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(54) **Label sheet design for easy removal of labels**

Etikettenblatt für leichte Etikettenentfernung

Design de feuille d'étiquettes pour faciliter la suppression d'étiquettes

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Description

RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] None.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0002] The present invention relates to label sheets. More particularly, the present invention relates to a design for label sheets in which the labels may be easily removed.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Address labels on printable 8½ x 11 and A4 sheets have been in use for a number of years as a means of printing a medium to large number of addresses or other information in a relatively short period of time. After the label sheets have been printed, these labels must then be removed from the sheet and applied to an envelope or other substrate. The standard method for removing the labels by hand is that the user bends back the label sheet somewhere in the vicinity of one of the edges or corners of the first label to be removed. This causes a separation between the label and the liner. The user grasps the label in the area where the separation has been created, and removes the label from the sheet. This operation is then repeated for each label. This operation can be somewhat difficult and time consuming, and requires a fair amount of manual dexterity. In addition, some combinations of materials such as a thin or flexible face and thick paper liner can be difficult to die cut without cutting into the liner. When the die cut extends into the liner, the user can accidentally tear off a section of the liner in the process of removing the label from the liner.

[0004] Label strips or webs have also been invented for use with automated label removal and placement machinery. U.S. Patent No. 5,788,284 issued to Hirst discloses a label strip with a cut running down the centerline of the release liner and underneath the center of the individual labels. The label strip moves over a V-shaped notch in a separator plate, thereby automatically separating the labels from the release liner.

[0005] U. S. Patent No. 5, 182, 152 issued to Ericson discloses a Bible index label dispensing sheet having a weakened line in the backing and fold lines in the individual labels. A release strip overlies the weakened backing line on one side of each horizontal row of labels. The release strip acts as an adhesive tape to prevent premature rupture of the sheet. The user grasps and pulls away the release strip, and tears off the backing from a portion of the horizontal row of labels. International Patent No. 5, 182, 152 issued to Ericson. International Patent No. WO 01/4550 in the name of Neato (UK) Limited discloses CD label sheets which have a portion of backing layer which can be removed so that an exposed section of CD label can be adhered to a CD without needing to handle

the whole exposed adhesive label and without using any dedicated applicators. European patent application Ep0765514 in the name of Dry Label Denmark APS discloses a label sheet for making non stick labels. The sheet has an adhesive backing layer which peels off to leave a non adhesive portion of card label exposed so that it can be removed without damage. US patent No. 5,788,284 in the name of Sinclair International Limited discloses a label strip of fruit labels that has a liner split line running down the centre of the labels and in which incorrectly printed labels are weakened along the liner split line so they tear and remain adhered to the liner when the liner strip is separated.

15 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The present invention provides a label sheet assembly configured to be fed through a printer such as a laser printer, an inkjet printer, or other printer attached to a. personal computer, for desktop printability and is defined by the features of independent claims 1 and 19. Thereafter, a narrow strip of the release liner can be torn off in a single motion. This a narrow strip of each label within a row or column of labels, allowing the labels to be easily removed and placed on some other object or substrate one-by-one. In a label sheet which has a border or matrix surrounding the labels and/or running between the labels or portions of the labels, both the release liner and the matrix have weakened separation lines therein. The separation lines are formed by a series of cuts and ties in the release liner and in the matrix. The ties are preferably strongest near the edges of the sheet and weaker in the interior portion of the sheet. This allows the sheet to resist tearing along the weakened separation lines due to normal handling or printing in the printer, but once the tearing has begun the tearing continues easily until an entire strip of the release liner has been stripped away. A notch is preferably formed in a release liner and the matrix if applicable at each end of the weakened separation line. The notch is aligned with the weakened separation lines in both the liner and in the matrix. The notch helps to ensure that tearing will begin along the weakened separation lines. The two separation lines are sufficiently close together that the user can tear away the strip of release liner from the remainder of the sheet in a single motion without having to remove a separate release strip, and the tearing, once begun, will continue until the release liner is torn entirely away from the remainder of the sheet. The size of the cuts and the size of the ties are chosen so that the assembly is strong enough to be fed through a printer such as a laser printer or an ink jet printer, but weak enough so that the user can tear off the release liner strip along the separation line in an easy and fluid motion without any other mechanical preparation of the label sheet between the printing and the tearing steps. The ratio of cut length to overall separation line length is greater than 95% to ensure ease of separation. Preferably, the separation line lies approx-

imately 0.6 centimeters (approximately ¼ inch) from the edge of a column or column of labels. In this way there is sufficient overhang of the exposed portion of the labels that a user can easily grasp the labels, but a sheet of labels which has had one column or column of labels partially exposed will not have so much exposed adhesive area that the label sheet will readily stick to a desk or other surface on which the label sheet is placed.

[0007] In one aspect therefore the invention is of a label sheet assembly modified for easy removal of labels by hand, comprising a release liner and a sheet of facestock material releasably adhered to the release liner, the facestock material including at least a first column of labels formed therein and a matrix at least partially bordering the labels, wherein a first weakened separation line is formed in the release liner below the column of labels and offset from a center of the column of labels toward an edge of the labels, and a second weakened separation line is formed in the matrix running generally parallel to the first weakened separation line. The release liner has a notch aligned with the two weakened separation lines, and preferably a notch at either end of the separation lines. The weakened separation lines are offset from each other by a short distance so that a user can tear off a strip of the liner and a strip of the matrix in a single motion leaving each label within the column of labels with a portion of its liner removed, thereby allowing easy removal of the labels from the label sheet assembly after the tearing operation without the need for the user to perform any other physical preparation of the label sheet between the printing and tearing operations. The weakened separation lines are preferably formed by cuts and ties in the liners and cuts and ties in the matrix when present, with the strongest of the ties being positioned next to the edges of the assembly or the notch when present. For label sheets having multiple columns of labels, the sheet has a weakened separation line in the liner and in the matrix when present below each column of labels.

[0008] Exemplary embodiments of the invention will be further described below with reference to the drawings, in which like numbers refer to like parts.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0009] FIG. 1 is a plan view of the label sheet according to a first embodiment of the present invention.

[0010] FIG. 2 is a close up of the lower right hand corner of the label sheet of FIG. 1.

[0011] FIG. 3 shows the back side of the portion of the label sheet shown in FIG. 2.

[0012] FIG. 4 shows a first method of using the label sheet of FIG. 1.

[0013] FIG. 5 shows the label sheet of FIG. 4 after strip 26 has been completely removed.

[0014] FIG. 6 shows a second method of using the label sheet of FIG. 1.

[0015] FIG. 7 shows a label sheet according to a sec-

ond embodiment of the present invention.

[0016] FIG. 8 illustrates a third embodiment of the invention without notches at the edges of the assembly.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENTS

[0017] FIG. 1 shows label sheet assembly 10 in which the labels can be easily peeled according to a first embodiment of the present invention. The label assembly 10 is preferably of an overall standard size such as 8-1/2 inches by 11 inches, or A4 (approximately 21 cm x 29.7 cm), or 4 inches by 6 inches, or other size compatible with standard printers used with personal computers. Assembly 10 includes a release liner sheet or simply release liner 16 with a sheet of facestock material releasably adhered thereto via a pressure sensitive adhesive. The release liner 16 is coated with a thin layer of release material such as silicone, or is otherwise constructed or treated such that the labels can be easily removed therefrom. The sheet of facestock material comprises a generally rectangular sheet of paper or film facestock with a plurality of labels 12 formed therein such as by die cutting. The section of the facestock sheet not used for labels constitutes the border or matrix 14. In the figure the facestock sheet is shown smaller than the release liner 16, although it is not necessary that the facestock sheet be smaller than the release liner. Additionally, although the assembly 10 is shown with a matrix, it is not necessary for the invention that the label assembly 10 includes a matrix 14 surrounding and/or between labels 12.

[0018] FIG. 2 shows a close up of the lower right hand corner of the label assembly 10 of FIG. 1. The matrix 14 has a weakened separation line 20 formed therein near one edge of the column of labels. Matrix separation line 20 includes a plurality of cuts 22 and a plurality of small ties 24. The liner includes a weakened separation line 30 which is shown in phantom in FIG. 2. This weakened separation line or liner separation line 30 runs generally from one edge of the assembly 10 to an opposite edge of the assembly 10 and runs preferably linearly beneath labels 12 along a column of labels, near an edge of the labels. Preferably liner separation line 30 runs less than one centimeter from the edge of the labels, and more preferably approximately 0.6 centimeters (approximately ¼ inch) from the edge of the labels. Liner separation line 30 is shown running vertically underneath a column of labels; however, the assembly can alternatively be constructed such that the separation lines run horizontally beneath a row of labels. Liner 16 also optionally includes a notch 18 generally in alignment with the liner separation line 30 and the cuts and ties 22/24 in matrix 14. As shown in FIG. 1, a similar structure of weakened separation lines and notches is created at the top right hand corner of the assembly. Additionally, assembly 10 includes two other sets of weakened separation lines and notches, one set for each column of labels with the weakened separation lines running underneath the column of labels at approx-

imately 0.6 centimeters from one edge thereof. If the assembly 10 had been laid out to include a different number of columns of labels, e.g. two columns, four columns, five columns, etc., the assembly would include a corresponding number of sets of separation lines and notches. Arrows printed on the facestock material instruct or encourage the user to begin tearing the assembly at notches 18. Alternatively, other instructional indicia or written instructions, such as the words "Tear Here" or the like, could be printed on the assembly.

[0019] The distance between liner separation line 30 and the cuts and ties 22/24 in the matrix which form matrix separation line 20 is exaggerated in the figures for illustration purposes. The separation lines in the liner and in the matrix are preferably placed close enough together such that, after assembly 10 has been printed on by a printer, a user can tear off the strip 26 of liner and matrix as illustrated in **FIG. 4** in a single fluid motion without any further physical preparation of assembly 10 being required between the printing and the tearing steps. At the same time, the separation lines are slightly separated so that the portion of the matrix overlying liner separation line 30 helps to keep liner 16 from prematurely tearing, and the portion of the liner underneath matrix separation line 20 helps to keep the matrix from prematurely tearing. Another reason for offsetting the two separation lines has to do with the manufacturing process. If the separation line in the facestock were to be die cut directly over the separation line in the liner, the die pressing into the facestock would have a tendency to deform the facestock material rather than cut cleanly into it because there would be insufficient liner strength to support the dies cutting into the facestock. Therefore, the two separation lines are preferably offset by enough distance such that normal manufacturing tolerances are unlikely to produce a cut-on-cut situation. Preferably, matrix separation line 20 is offset the liner separation line 30 by less than 5 mm; more preferably, the two are separated by less than 2 mm; more preferably still, the two are separated by less than 1 mm. It has been found that an offset distance of approximately 0.5 mm produces good results for typical sheets of paper labels. However, the exact separation distance is not critical. Furthermore, the preferred separation distance can vary depending upon the thickness and strength of the liner and matrix, the strength of the pressure sensitive adhesive and the effectiveness of the release liner, the overall size of the assembly, and other factors.

[0020] **FIG. 3** shows the back side of the lower right hand corner of the label assembly 10 illustrated in **FIG. 2**. Liner separation line 30 is illustrated in greater detail. It includes a plurality of cuts 32, and plurality of ties 36 and 38. In the embodiment shown two small ties 36 lie underneath the matrix, and one small tie 38 lies underneath each label 12. The particular locations of the ties are not critical. Additionally, release liner 16 includes a large tie 31 near notch 18 or, if no notch is present, near the edge of release liner 16.

[0021] Both the matrix separation line 20 and the liner separation line 30 run parallel to the edge of a column of labels and disposed about 0.6 centimeters from the edge of the column. The exact distance is not critical. Preferably, however, the separation lines are offset from the edge of the column of labels far enough so that when strip 26 is removed labels 12 can be easily grasped and removed by the user. At the same time, the separation lines are close enough to the edge of the labels such that when strip 26 is removed a narrow enough edge of the labels is exposed so that when the label sheet is placed onto a table or similar surface, the exposed edge of the unremoved labels 12 do not easily and inadvertently stick to the table.

[0022] The purpose of these structures will now be described with reference to **FIGS. 3, 4** and **5**. **FIG. 4** shows one method of using the label sheet assembly of **FIG. 1**. For purposes of this discussion, it will be assumed that the upper right hand corner of label assembly 10 has a structure that is the mirror image of the structure shown in **FIG. 2**, with corresponding parts having the same reference designators. The user grasps one corner of label assembly 10 at approximately position 27 with one thumb and forefinger, and with the other thumb and forefinger grasps the narrow strip 26 of release liner and matrix so as to focus the shear forces at notch 18 and large tie 31, and begins tearing strip 26 away from the rest of the sheet. After large tie 31 is broken, the tearing away of matrix liner strip 26 progresses relatively easily through small ties 36 and 38 within release liner 16, and through small ties 24 within matrix 14, until strip 26 is completely torn off. This leaves the label assembly 10 as shown in **FIG. 5**, i.e., with one column of labels 12 mostly attached to the release liner 16 but having a relatively narrow strip of the labels with the underlying liner portion removed. The user can then easily peel off the individual labels 12 by hand one-by-one as desired without having to bend and manipulate the assembly 10 each time the user wishes to remove the next label.

[0023] **FIG. 6** shows a second method of using label sheet assembly 10 of **FIG. 1**. The assembly includes three sets of vertical separation lines, one set of separation lines associated with each column of labels. The separation lines divide the assembly into three individual portions 40, 50 and 60 which may be individually separated from each other. In **FIG. 6**, the left hand portion 40 has been separated from the center portion 50 and right hand portion 60. The labels within left hand portion 40 are now ready to be easily peeled one by one from the liner and applied to envelopes or other substrate. Sections 50 and 60 do not have any portions of the labels with their adhesive sides exposed. Thus, portions 50 and 60 can be handled and/or stored for later use without any degradation of the adhesive on the backs of those labels. Remaining portion 50/60 could even be fed through a printer for later printing. For example, if only ten or fewer labels needed to be printed and used, the user could run assembly 10 through the printer and print only on labels

within the column of labels in section 40. The user would then separate section 40 and use the labels within that section. Remaining sections 50/60 would be stored for later use. When additional labels are ready to be printed, the label assembly could be fed through the printer beginning with the right hand edge of section 60. Alternatively, the software could be instructed to shift the printing of labels over to the right slightly from the normal position, such that section 50/60 could be fed through the printer beginning with the left hand side of section 50. The software could be commanded to make such an adjustment by a selectable software switch or option. Using this latter method, a first column of labels 40 could be printed, torn off, and used; at a later time a second column of labels 50 could be printed, torn off, and used; and at a later time still a third column of labels 60 could be printed and used.

[0024] Of course, the labels on the label sheet need not be generally rectangular in shape and butting against each other as in the first embodiment shown in **FIG. 1**. The labels could be virtually any shape and could be completely separated from each other by matrix therebetween or by bare liner. **FIG. 7** shows one such possibility in which the labels are round and slightly separated one from another.

[0025] The size of the cuts and the size of the ties are chosen so that the assembly is strong enough to be fed through a printer such as a laser printer or an ink jet printer, but weak enough so that the user can tear off the release liner strip along the separation line in an easy and fluid motion without any other mechanical preparation of the label sheet between the printing and the tearing steps. The ratio of cut length to overall separation line length is greater than 95% to ensure ease of separation. It has been found that an average tensile strength of the facestock and liner along the separation lines of 6 gm/cm produces good results, and it is expected that values of about 4 gm/cm to 10 gm/cm would also produce good results, and that value of about 2 gm/cm to 15 gm/cm would also be acceptable.

[0026] **FIG. 8** shows a third embodiment similar to the embodiment shown in **FIG. 1**, except that the label assembly does not include notches.

[0027] As shown in **FIGS. 1** and **2**, the facestock material is slightly smaller than the liner 16 such that matrix 14 does not extend to the edge of the label assembly. If the facestock were to extend to the edge of the label sheet, it would be desirable to form notch 18 in both matrix 14 and liner 16.

[0028] In yet another possible embodiment, the label assembly would not even include a matrix bordering the labels. In **FIG. 1**, for example, matrix 14 could be entirely stripped from the label sheet before the product is sold. Alternatively, the entire sheet of facestock material could be die cut such that the entirety of the facestock material formed labels. The facestock material could either take up the same amount of facestock area shown in **FIG. 1**, or a significantly smaller area. Regardless of how the facestock material were constructed, shaped, and cut, a

label sheet without a matrix could still employ the present invention so that a narrow strip of liner material could be easily removed in a fluid motion from a number of labels at a single time, thus exposing a minor portion of those labels so that they could thereafter be easily removed from the remaining portion of the liner.

[0029] In a still further embodiment, the label sheet could be symmetrical. For example, a label sheet could include two columns of labels. For the right hand column of labels, separation lines would be offset slightly from the right hand edge of that right hand column of labels, and for the left hand column of labels, separation lines would be offset slightly from that left hand edge of the left hand column of labels.

[0030] Additionally, it will be understood that the present invention can be used with various types and media of labels such as metallic foil, clear plastic, MYLAR®, and other well known materials. The labels could be colored or clear, and could contain preprinted indicia such as text, two dimensional graphic or photographic images, or holographic images. The invention could be used with a variety of printing devices including but not limited to printers for use with a personal computer.

[0031] The present invention is well suited for applications in which the labels will be individually removed by hand. However, the invention is not limited to hand use. The invention could be used with automated machinery for tearing strip 26 away and thereafter placing labels 12 on a substrate. The invention could also be used in applications in which a plurality of labels are to be positioned over one or more substrate objects and applied thereto as a group in the same relative positions on which those labels are found on label assembly 10.

[0032] It will be appreciated that the term "present invention" as used herein should not be construed to mean that only a single invention having a single essential element or group of elements is presented. Although the present invention has thus been described in detail with regard to the preferred embodiments and drawings thereof, it should be apparent to those skilled in the art that various adaptations and modifications of the present invention may be accomplished without departing from the scope of the invention. For example, different sizes of label assemblies could be used, either with or without matrices. The labels could be of various shapes and sizes, and need not all be of the same shape or size. The pressure sensitive adhesive could be weak or strong. The term "standard size" will be understood to mean approximately standard size, and "8-1/2 in. x 11 in." and "A-4" and the like will be understood to mean approximately those sizes. The weakened separation lines could be formed by various known methods. The weakened separation lines are generally linear and parallel, but need not be strictly linear or strictly parallel. Accordingly, it is to be understood that the detailed description and the accompanying drawings as set forth hereinabove are not intended to limit the breadth of the present invention, which should be inferred only from the following claims

and their appropriately construed legal equivalents.

Claims

1. A label sheet assembly comprising:

- a. a flexible release liner (16) that is configured to be fed through a desktop printer; and
- b. facestock material (14) having a printable surface, a back surface, and a pressure-sensitive adhesive applied to the back surface, wherein the facestock material (14) is releasably adhered to the release liner (16);
- c. wherein:

- i. the facestock material (14) has formed therein a first label (12) and a second label (12),
- ii. the first label (12) has a shape and a surface that is adhered to the release liner (16),
- iii. the second label (12) has a shape and a surface that is adhered to the release liner (16),

characterized in that:

- iv. the first label (12) and the second label (12) are adjacent to one another and are separated by a cut in the facestock material (14),
- v. said cut in the facestock material (14) between the first label (12) and the second label (12) defines at least a portion of the first label's shape and a portion of the second label's shape,
- vi. the release liner has a weakened separation line therein and a portion of the release liner (16) is configured to be separated from a part of the first label (12) and a part of the second label (12) with the majority of both the first label's surface and the second label's surface remaining adhered to another portion of the release liner (16), and
- vii. the label sheet (10) assembly is configured such that after the separation of the portion of the release liner from the part of the first label (12) the label sheet can be placed on a flat surface without the exposed adhesive area of the first label readily sticking to the surface.

- 2. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 1, wherein the release liner (16) weakened separation line (30) underlies the first label (12) and the second label (12).
- 3. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein:

- a. the first label (12) has an edge; and
- b. the second label (12) has an edge.

- 4. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 3, wherein the weakened separation line (30) is offset from the first label's edge and the second label's edge.
- 5. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 3, wherein the weakened separation line (30) underlies the first label (12) less than one centimeter from the first label's edge.
- 6. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein the weakened separation line (30) underlies the cut in the facestock material between the first label (12) and the second label (12).
- 7. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein the weakened separation line (30) is a straight line.
- 8. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein the release liner (16) is configured to be separated from the part of the first label (12) and the part of the second label (12) along the weakened separation line (30).
- 9. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein the label sheet assembly is configured to be torn by a user along the weakened separation line (30), and in doing so, remove both a portion of the release liner and a portion of the facestock material, leaving a portion of the first label's surface exposed and a portion of the second label's surface exposed.
- 10. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein:
 - a. the release liner (16) has an edge; and
 - b. the weakened separation line (30) includes a tie (31) at the release liner edge.
- 11. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein the facestock material (14) includes a weakened separation line (20).
- 12. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 11, wherein the facestock material's weakened separation line (20) is generally parallel to the release liner's weakened separation line (30).
- 13. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 11, wherein the label sheet assembly is configured to be simultaneously torn by a user along both the release liner's weakened separation line (30) and the facestock material's weakened separation line (20).

14. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein the release liner's weakened separation line (30) includes a plurality of cuts (32) and a plurality of ties (36). 5
15. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein the weakened separation line (30) includes at least one tie (38) that underlies the first label (12) and at least another tie that underlies the second label. 10
16. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein:
- a. the release liner (16) further includes a notch (18); 15
 - b. the notch (18) is adjacent to and aligned with the weakened separation line (30); and
 - c. the notch (18) is configured to facilitate tearing by a user of the liner sheet (16) along the weakened separation line (30). 20
17. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 2, wherein the label sheet assembly is sufficiently strong along the weakened separation line (30) so that the label sheet assembly can be fed through a printer without the liner sheet (16) separating along the weakened separation line (30). 25
18. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 1, wherein:
- a. the label sheet assembly further includes an edge; 30
 - b. the label sheet assembly includes facestock material between the first label (12) and the label sheet assembly's edge; and
 - c. the facestock material between the label sheet assembly's edge and the first label (12) is configured to be torn by a user. 35 40
19. A label sheet assembly (10) comprising:
- a. a flexible release liner (16) that is configured to be fed through a desktop printer; and 45
 - b. a plurality of labels (12) having a printable surface and an adhesive back surface that is coupled to the release liner;
 - c. wherein: 50
 - i. each one of the plurality of labels (12) has an end and a surface, **characterized in that:**
 - ii. each one of the plurality of labels (12) abuts another one of the plurality of labels, 55
 - iii. the release liner has a weakened separation line therein and a first portion of the release liner (16) is configured to separate
- from each one of the plurality of labels (12) so that after the first portion of the release liner (16) is separated from each one of the plurality of labels (12) the end of each one of the plurality of labels (12) no longer is coupled to the release liner (16) and a second portion of the release liner (16) continues to be coupled to a majority of the surface of each one of the plurality of labels (12), and
- iv. the label sheet assembly is configured such that after the separation of the first portion of the release liner (16) from each one of the plurality of labels (12) the label sheet can be placed on a flat surface without the exposed adhesive area of the labels readily sticking to the surface.
20. The label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 19, wherein the release liner (16) weakened separation (30) line defines a boundary between the first and second portions of the release liner (16).
21. A label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 1 wherein
- vi. the release liner (16) weakened separation line underlies the first label (12) and the second label (12),
 - vii. the release liner (16) has an edge, and the weakened separation line includes a tie (31) at the release liner edge.
22. A label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 1 wherein:
- vi. the release liner weakened separation line (30) underlies the first label (12) and the second label (12),
 - vii. the weakened separation line (30) includes at least one tie (38) that underlies the first label (12) and at least another tie that underlies the second label (12).
23. A label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 1 wherein the facestock material (14) has formed therein a matrix surrounding and/or running between the labels or portions of labels.
24. A label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 23 wherein the matrix is configured to be torn by the user. 50
25. A label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 23 wherein:
- the release liner weakened separation line (30) underlies the first label (12) and the second label (12); and

the matrix overlies a portion of the weakened separation line (30).

26. A label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 25 wherein both the matrix and the release liner (16) are configured to be torn by the user when the release liner (16) is torn along the weakened separation line (30). 5
27. A label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 4 wherein the facestock material (14) includes a weakened separation line (20) and wherein the facestock material's weakened separation line (20) is generally parallel to the release liner's weakened separation line (30). 10 15
28. A label sheet assembly (10) according to claim 5 wherein the release liner separation line runs substantially 0.6cm from the edges of the labels. 20

Patentansprüche

1. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung, die Folgendes umfasst:

- a. eine flexible Trennträgerschicht (16), die dafür konfiguriert ist, durch einen Schreibtischdrucker zugeführt zu werden, und
b. Oberseitenmaterial (14), das eine bedruckbare Oberfläche, eine Rückseite und einen auf die Rückseite aufgetragenen Haftklebstoff hat, wobei das Oberseitenmaterial (14) ablösbar an die Trennträgerschicht (16) geklebt ist,
c. wobei:

- i. das Oberseitenmaterial (14) in demselben geformt ein erstes Etikett (12) und ein zweites Etikett (12) hat,
ii. das erste Etikett (12) eine Form und eine Oberfläche, die an die Trennträgerschicht (16) geklebt ist, hat,
iii. das zweite Etikett (12) eine Form und eine Oberfläche, die an die Trennträgerschicht (16) geklebt ist, hat,
dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass:
iv. das erste Etikett (12) und das zweite Etikett (12) einander benachbart sind und durch einen Schnitt in dem Oberseitenmaterial (14) getrennt sind,
v. der Schnitt in dem Oberseitenmaterial (14) zwischen dem ersten Etikett (12) und dem zweiten Etikett (12) wenigstens einen Abschnitt der Form des ersten Etiketts und einen Abschnitt der Form des zweiten Etiketts definiert,
vi. die Trennträgerschicht eine geschwächte Trennlinie in derselben hat und ein Abschnitt der Trennträgerschicht (16) dafür

konfiguriert ist, von einem Teil des ersten Etiketts (12) und einem Teil des zweiten Etiketts (12) getrennt zu werden, wobei der Großteil sowohl der Oberfläche des ersten Etiketts als auch der Oberfläche des zweiten Etiketts an einem anderen Abschnitt der Trennträgerschicht (16) angeklebt verbleibt, und

vii. die Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) derart konfiguriert ist, dass nach der Trennung des Abschnitts der Trennträgerschicht von dem Teil des ersten Etiketts (12) das Etikettenblatt auf eine ebene Fläche gelegt werden kann, ohne dass die freigelegte Klebefläche des ersten Etiketts leicht an der Fläche haftet.

2. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 1, wobei die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) der Trennträgerschicht (16) unter dem ersten Etikett (12) und dem zweiten Etikett (12) liegt.

3. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei:

- a. das erste Etikett (12) eine Kante hat und
b. das zweite Etikett (12) eine Kante hat.

4. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 3, wobei die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) gegenüber der Kante des ersten Etiketts und der Kante des zweiten Etiketts versetzt ist.

5. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 3, wobei die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) unter dem ersten Etikett (12) weniger als einen Zentimeter von der Kante des ersten Etiketts liegt.

6. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) unter dem Schnitt in dem Oberseitenmaterial zwischen dem ersten Etikett (12) und dem zweiten Etikett (12) liegt.

7. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) eine gerade Linie ist.

8. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei die Trennträgerschicht (16) dafür konfiguriert ist, entlang der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) von dem Teil des ersten Etiketts (12) und dem Teil des zweiten Etiketts (12) getrennt zu werden.

9. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei die Etikettenblatt-Anordnung dafür konfiguriert ist, durch einen Benutzer entlang der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) abgerissen zu werden und dabei sowohl einen Abschnitt der Trennträgerschicht als

auch einen Abschnitt des Oberseitenmaterials zu entfernen, was einen Abschnitt der Oberfläche des ersten Etiketts und einen Abschnitt der Oberfläche des zweiten Etiketts freigelegt hinterlässt.

10. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei

- a. die Trennträgerschicht (16) eine Kante hat und
- b. die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) ein Bindeglied (31) an der Trennträgerschichtkante einschließt.

11. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei das Oberseitenmaterial (14) eine geschwächte Trennlinie (20) einschließt.

12. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 11, wobei die geschwächte Trennlinie (20) des Oberseitenmaterials im Allgemeinen parallel zu der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) der Trennträgerschicht ist.

13. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 11, wobei die Etikettenblatt-Anordnung dafür konfiguriert ist, durch einen Benutzer gleichzeitig entlang der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) der Trennträgerschicht und der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) des Oberseitenmaterials durchgerissen zu werden.

14. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) der Trennträgerschicht mehrere Schnitte (32) und mehrere Bindeglieder (36) einschließt.

15. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) wenigstens ein Bindeglied (38), das unter dem ersten Etikett (12) liegt, und wenigstens ein anderes Bindeglied, das unter dem zweiten Etikett liegt, einschließt.

16. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei:

- a. die Trennträgerschicht (16) ferner eine Kerbe (18) einschließt,
- b. die Kerbe (18) der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) benachbart und mit derselben ausgerichtet ist und
- c. die Kerbe (18) dafür konfiguriert ist, das Abreißen der Trennträgerschicht (16) entlang der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) durch einen Benutzer zu erleichtern.

17. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 2, wobei die Etikettenblatt-Anordnung entlang der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) ausreichend fest ist, so

dass die Etikettenblatt-Anordnung durch einen Drucker zugeführt werden kann, ohne dass sich die Trennträgerschicht (16) entlang der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) abtrennt.

18. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 1, wobei:

- a. die Etikettenblatt-Anordnung ferner eine Kante einschließt,
- b. die Etikettenblatt-Anordnung Oberseitenmaterial zwischen dem ersten Etikett (12) und der Kante der Etikettenblatt-Anordnung einschließt und
- c. das Oberseitenmaterial zwischen der Kante der Etikettenblatt-Anordnung und dem ersten Etikett (12) dafür konfiguriert ist, durch einen Benutzer abgerissen zu werden.

19. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10), die Folgendes umfasst:

- a. eine flexible Trennträgerschicht (16), die dafür konfiguriert ist, durch einen Schreibtischdrucker zugeführt zu werden, und
- b. mehrere Etiketten (12), die eine bedruckbare Oberfläche und eine klebende Rückseite, die an die Trennträgerschicht gekoppelt ist, haben,
- c. wobei:

- i. jedes der mehreren Etiketten (12) ein Ende und eine Oberfläche hat,

dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass:

- ii. jedes der mehreren Etiketten (12) an ein anderes der mehreren Etiketten (12) anstößt,

- iii. die Trennträgerschicht eine geschwächte Trennlinie in derselben hat und ein erster Abschnitt der Trennträgerschicht (16) dafür konfiguriert ist, sich von jedem der mehreren Etiketten (12) zu trennen, sodass, nachdem der erste Abschnitt der Trennträgerschicht (16) von jedem der mehreren Etiketten (12) getrennt ist, das Ende jedes der mehreren Etiketten (12) nicht mehr an die Trennträgerschicht (16) gekoppelt ist und ein zweiter Abschnitt der Trennträgerschicht (16) weiter an einen Großteil der Oberfläche jedes der mehreren Etiketten (12) gekoppelt ist, und

- iv. die Etikettenblatt-Anordnung derart konfiguriert ist, dass nach der Trennung des ersten Abschnitts der Trennträgerschicht (16) von jedem der mehreren Etiketten (12) das Etikettenblatt auf eine ebene Fläche gelegt werden kann, ohne dass die freigelegte Klebefläche der Etiketten leicht an der Fläche haftet.

20. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 19, wobei die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) der Trennträgerschicht (16) eine Grenze zwischen dem ersten und dem zweiten Abschnitt der Trennträgerschicht (16) definiert.

21. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 1, wobei:

vi. die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) der Trennträgerschicht (16) unter dem ersten Etikett (12) und dem zweiten Etikett (12) liegt,

vii. die Trennträgerschicht (16) eine Kante hat und die geschwächte Trennlinie ein Bindeglied (31) an der Trennträgerschichtkante einschließt.

22. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 1, wobei:

vi. die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) der Trennträgerschicht unter dem ersten Etikett (12) und dem zweiten Etikett (12) liegt,

vii. die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) wenigstens ein Bindeglied (38), das unter dem ersten Etikett (12) liegt, und wenigstens ein anderes Bindeglied, das unter dem zweiten Etikett (12) liegt, einschließt.

23. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 1, wobei das Oberseitenmaterial (14) in demselben eine Matrix geformt hat, welche die Etiketten oder Abschnitte von Etiketten umschließt und/oder zwischen denselben verläuft.

24. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 23, wobei die Matrix dafür konfiguriert ist, durch den Benutzer durchgerissen zu werden.

25. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 23, wobei:

die geschwächte Trennlinie (30) der Trennträgerschicht unter dem ersten Etikett (12) und dem zweiten Etikett (12) liegt und die Matrix über einem Abschnitt der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) liegt.

26. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 25, wobei sowohl die Matrix als auch die Trennträgerschicht (16) dafür konfiguriert sind, durch den Benutzer durchgerissen zu werden, wenn die Trennträgerschicht (16) entlang der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) durchgerissen wird.

27. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 4, wobei das Oberseitenmaterial (14) eine geschwächte Trennlinie (20) einschließt und wobei die ge-

schwächte Trennlinie (20) des Obermaterials im Allgemeinen parallel zu der geschwächten Trennlinie (30) der Trennträgerschicht ist.

28. Etikettenblatt-Anordnung (10) nach Anspruch 5, wobei die geschwächte Trennlinie der Trennträgerschicht im Wesentlichen 0,6 cm von den Kanten der Etiketten verläuft.

Revendications

1. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes comprenant:

a. une doublure de détachement (16) flexible qui est configurée pour être alimentée à travers une imprimante de bureau; et

b. un matériau de pellicule frontale (14) présentant une surface imprimable, une surface postérieure et un adhésif sensible à la pression appliqué sur la surface postérieure, le matériau de pellicule frontale (14) adhérent de manière détachable sur la doublure de détachement (16);

c. dans lequel:

i. une première étiquette (12) et une seconde étiquette (12) sont formées dans le matériau de pellicule frontale (14),

ii. la première étiquette (12) a une forme et une surface qui est collée sur la doublure de détachement (16),

iii. la seconde étiquette (12) a une forme et une surface qui est collée sur la doublure de détachement (16),

caractérisé par le fait que:

iv. la première étiquette (12) et la seconde étiquette (12) sont adjacentes l'une à l'autre et sont séparées par une découpe dans le matériau de pellicule frontale (14),

v. ladite découpe dans le matériau de pellicule frontale (14) entre la première étiquette (12) et la seconde étiquette (12) définit au moins une partie de la forme de la première étiquette et une partie de la forme de la seconde étiquette,

vi. une ligne de séparation affaiblie est formée dans la doublure de détachement et une partie de la doublure de détachement (16) est configurée pour être séparée d'une partie de la première étiquette (12) et d'une partie de la seconde étiquette (12) avec la majeure partie de la surface de la première étiquette et de la surface de la seconde étiquette qui reste collée sur une autre partie de la doublure de détachement (16), et

vii. l'ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) est configuré de telle sorte qu'après la séparation de la partie de la doublure de dé-

- tachement de la partie de la première étiquette (12), la feuille d'étiquettes peut être placée sur une surface plate sans que la zone adhésive exposée de la première étiquette adhère facilement sur la surface.
2. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) de la doublure de détachement (16) se trouve en dessous de la première étiquette (12) et de la seconde étiquette (12).
 3. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel:
 - a. la première étiquette (12) a un bord; et
 - b. la seconde étiquette (12) a un bord.
 4. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 3, dans lequel la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) est décalée par rapport au bord de la première étiquette et au bord de la seconde étiquette.
 5. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 3, dans lequel la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) se trouve en dessous de la première étiquette (12) à moins d'un centimètre du bord de la première étiquette.
 6. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) se trouve en dessous de la découpe dans le matériau de pellicule frontale entre la première étiquette (12) et la seconde étiquette (12).
 7. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) est une ligne droite.
 8. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel la doublure de détachement (16) est configurée pour être séparée de la partie de la première étiquette (12) et de la partie de la seconde étiquette (12) le long de la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30).
 9. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel l'ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes est configuré pour être déchiré par un utilisateur le long de la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) et, ce faisant, enlever à la fois une partie de la doublure de détachement et une partie du matériau de pellicule frontale, laissant une partie de la surface de la première étiquette exposée et une partie de la surface de la seconde étiquette exposée.
 10. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel:
 - a. la doublure de détachement (16) a un bord; et
 - b. la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) inclut une liaison (31) au niveau du bord de la doublure de détachement.
 11. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel le matériau de pellicule frontale (14) inclut une ligne de séparation affaiblie (20).
 12. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 11, dans lequel la ligne de séparation affaiblie (20) du matériau de pellicule frontale est globalement parallèle à la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) de la doublure de détachement.
 13. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 11, dans lequel l'ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes est configuré pour être déchiré par un utilisateur à la fois le long de la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) de la doublure de détachement et le long de la ligne de séparation affaiblie (20) du matériau de pellicule frontale dans le même temps.
 14. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) de la doublure de détachement inclut une pluralité de découpes (32) et une pluralité de liaisons (36).
 15. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) inclut au moins une liaison (38) qui se trouve en dessous de la première étiquette (12) et au moins une autre liaison qui se trouve en dessous de la seconde étiquette.
 16. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel:
 - a. la doublure de détachement (16) inclut, en outre, une encoche (18);
 - b. l'encoche (18) est adjacente et alignée avec la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30); et
 - c. l'encoche (18) est configurée pour faciliter la déchirure de la feuille de doublure (16) le long de la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) par un utilisateur.
 17. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 2, dans lequel l'ensemble de feuilles d'étiquettes est suffisamment résistant le long de la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) pour que l'ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes puisse être alimenté à travers une imprimante sans que la feuille de doublure (16) se sépare le long de la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30).
 18. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la reven-

dication 1, dans lequel:

- a. l'ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes inclut, en outre, un bord;
- b. l'ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes inclut un matériau de pellicule frontale entre la première étiquette (12) et le bord de l'ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes; et
- c. le matériau de pellicule frontale entre le bord de l'ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes et la première étiquette (12) est configuré pour être déchiré par un utilisateur.

19. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) comprenant:

- a. une doublure de détachement (16) flexible qui est configurée pour être alimentée à travers une imprimante de bureau; et
- b. une pluralité d'étiquettes (12) présentant une surface imprimable et une surface postérieure adhésive qui est attachée à la doublure de détachement;
- c. dans lequel:

i. chaque étiquette de la pluralité d'étiquettes (12) a une extrémité et une surface, **caractérisé par le fait que:**

ii. chaque étiquette de la pluralité d'étiquettes (12) est contiguë à une autre étiquette de la pluralité d'étiquettes,

iii. une ligne de séparation affaiblie est formée dans la doublure de détachement et une première partie de la doublure de détachement (16) est configurée pour se séparer de chaque étiquette de la pluralité d'étiquettes (12) de telle sorte qu'après la séparation de la première partie de la doublure de détachement (16) de chaque étiquette de la pluralité d'étiquettes (12), l'extrémité de chaque étiquette de la pluralité d'étiquettes (12) n'est plus attachée à la doublure de détachement (16) et une seconde partie de la doublure de détachement (16) demeure toujours attachée à une majeure partie de la surface de chaque étiquette de la pluralité d'étiquettes (12), et

iv. l'ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes est configuré de telle sorte qu'après la séparation de la première partie de la doublure de détachement (16) de chaque étiquette de la pluralité d'étiquettes (12), la feuille d'étiquettes peut être placée sur une surface plate sans que la zone adhésive exposée des étiquettes adhère facilement sur la surface.

20. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 19, dans lequel la ligne de séparation affai-

blie (30) de la doublure de détachement (16) définit une limite entre la première et la seconde partie de la doublure de détachement (16).

21. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 1, dans lequel:

vi. la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) de la doublure de détachement (16) se trouve en dessous de la première étiquette (12) et de la seconde étiquette (12),

vii. la doublure de détachement (16) a un bord et la ligne de séparation affaiblie inclut une liaison (31) au niveau du bord de la doublure de détachement.

22. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 1, dans lequel:

vi. la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) de la doublure de détachement se trouve en dessous de la première étiquette (12) et de la seconde étiquette (12),

vii. la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) inclut au moins une liaison (38) qui se trouve en dessous de la première étiquette (12) et au moins une autre liaison qui se trouve en dessous de la seconde étiquette (12).

23. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 1, dans lequel une matrice entourant et/ou s'étendant entre les étiquettes ou des parties d'étiquettes est formée dans le matériau de pellicule frontale (14).

24. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 23, dans lequel la matrice est configurée pour être déchirée par l'utilisateur.

25. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 23, dans lequel:

la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) de la doublure de détachement se trouve en dessous de la première étiquette (12) et de la seconde étiquette (12); et

la matrice recouvre une partie de la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30).

26. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 25, dans lequel la matrice et la doublure de détachement (16) sont toutes les deux configurées pour être déchirées par l'utilisateur lorsque la doublure de détachement (16) est déchirée le long de la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30).

27. Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 4, dans lequel le matériau de pellicule fron-

tale (14) inclut une ligne de séparation affaiblie (20) et dans lequel la ligne de séparation affaiblie (20) du matériau de pellicule frontale est globalement parallèle à la ligne de séparation affaiblie (30) de la doublure de détachement.

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- 28.** Ensemble de feuille d'étiquettes (10) selon la revendication 5, dans lequel la ligne de séparation de la doublure de détachement s'étend à sensiblement 0,6 cm des bords des étiquettes.

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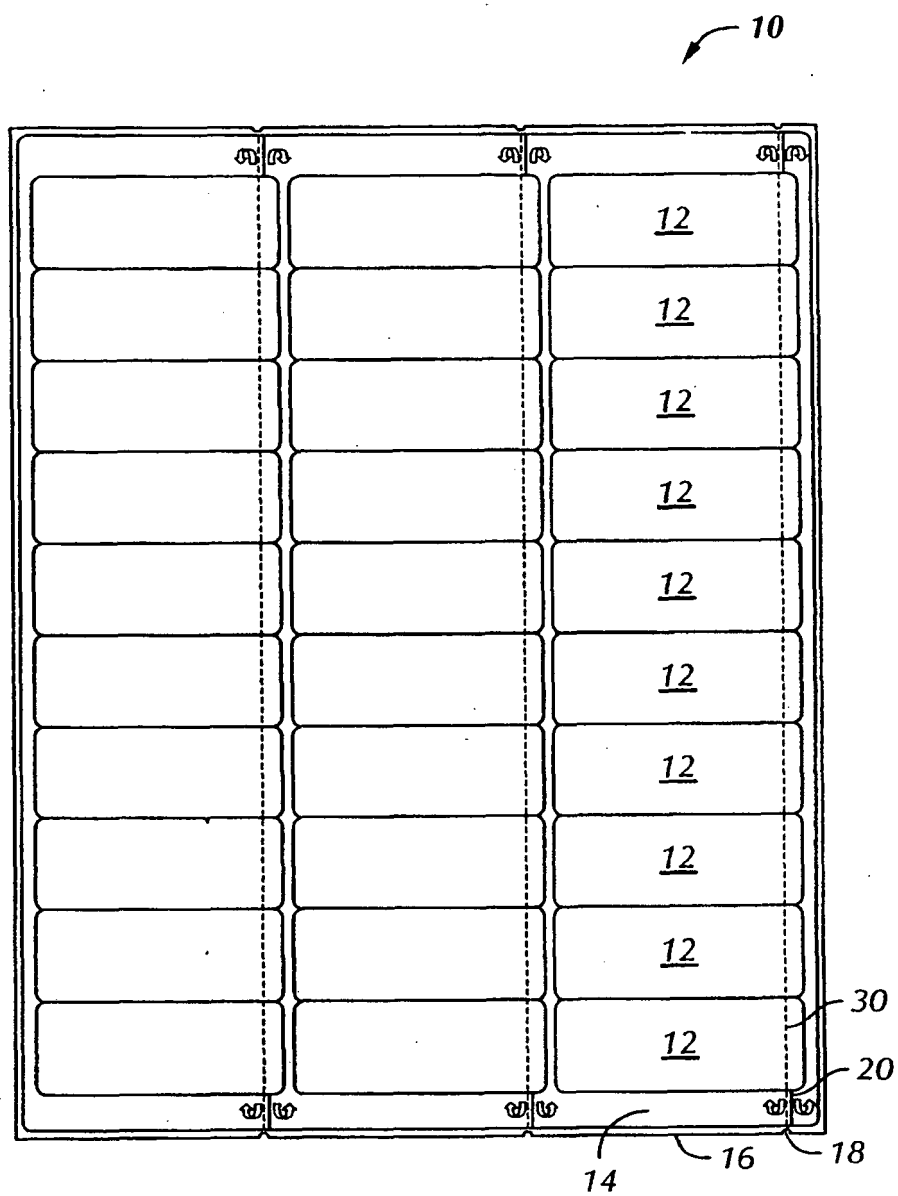


FIG. 1

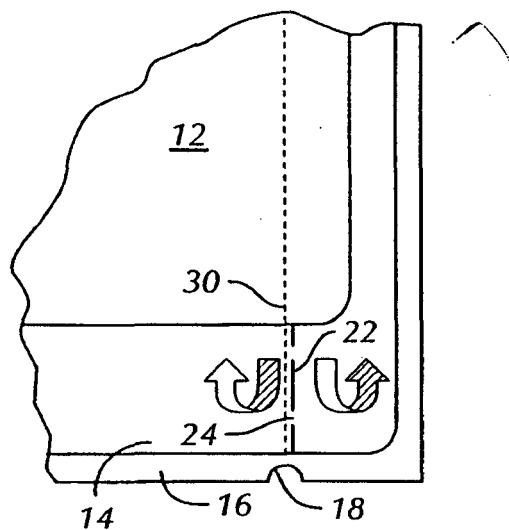


FIG. 2

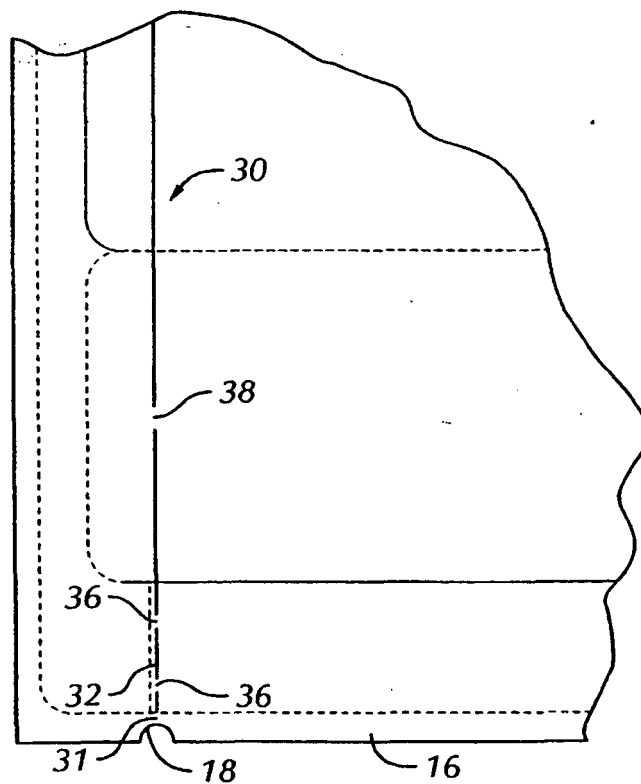


FIG. 3

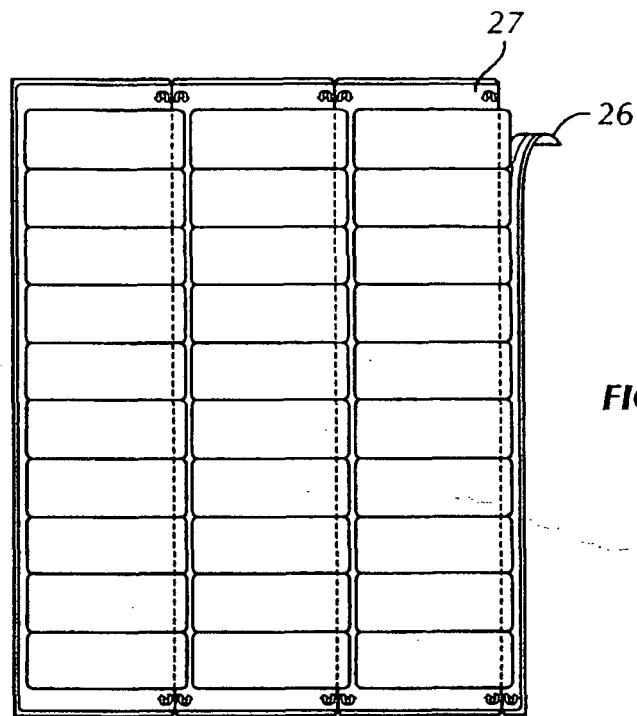


FIG. 4

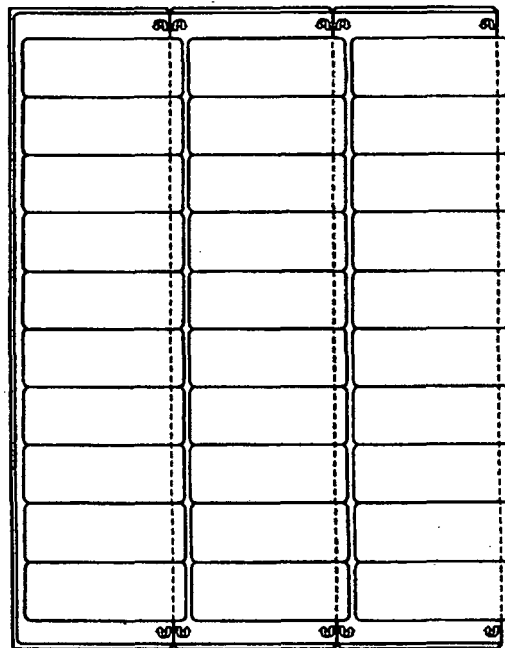


FIG. 5

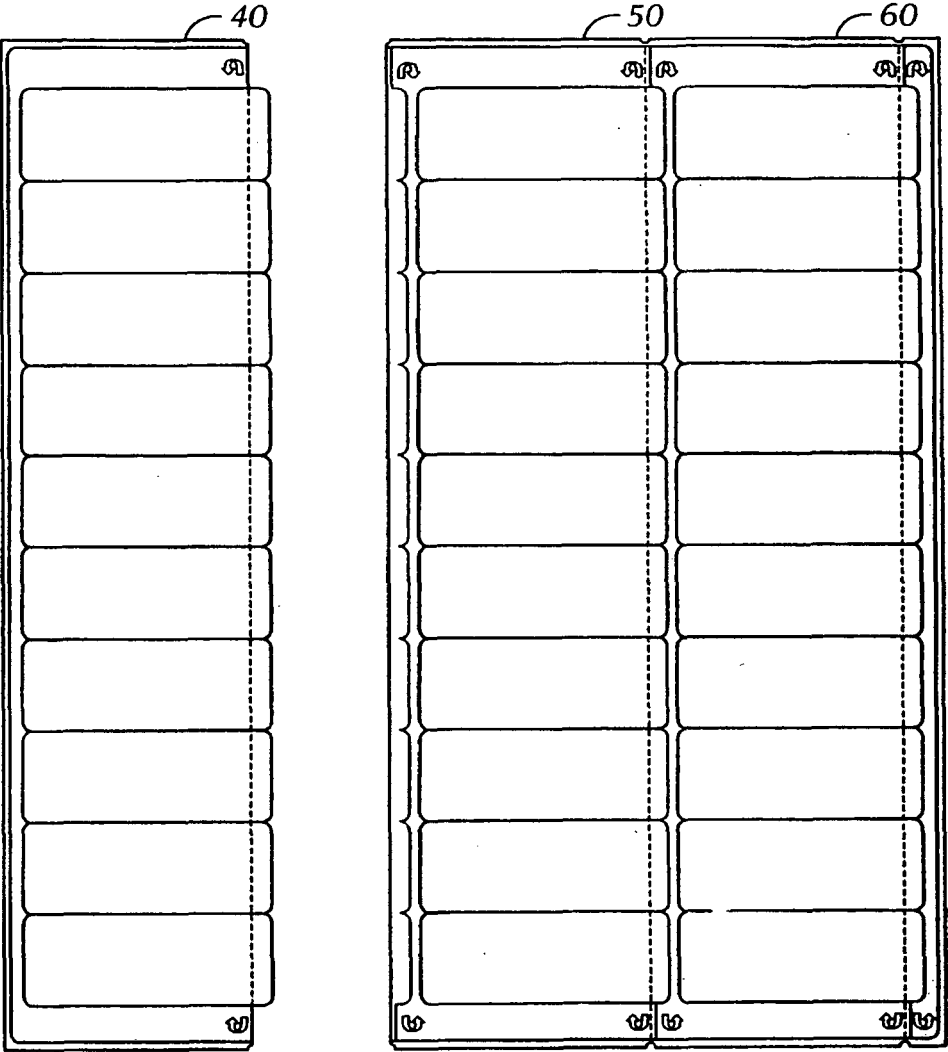


FIG. 6

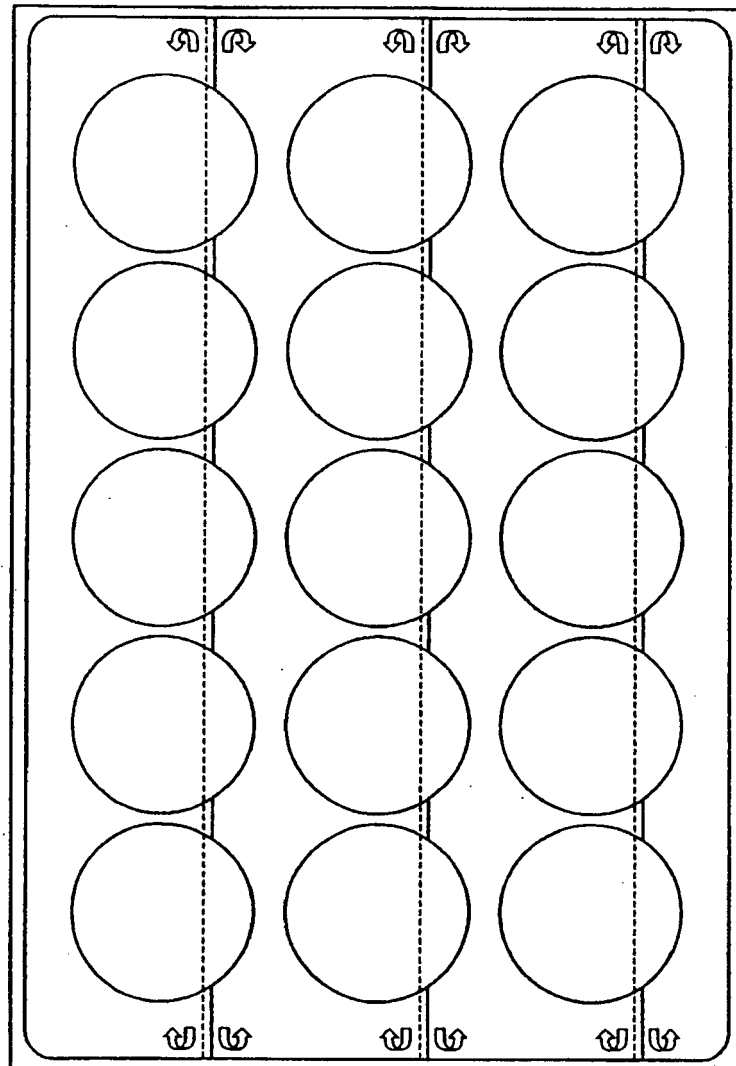


FIG. 7

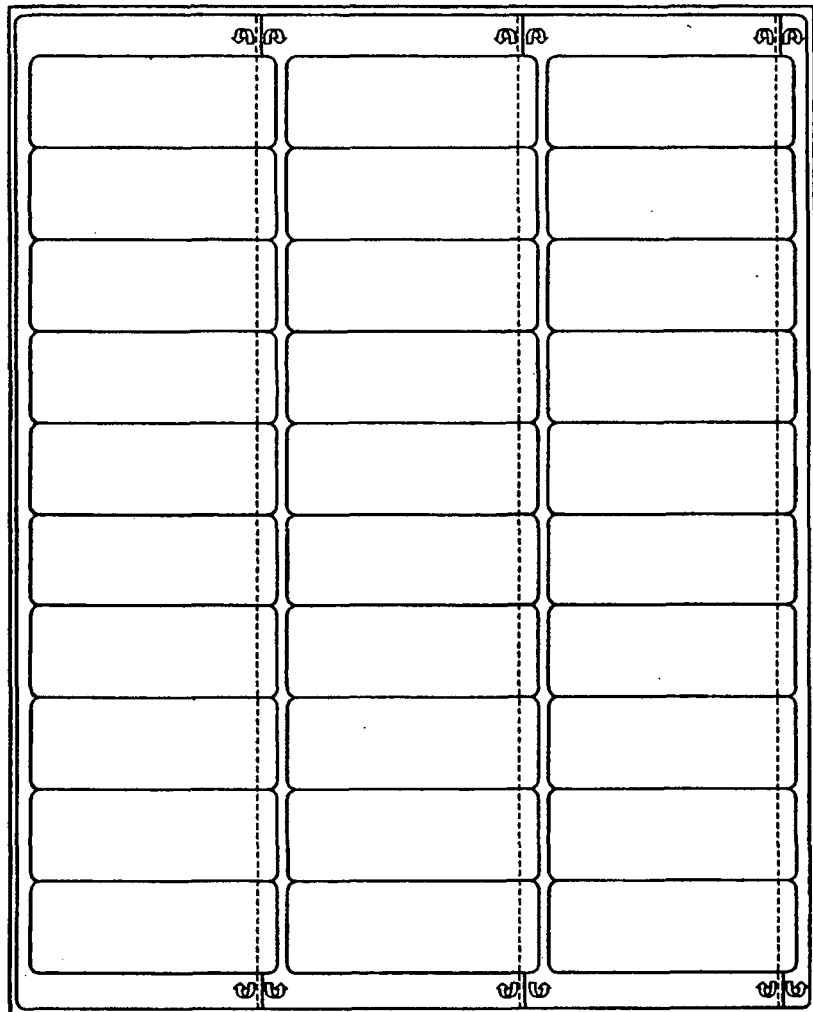


FIG. 8

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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