United States Patent

Cunningham

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[54] LAMINATED INDEX TAB CONSTRUCTION

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **40/23 A**

[51] **Int. Cl.** **G09f 3/16**

[58] **Field of Search** .....40/2, 23, 23 A, 125, 359, 360

[56] **References Cited**

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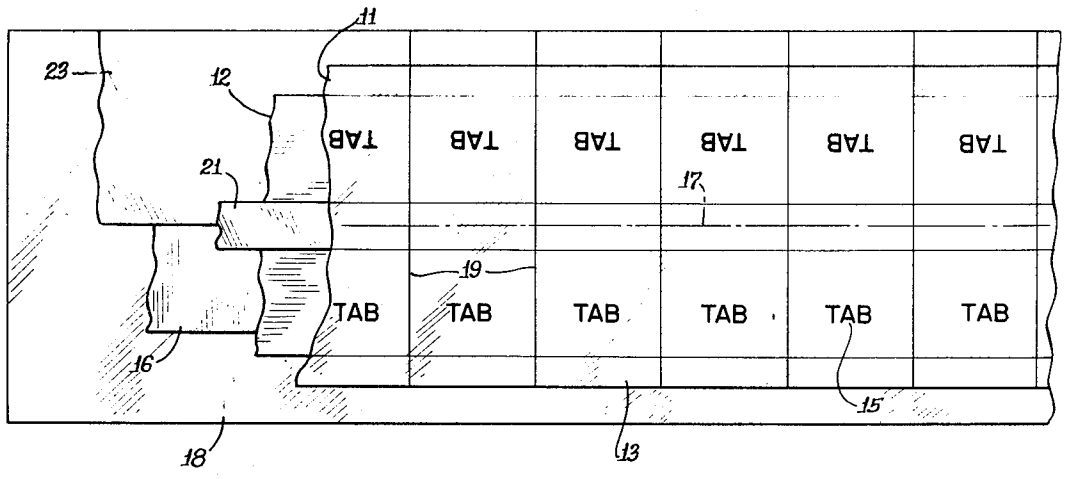
[57] **ABSTRACT**

Laminated index tab with top laminate of transparent film having pressure-sensitive adhesive on lower surface, an intermediate legend laminate with pressure-sensitive adhesive on its lower surface and narrower than top laminate, whereby adhesive-coated skirt portions are provided for attachment of tab to opposed surfaces of a receiving sheet, and a lower opaque filler extending from center laterally short of edge of tab to define one skirt portion, with its inner edge facilitating folding of tab during mounting, all mounted on carrier strip. Tab edge color coding provided by color ink on legend laminate or strip of color film between latter and top laminate, and optional strip of partial release paper in plane of filler extending from inner edge of latter past skirt portion at that edge of tab to facilitate removal of tab from carrier and attachment of other skirt portion to a sheet requiring additional processing with tab unfolded.

6 Claims, 3 Drawing Figures



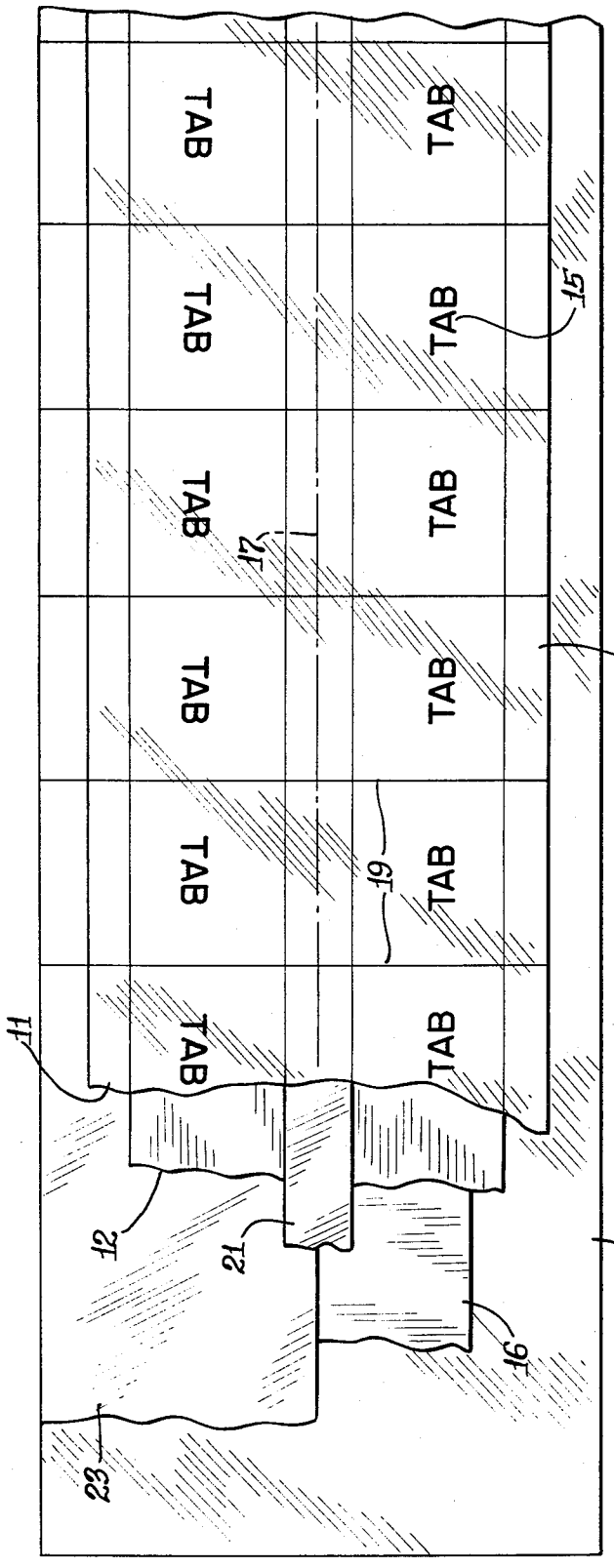


Fig. 1.

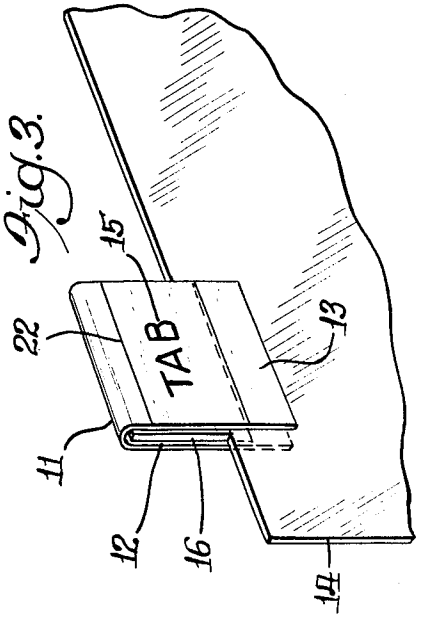


Fig. 3.

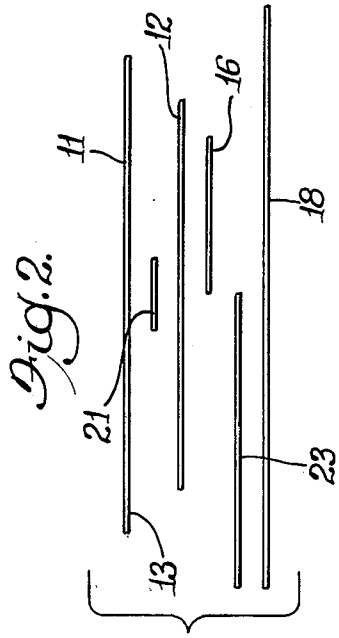


Fig. 2.

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LAMINATED INDEX TAB CONSTRUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to index tabs, and more particularly to tabs having transparent skirt portions with pressure-sensitive adhesive on their lower surfaces adapted to be adhered to opposed surfaces of the edge portion of a receiving sheet.

2. Description of the Prior Art

The closet prior art structure is thought to be that disclosed in my U. S. Pat. No. 2,893,144 which comprises a base strip of transparent film having pressure-sensitive adhesive on one surface and a pair of parallel filler members adhered by that adhesive to the base strip and spaced from each other along the longitudinal center line of the base strip to define a central hinge portion and exposed lateral wing portions of the base. The spacing of the filler members facilitates folding of the base member along its longitudinal center to enable the wing portions to be secured by pressure only to opposed surfaces of the edge portion of a receiving sheet without imposing any undue stress on the central part of the base strip. In that index tab, the desired indicia are printed upon the surfaces of the filler members adhered to the base strip for display on both sides of the mounted tab.

While those tabs are far superior to their predecessors, they still are somewhat bulky, the stiffening or filler members being substantially twice as thick in the mounted tab as the receiving sheet. That is of major importance when the receiving sheet is part of a bound volume and it is desired to use a large number of index tabs therewith. If a single filler of substantially the thickness of the receiving sheet were to be used instead of those parallel filler members, however, it would be necessary to print the indicia on both sides of it.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention obviates such difficulties by employing a single opaque stiffener or filler which is approximately the same thickness as the sheet receiving the tab, together with an intermediate legend laminate of film or paper between a top transparent film laminate and the filler. Both the top and the intermediate laminates have pressure-sensitive adhesive on their lower surfaces, with the intermediate laminate being narrower than the top laminate to provide adhesive-coated skirt portions for attachment to opposed surfaces of the receiving sheet, and the indicia to be displayed by a mounted tab being imprinted on the upper surface of the intermediate or legend laminate. The outer edge of the filler laminate is disposed inwardly of one edge of the legend laminate to define one of the skirt portions, and its inner edge is disposed approximately along the longitudinal center of the legend laminate to facilitate folding thereover of the other half of the tab during mounting on a receiving sheet.

The invention further contemplates tab edge color coding by means of color ink applied along the center portion of the legend laminate or a color film with pressure-sensitive adhesive on its lower surface disposed between the top and intermediate laminates. It also includes a partial release laminate interposed between the legend laminate and a tab-supporting carrier from a line adjacent the inner edge of the filler laminate and extending laterally therefrom away from the latter past one of the skirt portions to facilitate removal from the carrier of the tab and its attachment by pressure applied to the other skirt portion to a sheet requiring additional processing with the index tab unfolded.

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a plan view of a strip of index tabs with end portions of different laminates cut away to disclose lower ones;

FIG. 2 is an exploded end view, as seen from the left side of FIG. 1, showing the lateral relationship of the different laminates; and

FIG. 3 is a perspective view of one of the tabs mounted on a receiving sheet, with the edge coding provided by color ink applied to the legend laminate.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

As illustrated in the drawings, the present index tab construction comprises a top laminate **11** of transparent film or paper having a coating of pressure-sensitive adhesive on its lower surface. This preferably is the well-known "Scotch" tape made by Minnesota Mining and Mfg. Co. with polyester film.

An intermediate or legend laminate **12** of printable paper or film and either transparent or opaque, with pressure-sensitive adhesive on its lower surface, is adhered to the lower surface of the top laminate **11**. The legend laminate **12** preferably is narrower than the top laminate **11**, whereby laterally extending edge portions of the latter extend beyond the lateral edges of the legend laminate to provide adhesive-coated skirt portions **13** for attaching the index tab to opposed surfaces of a receiving sheet, as designated by reference numeral **14** in FIG. 3.

The legend laminate **12** preferably has pre-printed indicia **15** on its upper surface for display through the transparent top laminate **11** in opposite directions when the tab is mounted on a receiving sheet **14**, but it may comprise an impression-sensitive sheet of white coated carbon paper or well-known carbonless paper having dispersed pellets of encapsulated dye and a chemical reacting therewith when pressure from type or a stylus ruptures the pellets.

A single opaque filler laminate **16** of paper or film, and preferably of substantially the same thickness as the receiving sheet **14**, is adhered to the lower surface of the legend laminate **12** to serve as a stiffener and as a background for the indicia **15** when the legend laminate **12** is transparent. This filler laminate **16** has its outer edge disposed adjacent one outer edge of the legend laminate to expose the one skirt portion **13**, and its inner edge is spaced inwardly from the other edge of the legend laminate preferably a distance approximately one-half the lateral width of legend laminate **12**. The inner edge of filler laminate **16** thus substantially coincides with the longitudinal center line of the tab structure in its preferred embodiments of the drawings, but in any event it defines an edge to facilitate folding over of the top and legend laminates **11** and **12** during a tab mounting operation, even if for any reason one portion or leg of the index tab is made longer or laterally wider than the other.

In the embodiment of FIGS. **1** and **2** it will be seen that the two leg portions of the index tab are substantially identical and extend laterally for the same

distances from the longitudinal center line 17. It also will be noted that the laminates 11, 12 and 16 preferably are made from superposed strips of appropriate materials overlying and removably mounted in well-known manner upon a carrier 18 comprising a strip of suitable release paper wider than, and extending laterally beyond, the widest or top laminate 11. The individual index tabs thus mounted on the carrier 18 are defined by die cutting along lateral lines 19 through all of the laminates down to the carrier 18, as shown in FIG. 1.

Tab edge color coding means is provided by incorporating a strip of color film 21 along the longitudinal center between the top laminate 11 and the legend laminate 12, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, with that color strip preferably having pressure-sensitive adhesive on its lower surface. Or such edge color coding means may be in the form of the modification of FIG. 3, wherein a strip of color ink 22 similar in location to the color film 21 is applied to the upper surface of the legend laminate 12 or to the lower surface of the top laminate 11.

The individual index tabs readily may be removed selectively from the carrier 18 and applied to the desired edge portion of a receiving sheet 14 in the following simple manner. With the tab when removed from carrier 18 still flat, as it was when mounted on the carrier 18, one of the skirt portions 13 is pressed against the obverse surface of the receiving sheet 14, normal or vertical alignment being assured by positioning the outer edge of the filler laminate 16 along, and in contact with, the edge of the receiving sheet. Then the free end of the tab so partially affixed to the receiving sheet 14 is folded back over the inner edge of the filler laminate 16, and the other skirt portion 13 pressed against the reverse surface of the receiving sheet, as shown in FIG. 3.

When it is desired to use the index tabs with receiving sheets in a process requiring additional steps with the index tabs flat or unfolded, for example, in a machine operation wherein it is advantageous to apply the tabs flat to the obverse sides of receiving sheets on which subsequent operations are to be performed before the tabs can be secured to the reverse sides of the sheets, an additional partial release laminate 23 in the form of a strip of well-known release paper is interposed, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, between the carrier 18 and that half of the laminates 11 and 12 not overlying the filler laminate 16. This partial release strip 23 is for the purpose of protecting the pressure-sensitive adhesive of that half of the tab when it is removed from the carrier 18, and it is preferred that such partial release strip extend laterally from the inner edge of the filler laminate 16 outwardly beyond the outer edge of the top laminate 11. Since the tabs require this partial release 23 to be retained thereon after removal from the carrier 18, it will be understood that the die cutting on lines 19 also will go through the laminate 23, as shown in FIG. 1.

I claim:

1. A laminated index tab construction, comprising a top laminate of transparent film having a coating of pressure-sensitive adhesive on its lower surface, a legend laminate of printable film having a coating of pressure-sensitive adhesive on its lower surface, said legend laminate being narrower than said top laminate whereby laterally extending edge portions of said top laminate extend beyond the lateral edges of said legend laminate to provide adhesive-coated skirt portions for attachment of said index tab to opposed surfaces of a receiving sheet, an opaque filler laminate attached to the lower surface of said legend laminate along one lateral portion thereof and having an outer edge disposed adjacent one outer edge of said legend laminate and an inner edge spaced inwardly from the other edge of said legend laminate a distance approximately one-half the lateral width of said legend laminate, and a carrier of release paper wider than said top laminate for carrying said laminated tab structure thereon for easy removal to enable pressure attachment of one skirt portion of said top laminate to the obverse surface of said receiving sheet, folding of said top laminate over said inner edge of said filler laminate and pressure attachment of the other said skirt portion of said top laminate to the reverse surface of said receiving sheet.

2. A laminated index tab construction according to claim 1, wherein color coding means is positioned between said top and legend laminates adjacent and extending laterally in both directions from said inner edge of said filler laminate.

3. A laminated index tab construction according to claim 2, wherein said color coding means comprises color ink applied to said legend laminate.

4. A laminated index tab construction according to claim 2, wherein said color coding means comprises a color film with pressure-sensitive adhesive on its lower surface.

5. In a laminated index tab construction according to claim 1, a partial release laminate interposed between said legend laminate and said carrier from a line adjacent the inner edge of said filler laminate and extending laterally therefrom past one of said skirt portions to facilitate removal from said carrier of said tab structure and attachment thereof by pressure applied to the other thus exposed skirt portion of said top laminate to a sheet requiring additional processing with the index tab unfolded.

6. In a laminated index tab construction according to claim 5, color coding means positioned between said top and legend laminates and extending laterally in both directions from said inner edge of said filler laminate.

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