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(54) **METHOD & APPARATUS FOR POINT OF SALE GENERATED ACCESS TO REMOTE FILE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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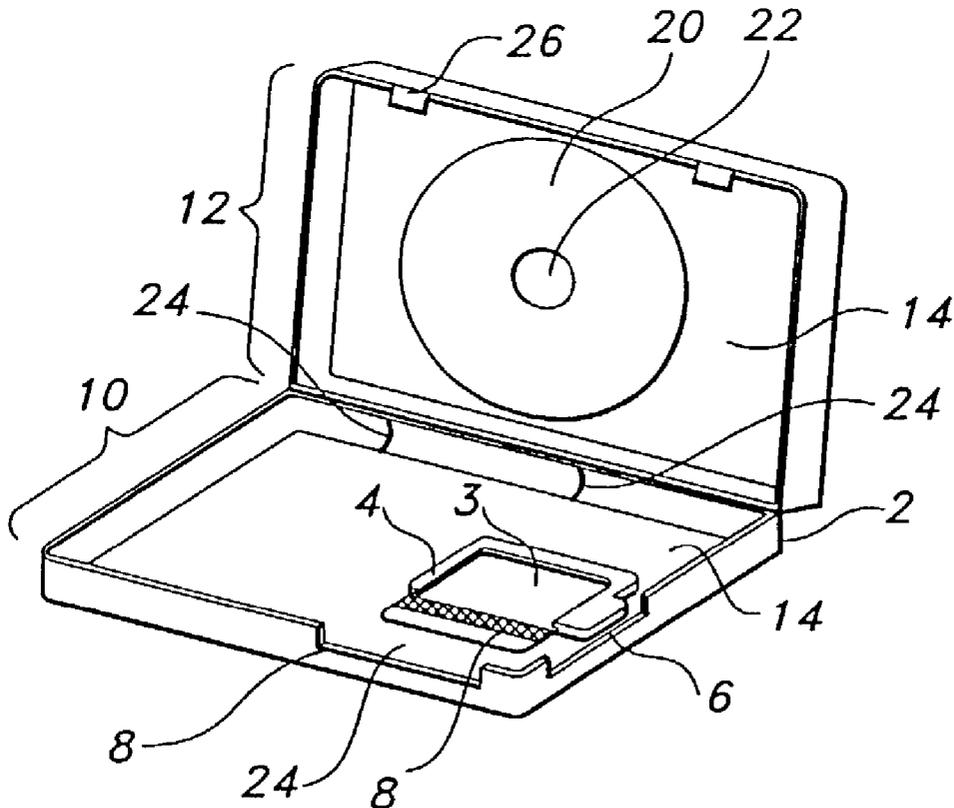
This invention provides an apparatus for point of sale generated access to remote files. The method relates to a transaction between a merchant, content provider transaction manager and a customer. A point of sale generated activated identification number allows the customer to remotely download a specific file from a content provider. A package adapted for holding a data encoded card and a disk or cartridge is disclosed. The card generally defines a plane and includes a means to encode data. In the preferred embodiment the package has first and second panels, retaining means for securing the card substantially between the first and second panels, wherein a data encoded stripe is not exposed and means for exposing the data encoded strip, while the card is secured between the panels.

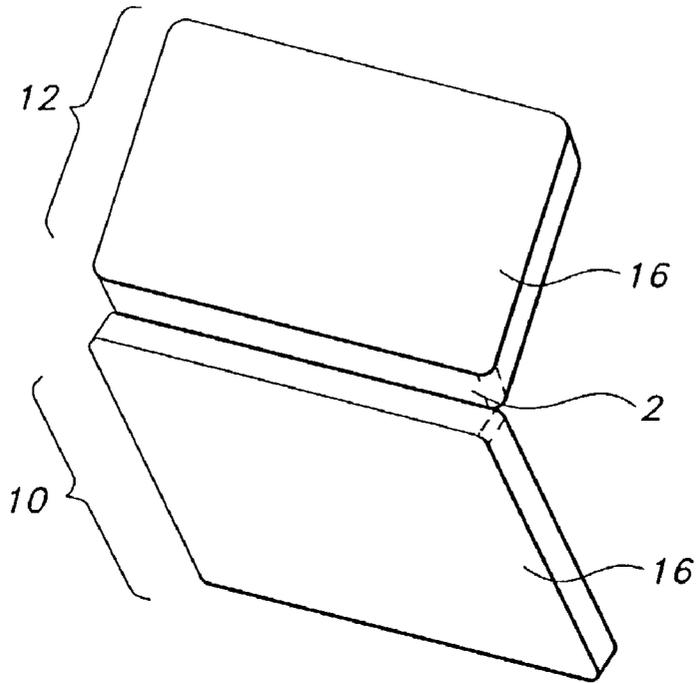
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(22) **Filed: Jul. 19, 2002**

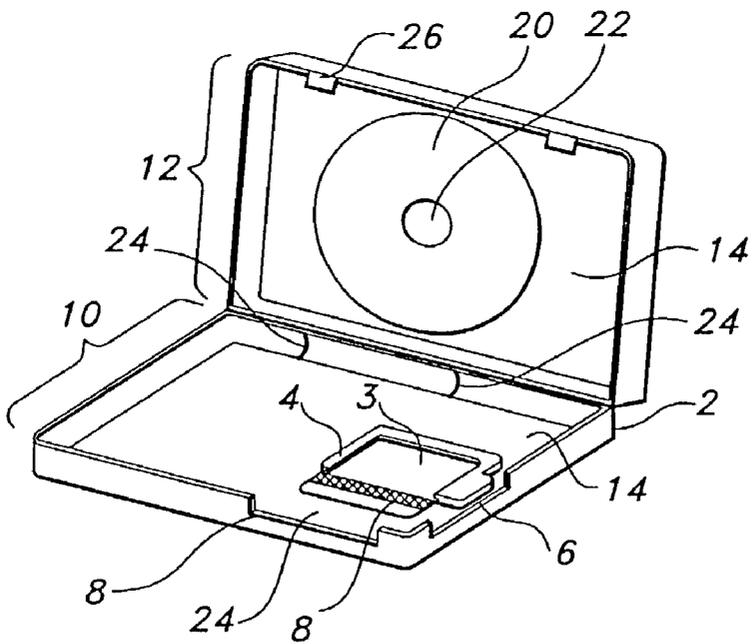
**Related U.S. Application Data**

(60) **Provisional application No. 60/308,080, filed on Jul. 26, 2001.**

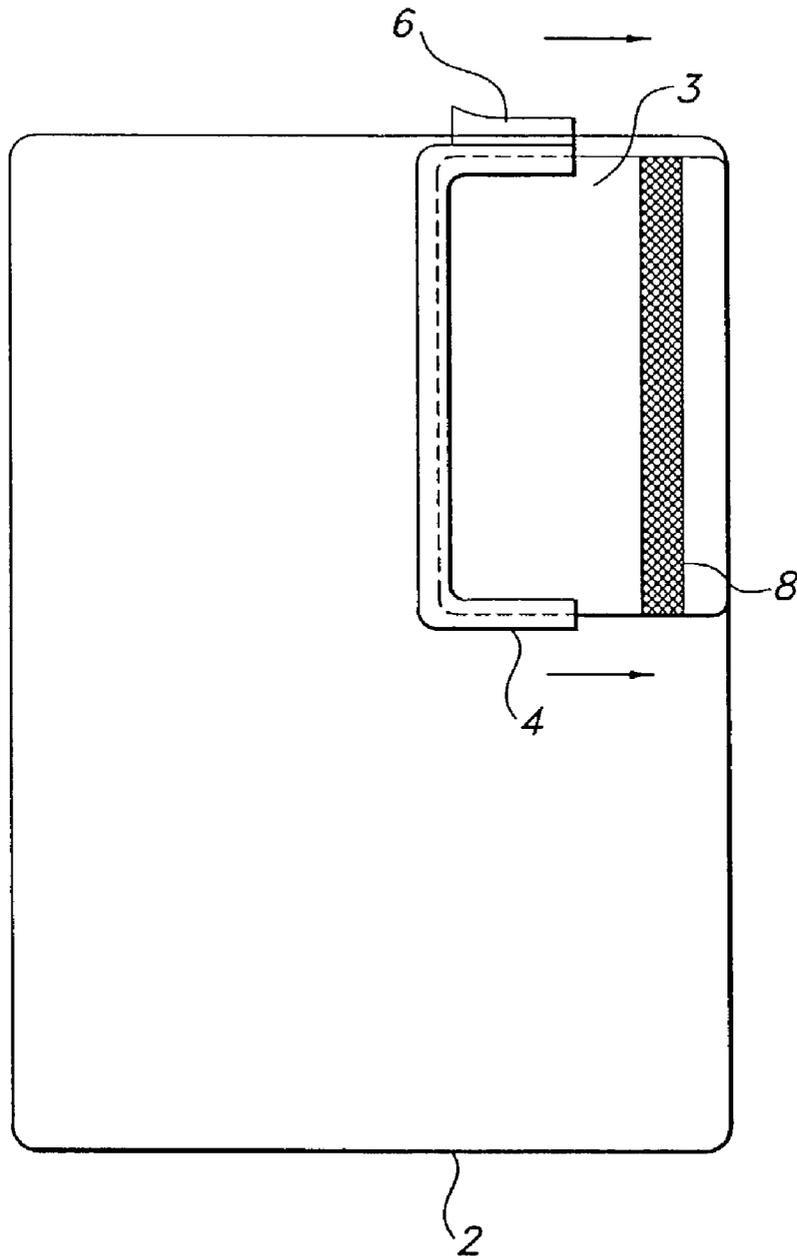




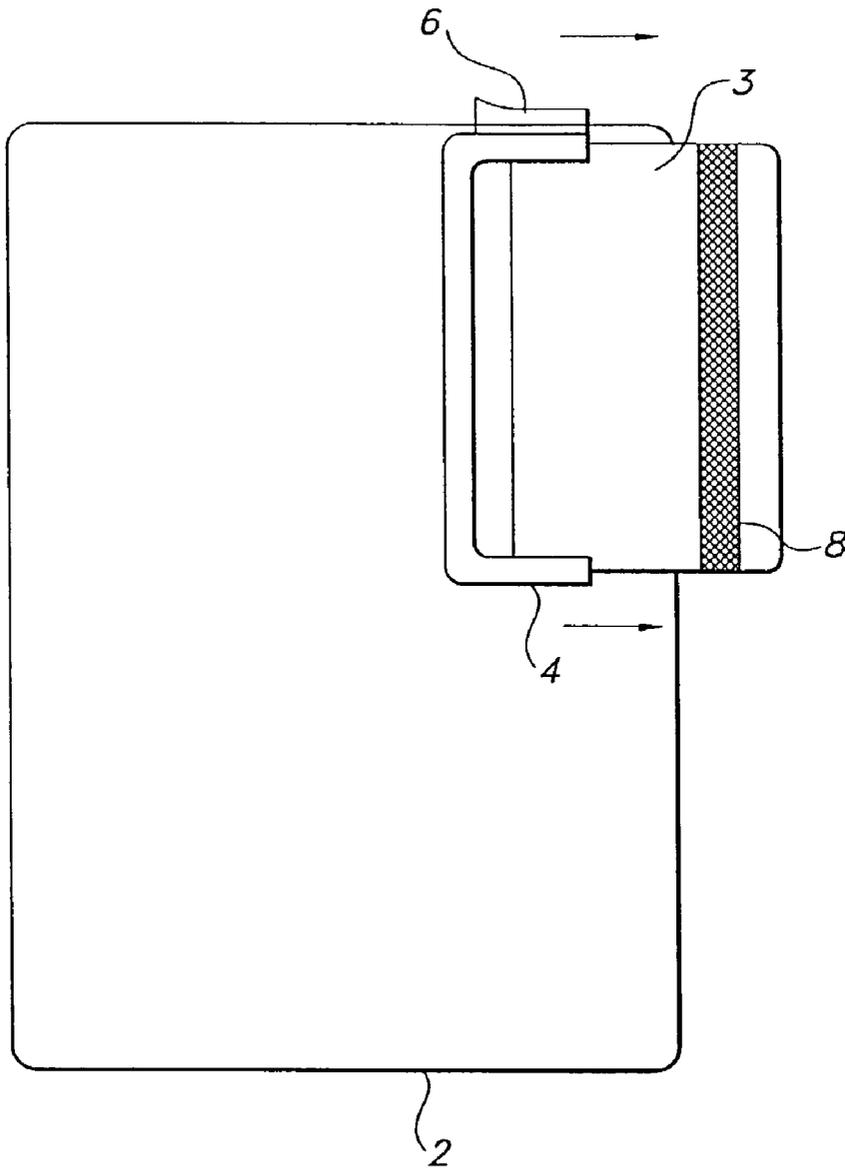
**FIG 2**



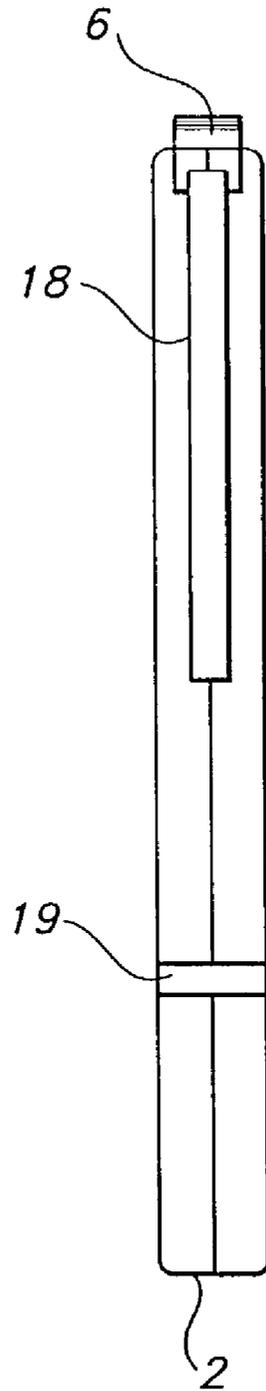
**FIG 1**



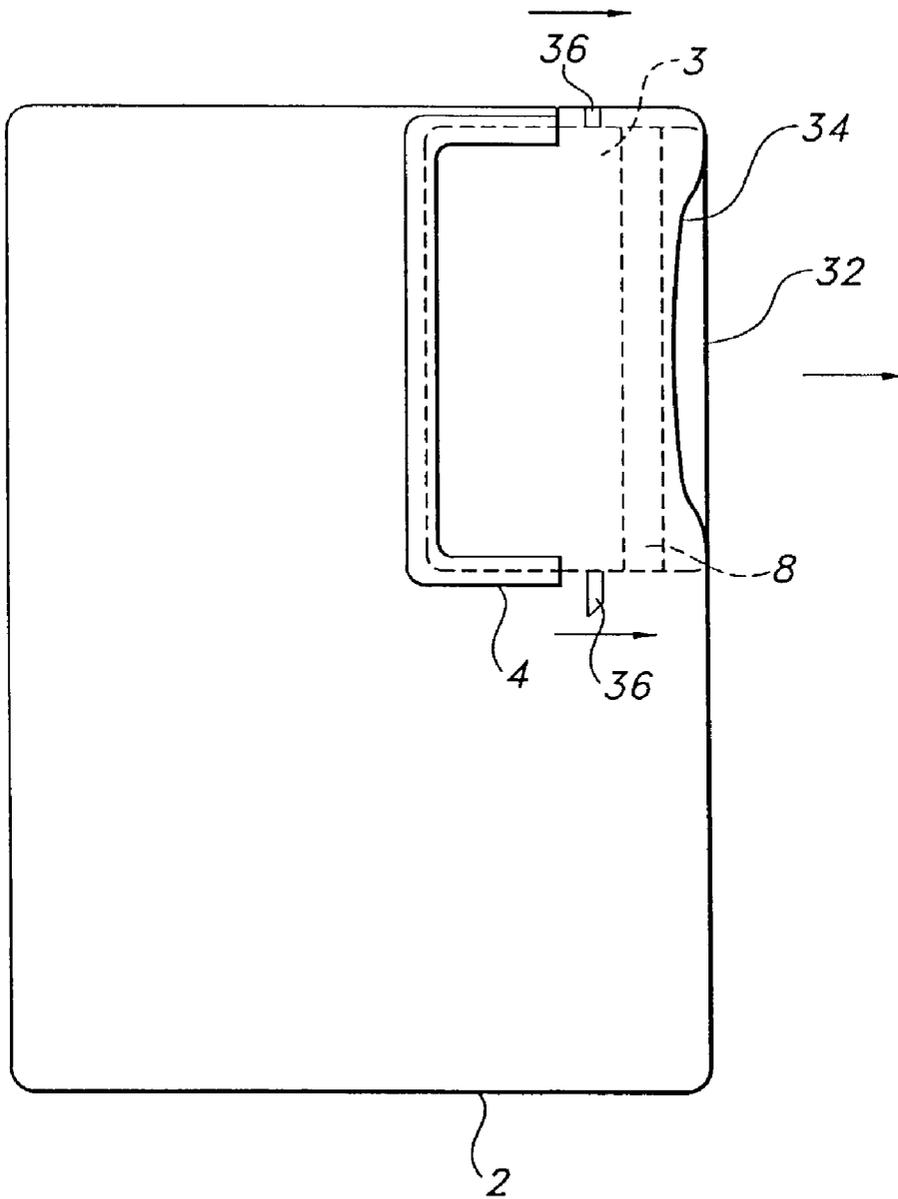
**FIG 3**



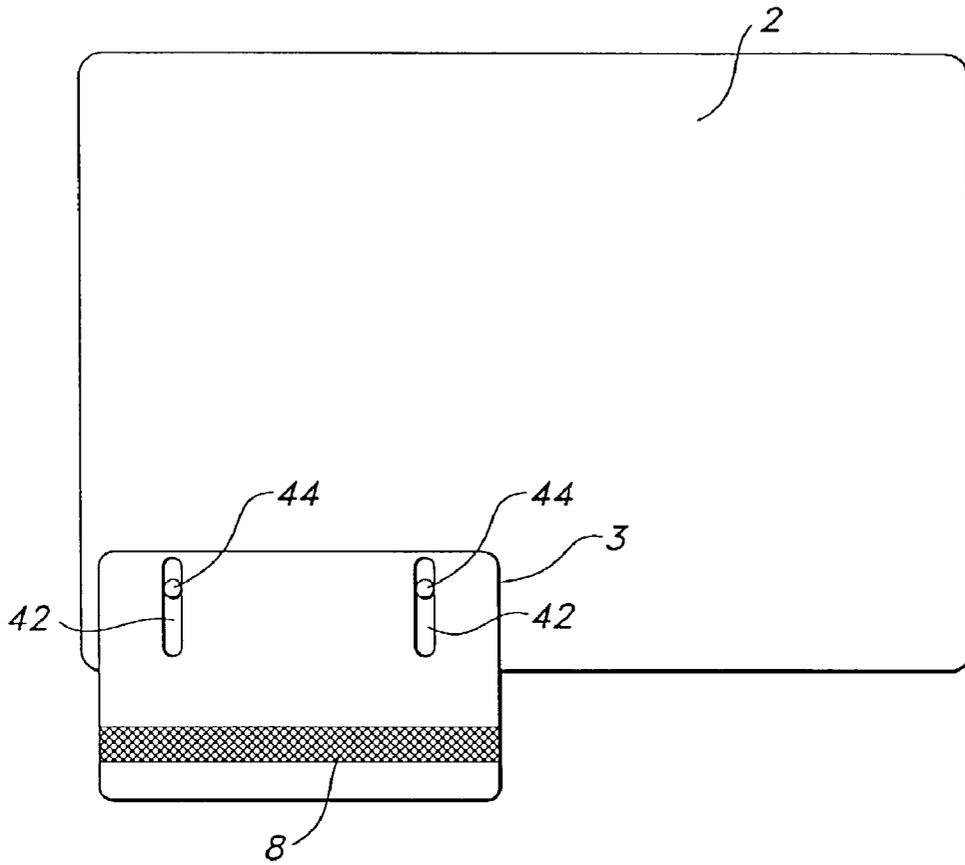
**FIG 4**



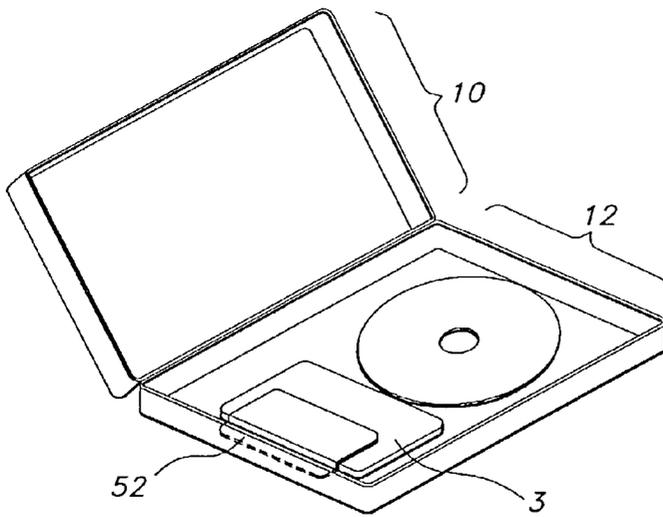
**FIG 5**



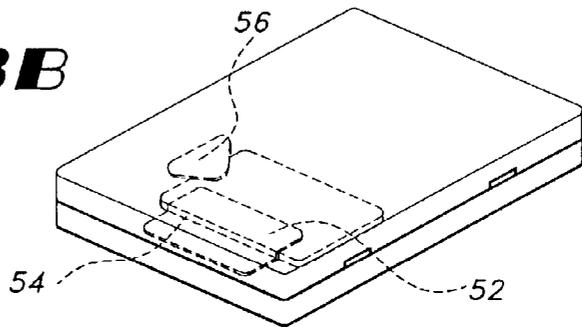
**FIG 6**



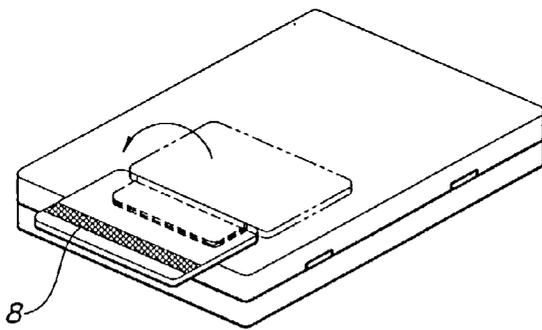
**FIG 7**



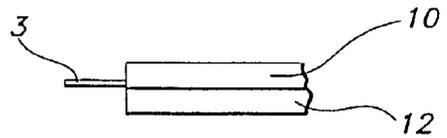
**FIG 8B**



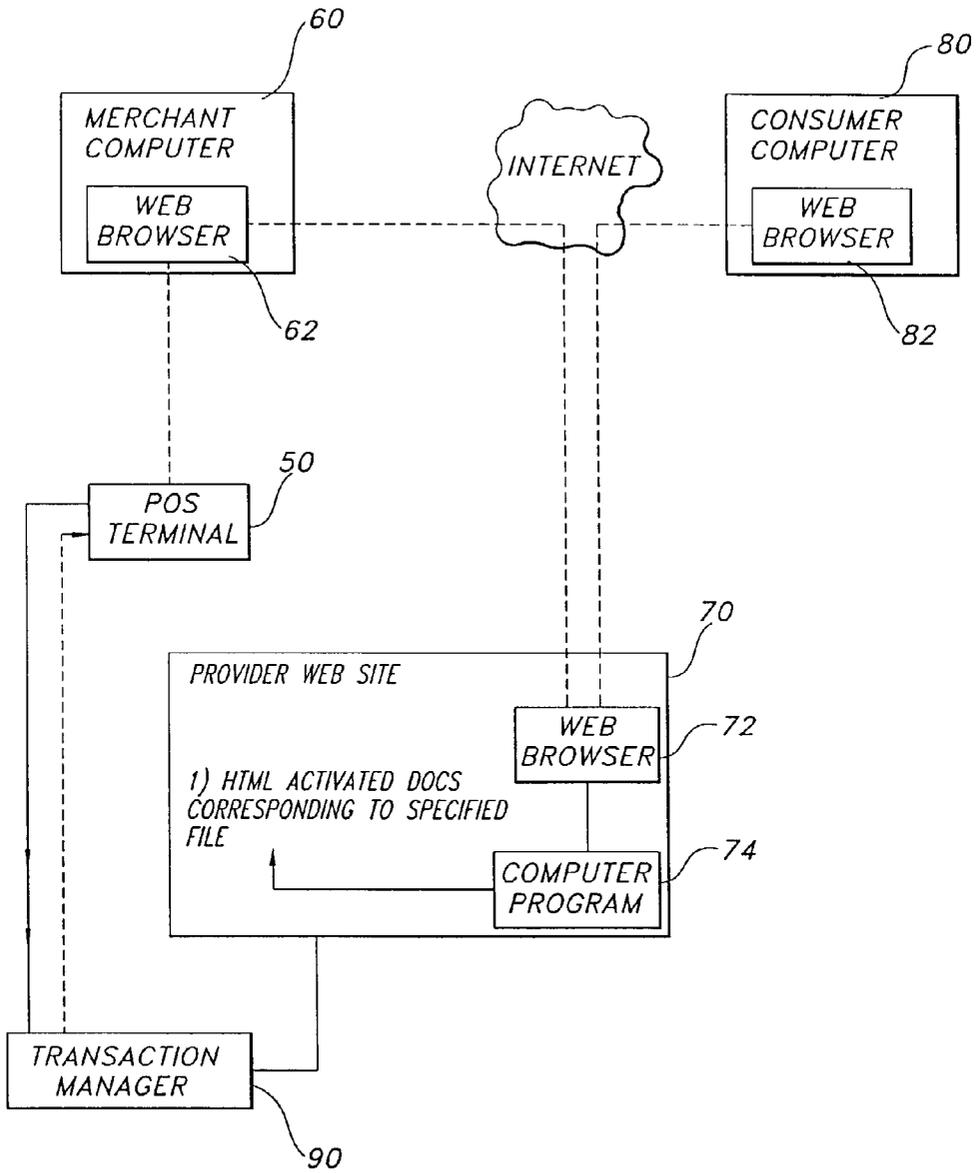
**FIG 8A**



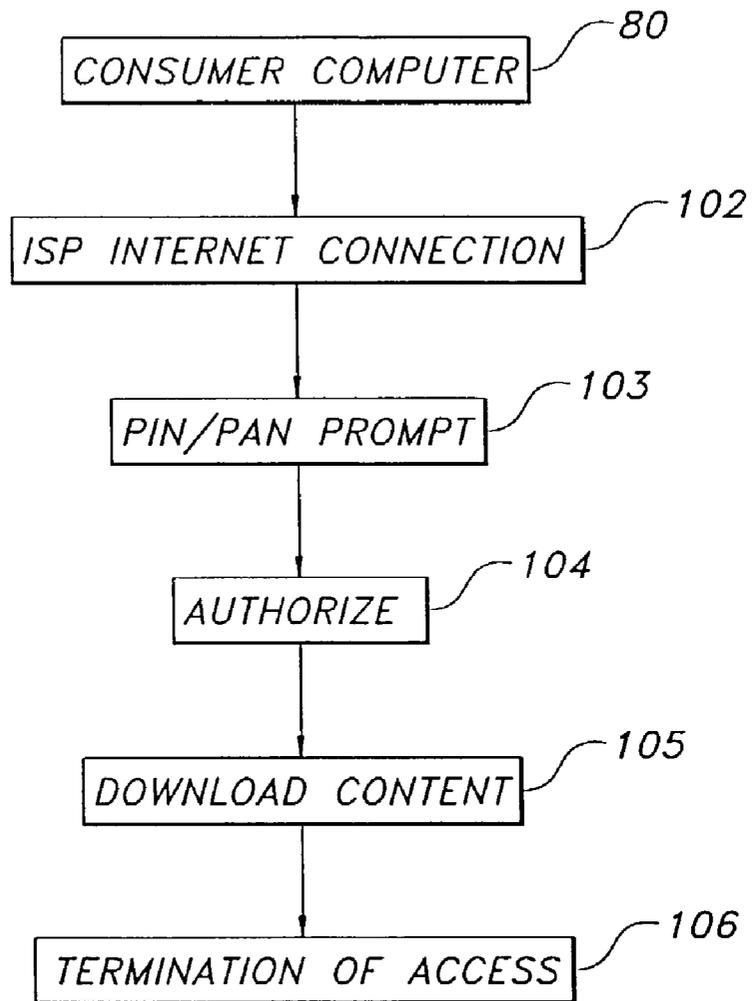
**FIG 8C**



**FIG 8D**

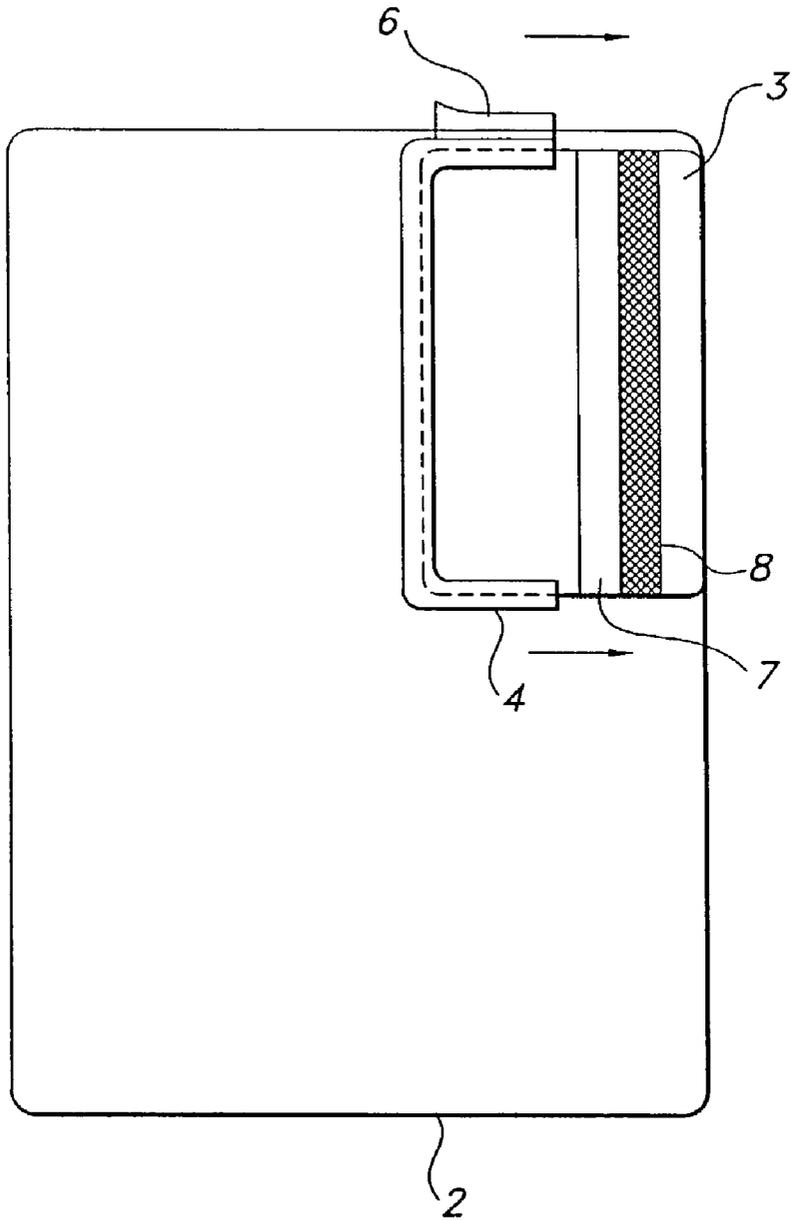


**FIG 9**

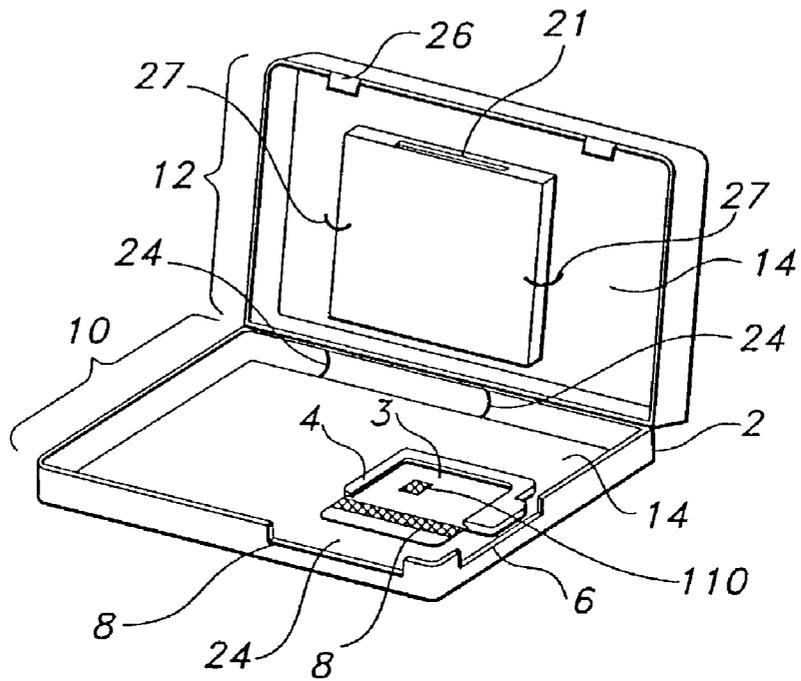


**FIG 10**

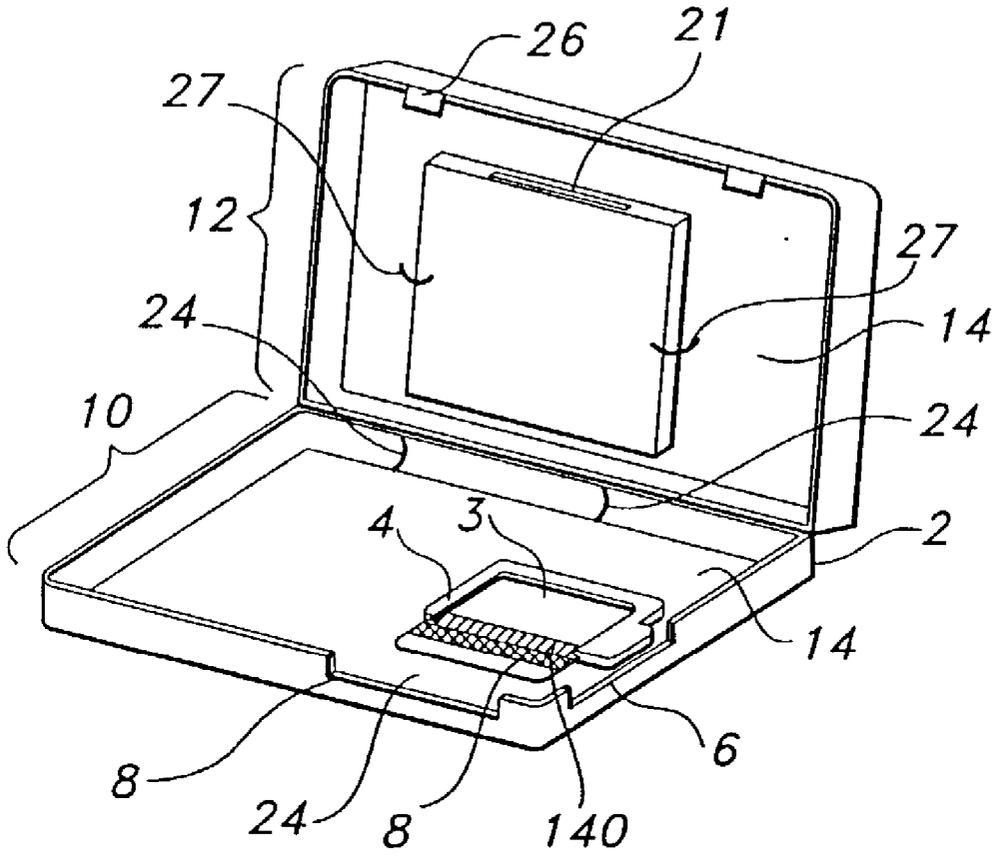




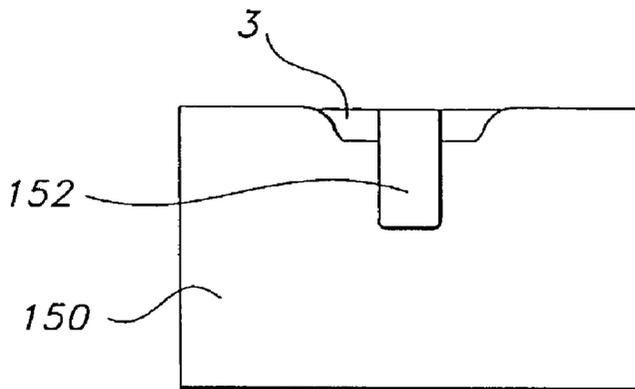
**FIG 12**



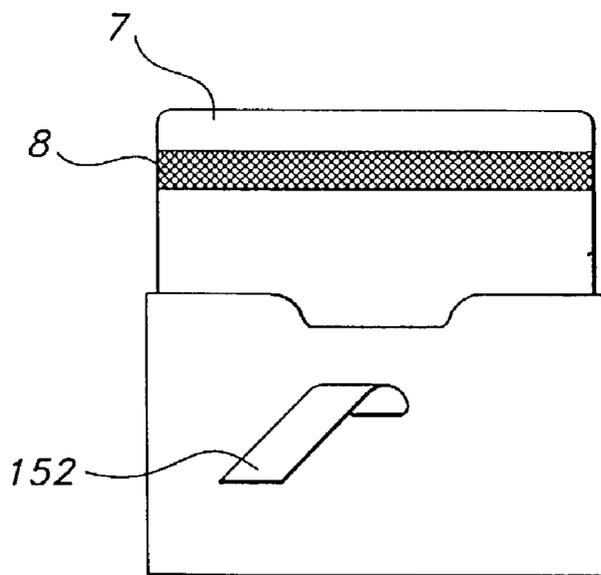
**FIG 13**



**FIG 14**



**FIG 15A**



**FIG 15B**

## METHOD & APPARATUS FOR POINT OF SALE GENERATED ACCESS TO REMOTE FILE

### RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] None

### STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] Not Applicable

### FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0003] The present invention relates to a method and apparatus for point of sale generated access to remote files and download of specific files to an optical or magnetic disk. This invention also relates to packaging for an optical or magnetic computer disk. The package including a data encoded card with or without bar code that allows for the download of files to the disk from a provider to a remote client via the internet or any other means of electronic commerce (e.g. ISP or DSL).

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0004] An important issue relating to publishing content e.g. computer software, video games, compact disks (hereinafter CD) and digital video disk (hereinafter DVD) is the issue of theft in the retail store and consumer sharing. Security cases have been proposed to prevent the theft of these items. Lax, U.S. Pat. No. 5,598,728, Lax U.S. Pat. No. 5,850,752, and U.S. Pat. No. 5,988,376. The security case is a locked box with a security strip that is inaccessible to the customer. At the check out counter the security strip is disabled and the customer can leave the store with the item. If the security strip is not disabled an alarm will sound if a customer tries to exit the store with the security box containing the video game, CD or DVD. The boxes are of a particular industry size to minimize shelf and warehouse space. These security packages must conform to the size requirements set forth by the Interactive Entertainment Merchants Association (IEMA) ([www.theiema.com](http://www.theiema.com)). These requirements also provide that the packages cannot have tags or other objects projecting from the box that would take up space on a shelf or in a shipping box.

### BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] This invention relates to a way to solve the security issue relating to computer software, video games, compact disks, and DVDs by packaging a disk in a package that contains a data encoded card. The data encoded card allows for the download of specific information from a provider to a remote client via the Internet or any other means of electronic communication i.e. ISP or DSL. More specifically, this invention relates to a package, with or without bar code, adapted for holding a card, the card generally defining a plane, the card having a means to encode data. The package including: first and second panels; retaining means for securing the card substantially between the first and second panels, wherein the means to encode data is not exposed; and means for exposing the means to encode data, while the card is secured between the panels. The means to encode data includes magnetic strip; computer chip or the like. The encoded data includes at least an identification number. The identification number can be printed on the

card. In one embodiment the identification number is obscured from view while the package is on display and the package includes a tamper evident device to prevent someone from observing the identification number. The primary benefit of the invention provides the ability to control and/or maintain inventory pilferage, consumer registration, and consumer sharing. A secondary benefit reduces inventory value of goods and services to the minimal cost of raw materials. If the product is stolen only this minimal cost is lost. The product, goods or services cannot be stolen, because it has not been activated at POS.

[0006] This invention also provides a package, with or without bar code, adapted for holding a card, the card generally defining a plane, the card having a data encoded stripe and a content storage means. The package including first and second panels, retaining means for securing the card substantially between the first and second panels, wherein the data encoded stripe is not exposed, means for exposing the data encoded stripe, while the card is secured between the panels and means for retaining the content storage means between the first and second panel.

[0007] The invention further provides a package, with or without bar code, adapted for holding a card, the card generally defining a plane, the card having means to encode data. The package including first and second panels, and retaining means for securing the card between the first and second panels wherein the means to encode data is not exposed, the retaining means allowing the means to encode data to be oriented towards the first panel when the means to encode data is not exposed and allowing the means to encode data to be oriented towards the second panel, when the means to encode data is exposed.

[0008] The invention also provides a package, with or without bar code, adapted for holding a card, the card generally defining a plane. The card having a data encoded stripe and a content storage means. The package including first and second panels and retaining means for securing the card between the first and second panels wherein the data encoded stripe is not exposed. The retaining means allowing the data encoded stripe to be oriented towards the first panel when the data encoded stripe is not exposed and allowing the stripe to be oriented towards the second panel when the data encoded stripe is exposed.

[0009] This invention also provides a system for point of sale generated access to remote file. The system including a data encoded card having a unique identification number and a transaction manager in communication with a POS terminal, a content provider and a customer computer in communication with a content provider.

[0010] This invention further provides a method to provide point of sale generated access to remote file in a transaction between a merchant, provider, transaction manager and a customer. This method involves providing a package adapted for holding a card and a content storage means, the card generally defining a plane. The card having means to encode data, the data including an identification number. The package including: first and second panels, retaining means for securing the card substantially between the first and second panels, wherein the means to encode data is not exposed during display by the merchant. The package further having means for exposing the means to encode data while the card is secured between the panels,

exposing the means to encode data; swiping the means to encode data through a point-of-sale terminal to read the data; transmitting data from the point of sale terminal to a transaction manager, activating the identification number by the transaction manager; transmitting the activated identification number to a file provider from the transaction manager, transmitting the activated identification number to a file provider from the transaction manager, accessing the provider's web site by the customer, providing the identification number to the provider by the customer to obtain authorization for the customer to access the file; and downloading authorized files to a content storage means.

[0011] This invention further proves a method to provide point of sale generated access to remote file in a transaction between a merchant, provider and a customer. The method involves providing a card having a means to encode data, the data including an identification number; exposing the means to encode data, swiping the means to encode data through a point-of-sale terminal to read the data; transmitting the data from the point of sale terminal to the transaction manager; activating the identification number by the transaction manager; transmitting the activated identification number to a file provider from the transaction manager; accessing the provider's web site by the customer; providing the identification number to the provider to obtain authorization for the customer to assess said files; and downloading authorized files to a storage means.

[0012] This invention provides a method of customer to prepay a provider for remote access to files. This method involves providing a package adapted for holding a card and a content storage means, the card having a means to encode data, the data including an identification number; swiping the card through a point-of-sale terminal to read the data; transmitting the identification number to the transaction manager; activating the identification number by the transaction manager, transmitting the activated identification number to a file provider from the transaction manager, accessing the provider's web site by the customer; providing the activated identification number to the provider to obtain authorization for the customer to access provider's files; and downloading authorized files by the customer to the content storage means.

[0013] This invention also provides a method for point of sale generated access to remote files. The method involves: providing a data encoded card having a unique identification number, swiping the card through a POS terminal, transmitting the identification number from the POS terminal to a transaction manager; activating the identification number by the transaction manager; transmitting the active identification number to a content provider from the transaction manager; transmitting the active identification number from the customer computer to the content provider; providing the customer with access to remote files by the content provider and accessing the remote files by the customer.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0014] FIG. 1 is a front view of a package containing a DVD and a data encoded card.

[0015] FIG. 2 is a back view of a package.

[0016] FIG. 3 is a top view of a package panel.

[0017] FIG. 4 is a top view of the package with an exposed data encoded card.

[0018] FIG. 5 is a side view of a package.

[0019] FIG. 6 is an alternative embodiment.

[0020] FIG. 7 is an alternative embodiment.

[0021] FIG. 8A is an alternative embodiment.

[0022] FIG. 8B is an alternative embodiment.

[0023] FIG. 8C is an alternative embodiment.

[0024] FIG. 8D is an alternative embodiment.

[0025] FIG. 9 illustrates the general architecture of the security system that operates in accordance with the present invention.

[0026] FIG. 10 illustrates a routine for accessing files by a customer from a provider.

[0027] FIG. 11 is a front view of package containing a CD and a card including a computer chip.

[0028] FIG. 12 is a top view of a package panel with a card having second data storage surface.

[0029] FIG. 13 is a front view of a package containing a cartridge and a data encoded card.

[0030] FIG. 14 is a front view of a package containing a cartridge and a hard drive card.

[0031] FIG. 15A is a front view of a sealed package containing a data encoded card.

[0032] FIG. 15B is a front view of a unsealed package containing a data encoded card.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0033] A method and apparatus to securely market publisher's content like computer software, music, written publication, video games, CDs and DVDs is provided, by packaging a disk or cartridge in a standard package with or without bar codes. The package also contains a data encoded card. The data encoded card allows for the download of specific information from a provider to a remote client via the Internet or any other means of electronic communication. More specifically, the method involves a point of sale generated access to remote files and transfer of specific files to an optical or magnetic disk or cartridge. The point of sale generated access is achieved by reading a data encoded card enclosed in the package, with or without bar codes. In the following description, for purposes of explanation, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding of the present invention. It will be evident, however, to one skilled in the art the present invention may be practiced without these specific details. In other instances, well-known structures and devices are shown in block diagram form in order to facilitate description. All patents referenced are heretofore incorporated by reference.

[0034] 1. Definitions

[0035] Cartridge. Is a magnetic or optical disk for use in a PlayStation® (Sony) on Nintendo® or the like.

[0036] Client-Server. A model of interaction in a distributed system in which a program at one site sends a request to a program at another site and waits for a response. The requesting program is called the "client," and the program which responds to the request is called the "server." In the

context of the World Wide Web (discussed below), the client is a "Web browser" (or simply "browser") which runs on a computer of a user; the program which responds to browser requests by serving Web pages is commonly referred to as a "Web server."

[0037] Content. To include but is not limited to entertainment video and music, software file, exe. file, encrypted key, fractional services of any kind.

[0038] DVD. Digital Video disk.

[0039] DISK. A magnetic or optical storage means for content.

[0040] IEMA. (Interactive Entertainment Merchants Association). In association of merchants that create retail packaging requirements for entertainment content.

[0041] HARD DISK CARD A card that includes a hard disk. These cards includes five megabites of intractive, re-writeable and encrypted storage. See e.g. UltraCard® (Ultra Card, Inc.) (See e.g. Smith, Sr. U.S. Pat. No. 6,131, 816).

[0042] HTML (HyperText Markup Language). A standard coding convention and set of codes for attaching presentation and linking attributes to informational content within documents. (HTML 2.0 is currently the primary standard used for generating Web documents.) During a document authoring stage, the HTML codes (referred to as "tags") are embedded within the informational content of the document. When the Web document (or HTML document) is subsequently transferred from a Web server to a browser, the codes are interpreted by the browser and used to parse and display the document. Additionally in specifying how the Web browser is to display the document, HTML tags can be used to create links to other Web documents (commonly referred to as "hyperlinks"). For more information on HTML, see Ian S. Graham, The HTML Source Book, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1995 (ISBN 0471-11894-4).

[0043] HTTP (HyperText Transport Protocol). The standard World Wide Web client-server protocol used for the exchange of information (such as HTML documents, and client requests for such documents) between a browser and a Web server. HTTP includes a number of different types of messages which can be sent from the client to the server to request different types of server actions. For example, a "GET" message, which has the format GET <URL>, causes the server to return the document or file located at the specified URL.

[0044] Internet. A collection of interconnected (public and/or private) networks that are linked together by a set of standard protocols (such as TCP/IP and HTTP) to form a global, distributed network. (While this term is intended to refer to what is now commonly known as the Internet, it is also intended to encompass variations which maybe made in the future, including changes and additions to existing standard protocols.)

[0045] ISBN (International Standard Book Number). A numerical identifier associated with books, pamphlets, educational kits, microforms, CD-ROM and braille publications in circulation throughout the world. The ISBN is a ten-digit number assigned to each published title that provides

[0046] Provider. Is a Publisher providing content like computer software, video games, music, CDs or Dvd's, such as MTV®.

[0047] SMART CARD. An electronic or computer chip is added to the magnetic stripe on either side of the card, to provide additional data capacity (generally providing 2 KB in data storage capacity).

[0048] Transaction Manager. Is a site controller connected to the POS terminal via any communications link.

[0049] URL (Uniform Resource Locator). A unique address which fully specifies the location of a file or other resource on the Internet. The general format of a URL is protocol://machine address: port/path/filename. The port specification is optional, and if none is entered by the user, the browser defaults to the standard port for whatever service is specified as the protocol.

[0050] Web Site. A computer system that serves informational content over a network using the standard protocols of the World Wide Web. Typically, a Web site corresponds to a particular Internet domain name. As used herein, the term is generally intended to encompass both (i) the hardware/software server components that serve the informational content over the network, and (ii) the "back end" hardware/software components, including any non-standard or specialized components, that interact with the server components to perform services for Web site users.

[0051] World Wide Web ("Web"). Used herein to refer generally to both (i) a distributed collection of interlinked, user-viewable hypertext documents (commonly referred to as Web documents or Web an unduplicated, internationally recognized "identity." The ISBN number can be a product code.

[0052] MPEG (Moving Pictures Experts Group). The MPEG standard concerns high-quality coding of possibly interlaced video, including high definition television (HDTV). A wide range of applications, bit rates, resolutions, signal qualities and services are addressed, including all forms of digital storage media, TV broadcasting and communications.

[0053] Point of Sale (POS) Terminals. POS terminals are used by a merchant to process a transaction. These terminals can include a magnetic card reader for acquiring PIN and PAN information, a Keypad for selecting options, entering transaction amounts, a display to report progress of transaction and print a receipt.

[0054] PAN (Personal Account Number). A PAN number can be an alphanumeric data of any length. A PAN is a term transactional platforms use for host to host transactions. The PAN can include a provider code, product code and activation code.

[0055] PIN (Personal Identification Number). A PIN number can be an alphanumeric data of any length. The PIN number correlates with a specific file and can also correlate with a specific transaction. The PIN can include a provider code, product code and activation code.

[0056] Point of Sale (POS) terminals. POS terminals are used by a merchant to process a transaction. These terminals can include a magnetic card reader for processing PIN and PAN information, a keypad for selecting options, entering transaction amounts, a display to report progress of a transaction and print a receipt. pages) that are accessible via the Internet, and (ii) the client and server software components which provide user access to such documents using stan-

standardized Internet protocols. Currently, the primary standard protocol for allowing applications to locate and acquire Web documents is HTTP, and the Web pages are encoded using HTML. However, the terms "Web" and "World Wide Web" are intended to encompass future markup languages and transport protocols which may be used in place of (or in addition to) HTML and HTTP.

[0057] 2. Overview of the System Components and Operation

[0058] Disks and cartridges are content storage medium. The stored content includes software, music, movies, etc. FIGS. 1-9 show a package for holding a disk and a data-encoded card. A package 2 is formed according to industry standards for the product to be provided. Now referring to FIGS. 1-5, a card 3 having data encoded stripe 8 is affixed in the package 2 in a manner to hold the card 3 securely, but to provide access to the data encoded stripe 8 by a clerk at point of sale using a POS terminal, such as a Veriphone®. A magnetic reader such as a Veriphone® is used if the data encoded stripe 8 is a magnetic encoded stripe. The package 2 has first panel 10 and second panel 12. The card 3 containing the data encoded stripe 8 is retained substantially between the first panel 10 and second panel 12 by a retaining means 4. During shipment and display in the retail store the data enclosed stripe 8 is substantially concealed between the panels 10 and 12. Additionally, during display and shipment a band 19 can be used to secure panels 10 and 12 together so that the disk or card cannot be removed prior to sale. At the point of sale the data encoded stripe 8 can be sufficiently exposed by sliding it down to allow a clerk to insert the magnetic portion of the data encoded stripe into a POS terminal, such as a Veriphone®. The ability to fully conceal the card inside the package allows for display of computer software, video games, CDs, or DVDs on standard display racks available for buyer physical examination.

[0059] A card 3 having data encoded stripe 8 and/or another means to encode data is affixed in the package 2 in a manner to hold the card 3 securely but to provide access to the data encoded stripe 8 by a clerk at check-out using a POS terminal, such as a Veriphone®. A magnetic stripe on the data encoded card can be laminated to the exterior of a card or can be rolled onto the surface of a card. The data encoded on the card can include: a PIN, PAN, merchant number and/or data that directs the transmission of this data to the provider. The PIN or PAN number is referred to as an identification number. The identification number can also include reference to the specific content to be delivered. The identification number is unique to each card. The pre-method to write the data encoded information to the step is known by those skilled in the art. The card can be plastic, paper or a composite. The card can be of any shape, but rectangular is the preferred shape. The card can be permanently attached to the package as it may or may not be needed after it is scanned at the point of purchase. The identification number can be encoded on a magnetic stripe, encoded as a bar code or embossed or printed on the surface of the card in numerals or provided by any other means known in the art. In the preferred embodiment the identification number is obscured from view while the package is on display and the package includes a tamper evident device to prevent someone from observing the identification number.

[0060] Now referring to FIGS. 11, 12 and 14, an alternative embodiment shown wherein the means to encode data is a smart card 110 or hard drive card 140. A smart card or hard drive card, such as an Ultracard®, can be used for point of sale generated access to remote files in the same way a magnetic stripe is used to encode the desired data. In FIG. 11 a smart card 110 is affixed to the card 3, along with magnetic stripe 8. In FIG. 12, a second data storage surface 7 is provided on the card 3. This second data storage medium card can be a hard drive or any known means to encode data. In FIG. 14 a card 3 including a magnetic stripe 8 and a hard drive 140 is affixed in retaining means 4. Both storage surface can be exposed at POS for reading. The stripe can be used with or without an additional means to encode data. Additionally, and alternative means to encode data such as a smart chip or hard drive can be used instead of a magnetic stripe.

[0061] Access to the data encoded information at the point of sale can be provided by any number of means. For example, in FIGS. 3 & 4 the magnetic stripe 8 is exposed approximately ½ inch in this embodiment by pushing the card 3 out of the package 2 using thumb slide 6. The card 3 is retained in bracket 4, which is attached to thumb slide 6. The card 3 is projected through door 18 so that the magnetic stripe 8 can be read using a POS terminal such as a Veriphone®. Industry standards establish up to three tracks to provide encoding. All three tracks may or may not be used.

[0062] A disk 20 is retained on projection 22 inside package 2. A plurality of retaining members 24 are used to hold a booklet and a snap catch 26 can be used to close the package 2. The outer perimeters 16 of the package 2 can have a pictorial representation of the product to be delivered to disk 20. The outer perimeters 16 of the package can include a bar code used for tracking the package or inventory purposes. The outer perimeter can also include the identification number, preferably concealed with a tamper proof cover or the like.

[0063] Another feature of the invention is that the magnetic or optical disks are either blank or have a program that initiates contact with a designated server. For example, with respect to CDs, after the buyer installs the CD in the CD drive, the CD initiates contact with a web site that facilitates the remote download of the desired file.

[0064] In an alternative embodiment as shown in FIG. 6 the magnetic stripe 8 on card 3 can be exposed by pulling the exposed portion of the card 32. The exposed portion of the card 32 is exposed by a thumb slot 34 in package 2. The card 3 cannot be removed from the package due to a plurality of stops 36 that project from card 3 beyond opening 10. The magnetic stripe 8 can be exposed ½ inch for a clerk to pass the magnetic stripe 8 through a magnetic strip reader.

[0065] In another alternative embodiment, as shown in FIG. 7, the card 3 is punched with holes 42 that accept round posts 44 molded into the package. The card 3 can be slip forward to expose the data encoded stripe 8, but is retained in the package 2 by the posts 44.

[0066] In another alternative embodiment, as shown in FIGS. 8A-D, the card 3 is affixed to the inside of panels 10 or 12 with industrial quality tape 52 such as Mylar®. A section of tape 52 corresponding to the card is die cut with

two release liners. One release liner is removed and applied to the card **3** and a second release liner is removed and applied to the package to form hinge **54**. A tamper proof seal **56** can be applied to the card **3** so that it lies flat in the package **2**. The taped card **3** is parallel to the panels **10** & **12** when the package is in the closed position. When package **2** is opened the card **3** attached to tape **54** can be tilted out of the package **2** to expose the data encoded card. The card **3** is secured between closed panels **10** & **12** for reading by a POS terminal. See FIG. **8D**. More specifically, when package **2** is closed the data encoded stripe is oriented towards panel **12**, but when the data encoded card **3** is exposed for reading the data encoded portion of the card **8** is oriented towards panel **10**.

[**0067**] The package **2** does not need to be provided with locks, but if one is desired for extra security the present invention could be used with global package or retaining band **19**. In one embodiment the first **10** and second **12** panels are secured together until after the Point of Sale via a band, wrap or other known retaining means **19**. In an alternative embodiment the first **10** and second **12** panels can be freely opened as the disk is blank or pre-written with a identification number that is not activated.

[**0068**] With respect to video games, as shown in FIG. **13**, a game cartridge can be packaged in the same way as a disk. A card **3** having a data encoded stripe **8** and/or another means to the encode data is affixed in package **2** in a manner to hold the card **3** securely, but to provide access to the data encoded stripe **8** by a clerk at check-out using a POS terminal. A cartridge **21** is retained using retaining clips **27**. A plurality of retaining members **24** are used to hold a booklet and a snap catch **26** can be used to close package **2**.

[**0069**] In an alternative embodiment shown in FIGS. **15A** and **15B** the data encoded card **3** can be package in a sleeve **150**. The sleeve **150** can be notched or unnotched for access to card **3**. The sleeve **150** can include seal **152** to prevent the removal of the data encoded card **3** prior to sale. The sleeve **150** can depict the content to be sold. At the point of sale the seal **152** can be broken and the data encoded stripes **7** and **8** can be exposed to be swiped through a POS terminal. Two data encoded stripes are shown, but card **3** can include any means to encode data. The customer provides the cartridge or disk depending on the storage means that is desired.

[**0070**] FIG. **9** illustrates the general architecture of the security system that operates in accordance with the present invention, although various delivery methods are possible. This invention generally provides a magnetic stripe or the like which can be read by a device at the point of sale. The device reads the magnetic stripe or the like and transmits to a server via the Internet, or any other form of electronic communication. The data encoded on the card can include an identification number, merchant number or any data required to facilitate the delivery of the files from the provider server to a remote client. In one embodiment, the magnetic stripe **8** encodes a number associated with the store, the product to be delivered and an identification number. In an alternative embodiment the magnetic strip also includes billing data so that the price of the product can be charged to a metered account. See Fiala et al., U.S. Pat. No. 5,918,909. A digital computer can be linked to POS terminals at many different retail stores. The link can be via the Internet, or by any form of electronic communication. A

customer will select a package or sleeve containing a disk or cartridge. The package will depict, for example, a particular video or musical performance. When the data encoded stripe **8** and/or another means to encode data is read at a POS terminal, a software, video game, CD and/or DVD provider will be notified of the purchase.

[**0071**] More specifically, in operation the merchant computer **60** simultaneously transmits data obtained from the POS terminal **50** to a provider's web site **70** or computer program **74** and transaction manager **90** using a standard Web browser **62**, such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer or Netscape's Navigator, which uses the HTTP protocol to communicate with a web server **72** of the provider web site **70**. In the preferred embodiment, POS terminal **50** requests activation from transaction manager **90** using any form of electronic communication. A transaction manager **90** is a site controller connected to the POS terminal via any communications link. The transaction manager **90** may be in electronic communication with a bank processor or the like. The transaction manager **90** includes operating software that recognizes the identification number, activates the identification number and transmits the activated status of the identification number to the provider web site **70** or computer **74** and simultaneously transmits the activated status for the identification number to POS terminal **50**. The combination of the POS terminal **50**, the provider's mechanism to read this data and the transaction manager **90** to approve the transaction is referred to as the processing apparatus. With activated status consumer computer **80** using web browser **82** connects with provider's web browser **72** which requests the identification number (PIN). Consumer computer **80** enters the identification number. Provider's computer program **74** confirms and downloads content to consumer computer **80**.

[**0072**] In one embodiment the URL of the purchased computer software, video game, CD and/or DVD purchased from the merchant and the identification number will be encoded on the disk during the manufacturing process. See eg. Mages et al, U.S. Pat. No. 6,035,329. Now referring to FIG. **10** when the disk is inserted into the customer's computer **80** standard software will facilitate the loading of the software. Once a connection is made to the internet **102**, the customer will be prompted for an identification number **103**. Once the correct identification number **103** is supplied, and the provider authorizes the transaction **104**, the web browser **82** will search for the specific active URL that correlates with the identification number. The product or portion of the product (the entire file or special encrypted key) is then remotely downloaded **105** to either a magnetic or optical disk depending on the format. See Britt, U.S. Pat. No. 5,940,074. The URL will terminate after the file is downloaded or remain active for a specified period and then terminate **106**. If a computer with a stolen disk assesses the URL of the specific file, accesses will be denied because code on the identification number had not been activated by a command from the merchant computer to the transaction manager **90** which is communicated to the provider.

[**0073**] In an alternative embodiment if the manufacture wishes to use blank optical or magnetic disks the merchant's cash register could be provided with software that would provide the URL and the identification number to the purchaser as part of the receipt at the point of sale. More specifically, in operation the merchant computer **60** trans-

mits data obtained from the magnetic stripe reader **50** to a provider's Web site **70** using a standard Web browser **62**, such as Microsoft's Internet Explorer or Netscape's Navigator, which uses the HTTP protocol to communicate with a Web Server **72** of the provider Web site **70**. The Web server **62** accesses a catalogue of documents that correspond to the number encoded on the magnetic stripe stored in computer **74**. The provider web browser **72** send the merchant web browser, **62** via the Internet, the URL of the specific file requested. The provider computer **74** will allow access to the specific URL for that identification number. The merchant computer **62** will print the specific URL and identification number on the customer's receipt. Once a connection to the Internet is obtained the customer's web browser **82** will search for the specific active URL that correlates with the product purchased from the store. The customer will be prompted for an identification number. Once the correct identification number is supplied, the product is then remotely downloaded to either a magnetic or optical disk depending on the format. See Britt, U.S. Pat. No. 5,940,074. The URL will remain active until the download is complete or will remain active for a specified period and then terminate.

**[0074]** In another alternative embodiment the identification number is embossed on the card, but the CD is blank. A card having an identification number magnetically encoded and embossed on the card is swiped through POS terminal **50**. This data is simultaneously transmitted to provider web site **70** and Platform **90**. The transaction manager **90** authorizes the download by activating the identification number. The transaction manager **90** communicates this authorization to provider computer **74**. The customer will return home with the disk and insert the blank disk into his or her customer computer **80**. Standard software will facilitate loading of the software. When a connection to the internet is obtained, the customer can access provider's web site **70**. The customer will be prompted for an identification number and once the identification number is supplied from the embossed card, access to the associated file will be approved by the provider. The customer can then download the file to the disk by standard means.

**[0075]** In an alternative embodiment, a card having a magnetic stripe **8** and/or another means to encode data is sold. The data encoded stripe correlates with specific content to be remotely delivered to the purchase via a personal computer. A customer will purchase a card associated with specific content to be remotely delivered. The card is associated with specific content, for example MTV® music of the month card. At the point of sale the card is swiped through a POS terminal. In FIGS. **9** & **10** a transaction manager **90** connected to the POS terminal **50** via any communications link will record the sale and activate the identification number. The provider **70** is notified by the transaction manager **90** of the sale and the activation of the identification number. The customer can provide his/or her own blank disk or cartridge. Once a connection is made to the internet **102**, the customer can access the provider's web site **70**. The customer will be prompted for an identification number. Once the correct identification number is provided, the provider will permit access to the content associated with the identification number. The product or a portion of the product can be downloaded **105** on to the CD or cartridge provided by the customer. The ability to download may terminate after one use.

**[0076]** A feature of this invention is that at the time of purchase a hardware device, such as a POS terminal, provides information to the provider. This information may include the ISBN of the material purchased, a provider number of the material purchased, the time of purchase and the amount of the purchase. This feature can provide the provider with real-time inventory numbers.

**[0077]** Various methods may be used for the remote download of software. With respect to the download of files to an optical disk. A video program signal is converted to a digital format, and then compressed and encoded in accordance with one of several known compression algorithms or methodologies. This compressed digital system signal, or bit-stream, which includes a video portion, an audio portion, and other informational portion, is then transmitted to a receiver. Transmission may be over existing television channels, cable television channels, satellite communications channels, and the like. A decoder is then typically employed at the receiver to decompress and decode the received system signal in accordance with the same compression algorithm used to encode the signal. The decoded video information may then be output to a display device, such as a television (TV) monitor. Video compression and encoding is typically performed by a video encoder. The video encoder normally produces a compressed digital system signal that conforms to a recognized standard or specification agreed to among the senders and receivers of digital video signals. One such standard is DVD. It includes audio and video compression technologies, as well as provisions for other information streams. Decoding technology is known. See e.g. U.S. Pat. No. 6,076,062 issued to Van Steenbrugge and U.S. Pat. No. 6,160,953.

#### EXAMPLE

**[0078]** A retail store carries packages containing blank CDs and point of sale activated card with a date encoded magnetic strip. The package has first and second panels, retaining bracket for securing a data-encoded strip substantially between the first and second panels. The data encoded strip is not exposed while on display, but the package includes a thumb slide for exposing the data encoded strip at point of purchase. The data encoded strip has an identification number that correlated with the MTV® music program of the month. At the point of purchase the identification number is activated by transaction manager **90**. The provider is simultaneously notified of the active status of an identification number. The CD can be downloaded by accessing the MTV® web site via the Internet. Once the web site is accessed the consumer is prompted for an identification number. The consumer inputs the active identification number and downloads the desired MTV® music program to the blank CD.

**[0079]** Although the present invention has been described and illustrated with respect to a preferred embodiment and a preferred use thereof, it is not so limited since modifications and changes can be made therein which are within the full scope of the invention.

I claim:

1. A package adapted for holding a card, the card generally defining a plane, the card having means to encode data; said package including:

- (a) first and second panels;
- (b) retaining means for securing said card substantially between said first and second panels, wherein said means to encode data is not exposed; and
- (c) means for exposing said means to encode data, while said card is secured between said panels.
2. The package of claim 1 wherein said means to encode data is a magnetic stripe.
3. The package of claim 1 wherein said means to encode data is a computer chip.
4. The package of claim 1 wherein said means to encode data is a hard drive.
5. The package of claim 1 wherein said retaining means is a bracket.
6. The package of claim 1 wherein said card contains holes to receive posts molded into said package.
7. The package of claim 1 wherein said means for exposing said data encoded strip is a thumb notch.
8. The package of claim 1 wherein a portion of said card is adhesively affixed to one of said panels.
9. The package of claim 1 wherein said package further includes means to secure said first and second panels together while package is on display.
10. The package of claim 1 wherein said means to encode data provides an identification number.
11. The package claim 1 wherein an identification number is printed on said card.
12. The package of claim 1 wherein said package includes bar coded data.
13. The package of claim 11 wherein said identification number is obscured while on display.
14. The package of claim 11 wherein said identification number is not obscured while on display.
15. The package of claim I wherein said package is adapted to contain a disk.
16. The package of claim I wherein said package is adapted to contain a cartridge.
17. A package adapted for holding a card, the card generally defining a plane, the card having a data encoded stripe and a content storage means; said package including:
- (a) first and second panels;
- (b) retaining means for securing said card substantially between said first and second panels, wherein said data encoded stripe is not exposed;
- (c) means for exposing said data encoded stripe, while said card is secured between said panels; and
- (d) means for retaining said content storage mean between said first and second panels.
18. The package of claim 17 wherein said data-encoded strip comprises a magnetic strip.
19. The package of claim 17 wherein said retaining means is a bracket.
20. The package of claim 17 wherein said card contains holes to receive posts molded into said package.
21. The package of claim 17 wherein said means for exposing said date encoded strip is a thumb slide.
22. The package of claim 17 wherein said means for exposing said data encoded strip is a thumb notch.
23. The package of claim 17 wherein a portion of said card is adhesively affixed to said panel.
24. The package of claim 17 wherein said data encoded strip provides an identification number.
25. The package of claim 17 wherein said package further includes means to secure said first and second panels together while package is on display.
26. The package claim 17 wherein an identification number is printed on said card.
27. The package of claim 17 wherein said package includes bar coded data.
28. The package of claim 27 wherein said identification number is obscured while on display.
29. The package of claim 27 wherein said identification number is not observed while on display.
30. The package of claim 17 wherein said content storage means is a disk.
31. The package of claim 17 wherein said content storage means is a cartridge.
32. A package adapted for holding a card, the card generally defining a plane, the card having means to encode data; said package including:
- (a) first and second panels; and
- (b) retaining means for securing said card between said first and second panels wherein said means to encode data is not exposed, said retaining means allowing said means to encode data to be oriented towards said first panel when said means to encode data coded is not exposed and allowing said means to encode data to be oriented towards said second panel when said means to encode data is exposed.
33. The package of claim 32 wherein said means to encode data is a magnetic strip.
34. The package of claim 32 wherein said means to encode data is a computer chip.
35. The package of claim 32 wherein said means to encode data is a hard drive.
36. The package of a claim 32 wherein a portion of said card is adhesively affixed to one of said panels.
37. The package of claim 32 wherein said card is exposed between said first and second panels.
38. The package of claim 32 wherein said means to encode data provides an identification number.
39. The package of claim 32 wherein said identification number is printed on said card.
40. The package of claim 39 wherein said identification number is obscured while on display.
41. The package of claim 39 wherein said identification number is not obscured while on display.
42. The package of claim 32 wherein said package further includes means to secure said first and second panels together with package is on display.
43. The package of claim 32 wherein said package is adapted to contain a disk.
44. The package of claim 32 wherein said package is adapted to contain a cartridge.
45. A package adapted for holding a card, the card generally defining a plane, the card having a data encoded stripe and a content storage means; said package including:
- (a) first and second panels; and
- (b) retaining means for securing said card between said first and second panels wherein said data encoded stripe is not exposed, said retaining means allowing said data encoded stripe to be oriented towards said first panel

when said data encoded stripe is not exposed and allowing said strip to be oriented towards said second panel when said encoded stripe is exposed.

**46.** The package of claim 45 wherein said data encoded stripe is magnetic.

**47.** The package of a claim 45 wherein a portion of said card is adhesively affixed to one of said panels.

**48.** The package of claim 45 wherein said card exposed between said first and second panels.

**49.** The package claim 45 where said package further include means to secure said first and second panels while package is on display.

**50.** The package of claim 45 where said data encoded strip provides an identification number.

**51.** The package of claim 45 wherein an identification number is printed on said card.

**52.** The package of claim 51 wherein said identification number is obscured while on display.

**53.** The package of claim 51 wherein said identification number is not observed while on display.

**54.** The package of claim 45 wherein said package includes bar coded data.

**55.** The package of claim 45 wherein said storage means is a cartridge.

**56.** The package of claim 45 wherein said storage means is a disk.

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