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SECURITY TAG

The present invention relates to a security tag, particularly to a security tag which can be attached to garments, items of clothing, handbags, shoes, sunglasses and other items of merchandise.

There is a major need for an improved security tag which can be used not only in shops and other retail premises but can also be attached to items purchased over the internet and delivered by mail or other delivery services to a customer. Such purchases can be returned by customers if not the correct size, not to their liking or if not satisfied with the product. The difficulty with such returns, is that the potential customers can use the item or wear it before they decide to return it, thereby diminishing its resale value. Such a practice is known in the industry as "wardrobing".

The object of the invention is to alleviate the problems associated with current security tags and to provide an effective security tag, particularly though not exclusively, for internet purchases.

The present invention provides a security tag for attachment to an item comprising a pair of flat panels joined together by a flexible hinge, each panel having an inner surface and an outer surface, the panels being foldable about the flexible hinge with the inner surfaces of the panels abutting each other with one panel having a retainer for a flexible tie of plastics material and the other panel having an orifice in alignment with the retainer whereby the security tag can be removed by breaking the plastics tie.

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The breakable plastics tie may be a narrow cross-section tie insertable into a garment using a needle applicator.

Ideally the plastics tie is manufactured from a bright or unique non-standard colour.

Alternatively, the breakable plastics tie is pivotably attached to one panel and is
5 engagable with a retainer in the outer panel.

Conveniently, the retainer has a pair of security tabs at the side which prevent access to its interior.

10 The invention will hereinafter be more particularly described with reference to the accompanying drawings, which show by way of example, two embodiments of a security tag according to the invention. In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a plan view of the inner surfaces of a first embodiment of security tag
15 according to the invention;

Figure 2 is a side view of the first embodiment of security tag;

Figure 3 is an end view of the first embodiment of security tag;
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Figure 4 is a plan view of the outer surfaces of the first embodiment of security tag;

Figure 5 is a perspective view from above of the inner surfaces of the first embodiment of security tag;
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Figure 6 is a perspective view from below of the outer surfaces of the first embodiment of security tag;

Figure 7 is a plan view of the outer surfaces of the second embodiment of security tag according to the invention;

- 5 Figure 8 is a side view of the second embodiment of security tag according to the invention;

Figure 9 is an end view of the second embodiment of security tag;

- 10 Figure 10 is a perspective view of the inner surfaces of the second embodiment of security tag; and

Figure 11 is a perspective view of the outer surfaces of the security tag.

- 15 Referring to the drawings and initially to Figures 1 to 6, the first embodiment of security tag 100 comprises two flat panels 102 and 104 joined together by a hinge 106 about which they can be folded to overlap one another with the inner surfaces 108 and 110 respectively contacting the upper and lower surfaces of the garment (not shown).
- 20 On the inner surface of 108 is a panel 109 for receiving an RS adhesive security label (not shown) which would not be visible when the panels 102 and 104 are folded over. On the flat panel 102, is a receptacle 112 which can be closed over by a lid 113. An orifice 116 on the panel 104 aligns up with the receptacle 112 and lid 113. Side holes 117 are provided on the receptacle 112 and complementary tabs 119 are provided on the lid 113.
- 25 Security tabs 115 prevent access to the receptacle 112 by a toothpick or the like. In order to attach the security tag to an item of clothing, a breakable tie of plastics materials (not shown) is inserted through the orifice 116 with one end of the tie lying in a protected zone

within the receptacle 112 preventing access to that end, the tie being held between one of the holes 117 and the tab 119. The tie will be manufactured in non-standard colours such as bright pink, green, yellow or other non-standard colours. In this way, if a customer breaks the tie and replaces it with a standard tie, it will be immediately apparent that the security tag has been tampered with. Also when the security tag is attached to an item of clothing in a shop, the RS adhesive security label fixed to the panel 109 cannot be accessed without first breaking the plastics tie securing the two panels 102 and 104 together.

Referring now to Figures 7 to 11, the second embodiment of security tag 200 comprises two flat panels 202 and 204 joined together by a hinge 206 about which they can be folded to overlap one another with the inner surfaces 208 and 210 respectively contacting one another.

On the inner surface 208 is a panel 209 for receiving an RS adhesive security label (not shown) which would not be visible when the panels 202 and 204 are folded over. On the flat panel 202, is a pivotable securing element 212, the barbed end 212 of which can be inserted into a hollow receiver 215 on the panel 204 which aligns up with the barbed end 213 when the panels 202 and 204 are folded over.

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In order to attach the security tag to an item of merchandise such as a bag, shoe, sunglasses or the like, the breakable securing element 212 of plastics material is inserted into the hollow receiver 215 preventing access to the barbed end 213. In this way if a customer breaks the securing element 212 to remove the security tag from the item of merchandise it will be immediately apparent that the security tag has been tampered with. Also when the security tag is attached to an item of merchandise in a shop, the RS

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adhesive security label fixed to the panel 209 cannot be accessed without first breaking the securing element 212 securing the two panels 202 and 204 together.

It is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the specific details described herein which are given by way of example only and that various modifications and alterations are possible without departing from the scope of this invention.

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CLAIMS

1. A security tag for attachment to an item comprising a pair of flat panels, namely a first panel and a second panel, each panel having an inner surface and an outer surface, with the inner surfaces of the panels adapted to abut each other, with the first panel having
 5 a retainer for a flexible tie of plastics material and the second panel having an orifice in alignment with the retainer whereby the security tag can only be removed by breaking the plastics tie.

2. A security tag for attachment to an item as claimed in Claim 1 in which the pair of
 10 flat panels are connected together at one edge by a flexible hinge to enable the flat panels to overlie one another;

the breakable plastics tie is a narrow cross-section tie insertable, through the panel into a garment and into the retainer on the first panel using a needle applicator; and

the plastics tie is manufactured from a bright or a unique non-standard colour or
 15 shape not used in the retail industry.

3. A security tag for attachment to an item as claimed in Claim 1 or Claim 2, in which the breakable plastics tie is pivotably attached to the second panel and is engagable with a retainer in the first panel.

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4. A security tag for attachment to an item as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the retainer has a pair of security tabs at the side which prevent access to its interior; and

the retainer is in the form of a receptacle or hollow receiver.

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5. A security tag as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in combination with a breakable tie of plastics material, in which a first end of the tie is adapted to lie within the receptacle.

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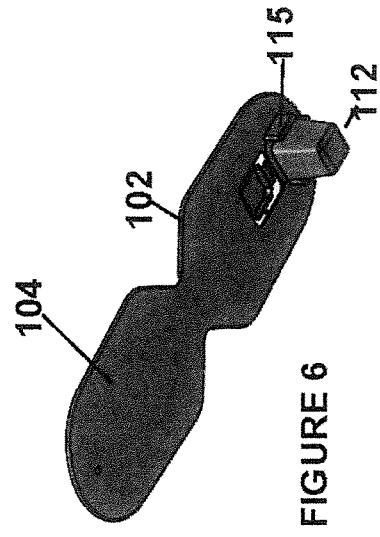
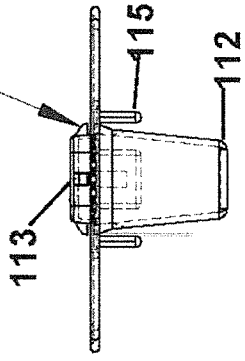
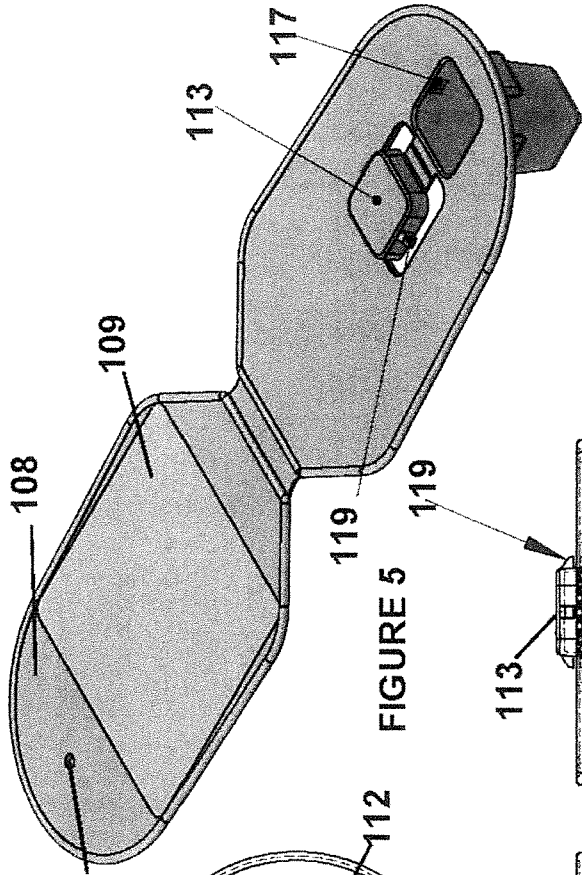
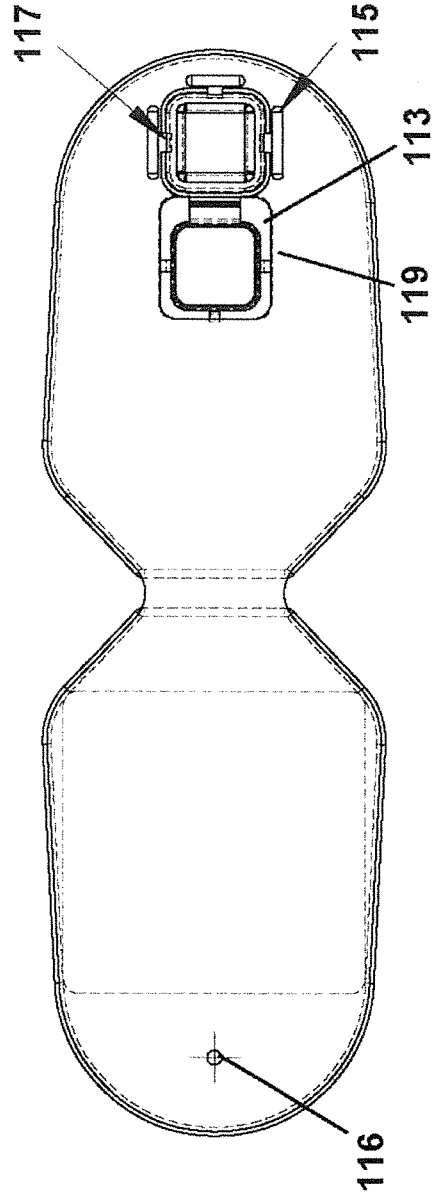
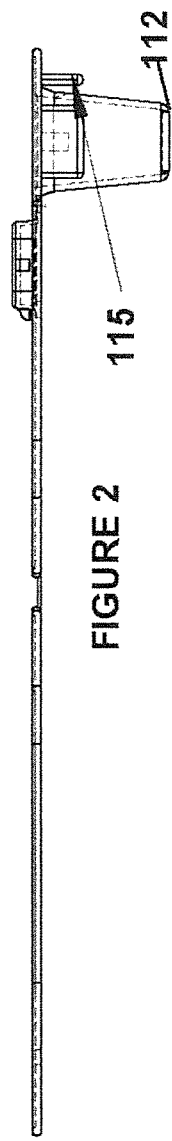
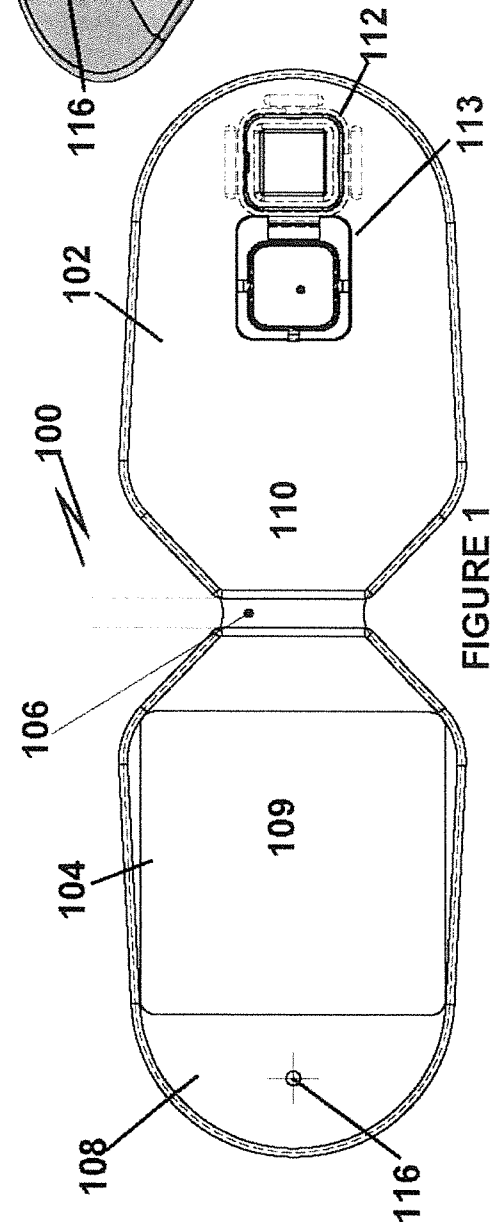
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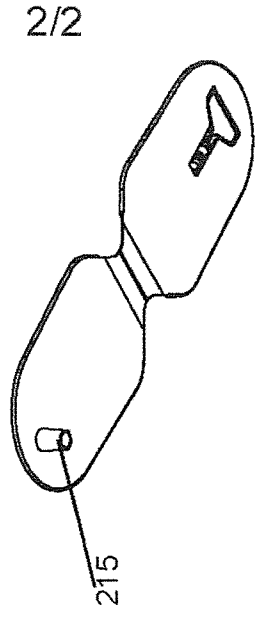
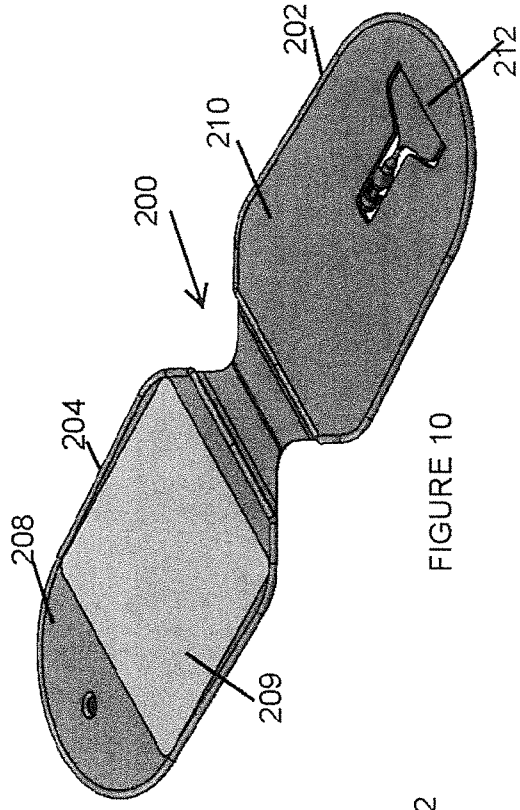
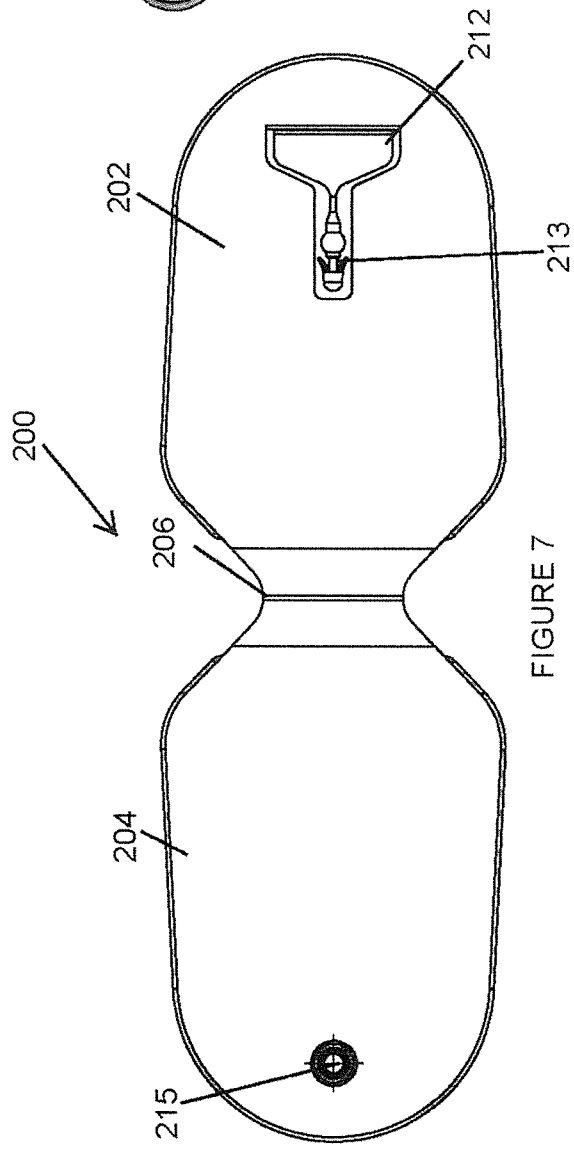
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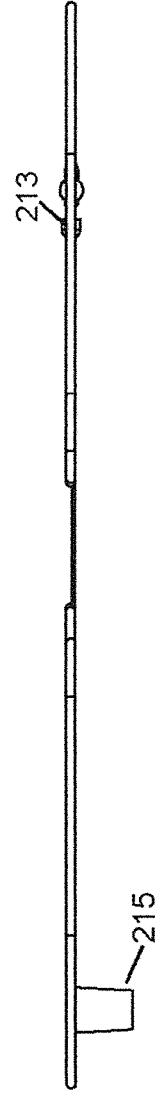


FIGURE 8

FIGURE 9