A stand-alone dispensable bag and method for packaging prescription drugs, cosmetics, and small objects wherein the bag comprises a bag made of plastic. The bag has a flap which covers an opening of the bag. The bag has a bottom gusset so that the bag can open flat on the bottom.
PLASTIC BAG DESIGNED FOR DISPENSING

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of patent application Ser. No. 11/068,708 filed Mar. 1, 2005.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates to a stand-alone dispensable bag and method for packaging prescription drugs, cosmetics, and small objects wherein the bag comprises a bag made of plastic. The bag has an opening below the handles which can be sealed. The bag has a bottom gusset so that the bag can open flat on the bottom.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Retail establishments typically use a plurality of different size bags for packaging their products sold to consumers. The bags are usually stored on a shelf or other support member provided for all sizes and shapes of bags.

[0004] In the prescription drug area conventional practice is to use paper bags for the distribution of products. These bags are opaque. They do not stand up by themselves, and must be held up manually when placing products in the bag.

[0005] U.S. Pat. Nos. 5,184,728 and 5,332,097 to Wile teach a plurality of the same size bags being held on a hook located inside of a paperboard cartridge. The bags are of the "T-shirt" type having perforations in the lip so the bags can be torn off of the hook.

[0006] U.S. Pat. No. 5,301,832 to Daniels teaches a rack for dispensing plastic bags. Various size bags are draped over a rod and held in stationary wire loop hooks. Each of the various size bags are disposed one on top of each other to form a stack of bags such that the body portions of the bags connected to the bag handles form a stack on the rod. Because of this arrangement, Daniels must provide louvered surfaces on each of the bags so that the bags located in the stack do not adhere to an adjacent bag when being removed from the rod. In addition, the bags are draped over the rod, the closure portions of each of the different size bags must be attached to a specific one of the hook loops which makes the mounting of the bags in the bag holder difficult. Furthermore, the top bags must be removed in order to replace the bottom bags.

[0007] Million, U.S. Pat. No. 3,312,339 and Dinges, U.S. Pat. No. 3,454,166, merely teach wicket for holding plastic bags having a pair of holes near the handles. With the device of Dinges, two different size bags are placed under the same hooks. Because the two different size bags are stacked on top of each other in Dinges, a large bag being removed has a tendency to adhere to an adjacent smaller bag and inadvertently remove several of the adjacent smaller bags. This effectively limits the number of different size bags to be held by the Dinges device. Furthermore, the top bags must be removed in order to replace the bottom bags. In addition, the wickets in both the Million and Dinges devices must be removed from a support base to mount additional bags on the wickets.

[0008] U.S. Pat. No. 5,871,115 relates to an apparatus for supporting and dispensing articles such as bags, and more particularly plastic "T-shirt" type bags having perforations allowing the bags to be easily removed from the apparatus.

[0009] U.S. Pat. No. 5,419,437 relates to a snap and fill plastic film bag and a process of opening and placing product in the plastic bags. A reclosable zipper is provided at the opening of the bag leading to the bag cavity. A lip extends from the front wall above the reclosable zipper and a header portion extends from the back wall above the reclosable zipper. A part of the header portion is supported on a support structure for carrying the bag and a perforation is provided on the header portion above the reclosable zipper. The bags are initially closed and, during the process of opening and placing the product therein, the operator grips the bag front wall rip and by pulling the lip away from the support structure, the zipper profiles are separated and opens the bag. Further pulling of the lip from the support structure causes the severing of the bag from the header portion at the perforation.

[0010] U.S. Pat. No. 5,062,716 relates to a staged release bag formed of a thermoplastic film material having multiple layers and having discrete cuts formed therein including wicket holes, stabilizing cuts and release paths, and which is useful in an automated packaging operation, and a method for making said bag from a continuous tub or sheet of plastic material.

[0011] U.S. Pat. No. 4,503,561 relates to a bag made of thin pliable plastic film, including panels having slits formed therein, the slits of the bag being formed to extend in a first direction, and the slits on a relatively facing panel having slits formed to extend in a direction transverse to said first direction.

[0012] U.S. Pat. No. 5,971,155 relates to a quickly accessible and fillable plastic bag unit, which includes a spacer unit having two layers, and a plastic bag having front and back walls which are joined together, and a pair of complimentary separable zipper halves which are provided respectively on the front and back walls and which are spaced apart from the spacer unit at a predetermined distance. The plastic bag unit has an aperture unit formed through an intermediate portion of the spacer unit, two narrower outer uncut spaces which are respectively adjacent to the longitudinal sides of the plastic bag and which connect the spacer unit to the front and back walls, and two wider inner uncut spaces which are respectively adjacent to the aperture unit and which connects the spacer unit to the front and back walls.

[0013] U.S. Pat. No. 6,007,244 relates to a plastic film bag assembly which includes a reclosable plastic film bag made up of a front wall and back wall joined together and having complimentary detachably attachable zipper profiles at the bag opening. A lip extends from the front wall above the zipper profiles. A header extends above the back wall above the zipper profiles. A hole is provided through the header at a distance from the header perimeter edge and defining a severable header portion between the hole and the perimeter edge.

[0014] U.S. Pat. No. 4,699,607 relates to a method and apparatus for producing thermoplastic bags from an elongate web. An apparatus for feeding the web includes devices for producing mounting holes and perforations along a circular path surrounding the holes. The web is severed and sealed to produce sheets containing a mounting hole encircled by the
perforations. A selected number of successive sheets are impaled on a post projecting through the holes. A stack having a selected number of sheets is accumulated on a post fixed to a support supporting a medial zone of the sheets which are combined by a heated punch penetrating the sheets in the area enclosed by the perforations.

[0015] U.S. Pat. No. 4,734,148 relates to a stack of interlocked detachable bags, formed from a thermoplastic foil strip, and each comprising two walls, a front wall and a back wall, preferably at least one handle-shaped incision positioned on one of said walls adjacent an upper filling opening, wherein the individual bags each have an interlock piece and are attached together with the aid of at least one interlock means engaging their interlock pieces, and by means of a row of perforations forming an edge of the interlock piece the individual bags are detachable from the interlocked stack by tearing off.

[0016] U.S. Pat. No. 5,100,000 relates to a suspendable bag adapted for suspending on a structure and opening, filling, and severing away therefrom. A suspension wall extends from the bags and includes suspension holes adapted to receive suspension pegs located on the structure. A score line is provided below the suspension holes and a support hole is provided below the score line and above the bag. The support hole is adapted to receive a support bag located on the structure. During operation, the support hole, in conjunction with the support peg, allows the opening of a reclosable zipper at the mouth of the bag by pulling on a lip connected to the front wall of the bag. The support hole, in conjunction with the support peg, further supports the back portion of the bag while the bag is being filled with various products.

[0017] U.S. Pat. Nos. 6,193,058 and 6,364,105 relate to a liquid dispensing bag that has a sealed concentrate pouch and a mixing pouch, the concentrate pouch having a fluid tight seal separating the concentrate pouch from the mixing pouch, and the concentrate pouch containing a base material at a first concentration.

[0018] U.S. Pat. No. 4,854,451 relates to a block of side-gusseted, bottom-weld bags. Each bag has an opening on one side to facilitate the removal of individual bags from the block.

[0019] U.S. Pat. No. 6,718,738 relates to a plastic bag film assembly which includes a bag having front and back walls joined together and defining an opening leading to a cavity. A header portion extends from the back wall for supporting the bag on a structure. A severance line extends across the header and includes ten sections extending inwardly from each of the header side edges. The severance line also includes support sections adjacent and inwardly of the tear sections.

[0020] U.S. Pat. No. 4,769,126 relates to a bottom gusset bag pad arrangement for liquid containers. The bag pad arrangement is made from tube stock, for bagging a pair of liquid containers, such as containers for carry out for milk shakes, carbonated drinks, that are at fast food outlets, for carry away by the customer, in which the bag pads are all the same and are incorporated in the pad in congruent relation. Each bag has a bottom fold that is gusseted for flat bottom shaping when open, front and back panels extending between side end seals that extend normally of the bag bottom that are spot welded together at the center of the bag but spaced from the bottom gusset thereof, and that define rectilinear side edgings forming the upper corners of the respective bags that extend to the bag end seals adjacent to but spaced from the bottom gusset thereof, and aligned handle forming openings formed in the bag front and back panels adjacent the upper end of each bag. The back panel of each bag includes a projecting flange that extends beyond the top edging of the bag front panel which is free of the back panel to form the mouth of each bag. The bag back panel flange includes a score line and the bags of the pad are united in pad form by heat welding the bags together at the top edging of the back panel flange, with a pad mounting hole being formed in the pad bag back panel flanges.

[0021] U.S. Pat. No. 4,717,262 relates to a flat bottom plastic bag having two sided panel construction with the bottom of the bag formed by a gusset extending between the sealed ends of the bag, at which point the bag side panels are joined together, with the bag bottom gusset having a central fold line that is, in the flattened relation of the bag, disposed between the lower portions of the bag side panels, and that in such relation forms a first pair of adjacent bag plies that includes one said bag side panel lower portions, and a second pair of bag plies that includes the lower portion of the other bag side panel, with said respective sets of bag plies being respectively joined together but free of adherence to each other by diagonally extending heat seals on either side of the bag that extend diagonally from the bag respective ends in converging relation to adjacent the respective bottom edges of the bag that are defined by the respective bag plies.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

[0022] The present invention relates to a stand-alone dispensable bag for packaging prescription drugs, cosmetics, and small objects comprising: a bag made of plastic. The bag has a flap which covers an opening in the front or back of the bag. The bag can be filled by lifting the flap and placing the objects into the front or back pocket beneath the flap. The flap is then closed. It is an object of the invention to staple the flap securely to keep objects from falling out of the bag. It is an object of the present invention to provide a sealing means to seal the flap to the bag. It is an object of the present invention to provide handles which are sealed separately above the flap. It is an object of the present invention for the handles not to affect the opening of the bag. It is an object of the present invention to provide a die cut handle above a seal which separates the flap and bottom of the bag from the handle.

[0023] It is an object of the present invention for the bag to have tear-off perforations so that the bag can be removed from a dispenser. The bag has a slit above the tear-off perforations so that the bag can be hung on hooks. It is an object of the present invention for the bag to have a bottom gusset so the bag can open flat on the bottom. It is an object of the present invention for the bag to have a width of approximately 5" to 7" and a height of approximately 11" to 13". It is an object of the present invention for the bottom gusset to be approximately 2" so that the bag can open flat on bottom.

[0024] It is an object of the present invention to provide a method of point of purchase packaging prescription drugs,
cosmetics and other small objects comprising: placing multiple gangs of plastic bags having a width between about 5" and 7" and a height of between about 11" and 13" on a dispenser. The bag is removed from the dispenser by means of tear off perforations. Prescription drugs, cosmetics, or other small objects are placed in the bag and the bag is closed.

0025 It is an object of the present invention for the bag to be dispensable in multiple quantities. A stand alone bag is defined as a bag that can stand up by itself when opened. It is an object of the present invention for the bag to be dispensable from a plurality of hooks. It is an object of the present invention for the bags to be plastic. It is an object of the present invention for the bags to be made of high density plastic. It is an object of the present invention for the bags to be used for prescriptions, cosmetics or other similar small articles. It is an object of the present invention for the bags to stand on their own without any additional support. It is an object of the present invention to provide a surface area to accept all types of graphics on both the front and back of the bag.

0026 It is an object of the present invention for the bag to be attached at the top edge to a header which keeps a gang of 50-100 bags together for use with a dispenser. It is an object of the present invention for a header to hold the bags together. It is an object of the present invention for the bag to have a slit above the tear off perforations so that the bag can be hung on the hooks. It is an object of the present invention for the bag to have a bottom gusset so the bag can open flat on the bottom. It is an object of the present invention for the bag to have a die cut handle. It is an object of the present invention for the die cut handle to go through the front and back panels of the bag.

0027 It is an object of the present invention for the bag to have an advertisement printed on it. It is an object of the present invention for the bag to have at least one advertisement on the front of the bag and at least one advertisement on the back of the bag. It is an object of the present invention for the bag to have an indicator for showing a user where to close the bag after a product is placed in the bag. It is an object of the present invention for the bag to have a device for closing the bag after a product is placed in the bag. This device or closing mechanism can be an adhesive, zip-lock or other type of closure mechanism. It is an object for the bag to be opaque.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

0028 Throughout the following views, reference numerals will be used in the drawings, and the same reference numerals will be used throughout the several views and in the description to indicate same or like parts of the invention.

0029 FIG. 1 is a front view of a stand-alone dispensable bag according to the present invention.

0030 FIG. 2 is a front view of a stand-alone dispensable bag which is on a dispensing apparatus.

0031 FIG. 3 is a front view of a stand-alone dispensable bag which is in its open position.

0032 FIG. 4 is a front view of a stand-alone dispensable bag.

0033 FIG. 5 is a front view of a stand-alone dispensable bag.

0034 FIG. 6 is a front view of a stand-alone dispensable bag.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

0035 The present invention relates to a stand-alone bag which is dispensable in multiple quantities. In an embodiment, the bag of the present invention is dispensable from a plurality of hooks. In an embodiment, the bag of the present invention is made of plastic. In a preferred embodiment, the bag of the present invention is made of high density plastic. The bag of the present invention can be used for prescriptions, cosmetics or other similar small articles. The bags of the present invention stand on their own without any additional support.

0036 In an embodiment of the present invention, the bags have a wide face and a seamless construction, which provides an excellent surface area to accept all types of graphics on both the front and back of the bag. In an embodiment there are no vertical seams to restrict print areas.

0037 In an embodiment, the bags of the present invention have a wide opening at the top to make it easier to insert products. In an embodiment of the present invention the bags are attached at the top edge to a header which keeps a gang of 50-100 bags together for use with a dispenser. In an embodiment of the present invention a header holds the bags together. The bags have a means for separating the bags from the dispenser. In an embodiment, the bags have tear-off perforations so that the bags can be removed from the dispenser. In an embodiment, the bag has a slit above the tear off perforations so that the bag can be hung on the hooks. In an embodiment, the bag has a bottom gusset so the bag can open flat on the bottom. In an embodiment, the bag has die cut handles.

0038 In an embodiment, the bag has a lifting flap which when opened provides an opening which allows objects to be placed in the bag. The flap can then be closed. In a preferred embodiment the flap is securely attached to the bag once the objects are placed inside. In an embodiment the flap is attached to the bag by a staple. In an embodiment the flap is attached to the bag by a sealing mechanism such as a zip lock, adhesive, or snap fit. In an embodiment the flap is placed on the bag below a sealing mechanism which separates the bag opening from the handles on the bag.

0039 Referring now to the drawings, an embodiment of a dispensable bag of the invention generally designated with the numeral 10, is shown in FIG. 1.

0040 The bag 10 has a slit 12 which is used to be hung on a dispenser. A header 14 holds the bags 10 together. The bags 10 are separated from the dispenser by tear-off perforations 16. The space between line 19 and perforations 16 reflects the lip that appears after the bag is torn off and provides an easy access to opening the bag even while on the dispenser. The bag 10 has a die cut handle 18. The bag 10 has a bottom gusset 20 which opens flat. The bag has a height 24 of approximately 12" and a width 26 of approximately 7". The area 14 above the tear-off perforations 16 is approximately 1". And the area for the bottom gusset 28 is approximately 1 1/4".
FIG. 2 is a front view of a stand-alone dispensable bag which is on a dispensing apparatus. FIG. 2 shows the bag 100 on a bag hook 102 which holds gangs of bags 100. The bag 100 has tear-off perforations 108 and has a die cut handle 104. The space 107 between line 109 and perforations 108 reflects the lip that appears after the bag is torn off and provides an easy access to opening the bag even while it is on the dispenser. The bag 100 has a bottom gusset 106.

FIG. 3 is a front view of a stand-alone dispensable bag which is in its open position. Bag 200 shows its top opening 202 after it is torn off at the perforations. FIG. 3 shows the rear panel 208 extended above the front panel 210 after the bag has been torn off and opened. Bag 200 has its die cut handle 204. Bottom gusset 206 opens to approximately 2/3 its full size. It provides a flat bottom which allows the separated bag to stand on its own without additional support.

FIG. 4 shows an embodiment of the bag 300. The bag 300 has a slit 310 for placing the bags on a hook. The bag 300 has a padded header 312 for holding a gang of bags together. The bag 300 has a tear off perforation 314 for separating the bag from the header. The bag 300 has a die cut handle 316 for allowing the user to hold the bag. The bag 300 has a seal 318 which separates the handle from the bottom of the bag. A front flap 320 is located below the seal 318. Once the front flap 320 is lifted up an opening 322 allows a user to place objects inside of the bag 300. The bag 300 further has a bottom gusset 324. The bag 300 shown in FIG. 4 is approximately 5" wide 9 ½" tall with a two inch bottom gusset.

FIG. 5 shows an embodiment of the bag 400. The bag 400 has a slit 410 for placing the bags on a hook. The bag 400 has a padded header 412 for holding a gang of bags together. The bag 400 has a tear off perforation 414 for separating the bag from the header. The bag 400 has a die cut handle 416 for allowing the user to hold the bag. The bag 400 has a seal 418 which separates the handle from the bottom of the bag. A front flap 420 is located below the seal 418. Once the front flap 420 is lifted up an opening 422 allows a user to place objects inside of the bag 400. The bag 400 further has a bottom gusset 424. The bag 400 shown in FIG. 5 is approximately 7" wide 11 ½" tall with a two inch bottom gusset.

FIG. 6 shows an embodiment of the bag 500. The bag 500 has a die cut handle 516 for allowing the user to hold the bag. The bag 500 has a seal 518 which separates the handle from the bottom of the bag. A front flap 520 is located below the seal 518. Once the front flap 520 is lifted an opening 522 allows a user to place objects inside of the bag 500. The bag 500 further has a bottom gusset 524.

The invention has been described by reference to detailed examples and methodologies. These examples are not meant to limit the scope of the invention. Variations within the concepts of the invention are apparent to those skilled in the art. The disclosures of the cited references throughout the application are incorporated by reference herein.

A stand-alone dispensable bag for packaging prescription drugs, cosmetics, and small objects comprising:

- tear-off perforations;
- a slit above said tear-off perforations;
- a bottom gusset;
- handles;
- a flap covering an opening in said bag;
- a seal below said handles and above said flap and said opening;
- said bag being made of plastic.

2. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bottom gusset is approximately 2" so said bag can open flat on bottom.

3. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag is dispensable in multiple quantities.

4. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag is made of high density plastic.

5. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag stands on its own without any additional support.

6. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag is attached at top edge to a header.

7. The bag of claim 6 wherein said header keeps a gang of 50-100 bags together with use of a dispenser.

8. The bag of claim 1 wherein said handle comprises a die cut handle.

9. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag has advertisement printed on said bag.

10. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag has at least one advertisement on front of said bag and at least one advertisement on back of said bag.

11. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag has an indicator for showing a user where to close said bag after a product is placed in said bag.

12. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag further comprises a device for closing said bag after a product is placed in said bag.

13. The bag of claim 1 wherein surface area of said bag accepts all types of graphics on front and back of said bag.

14. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag is opaque.

15. A method of point of purchase packaging prescription drugs, cosmetics and other small objects comprising:

- placing multiple gangs of plastic bags on a dispenser;
- removing said bag from said dispenser by means of tear of perforations;
- opening a flap on said bag;
- placing said prescription drugs, cosmetics, or other small objects in said bag; and
- closing said flap on said bag.

16. The method of claim 15 further comprising:

- securing said flap to said bag.

17. A stand-alone dispensable bag for packaging prescription drugs, cosmetics, and small objects comprising:

- a bag comprising a bottom gusset;
- handles;
- a flap covering an opening in said bag;
- a seal below said handles and above said flap and said opening;
- said bag being made of plastic.

18. The bag of claim 17 further comprising:

- a mechanism for closing said flap once an object is placed in said bag.
19. The bag of claim 17 wherein said bottom gusset is approximately 2" so said bag can open flat on bottom.
20. The bag of claim 17 wherein said bag is made of high density plastic.
21. The bag of claim 17 wherein said bag stands on its own without any additional support.
22. The bag of claim 17 wherein said handle comprises a die cut handle.
23. The bag of claim 17 wherein said bag has advertisement printed on said bag.
24. The bag of claim 17 wherein said bag has at least one advertisement on front of said bag and at least one advertisement on back of said bag.
25. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag has an indicator for showing a user where to close said bag after a product is placed in said bag.
26. The bag of claim 1 wherein surface area of said bag accepts all types of graphics on front and back of said bag.
27. The bag of claim 1 wherein said bag is opaque.

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