An apparatus (10) for carrying one or more data storage carriers (12) for safe keeping and protecting against loss includes a lanyard (14) adapted to be worn around a body part of a person, such as the wrist or the neck. A split ring (18) is connected to the lanyard (14), and a desired number of tags (20) are connected to the split ring (18). Each tag (20) has an adhesive surface on one side for attaching a respective carrier thereto. The tag also has a hole (22) through which the split ring (18) passes to thereby connect the carrier (12) to the split ring (18).
IMPROVED APPARATUS FOR CARRYING DATA STORAGE CARRIERS

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to an apparatus for carrying one or more electronic video game discs or other data storage carriers or memory devices, such as game cards, flash memory cards or smart cards. In particular, the present invention relates to an apparatus that can be worn around the wrist or neck of a person and that carries for safe keeping and protecting against loss a plurality of video game cards, such as those marketed under the Nintendo DS brand.

Although the background, objects and preferred embodiments of the invention will be hereinafter described with reference to an apparatus for carrying data storage carriers, it is to be understood that the invention is not limited thereto but has wider application.

It is to be understood that the terminology employed herein is for the purpose of description only and should not be regarded as limiting. For instance, the terms "comprising" or "comprises" are to be understood as meaning "including", unless otherwise stated. Also, the term "carrier" is to be understood as including any small, portable device that can be used to store electronic data.

BACKGROUND ART

In the last decade, small portable data storage carriers in the form of digital memory discs or cards and memory sticks have become common place as their host devices, namely, electronic video game consoles, digital cameras, digital music players, mobile phones, personal digital organizers, and computers, have become smaller and increased their memory and data processing capacity.
However, the small size of such portable data storage carriers often leads to them being lost, misplaced or stolen, particularly when being moved from place to place, or when they are covered or obscured from view by larger objects.

Various apparatus have been developed to assist people in carrying memory cards from place to place.

For example, US Patent Application No. 09/902,578 (US Publication No. 2003/0010829) discloses an apparatus in which a hole is formed through flash memory cards and a string, lanyard or key ring passes through each hole of the cards so that they are strung together on a common carrier. However, whilst this assists in keeping the memory cards together, there is a danger that the holes may, when being formed, disrupt or interfere with the electronic and mechanical function of the cards. Furthermore, each hole may weaken the structure of the card and result in its breakage when excessive force is applied against the sides of the hole. Even more importantly, the item that passes through each hole may prevent the card being properly inserted into its host device.

In another approach, small flash memory cards and game cards can be stored and carried within pockets formed in plastic or metal pouches or cases. These are not designed to be easily carried by a person, say, around the person's neck by a strap or the like, and so may be easily lost. Also the cards inside these kinds of containers are loose and so may be lost if the containers are left open or fall over.

To date, none of these prior art devices have been entirely successful in preventing the loss, misplacement or theft of such portable data storage carriers.

It has been found by the present inventor that these problems can be overcome by providing an apparatus that can be worn around a body part of a person and that carries for safe keeping and protecting against loss a plurality of data storage carriers in a way that does not compromise their function and structure.
DISCLOSURE OF INVENTION

It is, therefore, an object of the present invention to overcome or substantially ameliorate the disadvantages and problems of the aforementioned prior art, or at least provide a useful alternative.

It has been found by the present inventor that these and other objects of the invention may be achieved in general by providing an apparatus for carrying one or more data storage carriers for safe keeping and protecting against loss, the apparatus comprising a lanyard adapted to be worn around a body part of a person, a split ring connected to the lanyard, and one or more tags connected to the split ring, the or each tag having an adhesive surface for attaching a respective carrier thereto, the tag also having a hole through which the split ring passes to thereby connect the carrier to the split ring.

The adhesive surface of the tag may be provided at a lower part of one side of the tag, and the hole may be provided through an upper part of the tag adjacent to the adhesive surface such that the tag, when attached to the carrier, extends partly outwardly from the carrier.

The adhesive surface preferably has a protective peel-away cover.

Preferably, the adhesive surface of the tag is attached to the rear of the carrier.

In a preferred form, the body part is the wrist or the neck.

It is preferred that the split ring is hinged and has two semicircular arms extending from a hinge point, the extremities of each arm defining respective first and second interengagable clip portions that are spring biased to assume an interengaged condition, with the clip portions being separable against the spring bias.
It is preferred that the split ring is a key ring, and that the key ring is connected to a J-swivel clip of the lanyard. A hinge ring may be used as an alternative to the key ring.

Alternatively, the split ring is connected directly to the lanyard.

The tag is preferably made of a thin plastic sheet, and an annular region around the hole may be reinforced against tearing. The tag is sufficiently thin that it will not interfere with the insertion or removal of the carrier from its host device.

There has been thus outlined, rather broadly, the more important features of the invention in order that the detailed description thereof that follows may be better understood and put into practical effect, and in order that the present contribution to the art may be better appreciated.

There are additional features of the invention that will be described hereinafter. As such, those skilled in the art will appreciate that the conception, upon which the disclosure is based, may be readily utilized as the basis for designing other assemblies and processes for carrying out the objects of the present invention. It is important, therefore, that the broad outline of the invention described above be regarded as including such equivalent constructions in so far as they do not depart from the spirit and scope of the present invention.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

The invention will be better understood and objects other than those set forth above will become apparent when consideration is given to the following detailed description thereof. Such description makes reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a plan view of an apparatus for carrying one or more data storage carriers according to a preferred embodiment of the invention,
Figure 2 is a perspective view of a preferred tag for use in the apparatus of Figure 1, and

Figure 3 is a perspective view of an apparatus according to another preferred embodiment of the invention.

**MODES FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION**

With reference now to the above summarized drawings of Figures 1, 2 and 3, an apparatus for carrying one or more data storage carriers embodying the principles and concepts of the present invention and generally designated by the reference numeral 10 will now be described.

The data storage carrier loss protecting apparatus 10 is shown in Figure 1 carrying, for ease of reference, a single data storage carrier 12 in the form of a game card.

The apparatus includes a lanyard 14 adapted to be worn around the neck of a person.

The lanyard has a J-swivel clip 16 to which a key ring 18 is connected.

A single tag 20 (also as shown individually in Figure 2) made of a thin plastic sheet is connected to the key ring by a hole 22 provided through an upper part of the tag and through which the key ring passes. An annular region around the hole 22 is reinforced against tearing.

The tag has an adhesive surface 24 provided at a lower part of one side of the tag which has a protective peel-away cover 26. After peeling away the cover 26, the tag is attached, via its adhesive surface, to the rear of the game card 12 such that the upper part of the tag extends partly outwardly from the game card. The rear of the game card should not have a label for the game affixed to it, to avoid damaging the label and thus reducing the resale value of the game card.
In this way, the game card 12 is connected via the tag 20 to the key ring 18 which is, in turn, connected to the lanyard 14. The tag 20 is sufficiently thin that its connection to the game card will not, in use, interfere with the insertion or removal of the game card from its host device.

For electronic game play, the lanyard 14 would be looped around the neck, or even the wrist, of the player and the game card 12 would be inserted into the slot of the game console. Wearing the lanyard does not interfere with the playing of the game. When it is desired to replace the game card, the player simply removes the game card from the console and inserts another game card from those connected to the key ring.

The data storage carrier 30 shown in Figure 3 has a shorter length wrist lanyard 32, a loop 34 of thin cord at its top, a hinged split ring 36 connected at the bottom of the lanyard 32, and a pair of tags 38 connected to the split ring 36 by a hole 40 provided through an upper part of each tag.

The hinged split ring 36 has two semicircular arms extending from a hinge point 42. The extremities of each arm define respective first and second interengagable clip portions that are spring biased to assume an interengaged condition, with the clip portions being separable against the spring bias.

It will be apparent to persons skilled in the art that the component parts of the apparatus 10 and 30 may be made of many suitable materials.

It will also be readily apparent from the above that there are various advantages of the present invention.

One advantage is that, by using the apparatus of the present invention, it would be, compared with the prior art, much more difficult to lose, misplace or have stolen the portable data storage carriers connected to the apparatus.
Another advantage is that there is no danger of disrupting or interfering with the electronic and mechanical function of the data storage carriers, and especially the capacity of the carriers to be properly inserted into their host devices.

It will also be readily apparent to persons skilled in the art that various modifications may be made in details of design and construction of the embodiments of the data storage carrier loss protecting apparatus, and in the steps of using the apparatus described above, without departing from the scope or ambit of the present invention.

The reference in this specification to any prior publication (or information derived from it), or to any matter which is known, is not, and should not be taken as an acknowledgement or admission or any form of suggestion that that prior publication (or information derived from it) or known matter forms part of the common general knowledge in the field of endeavour to which this specification relates before the filing date of this patent application.
CLAMS

1. An apparatus for carrying one or more data storage carriers for safe keeping and protecting against loss, the apparatus comprising a lanyard adapted to be worn around a body part of a person, a split ring connected to the lanyard, and one or more tags connected to the split ring, the or each tag having an adhesive surface for attaching a respective carrier thereto, the tag also having a hole through which the split ring passes to thereby connect the carrier to the split ring.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the adhesive surface of the tag is provided at a lower part of one side of the tag, and the hole is provided through an upper part of the tag adjacent to the adhesive surface such that the tag, when attached to the carrier, extends partly outwardly from the carrier.

3. The apparatus of claim 2 wherein the adhesive surface has a protective peel-away cover.

4. The apparatus of claim 3 wherein the adhesive surface of the tag is attached to the rear of the carrier.

5. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the body part is the wrist or the neck.

6. The apparatus of claim 4 wherein the split ring is hinged and has two semicircular arms extending from a hinge point, the extremities of each arm defining respective first and second interengagable clip portions that are spring biased to assume an interengaged condition, with the clip portions being separable against the spring bias.
INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/AU2010/000725

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int. Cl.
A45F 3/00 (2006.01) A44B 99/00 (2010.01) A45F 5/00 (2006.01)

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)

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

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

EPDOC, WPI, GOOGLE PATENT SEARCH, LANYARD, STRAP, ADHESIVE, GLUE, ATTACHMENT, FIXTURE

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

<table>
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<th>Category</th>
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<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
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<td>X</td>
<td>US2006/01 13345 A1 (ZOULLAS et al.) 1 June 2006 See figs 1-13</td>
<td>1-6</td>
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<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>US6550108 B2 (PRATL) 22 April 2003 See column 3, lines 35-58, figs. 1-3</td>
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[X] See patent family annex

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Date of the actual completion of the international search
25 June 2010

Date of mailing of the international search report
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This Annex lists the known "A" publication level patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

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END OF ANNEX