics (i.e. printed circuit board **PCB**) disposed within the lock housing **22** operate the lock mechanism to move the plunger pin **23** from the retracted (unlocked) position to the extended (locked) position. Accordingly, an authorized person, such as a sales associate, must position the transfer probe **45** of the programmable

electronic key **40** within the transfer port **25** of the cabinet lock **20** and depress the actuator button **46** to verify the security code and activate the electronics (i.e. printed circuit board **PCB**) disposed within the lock housing **22** to operate the lock mechanism.

[0033] As previously mentioned, cabinet lock **20** may be provided with an optional visual indicator to indicate the status of the lock mechanism, and thus, the status of the cabinet lock. In particular, the visual indicator may indicate whether the cabinet lock **20** is in a locked configuration (FIG. 1) or an unlocked configuration (FIG. 4). As previously mentioned, screen **28** of transfer port **25** comprises segmented annular portion **30**. As illustrated in FIG. 9, annular portion **30** has at least two distinct segments that are energized for visually indicating the status of the cabinet lock **20**. For example, annular portion **30** may comprise a plurality of smaller segments, indicated generally at **A**, that are separated by a plurality of larger segments, indicated generally at **B**. As shown, an “UNLOCKED” status may be visually indicated by the segments **A** and the segments **B** both not being energized by a suitable display technology (i.e. OFF). Conversely, a “LOCKED” status may be visually indicated by the segments **A** and the segments **B** both being energized by a suitable display technology (i.e. ON). A combination of the segments **A** being energized (i.e. ON) and the segments **B** not being energized (i.e. OFF); or conversely, the segments **B** being energized (i.e. ON) and the segments **A** not being energized (i.e. OFF), may visually indicate an “ERROR” state. An ERROR state may exist, for example, when blocking member **24** overlies plunger pin **23** such that the lock mechanism is unable to move the plunger pin from the retracted (unlocked) position to the extended (locked) position.

[0034] Regardless, segments **A** and segments **B** of the annular portion **30** of the screen **28** of transfer port **25** are electrically connected by conductive traces or wires to leads **38** provided on a distal end of the screen. In turn, leads **38** are electrically connected to the electronics (i.e. printed circuit board **PCB**) disposed within the lock housing **22** of the cabinet lock **20**. A suitable

display technology for energizing/illuminating segments **A** and segments **B** on the annular portion **30** of screen **28** is Electronic Paper Display (EPD), commonly known as “electronic paper,” “e-paper,” “electronic ink” or “e-ink” of the type that is commercially available from E Ink Corporation of Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. Furthermore, the programmable electronic key **40** may be provided with a visible and/or audible indicator for indicating that the cabinet lock **20** has been successfully moved from a locked configuration to an unlocked configuration, or conversely, from an unlocked configuration to a locked configuration. In addition or alternatively, the key **40** may be provided with a continuous or periodic visible and/or audible indicator that indicates the cabinet lock **20** is in an unlocked configuration. Furthermore, the programmable electronic key **40** may provide a distinctly different visible and/or audible indication if the cabinet lock is in an ERROR state, or alternatively, if the key fails for any reason to successfully transfer electrical power from the key to the cabinet lock **20** to operate the lock mechanism of the cabinet lock.

[0035] The exemplary embodiments provided herein also broadly describe a merchandise display security system and method including a programmable electronic key that transfers electrical power to a merchandise security device for use with a merchandise fixture wherein the merchandise security device comprises a lock mechanism that is operated by the electrical power transferred from the key to the security device. The system and method may further comprise an optional programming station operable for programming the electronic key with a security code, for example a Security Disarm Code (SDC). The electronic key and the security device may each be pre-programmed with the same SDC into a respective permanent memory. Alternatively, the electronic key may first be programmed with the SDC by the programming station and the security device may subsequently be programmed with the same SDC by the programming station or by the electronic key. The electronic key may be provisioned with a single-use (i.e. non-rechargeable) internal power source, such as a conventional or extended-life battery. Alternatively, the electronic key may be provisioned

with a multiple-use (i.e. rechargeable) internal power source, such as a conventional capacitor or rechargeable battery.

[0036] In either instance, the internal source of electrical power may be permanent, semi-permanent (i.e. replaceable), or rechargeable, as desired. In the latter instance, the system and method may further comprise an optional charging station with, for example, inductive power transfer capability operable to initially charge and/or to subsequently recharge the internal power source of the electronic key. Furthermore, the electronic key and/or the security device may be provided with only a transient memory, such that the SDC must be reprogrammed periodically. In this instance, the programming station is configured to initially program and to subsequently reprogram the SDC into the electronic key and the security device, or alternatively, the electronic key is operable to initially program and to subsequently reprogram the security device with the SDC. The electronic key is further operable to transfer electrical power to the security device to operate the lock mechanism. In other exemplary embodiments, the electronic key is operable to wirelessly communicate the security code with the security device and to transfer electrical power by induction to operate the lock mechanism of the security device.

[0037] It will be readily apparent to those skilled in the art that the cabinet lock shown and described herein is but one of a number of “electrically passive” merchandise security devices including a lock mechanism that can be configured to be operated by an electronic key in accordance with the invention. By way of example and without limitation, the merchandise security device may be a locking base for securing a merchandise display hook to a display support, such as pegboard, slatwall, bar stock or wire grid, or may be a locking end assembly for preventing the rapid removal of merchandise from the merchandise display hook. Alternatively, the merchandise security device may be a merchandise security display stand comprising a physical lock mechanism for securing the display stand to a display support, such as a table, counter, desk, wall, or other fixed structure. Alternatively, the

merchandise security device may be incorporated into packaging for one or more items of merchandise comprising a lock mechanism for separating the packaging from the merchandise or for removing the merchandise from the packaging. Still further, the merchandise security device may be a conventional door or window lock for preventing access to a room, booth, or enclosure. In any embodiment, the merchandise security device may further comprise an electronic sensor, such as a conventional proximity, limit or contact switch, and an associated electronic monitoring circuit that activates an alarm in response to the switch being actuated or the integrity of the switch or the monitoring circuit being compromised.

That which is claimed is:

1. A merchandise security device (20) for use with a merchandise fixture (10) to protect merchandise (11) from theft, comprising:

a lock housing (22) affixed to the merchandise fixture, the lock housing comprising a lock mechanism (23) that is movable between an unlocked configuration and a locked configuration; and

an electronic key (40) for transferring electrical power to the lock housing to operate the lock mechanism between the unlocked configuration and the locked configuration.

2. A merchandise security device (20) according to claim 1, wherein the electronic key (40) transfers electrical power to the lock housing by inductive transfer.

3. A merchandise security device (40) according to claim 1, wherein the electronic key (40) is programmed with a security code, and wherein the electronic key communicates the security code with the lock housing (22) by wireless communication.

4. A merchandise security device (20) according to claim 3, wherein the electronic key (40) is programmed with a unique security code, and wherein the electronic key is operable to program the lock housing with the unique security code in the event that the lock housing does not have a security code.

5. A merchandise security device (20) according to claim 3, wherein the electronic key (40) communicates the security code with the lock housing (22) by infrared (IR) optical transmission.

6. A merchandise security device (20) according to claim 1, further comprising a strike plate (32) having a topside (31) and a recess (33) formed in the topside, and wherein the lock housing (22) has an underside (21) and the lock mechanism comprises a plunger pin (23) that is moveable between a retracted position in the unlocked configuration and an extended position in the locked configuration with the plunger pin disposed within the recess.

7. A merchandise security device (20) according to claim 1, further comprising an indicator (30) for indicating a state of the lock mechanism (23), the indicator comprising a first segment (A) and a second segment (B) that are configured to be energized to visually indicate the state of the lock mechanism.

8. A merchandise security device (20) according to claim 1, wherein the lock housing (22) defines an interior compartment having electronics (PCB) disposed therein for operating the lock mechanism (23) with the electrical power transferred to the lock housing by the electronic key (40).

9. A merchandise security device (20) according to claim 1, further comprising a strike plate (32) configured to be affixed to a first door (12) of a merchandise display cabinet (10), and wherein the lock housing (22) is configured to be affixed to a second door (14) of the merchandise display cabinet and to be operably coupled with the strike plate in the locked configuration.

10. A merchandise security device (20) according to claim 9, wherein the strike plate (32) comprises a strap (34) that extends from a first surface of the first door (12) to an opposite second surface of the first door and is formed around an edge (13B) of the first door, and wherein the strap is affixed to at least the second surface of the first door.

11. A merchandise security device (20) according to claim 10, wherein the strap (54) of the strike plate (32) is made of a metal sheet having one or more through reliefs (56) such that the strap is sufficiently formable to be formed around the edge (13B) of the first door (12) of the merchandise display cabinet (10) and is sufficiently deformable to defeat an attempt by a potential thief to separate the strike plate from the first door of the merchandise display cabinet.

12. A merchandise security device (20) according to claim 11, wherein the one or more through reliefs (56) define an elongate slot extending in a lengthwise direction of the strap (54) between the strike plate (32) and the edge (13B) of the first door.

13. A method for protecting merchandise (11) from theft, the method comprising:

providing a merchandise security device (20) operable for use with a merchandise fixture (10), the merchandise security device comprising an electrically passive lock mechanism (23);

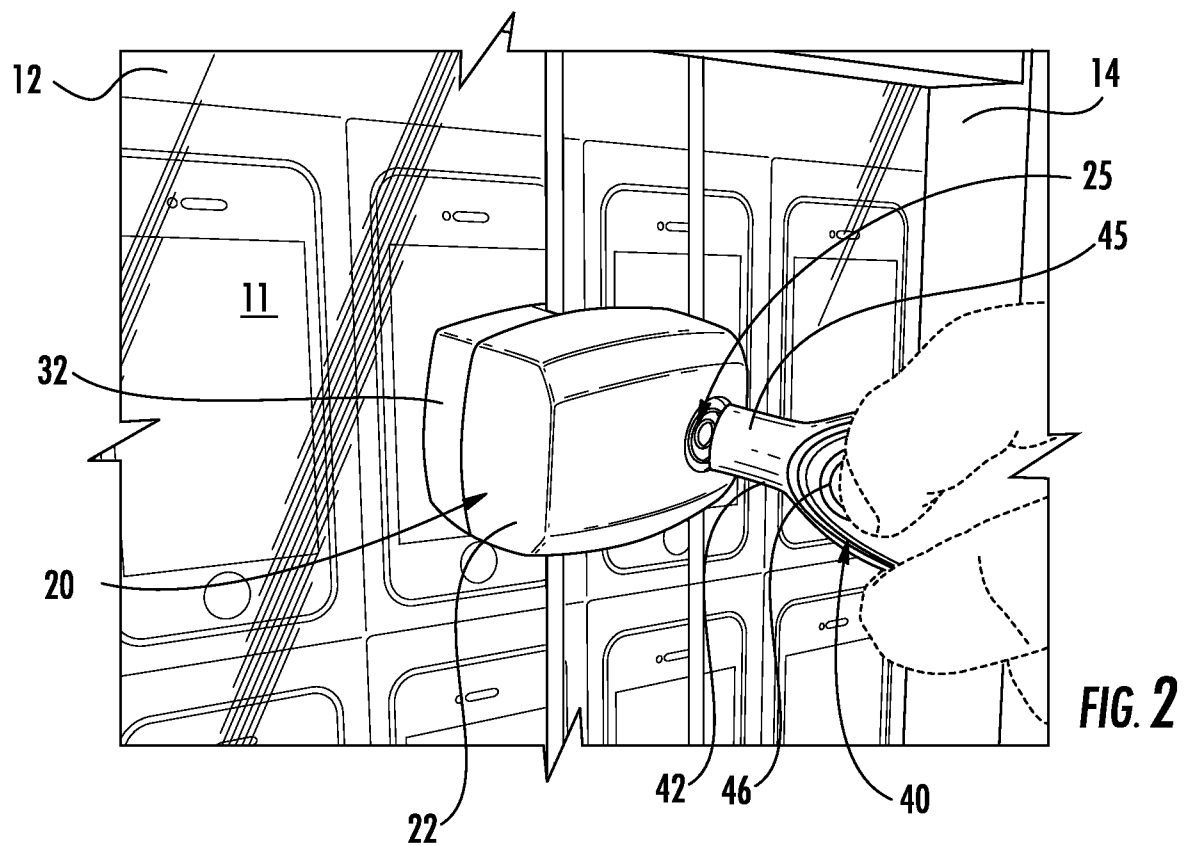
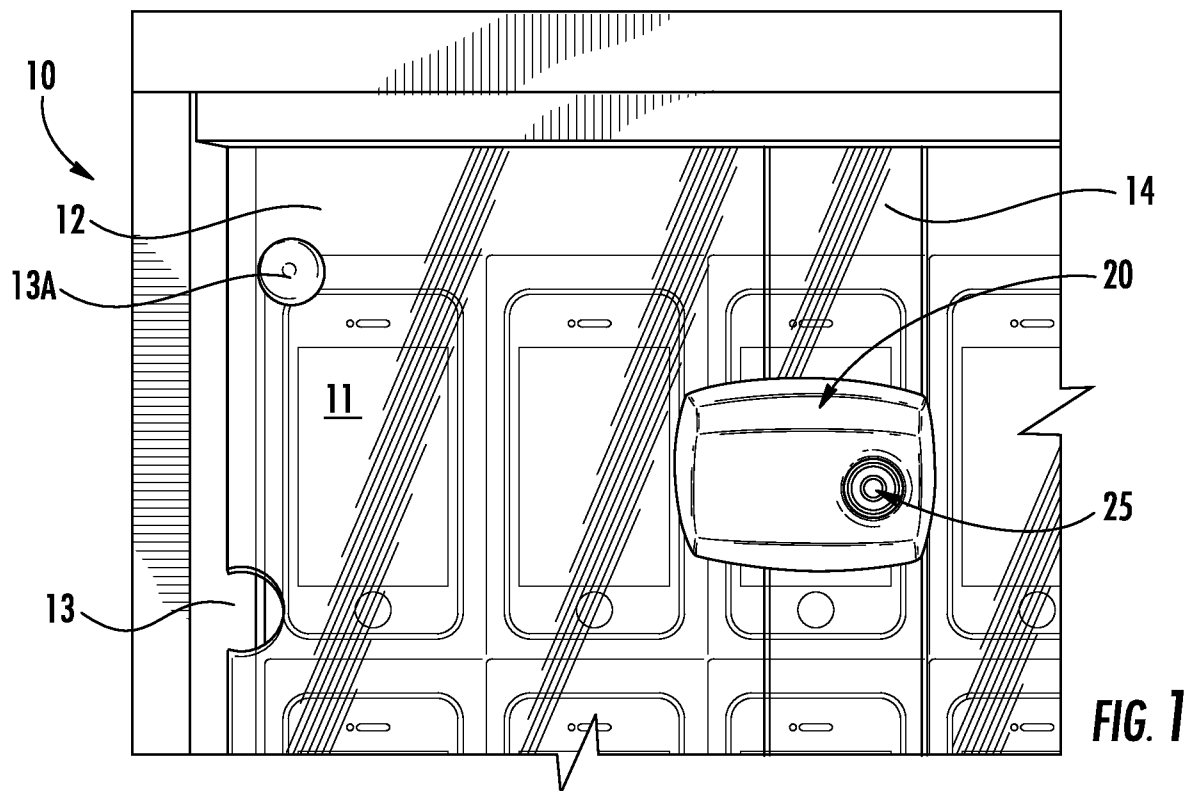
providing an electronic key (40) having an internal source of electrical power; and

using the electronic key to transfer electrical power from the internal source of electrical power to the merchandise security device to operate the lock mechanism between an unlocked configuration and a locked configuration that prevents access to the merchandise.

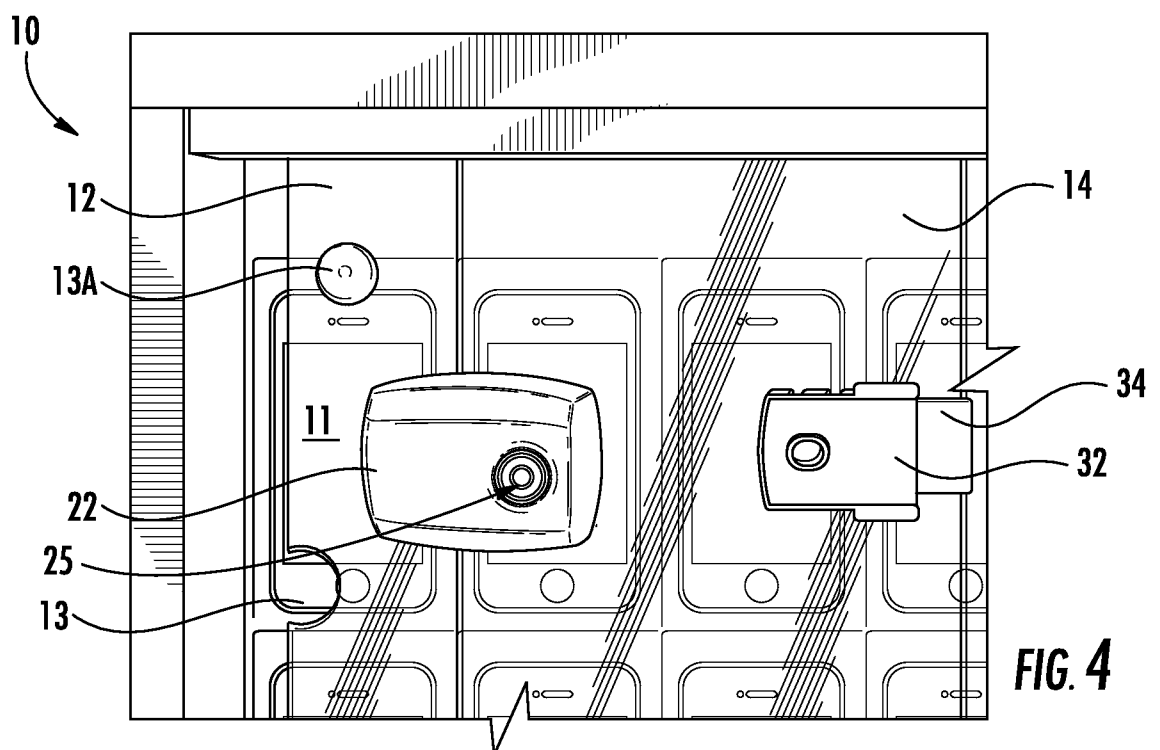
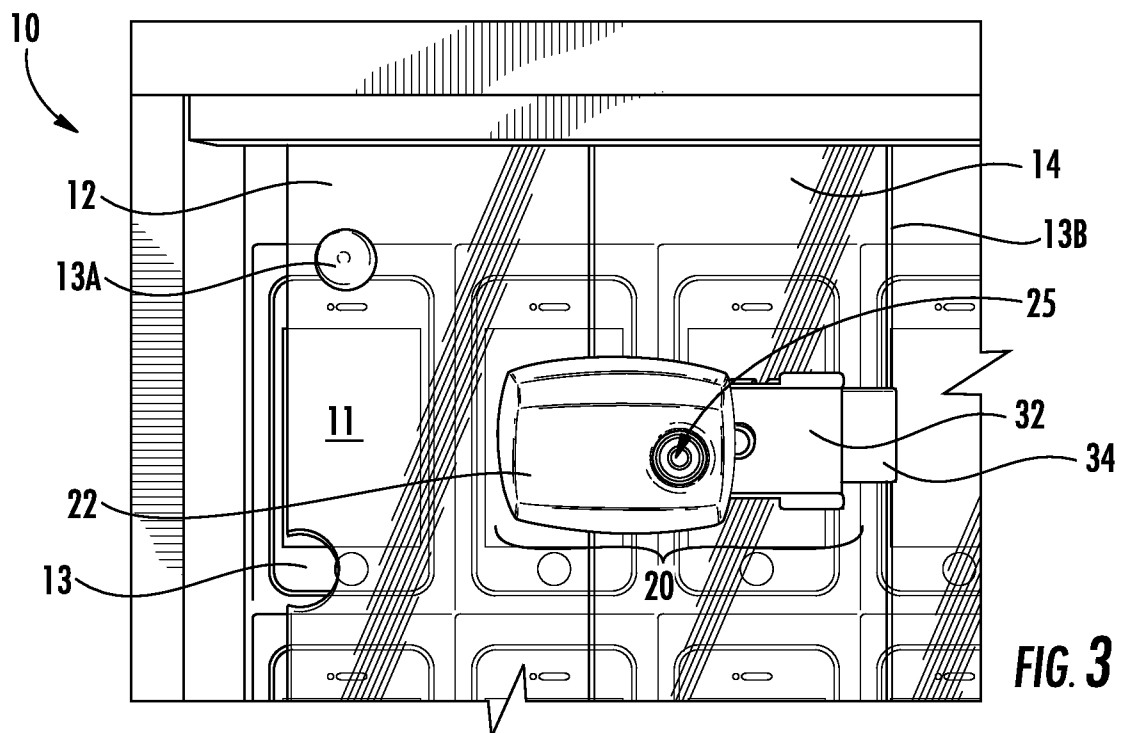
14. A method according to claim 13, wherein using the electronic key (40) to transfer electrical power from the internal source of electrical power to the merchandise security device (20) comprises transferring the electrical power by inductive transfer.

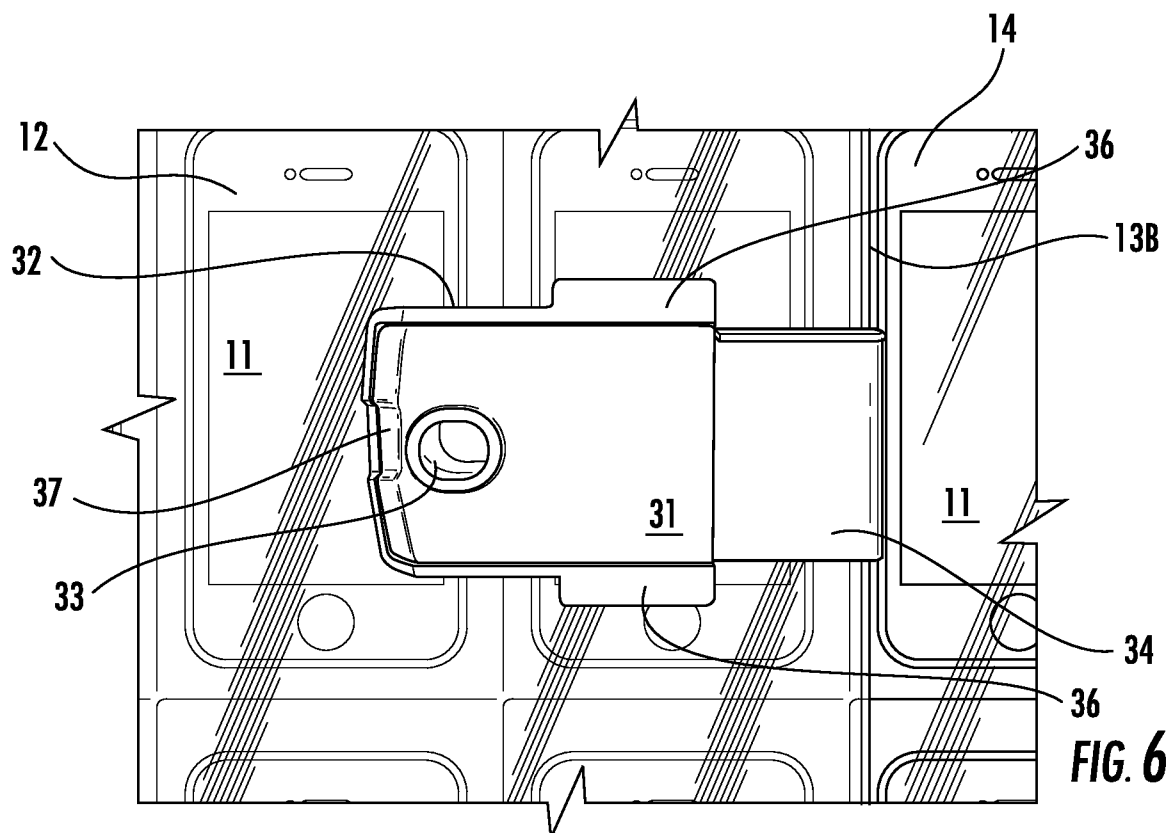
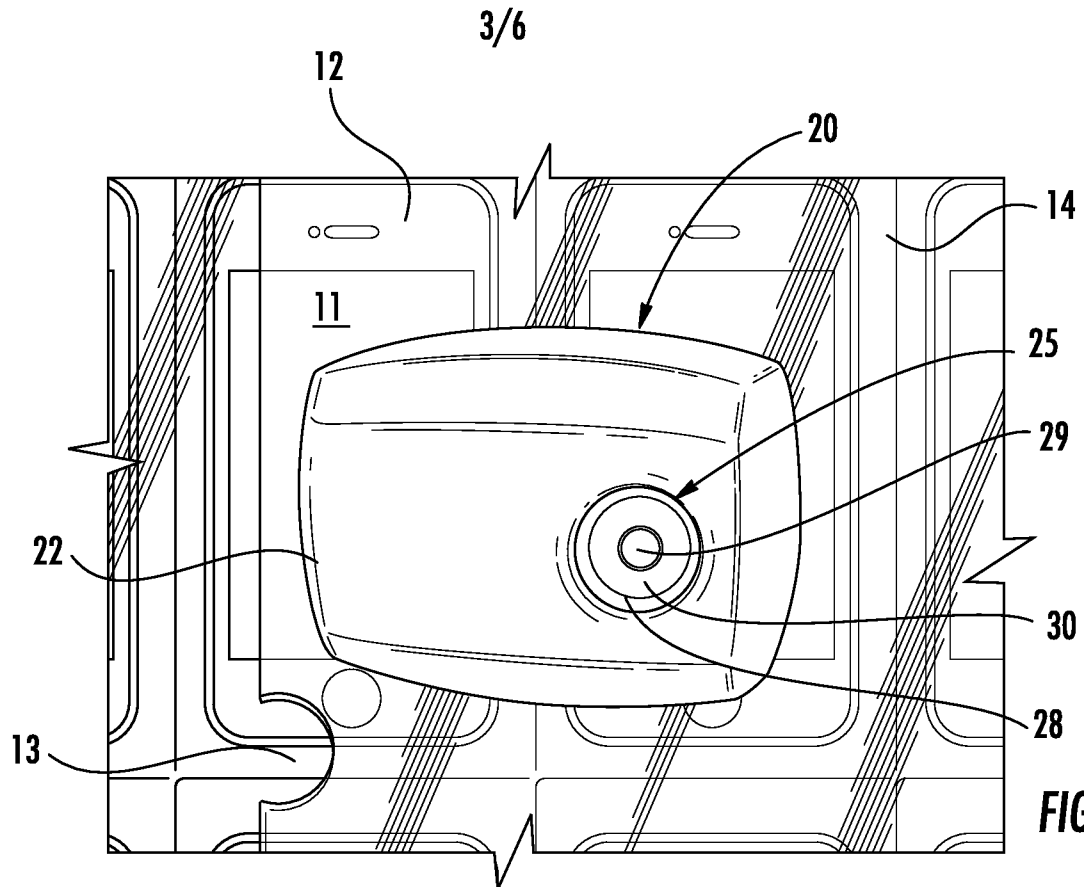
15. A method according to claim 13, further comprising programming the electronic key (40) with a security code, and communicating the security code between the electronic key and the merchandise security device (20).

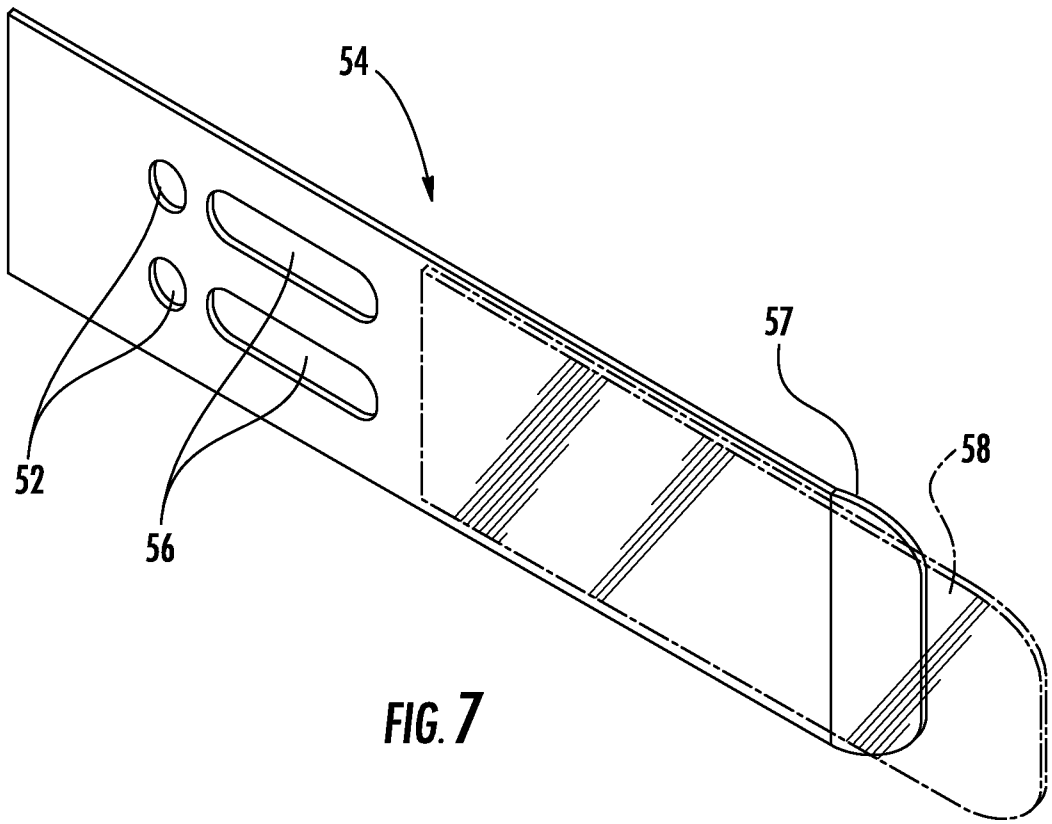
1/6



2/6







5/6

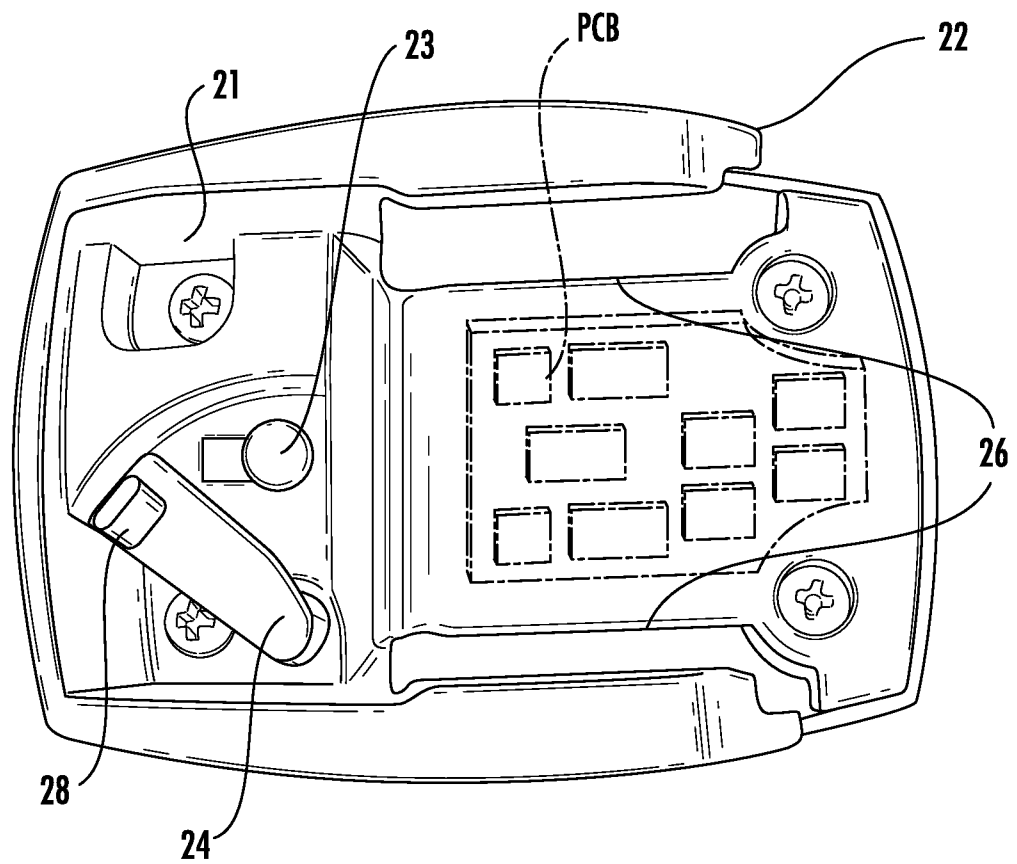


FIG. 8

6/6

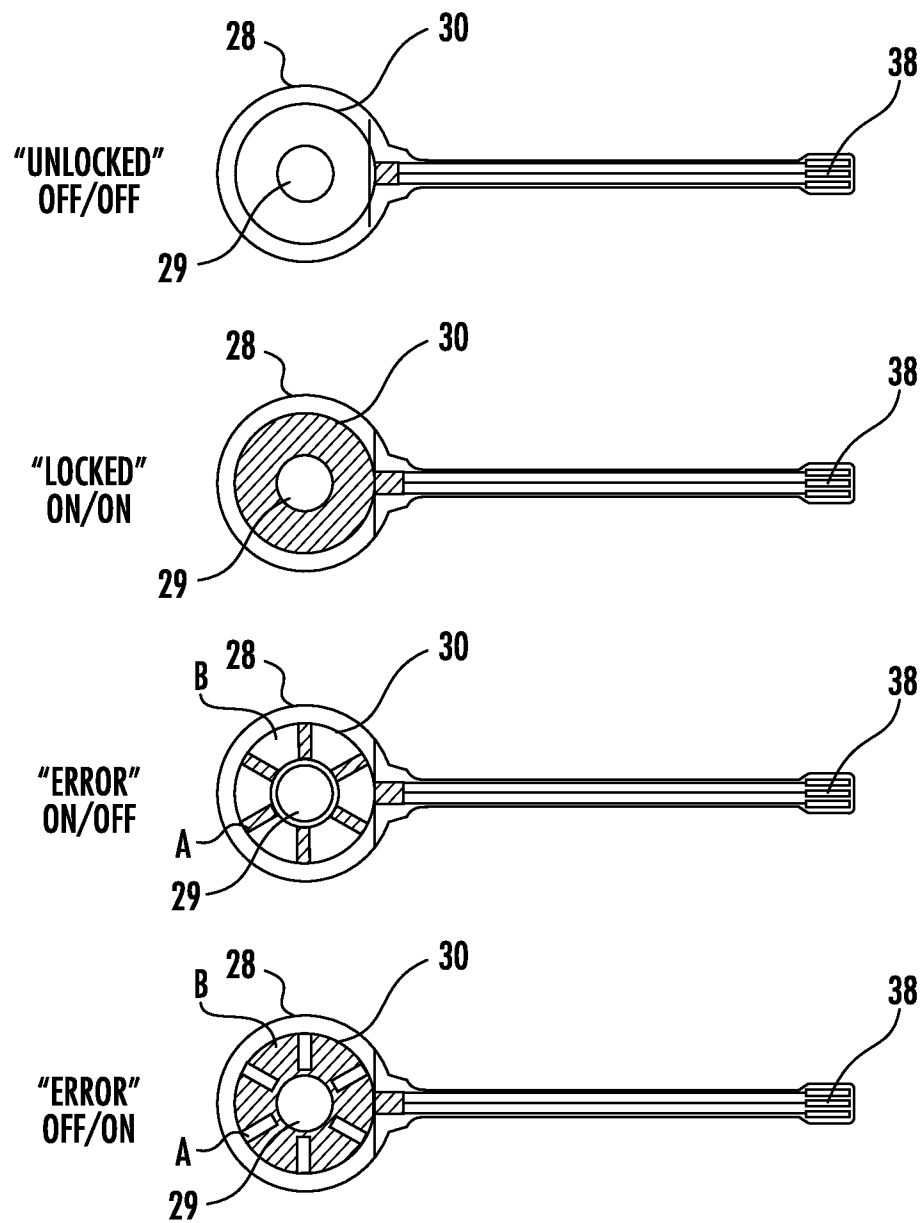


FIG. 9

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US2012/057784**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER*****E05B 65/46(2006.01)i, E05B 47/00(2006.01)i***

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)

E05B 65/46; E05B 49/00; E05B 47/00

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

Korean utility models and applications for utility models

Japanese utility models and applications for utility models

(Chinese Patents and application for patent)

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

eKOMPASS(KIPO internal) & Keywords:cabinet,lock,program,electronic,key

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X A	US 2009-0249846 A1 (GOKCEBAY ASIL T.) 08 October 2009 See column 51, claims 21-25 and figures 1-17.	1-5,13-15 6-12
A	WO 92-07156 A1 (INTELLIKEY CORPORATION) 30 April 1992 See claims 1-67 and figures 1-20.	1-15
A	US 05848541A A (GLICK; MARK et al.) 15 December 1998 See claims 1-16 and figures 6,7.	1-15
A	WO 02-42584 A1 (ZHAI, XIAO, MING) 30 May 2002 See abstract.	1-15

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.☒ See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

27 DECEMBER 2012 (27.12.2012)

Date of mailing of the international search report

28 DECEMBER 2012 (28.12.2012)

Name and mailing address of the ISA/KR

Korean Intellectual Property Office
189 Cheongsu-ro, Seo-gu, Daejeon Metropolitan
City, 302-701, Republic of Korea

Facsimile No. 82-42-472-7140

Authorized officer

LEE, Sun Woo

Telephone No. 82-42-481-5980



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No.

PCT/US2012/057784

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 2009-0249846 A1	08.10.2009	CA 2653935 A1 EP 2313582 A1 GB 2451988 A US 2007-0277571 A1 WO 2007-143142 A2 WO 2007-143142 A3 WO 2009-154757 A1	13.12.2007 27.04.2011 18.02.2009 06.12.2007 13.12.2007 13.12.2007 23.12.2009
WO 92-07156 A1	30.04.1992	AU 8932291 A CN 1144548 A0 EP 0746662 A1 EP 0746662 B1 US 05337588A A US 05507162A A US 05685182A A WO 92-07156A1 WO 95-20088 A1	20.05.1992 05.03.1997 22.08.2001 02.11.2006 16.08.1994 16.04.1996 11.11.1997 30.04.1992 27.07.1995
US 05848541A A	15.12.1998	JP 07-193242 A US 05510275A A US 05749253A A US 05777363A A US 05823027A A US 05848541A A US 06064316A A	28.07.1995 23.04.1996 12.05.1998 07.07.1998 20.10.1998 15.12.1998 16.05.2000
WO 02-42584 A1	30.05.2002	AT 434700 T AU 2002-21501 A1 AU 2002-221501 B2 AU 2002-221501 B2 AU 2150102 A CA 2429586 A1 CN 1205401 C CN 1205401 C0 CN 1354314 A0 CN 1404543 A0 DE 60139079 D1 EP 1338734 A1 EP 1338734 A4 EP 1338734 B1 JP 04-253186 B2 JP 2004-514080 A JP 2004-514080 T JP 2004-514080 T US 2004-0027236 A1 US 7212099 B2 WO 02-42584A1	15.07.2009 03.06.2002 13.09.2007 13.09.2007 03.06.2002 30.05.2002 01.06.2005 08.06.2005 19.06.2002 19.03.2003 06.08.2009 27.08.2003 06.12.2006 24.06.2009 08.04.2009 13.05.2004 13.05.2004 13.05.2004 12.02.2004 01.05.2007 30.05.2002