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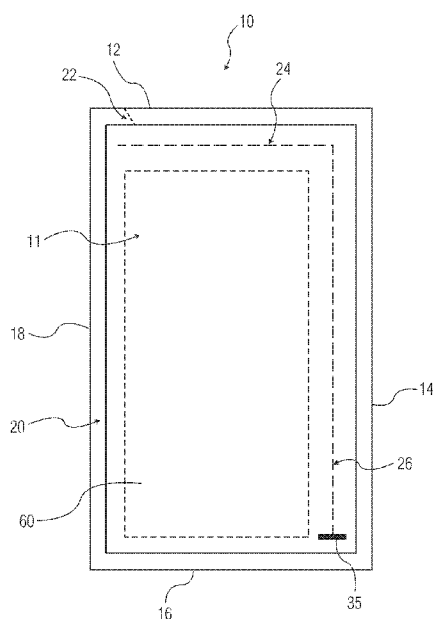


FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: The present invention provides a package for storing and dispensing a personal care article, such as a folded tissue sheet, where the package opens along two of its dimensions. The package comprises a first wall and a second wall, the first wall and second wall being bonded together in bonded regions, the bonded regions substantially surrounding a compartment portion within which a personal care article may be disposed. The package further comprises a first tear guide extending along a first axis and a second tear guide extending along a second axis, where the first and the second axes intersect. By tearing the package along the first and second tear guides a user may open the package along two of its dimensions, improving access to the personal care article.

PACKAGED PERSONAL CARE ARTICLES

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Personal care articles, such as facial tissue, pre-moistened wipes, feminine care products, and the like, are packaged and sold in a variety of packaging formats. One known format are packages of individual articles where the individual packages are interconnected to each other. Typically such products comprise a string, multi-pack, or bandolier of packages, each being filled with a product and separated from one another by a line of perforations. The perforations allow the user to separate the desired number of packages by tearing a perforation in the packaging film between each package. An exemplary package is described in US Patent No. 3,485,349, which discloses individual packets connected in tandem succession one with another along tear lines defined by lines of weakness such as the perforations.

While such packaging typically allows a user to select the desired number of individual packages, the individual packages must generally be provided with a separate opening mechanism to allow a user to open the individual package and access its contents. To this end such packages have employed tabs, tear strips, or notches, which facilitate opening of the package and access of its contents by a user. Such openings are generally limited to accessing the contents along only one dimension of the package. This may limit the ease with which a user may access the contents as well as the ease with which the user may reinsert the contents in the packaging for disposal after use. Accordingly, what is needed is an improved packaging format which allows a user to open the package along multiple dimensions and in certain instances also allows multiple packages to be connected to one another.

SUMMARY

To overcome the limitations of the prior art, the present invention provides a package having a line of weakness disposed along at least two dimensions of the package such that when a user opens the package by tearing along the lines of weakness the package is opened along the two dimensions providing for easy and unimpeded access to the contents of the package.

Accordingly, in one embodiment the present invention provides a package for housing a personal care article, the package having a width that extends perpendicularly to the longitudinal direction. Each package has a front wall and a back wall, which may be bonded to one another along a portion of their peripheral edge to form a compartment there between. Generally a personal care article is disposed within the compartment. The package further comprises a tear guide extending along both the width and longitudinal directions of the package and adapted to allow a consumer to open each

package to access the personal care article disposed therein. Preferably the tear guide at least partially superposes the package compartment.

In other embodiments, the present invention provides a package for containing a personal care article comprising at least a front wall, a back wall, the front wall and the back wall being bonded together in bonded regions, the bonded regions at least partially surrounding a compartment portion within which a personal product can be located, the package further comprising a first tear guide extending along a first axis and a second tear guide substantially extending along a second axis substantially perpendicular to the second line of weakness, and including a tear initiating weakness located in the sealed region and extending towards the compartment along a third axis. Generally when the foregoing package is opened a tear is initiated at the tear initiating weakness and then continued along the first tear guide in the direction of the first axis towards the second tear guide and then along the second tear guide to open the package at least partially along at least two of its dimensions.

In yet another embodiment the present invention provides substantially rectangular package for storing and dispensing a personal care article, the package having a width dimension and a longitudinal dimension extending perpendicular to the width, the package comprising a front wall and a back wall bonded together along their peripheral edge to form a sealed region surrounding a compartment portion, the package further comprising a personal care article disposed in the compartment portion, a first tear guide extending along a first axis and a second tear guide substantially extending along a second axis, wherein the first and second axes are substantially perpendicular to one another and the first and second tear guides superpose the compartment portion, the first and second tear guides being the only lines of weakness superposing the package compartment portion.

In still other embodiments the foregoing package may be joined with other packages to form a string, multi-pack, or bandolier of packages. For example, a plurality of packages may be joined to one another along a peripheral edge and a separation line of weakness may be disposed between individual packages, where each separation line of weakness is adapted to allow a consumer to separate a leading package from the plurality.

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a top plan view of a package for housing a personal care article in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2A is a top plan view of a plurality of connected packages for housing personal care articles in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2B illustrates a cross-section view of the packages of FIG. 2A through the line 2B-2B;

FIG. 3A illustrates a package according to one embodiment of the present invention in an open state;

FIG. 3B illustrates a package according to one embodiment of the present invention in an open state with its contents dispensed.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The invention provides a package for containing a personal care article, such as facial tissue, pre-moistened wipes, feminine care products, and the like. The package comprises a first wall and a second wall, the first wall and second wall being bonded together in bonded regions, the bonded regions substantially surrounding a compartment portion within which a personal care article may be disposed.

10 The package further comprises a first tear guide extending along a first axis and a second tear guide extending along a second axis, where the first and the second axes intersect. By tearing the package along the first and second tear guides a user may open the package along two of its dimensions, improving access to the personal care article. The tear guides are generally lines of weakness, which can comprise a discontinuous series of cuts, such as dots or dashes and may be formed by any suitable

15 method such as cutting, laser etching, mechanical scoring or perforations. It should be understood that the first and second tear guides need not all be formed by the same method and may differ in the relative depth and length of the cuts. In one embodiment the tear guides are formed from a discontinuous series of cuts having a depth that is less than the thickness of the first or second wall material. In a particularly preferred embodiment at least one of the tear guides at least partially superposes the compartment

20 portion of the package.

The package may further comprise a tear initiating weakness disposed within the sealed region and extending in a third axis (where the first and second tear guides extend in a first and a second axis). The tear initiating weakness may be formed by any suitable method such as cutting, laser etching, mechanical scoring or perforations. The weakness may be formed in one or both walls of the package.

25 Just as the tear guides may be formed by different methods and may differ in terms of the dimension of their respective cuts, the tear initiating weakness may be formed by a different method and may differ from the tear guides. For example it may be preferred that, for example the tear initiating weakness is weaker (easier to tear along, or in fact already separated) than tear guiding weaknesses. In one particularly preferred embodiment the tear initiating weakness may be formed by a cut through both the

30 first and second walls, while the tear guiding weaknesses are formed by laser etching which extends through only a portion of the first wall.

Generally the first and second walls are arranged in facing relation and sealed to one another along at least a portion of their respective peripheral edges to form a package with a compartment. Suitable bonding methods include adhesive bonding, heat bonding, ultrasonic bonding, pressure bonding, or the like. In other embodiments, the front and back walls are bonded to each other around
5 part of their respective peripheries, but are integrally connected to each other in other parts of their peripheries, such as when the first and second walls are formed from the same sheet of film, and the film is folded upon itself to create the sandwich. The package may be sealed along its entire periphery or may only be sealed along a portion of its periphery. Within the compartment the first and second walls are not bonded together so the walls and seals cooperate to enclose a compartment within which a
10 personal care article may be stored.

The package may be formed in any number of different shapes, such as substantially rectangular, triangular or circular. In a particularly preferred embodiment the package is substantially rectangular with a width dimension and longitudinal dimension perpendicular thereto. In those
15 embodiments where the package is substantially rectangular it may be preferable that the package be provided with a first tear guide extending in the width dimension of the package and substantially parallel with the top edge of the package and a second tear guide extending in the longitudinal dimension of the package and substantially parallel to the side edge of the package.

While in the foregoing embodiment the first and second tear guides generally extend along a perpendicular axis the invention is not so limited. Generally all that is required for the package to be at
20 least partially opened along two of its dimensions is that the first and second tear guides extend along axes that intersect one another. Further, in various embodiments a tear guide, or both guides, may extend along its associated axis until a near edge of the compartment is reached, a far edge of the compartment is reached, or an edge of the package is reached. Additionally, a tear guide, or both guides, extend entirely within the compartment region or between the sealed region and the compartment region.

25 Preferably the first and second tear guides are arranged in proximity to one another such that when a user initiates a tear along the first tear guide the tear is propagated to the second tear guide and the tear continues along the second tear guide to open the package at least partially along two of its dimensions. To achieve opening of the package in this manner it may be preferable that the first and second tear guides intersect one another, however, it is not necessary. What is preferred however is
30 that the package is only at least partially opened along two of its dimensions and that at least a portion of the package remains unopened to facilitate handling of the personal care article and its disposal after use. For example, in a preferred embodiment, a rectangular package is provided having only a first and

second tear guide where the first tear guide extends in the width dimension of the package and the second tear guide extends in the longitudinal dimension of the package.

Generally the first and second tear guides will be linear, however, the invention is not so limited. The tear guides may not be linear and could be shaped to guide the tear along a particular line to ensure a particular opening is created. For example, the first and second tear guides may be curvilinear so as to provide a semicircular opening when the package is torn open by a user.

Referring now to FIG.1 the package 10 is substantially rectangular having a top 12 and bottom 16 edges generally extending in the width dimension of the package and a pair of opposed sides 14, 18 extending in the longitudinal direction of the package. The package 10 comprises a front 11 wall and a back wall (not illustrated) in facing arrangement to one another and sealed along their peripheral edge to form a sealed peripheral edge 20. The sealed edges define a compartment 60 within the package for receiving a personal care article (illustrated by dashed lines).

The package 10 further comprises first 24 and second 26 tear guides. The tear guides are generally lines of weakness adapted to allow a user to open the package to access the personal care article stored therein. As shown in FIG.1, in one embodiment, first 24 and second 26 tear guides at least partially superpose the compartment 60 of the package. Further, while the first 24 and second 26 tear guides superpose the compartment 60 they do not superpose the article disposed within the package 10. In other embodiments however, it may be desirable for one or both tear guides to superpose both the compartment and the article contained therein. One desirable effect of having the one or both tear guides superpose the article is that when the package is torn along the tear guides an edge of the article is likely to be exposed for easy grasping and removal from the package.

In particular embodiments, each tear guide extends across at least 50 percent and more preferably at least about 75 percent and still more preferably at least about 95 percent of the width, or longitudinal, dimension of the compartment. For example, referring to FIG.1, the first tear guide 24 extends across about 95 percent of the width of the compartment 60 and the second tear guide 26 extends across about 95 percent of the longitudinal dimension of the compartment 60. As further illustrated in FIG.1, the first tear guide 24 extends along a first axis substantially parallel to the top edge 12, while the second tear guide 26 extends along a second axis substantially parallel to the side edge 14. The first and second axes intersect one another at a substantially right angle.

As noted previously each tear guide 24, 26 may be disposed on the front wall 11 and may comprise a discontinuous series of cuts, such as dots or dashes, having a depth that is less than the thickness of the material forming the front wall 11. In other embodiments, each tear guide can comprise a continuous score line that has a depth that is less than the thickness of the flexible packaging material.

Employing cuts or score lines whose depth is less than the thickness of the flexible packaging material for the tear guide is in particular embodiments desirable, because the package's compartment remains impervious to the outside environment. This is important in certain applications, such as keeping facial tissue free of outside contaminants, or preventing the evaporation of wetting solution of pre-moistened
5 wipes. If, for example, the dots or dashes forming any tear guide fully penetrated the thickness of the wall material, the impervious nature of the compartment would be compromised.

In certain embodiments the package 10 may be provided with a tear initiating weakness 22, which may be disposed along the upper edge 12 and may transverse a portion of the sealed area 20. Generally the tear initiating weakness 22 extends along a third axis, where the first and second tear
10 guides 24, 26 extend along a first and a second axis respectively. As illustrated in FIG.1, the tear initiating weakness 22 may extend along a third axis that intersects the first axis. In this manner a user may initiate opening the package by tearing the tear initiating weakness in the direction of the third axis, eventually intersecting the first tear guide 24 and continuing to open the package in the direction of the first axis.

In a particularly preferred embodiment the tear initiating weakness 22 extends from the top edge
15 12 of the package along an axis that is orientated approximately 90 degrees relative to the axis along which the first tear guide extends. In such embodiments the first tear guide 24 extends along a first axis that is substantially parallel to the top edge 12 and the second tear guide 26 extends along a second axis that is substantially parallel to the side edge 14. In this manner the first and second axes are generally arranged such that they intersect one another to form a right angle.

The foregoing individual packages of personal care articles may be joined with other similar
20 packages to form a string, multi-pack, or bandolier of packages. For example, a plurality of packages may be joined to one another along a peripheral edge and a separation line of weakness may be disposed between individual packages, where each separation line of weakness is adapted to allow a consumer to separate a leading package from the plurality. Turning now to FIG.2, individual packages
25 10a, 10b, 10c, substantially as described above, are joined to one another in a continuous fashion with a separation line of weakness 30a, 30b defined between individual packages.

Each separation line of weakness 30 is adapted to allow a consumer to separate a leading
package 10 from the plurality 40. For example, as representatively illustrated in FIG. 2B, when a force is applied on the leading package 10 in a direction 50, the leading package 10 begins to tear away from
30 the remainder of the plurality 40 along the separation line of weakness 30.

The separation line of weakness 30 can be formed by a series of perforations, such as, for example, dots or dashes. Such dots or dashes can penetrate the combined thickness 52 of the front wall 11 and back wall 13, as representatively illustrated in FIG.2B. Alternatively, such dots or dashes can

only partially penetrate the combined thickness 52, such as the thickness 54 of only the front 11 or back 13 wall. In certain embodiments, each separation line of weakness 30 comprises a continuous score line that only partially penetrates the combined thickness 52 of the front wall 11 and back wall 13. Preferably, the separation line of weakness – whether a series of dots or dashes, or a continuous score line –
5 extends across the entire longitudinal dimension of the plurality 40 of packages.

In one particularly preferred embodiment each separation line of weakness 30 is parallel to at least one tear guide, and more preferably parallel to the second tear guide 26 extending along a second axis. FIG.2A representatively illustrates such a configuration. In particular embodiments, when a consumer pulls on the lead individual package 10a to remove it from the remaining plurality 40, a
10 separation line of weakness 30 tears to facilitate such removal, but the package does not tear along either the first or the second tear guide 24, 26. In this way, the individual package can be removed and placed in a purse or briefcase if desired, while remaining sealed to protect the personal care article housed therein from outside contamination. To achieve this the tear guide can have a higher tear strength (i.e., require more force to tear) than the separation line of weakness 30. In this way, as a
15 removal force is placed on the package (such as force 50 in FIG.2A), the separation line of weakness 30 will tear, but the tear guide 26 will not. Having each separation line of weakness being parallel to each tear guide can be advantageous in certain manufacturing configurations.

Turning now to FIG.3A the opening of an exemplary individual package is illustrated. To open the package a user may apply a force generally in the direction of the first arrow 51 thereby tearing along
20 a tear initiating weakness. Upon reaching the first tear guide the user applies a force generally in the direction of a second arrow 53 until reaching the second tear guide, at which time a force is applied in the direction of the third arrow 55. Thereafter the package is opened at least partially along two of its sides to expose an edge of the product, which a user may grasp and remove. In a particularly preferred embodiment where the package is substantially rectangular, the second tear guide does not extend
25 along the entire longitudinal dimension of the package, but rather extends along only a portion of the longitudinal dimension so that the separated portion of the package is retained. To ensure that the separated portion of the package is retained the package may be provided with a tear stop 35 at the distal end of the second tear guide.

The lengths of the first and second tear guides may vary depending upon the contents of the
30 package, however, it is generally preferred that the total length of the guides is at least about 30 percent of the total perimeter length of the package and more preferably at least about 40 percent and still more preferably about 45 percent of the total perimeter length of the package. Further, the respective lengths of the first and second tear guides may be the same or they may be different. Where the package is

substantially rectangular having a width that extends perpendicularly to the longitudinal direction and the first tear guide extends along an axis in the width dimension and the second tear guide extends along an axis in the longitudinal direction, the first tear guide may have a length that is less than the length of the second tear guide. In the foregoing embodiment the total length of the tear guides is at least about
5 30 percent of the total perimeter length of the package and more preferably at least about 40 percent and still more preferably about 45 percent of the total perimeter length of the package and the guides are arranged such that package is at least partially opened along two of its edges when a user opens the package along the tear guides.

Once the package is opened along two of its sides, a user may dispense the product for use. In
10 one embodiment, such as that illustrated in FIG.3B, the product is a folded tissue sheet. The tissue sheet may be folded in any number of different ways. For example, beginning with a full-sized single sheet of tissue measuring about 8.75 inches x 8.5 inches, the tissue sheet may be z-folded in which opposite edges of the tissue are folded to place both edges at the centerline of the tissue sheet. The tissue may then be folded in half with the fold line perpendicular to the z-folds. The tissue sheet may be folded in
15 half a second time if a more compact folded product is desired. In a particularly preferred embodiment the z-fold lines are parallel to the longer dimension of the tissue sheet.

In a particularly preferred embodiment, such as that illustrated in FIG.3B, a portion of the product
62 may remain sandwiched between the package's first 11 and second 13 walls. The amount of product that remains within the package may vary depending on the size of the product and the size of the
20 package. In one embodiment from about 2 to about 20 percent, more preferably from about 5 to about 10 percent of the product, measured as a percentage of the total surface area of the product, is retained within the package once the package is opened and the product is dispensed for use.

As seen in FIG. 3B, by providing a package 10 that retains a portion of the product 62 the package may be used as a barrier between the user and the product. This may be particularly beneficial
25 where the product is a tissue for nose wiping and the like and the package provides an additional barrier between the insult to be wiped and the user's hands. This configuration may provide the additional benefit of providing a receptacle for storing and disposing of used product. For example, after use a user may return the product to the package, which remains sealed on two sides, for storage and disposal.

While the invention has been described in detail with respect to the specific aspects thereof, it
30 will be appreciated that those skilled in the art, upon attaining an understanding of the foregoing, may readily conceive of alterations to, variations of, and equivalents to these aspects. Accordingly, the scope of the present invention should be assessed as that of the appended claims.

In a first embodiment the invention provides a package for containing a personal care article comprising a front wall, a back wall, the front wall and the back wall being bonded together in bonded regions, the bonded regions at least partially surrounding a compartment portion, the package further comprising a personal care article disposed in the compartment portion, a first tear guide extending
5 along a first axis and a second tear guide substantially extending along a second axis, wherein the first and second axes intersect such that a tear initiated at the first tear guide will be guided along the first axis and then continue along the second axis to form a package opening along two dimensions of the package.

In a second embodiment, the invention provides the package of the first embodiment further
10 comprising a tear initiating weakness located in the sealed region and extending towards the compartment portion along a third axis.

In a third embodiment, the invention provides the package of the first or second embodiment, wherein the first and the second tear guides at least partially superpose the compartment portion.

In a fourth embodiment, the invention provides the package of any one of the first through third
15 embodiments, wherein the package is substantially rectangular and has a width that extends perpendicularly to the longitudinal direction and the first axis is orientated substantially parallel to the width and the second axis is orientated substantially parallel to the longitudinal direction, and the intersection of the first and second axes forms a right angle.

In a fifth embodiment, the invention provides the package of any one of the first through fourth
20 embodiments further wherein when a consumer pulls on an individual package to remove said individual package from said plurality, a separation line of weakness tears to facilitate removal, but no tear guide tears.

In a sixth embodiment, the invention provides the package of any one of the first through fifth
25 embodiments, wherein at least the first or the second tear guide at least partially superposes the personal care article within the compartment portion.

In a seventh embodiment, the invention provides the package of any one of the first through sixth embodiments, wherein the first and second tear guides comprise a discontinuous series of cuts.

In an eighth embodiment, the present invention provides the package of the seventh
30 embodiment, wherein the first and second walls comprise a flexible material having a thickness and wherein the first and second tear guides comprise a discontinuous series of cuts having a depth that is less than the thickness of the flexible packaging material.

In a ninth embodiment, the invention provides the package of any one of the first through eighth embodiments further comprising a tear initiating weakness located in the sealed region and extending towards the compartment portion along a third axis.

5 In a tenth embodiment, the invention provides the package of any one of the first through ninth embodiments, wherein the personal care article is a folded tissue sheet.

10 In an eleventh embodiment, the present invention provides a substantially rectangular package for storing and dispensing a personal care article, the package having a width dimension and a longitudinal dimension extending perpendicular to the width, the package comprising a front wall and a back wall bonded together along their peripheral edge to form a sealed region surrounding a compartment portion, the package further comprising a personal care article disposed in the compartment portion, a first tear guide extending along a first axis and a second tear guide substantially extending along a second axis, wherein the first and second axes are substantially perpendicular to one another and the first and second tear guides superpose the compartment portion, the first and second tear guides being the only lines of weakness superposing the package compartment portion.

15 In a twelfth embodiment the present invention provides the package of the eleventh embodiment, wherein the first tear guide extends across between 70 and 90 percent of the package width and the second tear guide extends across between 70 and 90 percent of the package longitudinal direction.

20 In a thirteenth embodiment, the present invention provides the package of the eleventh or twelfth embodiments further comprising a tear initiating weakness located in the sealed region and extending towards the compartment portion along a third axis.

In a fourteenth embodiment, the present invention provides the package of the any one of the eleventh through thirteenth embodiments, wherein at least the first or the second tear guide at least partially superposes the personal care article within the compartment portion.

25 In a fifteenth embodiment, the present invention provides the package of any one of the eleventh through fourteenth embodiments, wherein the first and second tear guides comprise a discontinuous series of cuts.

30 In a sixteenth embodiment the invention provides the package of any one of first through fifteenth embodiments, wherein each package has a longitudinal direction, a fixed end and a free end longitudinally opposite the fixed end, and wherein two or more packages are interconnected with one another in parallel such that the fixed end of each package is connected directly or indirectly to the fixed end of at least one other package via a connection, each individual package having a width that extends

perpendicularly to the longitudinal direction, and wherein a separation line of weakness is disposed between each package and a remainder of said plurality, each separation line of weakness adapted to allow a consumer to separate a leading package from said plurality.

5 In a seventeenth embodiment, the present invention provides the plurality of individual packages of the sixteenth embodiment, wherein each separation line of weakness is parallel to each second axis along which the second tear guide extends.

In an eighteenth embodiment, the present invention provides the plurality of individual packages of the sixteenth or seventeenth embodiments, wherein the first and second tear guides of each package at least partially superposes the personal care article.

10 In a nineteenth embodiment, the present invention provides the plurality of individual packages of any one of the sixteenth through eighteenth embodiments, wherein the removal of an individual package from said plurality by a user results in rupture of the separation line of weakness, but does not rupture the first or second tear guides.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A package for containing a personal care article comprising a front wall, a back wall, the front wall and the back wall being bonded together in bonded regions, the bonded regions at least partially surrounding a compartment portion, the package further comprising a personal care article
5 disposed in the compartment portion, a first tear guide extending along a first axis and a second tear guide substantially extending along a second axis, wherein the first and second axes intersect such that a tear initiated at the first tear guide will be guided along the first axis and then continue along the second axis to open the package along at least two of its dimensions.
2. The package of claim 1 wherein the package is substantially rectangular and has a
10 width that extends perpendicularly to the longitudinal direction and the first axis is orientated substantially parallel to the width and the second axis is orientated substantially parallel to the longitudinal direction, and the intersection of the first and second axes forms a right angle.
3. The package of claim 2 wherein the first tear guide extends across between 70 and 90 percent of the package width and the second tear guide extends across between 70 and 90 percent of
15 the package longitudinal direction.
4. The package of claim 1 further comprising a tear initiating weakness located in the sealed region and extending towards the compartment portion along a third axis.
5. The package of claim 1 wherein the first and the second tear guides at least partially superpose the compartment portion.
- 20 6. The package of claim 1 wherein at least the first or the second tear guide at least partially superposes the personal care article within the compartment portion.
7. The package of claim 1 wherein the first and second tear guides comprise a discontinuous series of cuts.
8. The package of claim 1 wherein the first and second tear guides comprise a continuous
25 score line.
9. The package of claim 1 wherein the first and second walls comprise a flexible material having a thickness and wherein the first and second tear guides comprises a discontinuous series of cuts having a depth that is less than the thickness of the flexible packaging material.

10. A substantially rectangular package for storing and dispensing a personal care article, the package having a width dimension and a longitudinal dimension extending perpendicular to the width, the package comprising a front wall and a back wall bonded together along their peripheral edge to form a sealed region surrounding a compartment portion, the package further comprising a personal
5 care article disposed in the compartment portion, a first tear guide extending along a first axis and a second tear guide substantially extending along a second axis, wherein the first and second axes are substantially perpendicular to one another and the first and second tear guides superpose the compartment portion, the first and second tear guides being the only lines of weakness superposing the package compartment portion.

10 11. The package of claim 10 wherein the first tear guide extends across between 70 and 90 percent of the package width and the second tear guide extends across between 70 and 90 percent of the package longitudinal direction.

12. The package of claim 10 further comprising a tear initiating weakness located in the sealed region and extending towards the compartment portion along a third axis.

15 13. The package of claim 10 wherein at least the first or the second tear guide at least partially superposes the personal care article within the compartment portion.

14. The package of claim 10 wherein the first and second tear guides comprise a discontinuous series of cuts.

20 15. The package of claim 10 wherein the first and second tear guides comprise a continuous score line.

16. The package of claim 10 wherein the first and second walls comprise a flexible material having a thickness and wherein the first and second tear guides comprise a discontinuous series of cuts having a depth that is less than the thickness of the flexible packaging material.

25 17. A plurality of individual packages for housing personal care articles, each individual package having a longitudinal direction, a fixed end and a free end longitudinally opposite the fixed end, said packages interconnected in parallel such that the fixed end of each package is connected directly or indirectly to the fixed end of at least one other package via a connection, each individual package having a width that extends perpendicularly to the longitudinal direction,

wherein each package comprises a front wall, a back wall, the front wall and the back wall being bonded together in bonded regions, the bonded regions at least partially surrounding a compartment portion, each package further comprising a personal care article disposed in the compartment portion, a first tear guide extending along a first axis and a second tear guide substantially extending along a second axis, and wherein a separation line of weakness is disposed between each package and a remainder of said plurality, each separation line of weakness adapted to allow a consumer to separate a leading package from said plurality.

18. The plurality of individual packages of claim 17, wherein each separation line of weakness is parallel to the second axis of each package along which the second tear guide extends.

19. The plurality of individual packages of claim 17, wherein the first and second tear guides of each package at least partially superpose the personal care article.

20. The plurality of individual packages of claim 17, wherein the removal of an individual package from said plurality by a user results in rupture of the separation line of weakness, but does not rupture the first or second tear guides.

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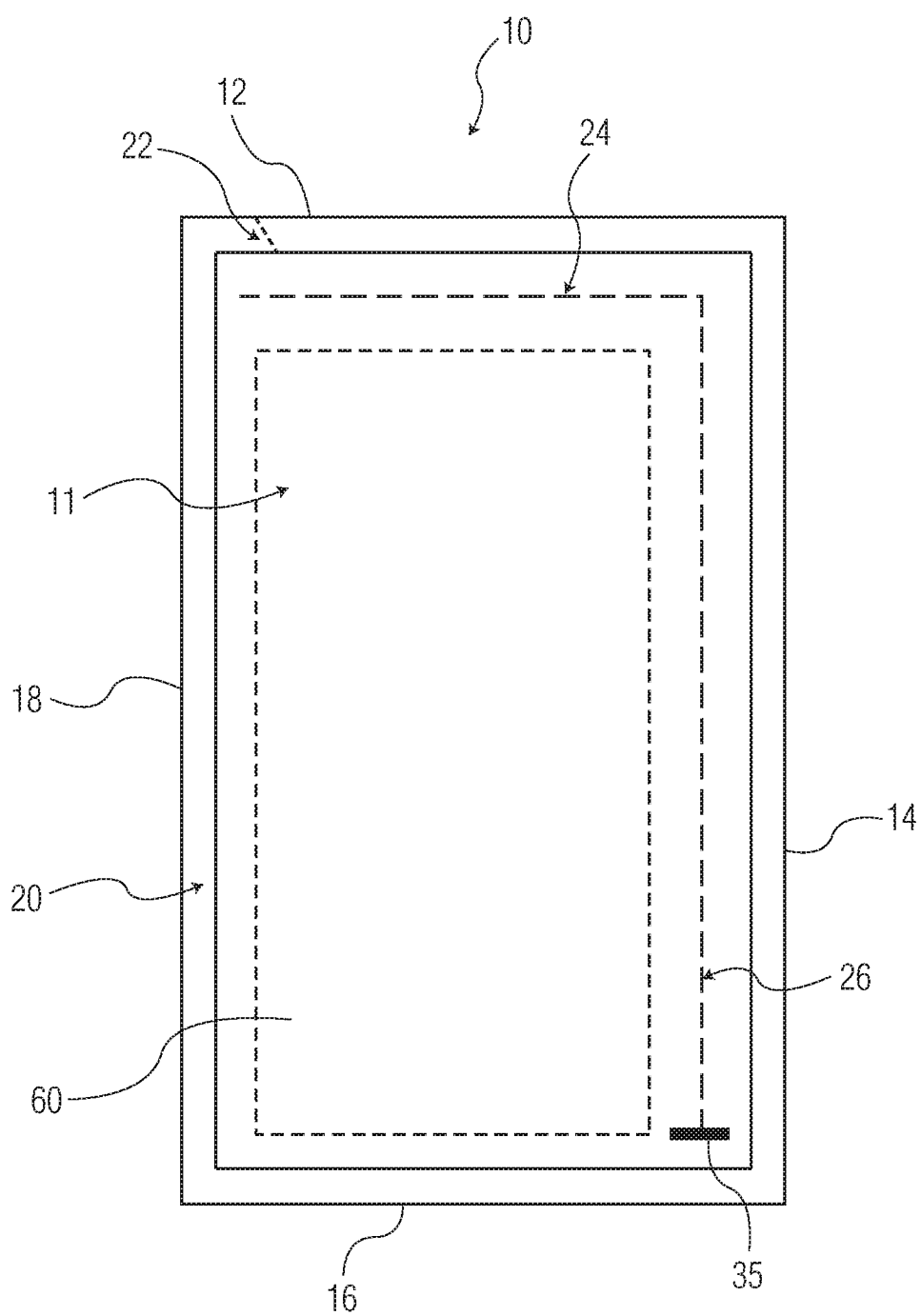


FIG. 1

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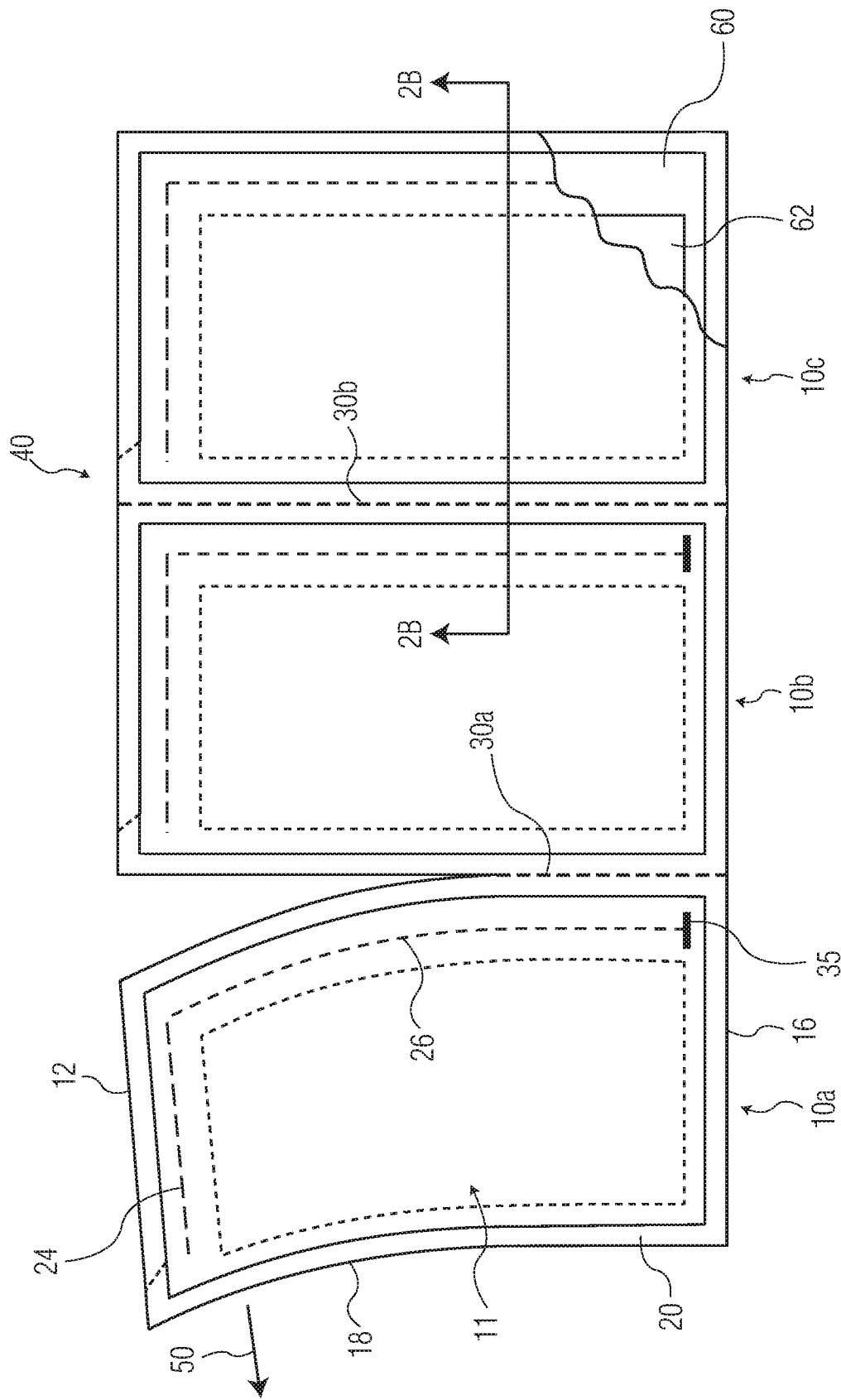


FIG. 2A

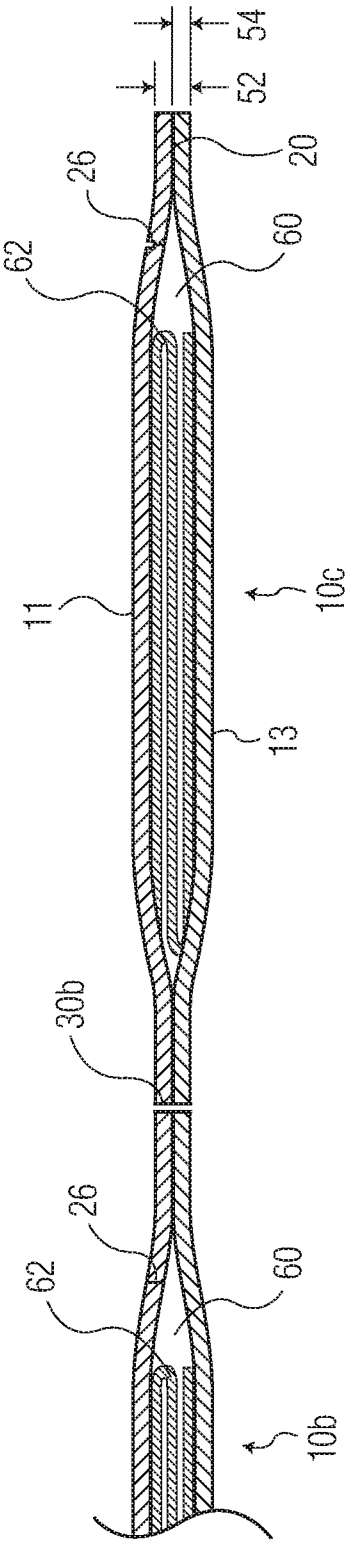
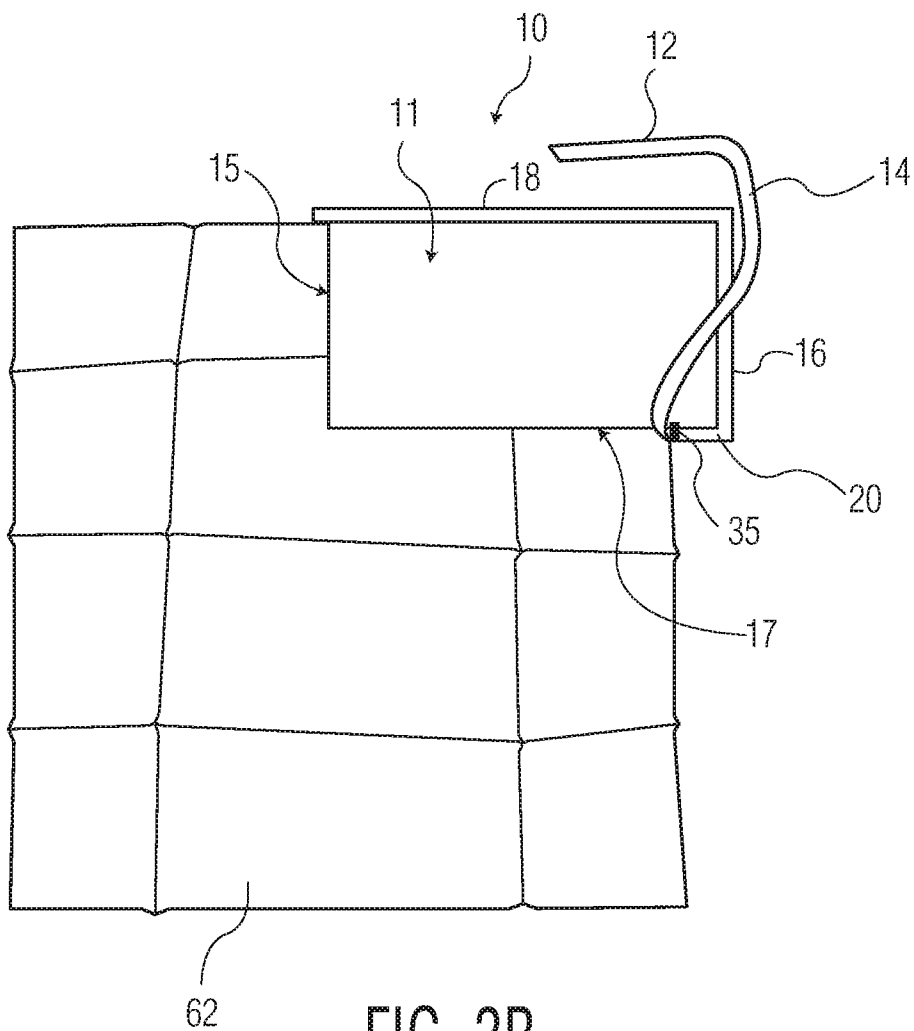
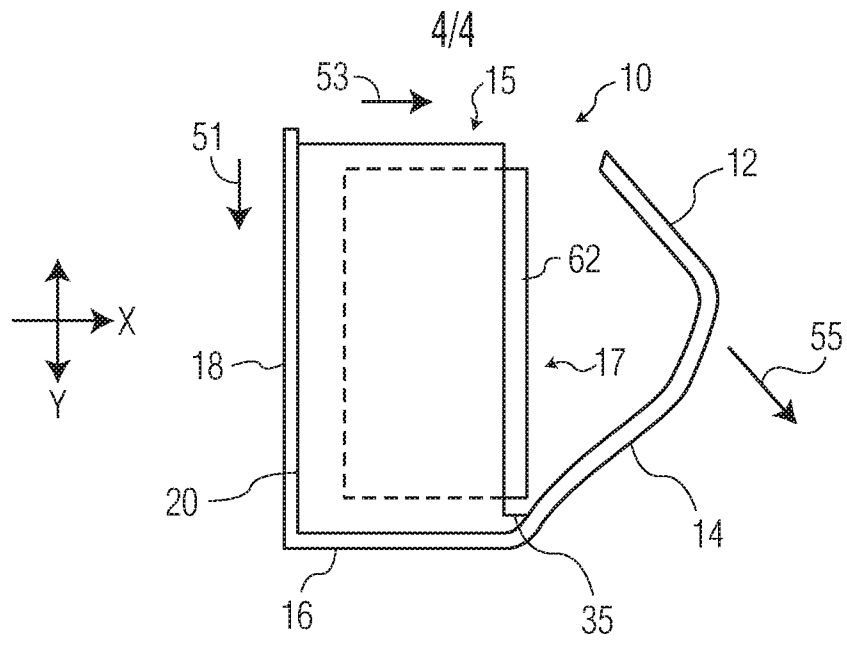


FIG. 2B



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US2016/054099**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER****B65D 75/42(2006.01)i**

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

B65D 75/42; B65D 83/04; B65D 63/00; B65D 51/00; B65D 73/00; B65D 75/60

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

Korean utility models and applications for utility models

Japanese utility models and applications for utility models

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

eKOMPASS(KIPO internal) & Keywords: package, tissue, wipe, bond, seal, compartment, tear guide, and intersection

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2011-0192754 A1 (SLOMINSKI et al.) 11 August 2011 See abstract, paragraphs [0033], [0034], [0037]-[0039] and figures 2, 3, 5, 5A.	1-16
Y		17-20
Y	US 3485349 A (CHANEY, JR., VERNE E.) 23 December 1969 See abstract, column 2, line 18 - column 3, line 27 and figures 1, 3-5.	17-20
A	US 2010-0326877 A1 (HEMMERLIN et al.) 30 December 2010 See abstract, paragraphs [0031]-[0034] and figures 1, 2.	1-20
A	US 3896524 A (PARKER, WARREN D.) 29 July 1975 See abstract, column 2, line 44 - column 4, line 13 and figures 1-5.	1-20
A	US 2007-0205127 A1 (BARNDT et al.) 06 September 2007 See abstract, paragraphs [0036]-[0041] and figures 1-4.	1-20



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

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

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

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

15 June 2017 (15.06.2017)

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No.

PCT/US2016/054099

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