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(54) **PRODUCT PACKAGE HAVING A
DISTRACTION PATTERN AND METHOD**

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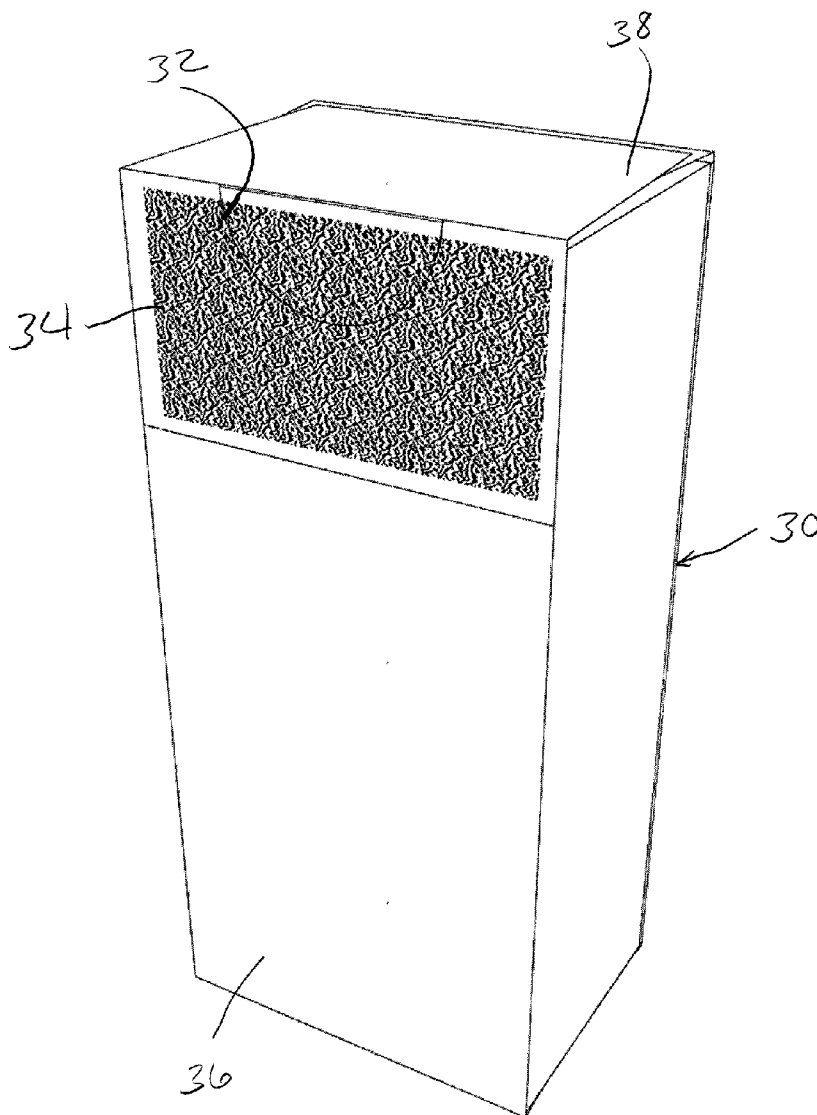
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12, 2007.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A product package includes an access portion that is manipulated to access the product contained within the package. A distraction pattern is provided in an area of the access portion, the distraction pattern presenting a visually confusing to prevent, in particular, young children from discerning how to manipulate the access portion to remove the product from the package.



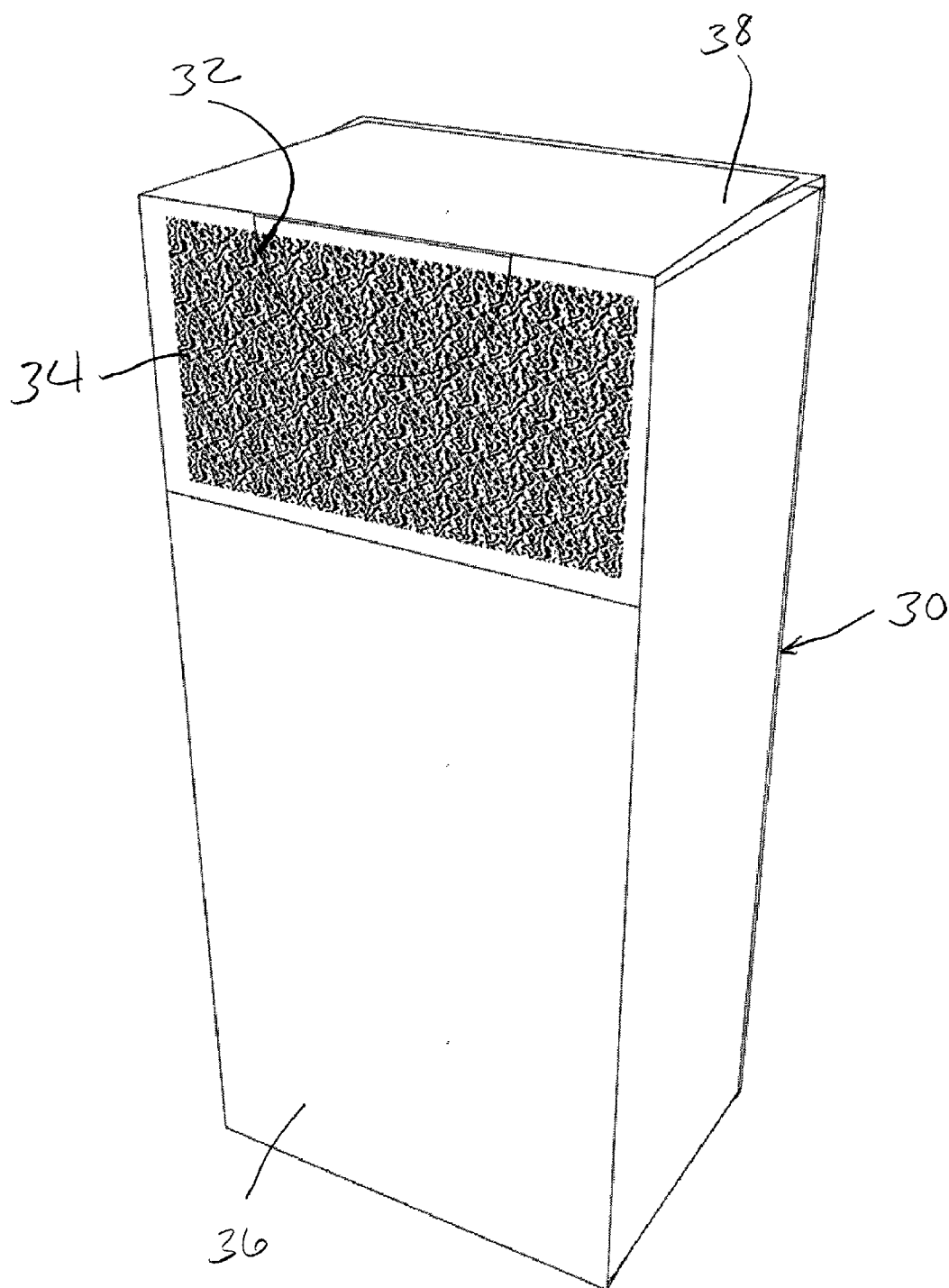


Figure 1

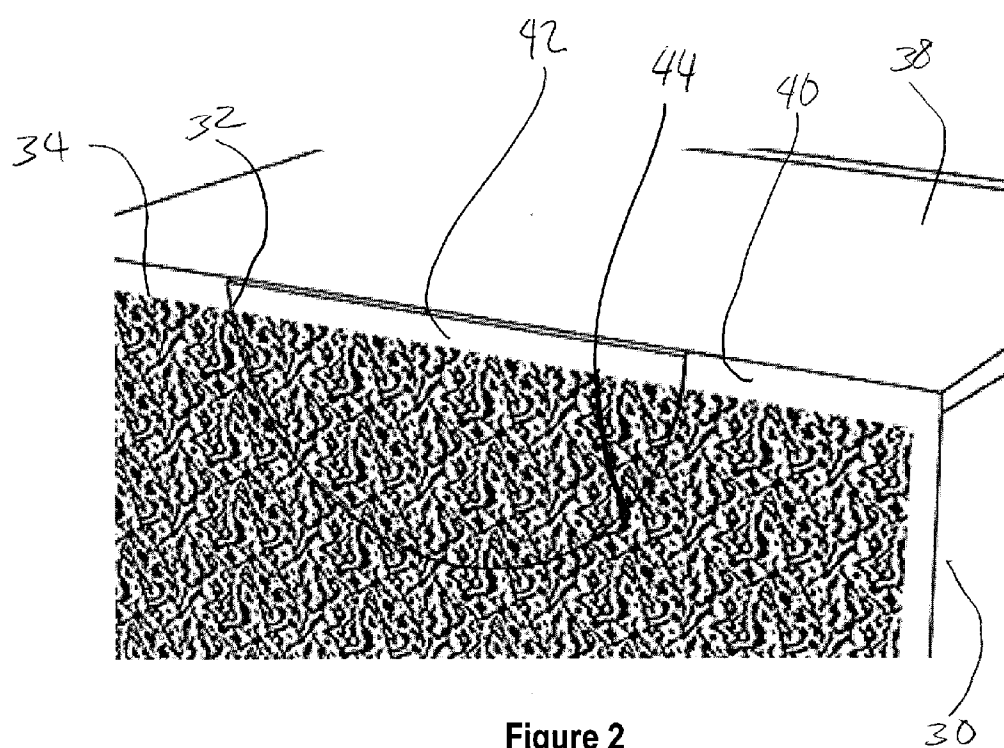


Figure 2

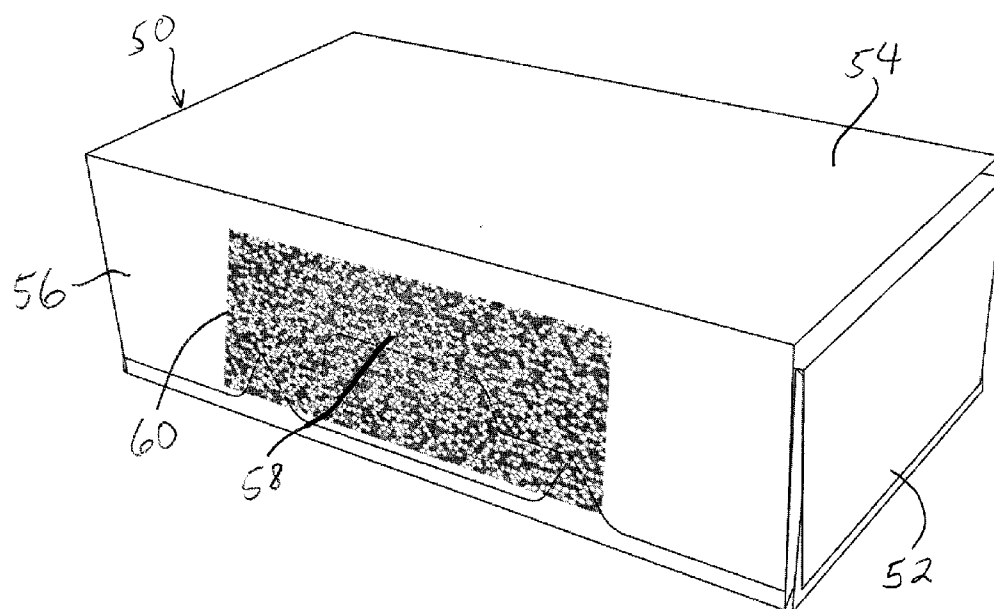


Figure 3

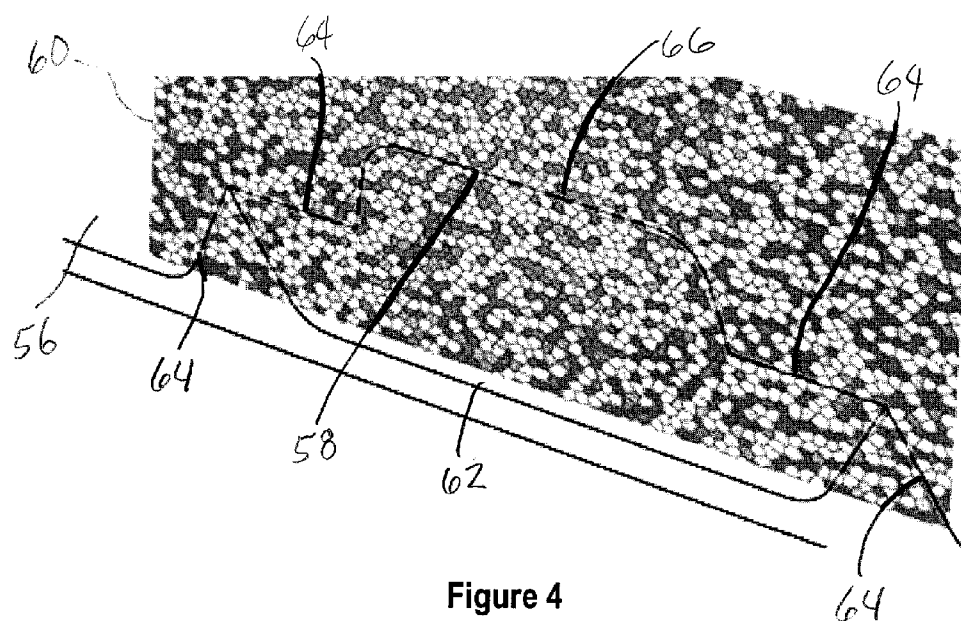


Figure 4

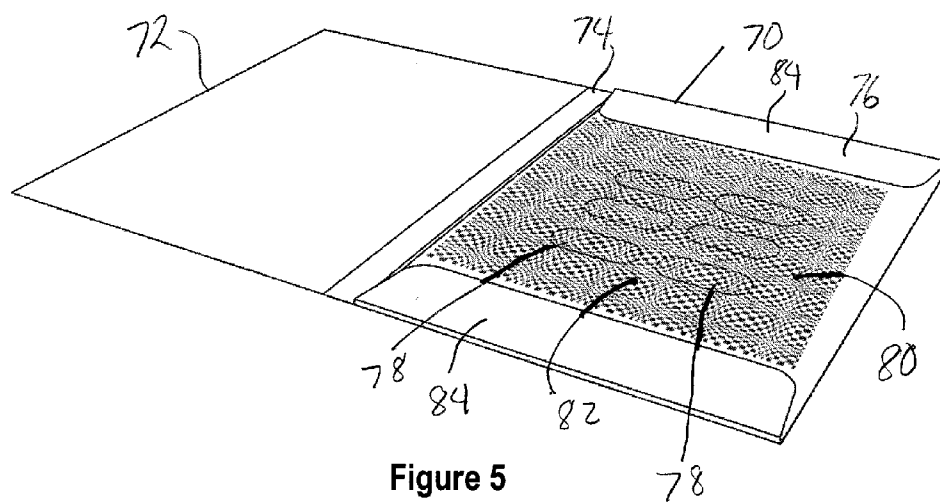


Figure 5

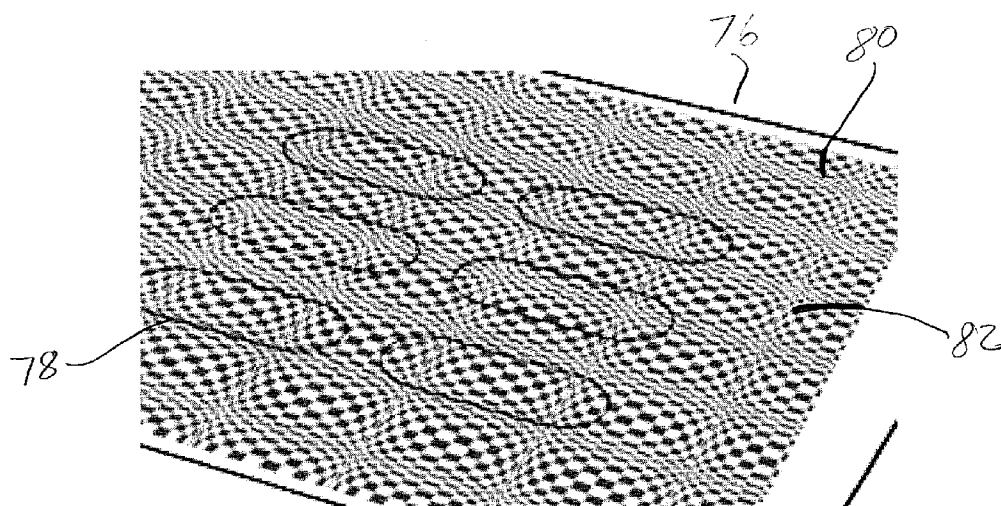


Figure 6

Figure 7

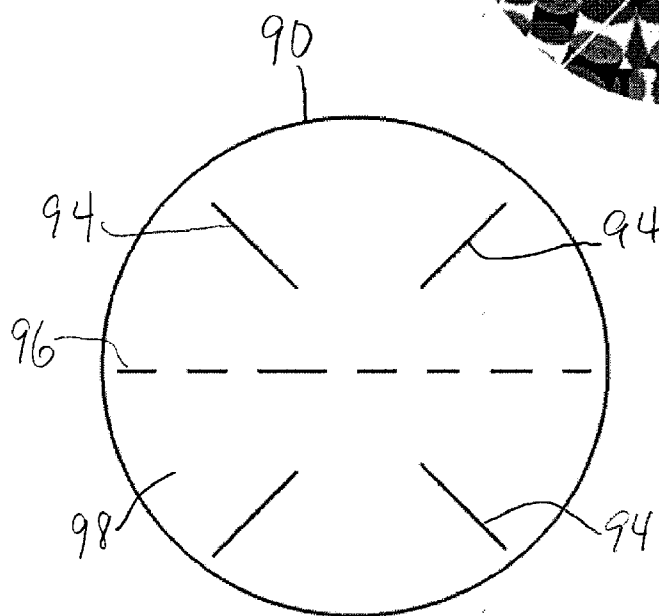
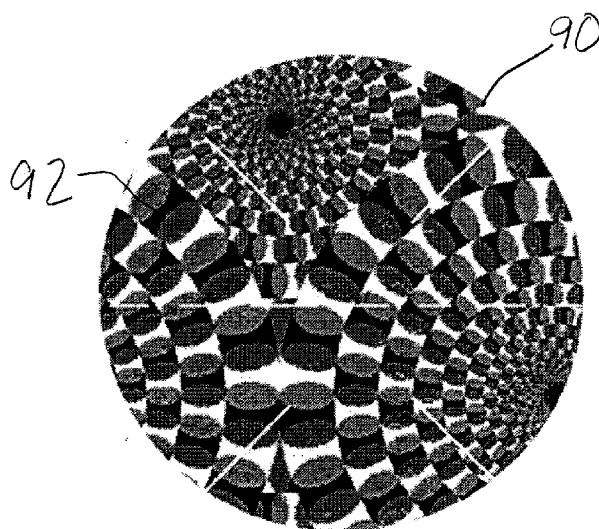


Figure 8

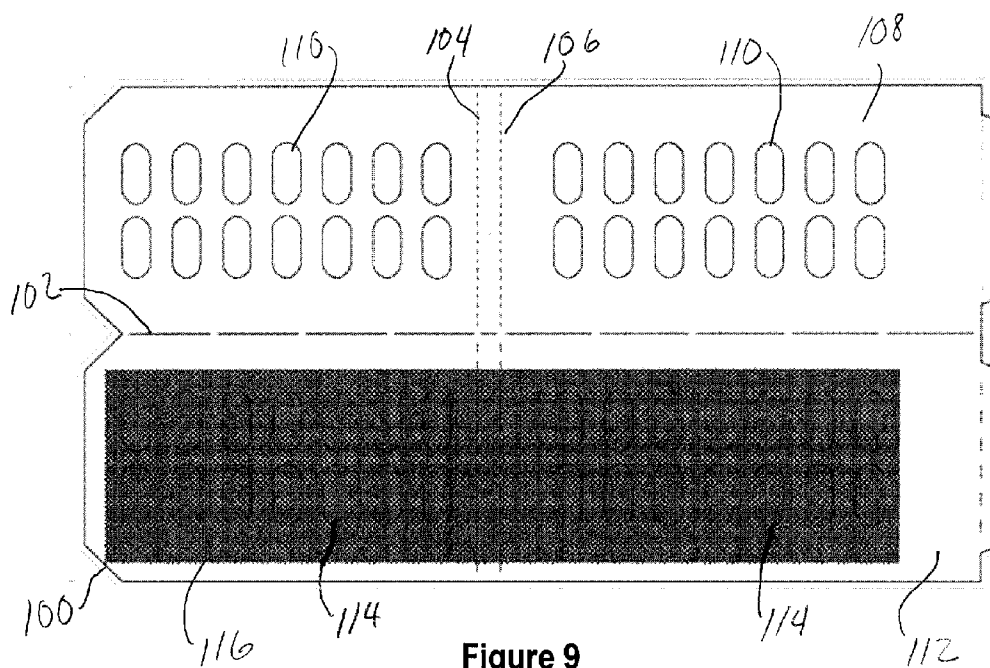


Figure 9

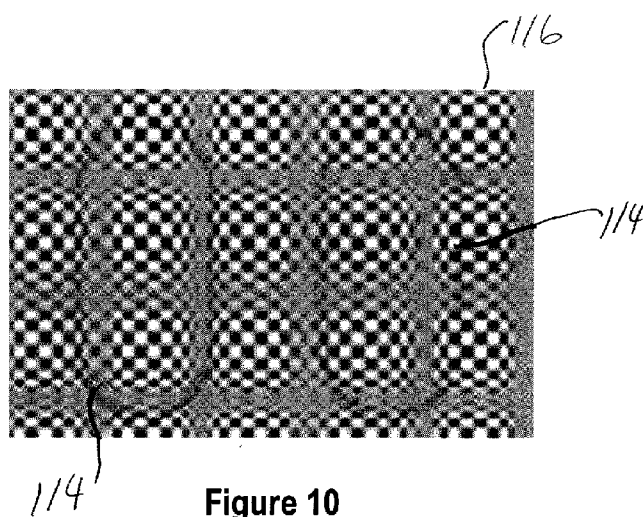


Figure 10

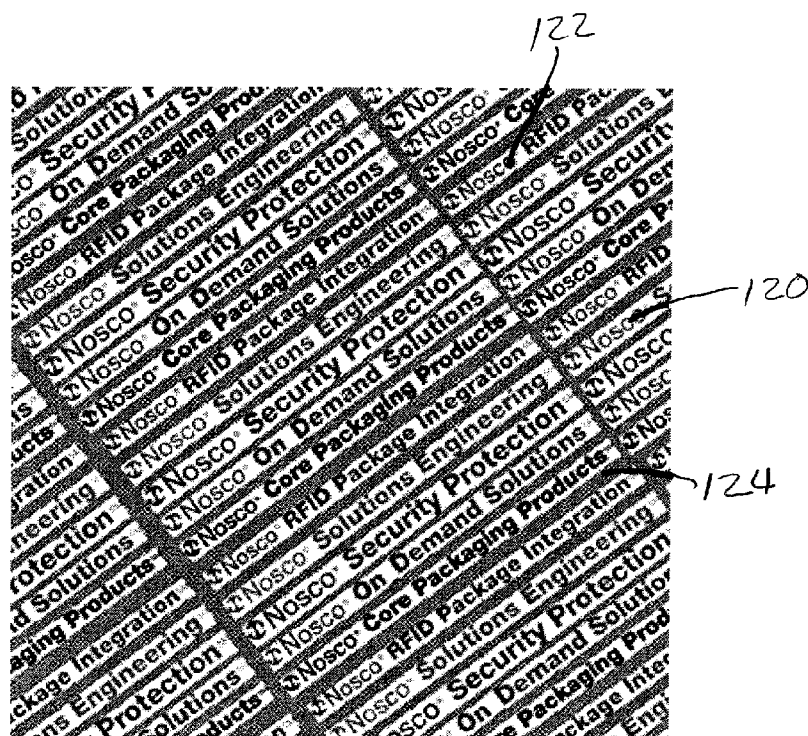


Figure 11

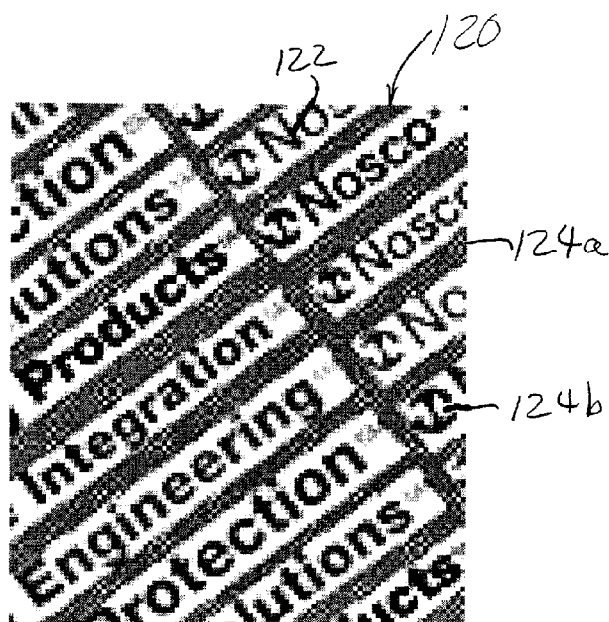


Figure 12

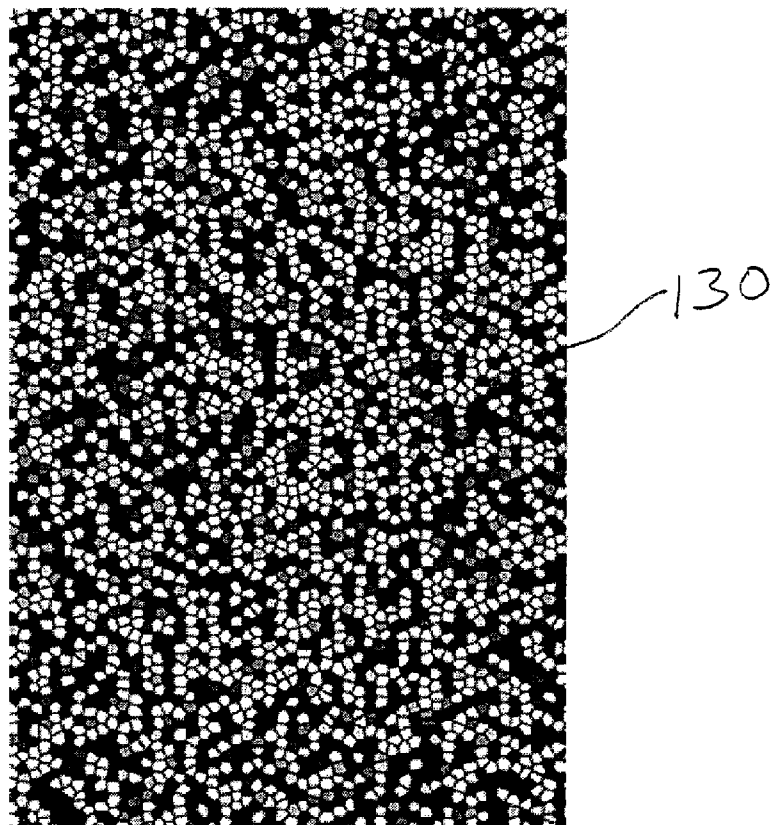


Figure 13

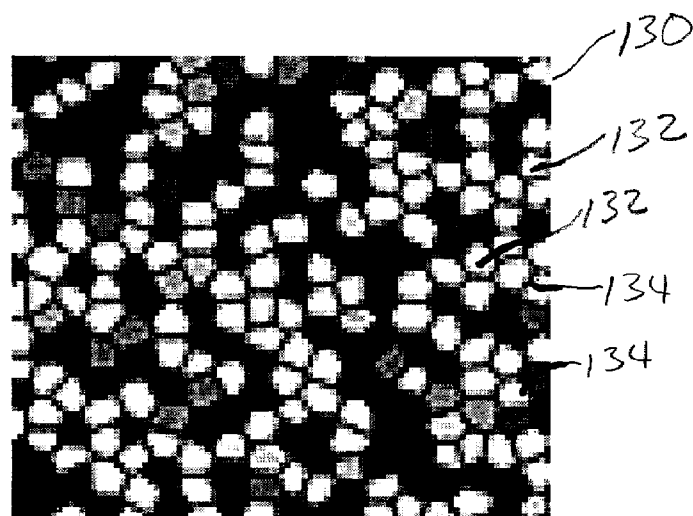


Figure 14

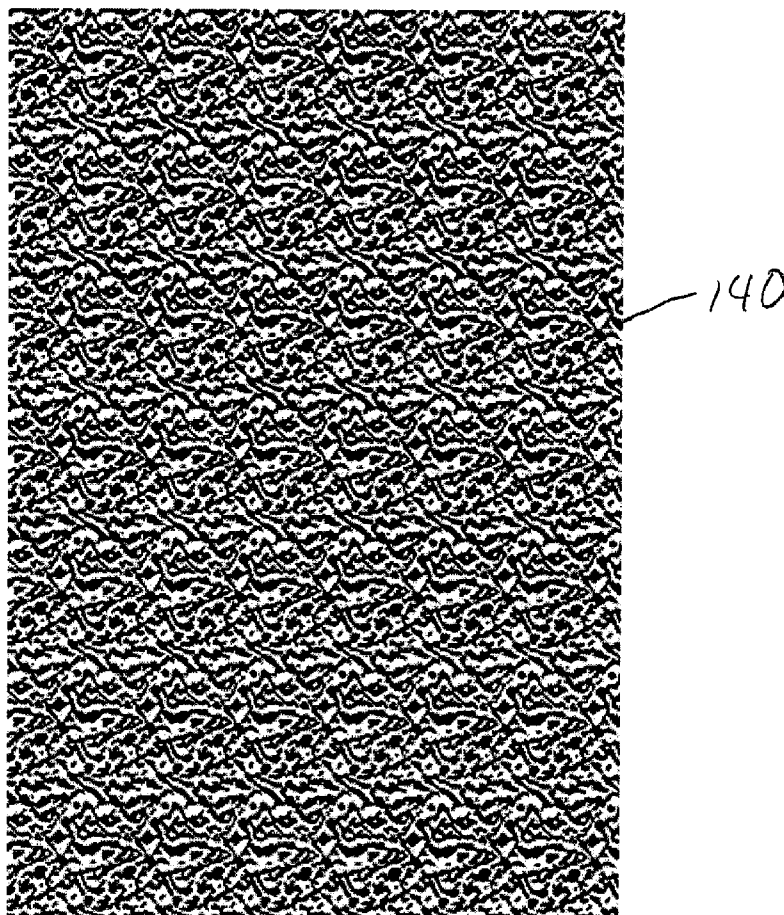


Figure 15

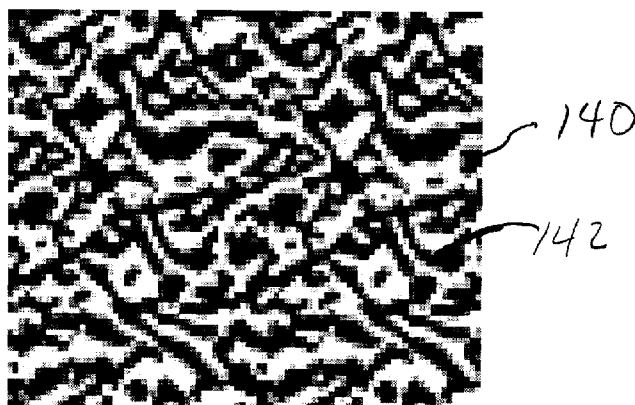


Figure 16

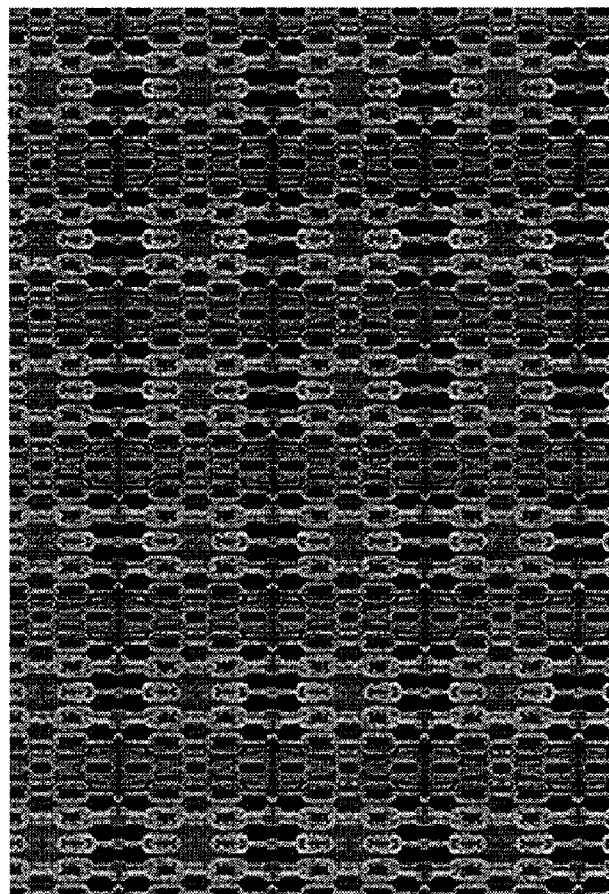


Figure 17

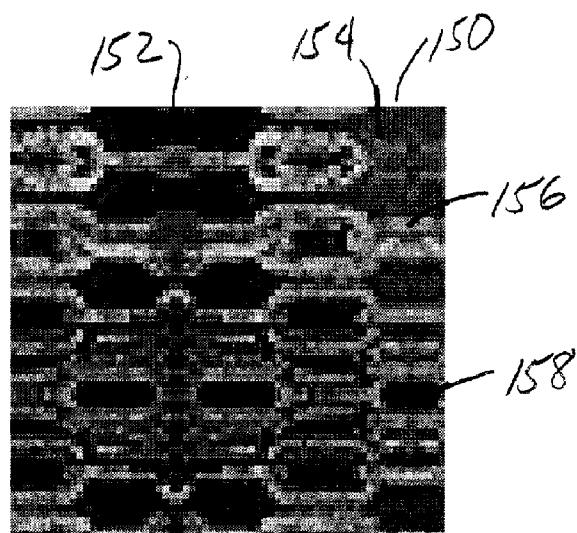


Figure 18

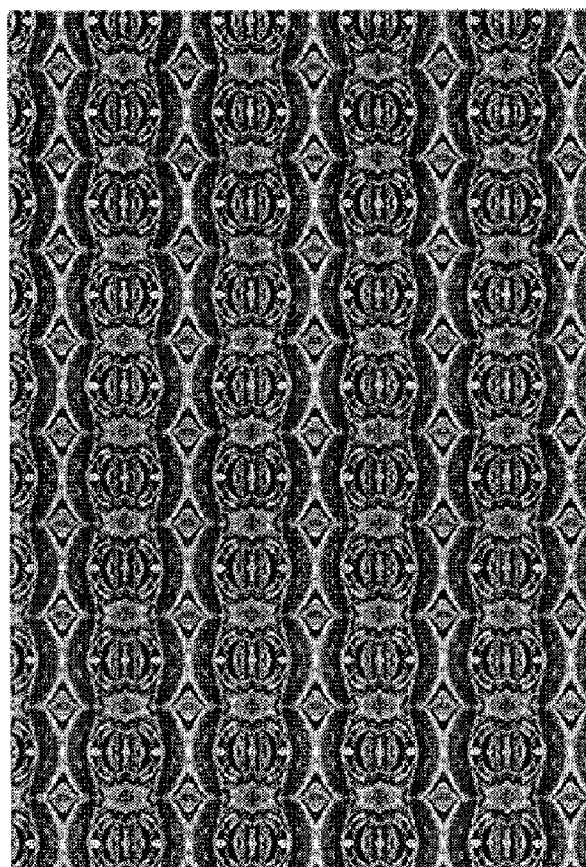


Figure 19

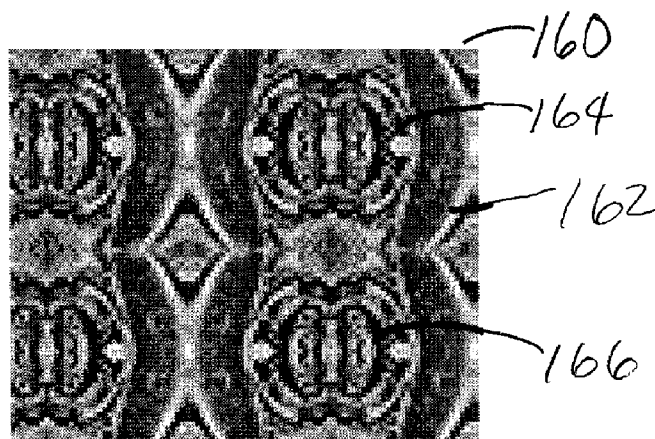


Figure 20

PRODUCT PACKAGE HAVING A DISTRACTION PATTERN AND METHOD

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 60/949,500, filed Jul. 12, 2007, which is incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates generally to a product package, and more specifically to a product package having a means for opening the package to provide access to a product within the package, and to a method for providing a product package.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] Products are increasingly being sold in packages that enclose the product and present the product in a favorable way for sale. Particularly for medications and other products that are potentially hazardous to young children, child resistant packaging serves to reduce the chance that a young child can access the product.

[0006] It would be beneficial if a product package included a visual or physical distraction to reduce the chances that a young child could access the product within the package or at least increased the amount of time for a young child to access the product within the package so that the child loses interest in accessing the package or to provide time for a parent or guardian to intercept the child's attempt to open the package.

[0007] It would be beneficial if the product packaging did not increase difficulty in opening for adult users, and particularly without increasing the manual dexterity required of elderly users to open the package.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The present invention provides an apparatus and method for a product package that includes a visually complex pattern applied at an access portion of the package. The visually complex pattern disguises the access portion or provides visual confusion to a younger viewer to that the nature of the access portion is less easily discerned by a child. The access portion can be hidden by the distraction pattern, with instructions for opening of the package provided elsewhere on the package. Or the distraction pattern may be of a type that is uncomfortable for the young child to view for any length of time, so the attention of the child is directed elsewhere away from the access portion.

[0009] The access portion of the package may be structured so that it is relatively easy for an adult to operate so that the package is opened. If directions are provided on the package, the adult may readily follow the directions to open the package, or the adult may have experience with the particular type of package and so understand how to open the package at the access portion. The adult is less likely to be confused by the distraction pattern as a result of the directions and experience, but also because an adult discerns the distraction pattern in a different way than a child, particularly a young child, so the adult is better able to ignore the distraction pattern and see the underlying structure of the access portion.

[0010] The present distraction pattern may also be used to direct a subject's attention toward a particular area of a product package, in some embodiments.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0011] FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a product package in the form of a box with a distraction pattern applied at an area of the box used for opening the package according to the principles of the present invention;

[0012] FIG. 2 is an enlarged detail of the package of FIG. 1 showing the access portion of the package and the distraction pattern;

[0013] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of another product package in the form of a box with a distraction pattern applied to an area of the box used for opening the package according to the invention;

[0014] FIG. 4 is an enlarged detail view of the opening portion of the package of FIG. 3;

[0015] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a flat pack package having a distraction pattern at a portion of the package for access to the product according to the invention;

[0016] FIG. 6 is an enlarged detail view of a portion of the package of FIG. 5 showing the access portion and distraction pattern;

[0017] FIG. 7 is a top plan view of a package portion including a tamper evident seal with a distraction pattern according to the invention;

[0018] FIG. 8 is a top plan view of the tamper evident seal of FIG. 7 shown without the distraction pattern;

[0019] FIG. 9 is a top plan view of a product package portion, as a product sleeve, including a distraction pattern according to the invention;

[0020] FIG. 10 is an enlarged detail view of the distraction pattern of the embodiment of FIG. 9;

[0021] FIG. 11 is a further embodiment of a distraction pattern including text;

[0022] FIG. 12 is an enlarged fragmentary view of the distraction pattern of FIG. 11;

[0023] FIG. 13 is another embodiment of a distraction pattern including image elements of a generally uniform size;

[0024] FIG. 14 is an enlarged detail view of the distraction pattern of FIG. 13;

[0025] FIG. 15 is yet another embodiment of a distraction pattern with irregular patterns;

[0026] FIG. 16 is an enlarged detail view of the distraction pattern of FIG. 15;

[0027] FIG. 17 is yet a further embodiment of a distraction pattern having repeating image elements;

[0028] FIG. 18 is an enlarged detail view of the distraction pattern of FIG. 17;

[0029] FIG. 19 is an additional distraction pattern having a complex decorative pattern of image elements; and

[0030] FIG. 20 is an enlarged detail view of the distraction pattern of FIG. 19.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0031] Referring first to FIG. 1, a product package 30 encloses a product (not shown). The package 30 has an access portion 32 that is manipulated to open the package so that the product can be removed. The access portion 32 is provided with a distraction pattern 34 over an area in the region of the access portion 32. The distraction pattern 34 in the illustrated

example extends over only a small portion of the package 30. The package 30 surface outside the area of the distraction pattern 34 is generally provided with text and images that identify the product and provide information in the product's use, for example.

[0032] The product package 30 of the example shown in FIG. 1 is a box 36 into which the product is placed. The box may be of cardboard, paperboard, plastic or other packaging material. The box may be wrapped in a plastic wrap, for example, or simply provided as a bare box. The box 36 has been formed from a flat sheet of the packaging material that is folded and glued to form an enclosed space for the product. The top and bottom of the box 36 includes flaps 38 that are secured to one another, such as by glue, to close the box after the product has been inserted. The package 30 encloses the product so that the product may be shipped and displayed in a store or other retail or wholesale location. The product package 30 also may be used to store the product in the packaging after purchase by a purchaser or user. The package 30 may enclose a product that is for sale via catalog order, on-line or telephone ordering, or for distribution as a sample, product promotion, or through other distribution channels.

[0033] The product that is enclosed in the package 30 or otherwise provided with the package may be a type of product to which children should not have uncontrolled access. Most commonly this may be prescription and over-the-counter medicines and medical devices, drugs of various types including birth control drugs, cold medications, heart medications and many others, syringes and other medical devices, insecticides and herbicides, cleaning agents, drain cleaners, bleach and other household liquids, lighter fluids, lighters and matches, knives and razors, but can also include any other type of product that may present a risk to a child or to others in the hands of a child.

[0034] The distraction pattern 34 and the use of the pattern 34 on the product package 30 makes it more difficult for the child to discern how to manipulate the access portion to open the product and so has the effect of delaying or preventing access to the product by children. The present distraction pattern 34 here is printed on the portion of the box 36 in the area of the access portion to visually confuse the viewer or otherwise distract the viewer from seeing how to open the box at the access portion 32. The package 30 is sealed from ready opening except at the access portion 32.

[0035] Turning to FIG. 2, the access portion 32 of the product package 30 is shown. A front wall 40 of the box 36 has a semi-circular area 42 outlined by a curved perforated line 44 formed in the material of the front wall 40. To open the box 36, a user presses against the semi-circular area 42 so as to cause the front wall 40 to tear at the perforated line 44. Once the semi-circular area 42 is torn free of the remainder of the front wall 40, the top of the box 36 opens easily, providing access to the product inside.

[0036] A small child seeing the perforated line 44 may be able to press on the area 42 or to pick at the perforated line 44 sufficiently to open the package 30. However, the distraction pattern printed on the box surface is visually confusing to a child so that the child does not notice the perforated line 44. For adult users, the package is printed with instructions indicating the location of the semi-circular area 42 to be pressed and instructions on opening the package. A young child is not able to read the instructions and so cannot readily open the package. Further, the visual abilities of the young child and adult may be sufficiently different that the young child is

confused by the distraction pattern, whereas the adult may more readily see the perforated line 44 in the distraction pattern 34.

[0037] It is also foreseen that the semi-circular area may already be cut from the front panel of the box and by pressing in the semi-circular area the user causes the front panel to separate from a portion to which it is secured so that the package may be opened. It is also foreseen that the semi-circular area may be covered by a seal, such as a thin plastic film that must be cut or torn to open the package. Other configurations of packaging and access portions are envisioned as well and are encompassed by the present application.

[0038] In FIG. 3, a different shape of box is shown, and a different configuration of access portion, at which is provided a different distraction pattern. A product package 50 is a box that is also formed of a flat material that is folded and glued or otherwise fastened to form an enclosure for a product. The package 50 has side flaps 52 that are secured against ready opening and a top flap 54 having a front portion 56 that provides ready access to the interior space of the package. The center of the front portion 56 is perforated at 58 to form a tear-away access portion. A distraction pattern 60 is provided at the access portion 58 over at least the perforations 58.

[0039] FIG. 4 provides an enlarged detail of the access portion 58 of the product package 50. A tab 62 is formed by notches 64 cut into the front portion 56. The tab 62 is separable from the front portion by tearing along the perforations 58. The perforations 58 have first portions 64 connecting to the notches 64 and a second portion 66 that forms a second tab. The tab 62 may either be torn away from the box to open the box or in an alternative embodiment may remain secured to the box yet with the remainder of the front portion 56 separated from the tab 62. The distraction pattern disguises the perforations 58 from a young viewer and distracts the child from the tab 62 to delay or prevent opening of the package by the child.

[0040] Turning now to FIG. 5, an alternative package 70 is shown. All manner of product packaging is encompassed by the present invention. The package generally encloses the product but need not completely enclose the product in every instance. Here, the package 70 is a flat pack that encloses pills, for example. The package includes a front flap 72 connected by a two hinge panel 74 to a rear flap 76. The rear flap 76 has oval openings 78 formed therein, through which extend plastic blisters into which the pills are placed, generally with a single pill in each blister. The blisters extend from the rear surface of the rear flap 76 and so are not visible in this view. The top surface of the rear flap 76 is covered by a membrane, such as of a metallic foil 80 or other cover material, which may be perforated or not. The product is removed from the package 70 by pressing on one of the blisters so that the blister deforms and the pill breaks through the metallic foil 80 or ruptures the perforations at the oval opening 78 and is released from the package. A distraction pattern 82 is provided at the area of the oval openings 78. The distraction pattern 82 may be printed on the metallic foil 80, embossed into the foil, printed on a cover for the foil, or otherwise provided in the area of the access portion. The distraction pattern 82 extends over an area greater than the access portion so that the viewer is not able to readily discern the nature of the access portion, particularly a small child viewing the package. Flaps 84 are provided at opposite edges of the rear flap 76.

[0041] FIG. 6 shows that six oval openings 78 are provided in the rear panel 76. The oval openings 78 may be visible on close inspection as perforations, as an indented surface or other surface texture change, or in some embodiments may not be visible at all. The drawing thereby indicates the locations of the openings 78 underlying the foil 80 and would not be visible in the object itself. The distraction pattern 82 prevents the viewer from determining that the foil 80 or other cover material could be penetrated at the oval openings to access the pills. The distraction pattern 82 extends over nearly all of the rear panel 76 top surface. The pills may be visible through the blisters on the back side of the package if the blisters are formed of a transparent or translucent material, but the blister material is tough enough to resist picking by a small child, so the child would not be able to gain access to the pill.

[0042] In FIG. 7, a seal 90 is shown. The seal 90 is circular in shape to provide a disk and is formed of a thin film or foil material. The seal 90 is applied to a package containing a product, either by being attached over an opening in the package, such as at the mouth of a bottle or jar, or by being adhered to a flap for opening a box, envelope, or other package configuration. The seal 90 may be in any of a variety of shapes and is not limited to a circular shape. The seal 90 can extend over a small area of the product package or over a substantial portion of the package. The seal is provided with a distraction pattern 92 which distracts the viewer, particularly a young viewer, from the access portion of the seal. The distraction pattern 92 here extends over the entirety of the seal membrane 90, but in some embodiments may be provided only over a portion of the seal. For example, it is envisioned to provide a seal having a tear tab that may be engaged by the user and pulled to release the seal or a portion thereof. The tear tab and the surrounding area may have the distraction pattern, but the remainder of the seal need not.

[0043] FIG. 9 shows the seal 90 without the distraction pattern. The seal includes incisions or perforations 94 extending at least part of the way across the seal membrane. The package to which the seal is affixed may be opened by tearing at the incisions or perforations 94, but these are hidden from view by the distraction pattern 92 on the seal 90. The seal 90 serves as an indicator as to whether the package has been opened or not, since the incisions or perforations 94 will be torn by the opening of the seal 90. The seal 90 thus provides a tamper evident seal on the package.

[0044] A dashed line 96 extending across the diameter of the seal 90 indicates a connection of the seal membrane to a semi-circular flap 98 that overlies half of the seal 90. The semi-circular flap 98 may be raised to a position generally perpendicular to the seal 90 and is pulled to release the seal 90 from the product package. In releasing the seal, the incisions or perforations 90 tear. The distraction pattern 92 decreases the likelihood that a child will see the flap 98 and use it to open the package.

[0045] The seal 90 may be configured as a ring shaped member that is shrink wrapped onto the top portion of a bottle or jar. The seal 90 indicates to the user that the package has not been opened after leaving the factory, thereby ensuring that the product has not been tampered with. The ring-shaped seal includes perforations extending across the ring which are torn by the user to remove the seal from the package. The seal is provided with a distraction pattern to ensure that a child does not readily see the perforations and open the seal.

[0046] With reference to FIG. 9, a package blister card 100 is shown. The package blister card 100 holds products in the shape of pills, for example. The blister card 100 is of cardboard or other flat material and is formed with fold lines 102, 104 and 106 along which the insert is folded to secure the product in the package. A top panel section 108 has oval openings 110 in two rows. A blister material that is generally clear or translucent, but may be opaque, is provided with an arrangement of blisters so that the blisters extend through the openings 110 when the blister material is laid over the top panel section 108. The pills are placed into the blisters at each of the openings 110. A bottom panel section 112 is folded along fold line 102 so that the bottom panel 112 lies over the top panel 108. The bottom panel 112 and top panel 108 are secured to one another, such as by glue. The bottom panel 112 has perforations 114 in the cardboard material that are arranged to overlie the oval openings 110 of the top panel 108 in registration therewith. The pills in the blisters at each opening are removed by pressing on the blister so that the pill presses against the perforations 114, causing the oval shaped perforation to rupture and the pill to be released from the package.

[0047] The perforations in the bottom panel 112 could be picked at by a small child to access the pill in the blister. However, the bottom panel 112 is provided with a distraction pattern 116 over the area of the access portion and the surrounding area so that the child is less able to discern the perforations. The distraction pattern 116 provides visually confusing view and so the child either loses interest in the package or turns to another part of the package, such as the blisters on the reverse side of the package. The blisters are less subject to being opened by a small child, since they resist being picked at and the child may not have sufficient finger strength to press the blister enough to cause the perforations 114 to rupture. The child is unable to access the pills or at least sufficiently delayed from access to the pills to that an adult finds the child and takes the package from the child.

[0048] The blister card 100 of the illustrated embodiment is folded again at fold lines 104 and 106 so that it is in effect folded in half with the distance between the two fold lines 104 and 106 defining the spacing of the two folded halves. The spacing may be sufficient to accommodate the blisters therebetween. The blister card 100 is preferably inserted into a sleeve so complete package for display and sale. A sleeve and insert arrangement is shown in co-pending application Ser. No. 11/504,305, filed Aug. 14, 2006, which is incorporated herein by reference. An example of the sleeve insert is shown in FIG. 2 of the application Ser. No. 11/504,305.

[0049] In one embodiment, FIG. 9 illustrates a distraction pattern applied over a bubble pack for capsule unit doses, which are applied over an access side of the pack. The distraction pattern makes it extremely difficult to determine where the capsule access area is located due to numerous oval-shaped patterns that mimic the oval-shape of the access area. This type of pattern is particularly suited for access regions comprising rounded shapes.

[0050] In FIG. 10, the distraction pattern 116 is shown over two of the oval perforations 114. The distraction pattern 116 has a three dimensional effect that distracts the small child from looking for the perforations 114 or at least visually confuses the child so that the perforations are not readily seen. The distraction pattern 116 may be embossed on the surface so as to make seeing the perforations 114 even harder to see. The illustrated distraction pattern 116 of FIGS. 9 and 10

presents the appearance of a three dimensional raised surface. The apparent raised surface provides a visual distraction to the viewer. The apparent three dimensional surface has a rounded appearance so that the oval perforations 114 are less readily seen.

[0051] The distraction patterns used may take many different configurations. For instance, FIGS. 6 and 10 show distraction patterns that use a rectangular image elements that are sized and arranged to portray an image that may be perceived by some viewers as a three dimensional or shaped surface. FIG. 7 shows a distraction pattern that includes circular arrangements of overlapping circles that likewise provides the impression for some viewers of a three dimensional or shaped surface. Some of the distraction patterns of the present application are only in black and white or shades of gray, while other embodiments utilize color to further distract the viewer. Preferred examples use both patterns and color.

[0052] An example of a distraction pattern 120 is shown in FIG. 11. The distraction pattern 120 differs from those described above in that text elements 122 are provided in addition to graphic or image elements 124. In FIG. 12, the text elements 122 are lines of text what may be provided in different fonts, different font sizes and in different colors. The text of the illustrated example identifies a supplier company and its product lines, but the text can identify the product, an expiration date, a seller, or any other text. The graphic elements 124 include lines 124a and symbols 124b. The visual effect of the text based distraction pattern 120 is to visually confuse the view, particularly a young child, from underlying access portions. The features being hidden in this design would tend to be linear or rectangular. The text-box edges combined with the borders between the text-boxes serve to divert the eye from the actual linear access points.

[0053] FIG. 13 is a distraction pattern 130 that presents a generally random arrangement of visual elements without portraying a shaped surface. The distraction pattern 130 may be described as a speckled surface. The distraction pattern 130 may be better able to disguise some access portions than other distraction patterns. It is envisioned that the distraction pattern used is chosen for its ability to disguise or hide an corresponding access portion. FIG. 14 provides a close up view of the distraction pattern 130. The distraction pattern 130 includes image elements 132 of a generally uniform size and of a few shapes, here four, five and six sided elements. The image elements 132 are separated from one another by lines 134, and the image elements are provided in various shades. The patent drawing shows the shades as shades of gray which may be used in some embodiments, whereas in other embodiments the shades can be shades of different colors. The use of highly contrasting shades, so that some of the image elements 134 are white or a very light color and others are black or a very dark color adds to the visual distraction effect. This distraction pattern is similar to that used in the package of FIG. 3. The distraction pattern has a small feature size and could be used when the camouflage of small openings (such as birth control pills) is required.

[0054] FIG. 15 shows a distraction pattern 140 that is only of two colors, here black and white. The distraction pattern 140 may depict a textured surface to some viewers while to others it appears as visual static. A subtle repeating pattern is present, although this is not necessary in all cases. In the enlarged view of FIG. 16, it can be seen that the distraction pattern 140 is made up of irregular shapes 142 of varying width, length and curvature. The irregular shapes 142 may

either be described as black-on-white or white-on-black. This distraction pattern 140 is similar to that used in the package of FIG. 1. The distraction pattern 140 has randomly distributed curved lines. The features being hidden by this pattern would generally comprise non-linear shapes, where the curvature of the randomly distributed curved lines in the pattern attempt to match the curvature of the features being hidden.

[0055] In FIG. 17, a distraction pattern 150 portrays a complex visual impression including that of an underlying checkboard or plaid pattern including alternating dark and light bands at right angles to one another over which is a series of complex shapes. In the close up view of FIG. 18, the distraction pattern 150 has a dark vertical band 152 and lighter vertical bands 154. A pattern of chain links 156 is provided extending in a horizontal direction over the horizontal banding 158. The resulting pattern is capable of disguising many different shapes of access portions. The distraction pattern 150 has a repeated capsule shape that could be utilized as a distract pattern for a bubble pack.

[0056] Turning now to FIG. 18, a strongly patterned distraction pattern 160 is provided. The distraction pattern 160 includes complex repeating shapes in a regular arrangement, the strongest visual effect being of vertical banding. At can be seen in the enlarged view of FIG. 20, the distraction pattern includes a repeating pattern of complex shapes that include both larger 162 and smaller 164 visual elements. Each smaller element 164 is made up of yet smaller elements 166, to a lower limit. The distraction pattern 160 has a complex repeated figure that could be used where the feature being hidden comprises both straight and curved lines. The repeating pattern has lines have a substantially varying degree of curvature.

[0057] Thus, there is shown and described a distraction pattern and method of use for distracting in particular children from an access portion of a product package. The method includes use of a distraction pattern for consumer product packaging that hides or directs a person's attention from a zone or region of interest of the package. In various embodiments of the invention, the design makes it difficult for the subject's eyes to focus on the areas of interest the design is hiding or at least difficult to discern the nature of the access portion of the package. An application of such packaging makes a particular package child-resistant. For example, a distraction pattern is used to cover the openings inherent in a blister card for the purpose of redirecting/diverting a child's interest to another part of the package. This prevents the child from seeing the cuts in the blister card and from opening the blister and removing the drug.

[0058] Another application provides for the distraction pattern in the area of tamper detection. In such a use, the distraction pattern covers the actual "proper" opening area of a package with a label using the pattern, and misdirects a person who should not be opening the package to another area. When the person attempts to open the package in the incorrect area, this triggers an indication that tampering has occurred with the package. In a similar vein, the distraction pattern of some embodiments is used to hide a tamper evident seal. For example, the distracting pattern is printed on a carton in an area that will contain a tamper-evident seal. The tamper evident seal may be clear and is hidden in the pattern. This also could be done via printing on top of an opaque tamper-evident seal and the corresponding surrounding area on the carton.

[0059] Another application of the distraction pattern is when it is desirable to slow an adult down when opening a

package. Often times an adult will attempt to open a package without first reading the directions (e.g., do not open unless . . . , until . . . , etc.). In this example, on a paperboard package, the pattern is printed over the top of a zipper strip, and thus it is not immediately obvious that the package contains a zipper strip. Similarly, another application is in using the distraction pattern over game pieces to temporarily prevent a consumer from immediately opening a game piece out of instinct. In this application, the pattern hides the area of interest and redirects the consumer to the directions. For example, when a consumer receives prize numbers in the mail, they may not be asked to reveal the prize number until the piece is taken to a store. This pattern could help to ensure that the readers see the directions before the access portion of the game piece.

[0060] The distraction pattern can be implemented by being complementary to the shape it is trying to hide. For example, when a slit is being hidden, the distraction pattern could include long and thin lines that are similar in size and appearance to the slit. When round shapes are being hidden, the distract pattern could include rounded shapes as well.

[0061] Such a pattern can be formulated in any number of ways. It can be printed, embossed, de-bossed, etched, engraved, routed, laser etched, die cut, scored, perforated or hot-stamped. Where the pattern is printed, any known printing technique may be utilized. A variant of the distract pattern is that instead of being visual, it could be functional as well. For example, creating a lot of small, peelable pieces on a package could distract children with little elements to pick at and play with, thereby buying time.

[0062] The contents of the pattern can be varied, and can include an image, photograph, drawing, barcode, 2D code, illustration, cartoon, sketch, hologram, watermark, etc. A photograph could easily be utilized here as well. Advantageously, the pattern could further include micro-printing that contains additional information. Similarly, the pattern could be created or supplemented with taggant particles to add anti-counterfeiting features.

[0063] The pattern can be printed on or applied to a large variety of objects, including cartons, inserts, labels, liners, partitions, tags, containers, closures, seals, blister cards, blister foil, laminating films, shrink sleeves, tape, membranes, blister foil, blister paper, lidding materials and other flexible packaging. The 3-D texture of a package can be utilized by replication in printing and/or the pattern itself can be applied in a 3-D textured manner.

[0064] The pattern could be implemented with multi-color printing using a specific tint color relative to a background color, or could be implemented using color shifting ink (e.g., different viewing angles could assist in hiding different aspects of a region, or different appearances of the same region due to a feature's 3-D nature).

[0065] The pattern can be implemented as a multi-layer printed distraction pattern. For example a blister swell may be visible, but one could have printing on one layer with camouflage on a second layer. Or a pattern on one layer deeper down could be aligned in some manner with another related distraction pattern on an upper layer.

[0066] In one application, varnish can be applied where chads are not present, and gloss can be used for areas not in registration. An offsetting gloss and matte finish can be used to create a distraction. Furthermore, a white-on-white implementation could be achieved in this manner by having a white backing with the die cut slit in it, and then have ink that would fill in the regions (similar to putting a label on the region)—

this would serve to hide the cracks, but may not technically “distract” the user. It should be noted that “distraction pattern” as used herein is defined as actually creating a pattern that distracts, or possibly only hides an opening from a user and does not solely direct the user's attention to a different location. It is also possible that films that are fully or partially clear can be utilized with translucent or opaque patterns . . . or schemes such as polarizing films where patterns emerge when the angle of polarization varies between two adjacent layers. Additionally, the use of Moiré patterns could be utilized as well, either with an interfering pattern interacting with the feature to be hidden, or with a pattern on a layer below.

[0067] Additionally plastic films that are frangible can be used to camouflage areas intended for child resistance. The brittle nature of the film, for example, creates many small, peelable pieces on a package that could distract children with little elements to pick at and play with, thereby buying time.

[0068] The distraction pattern may be use on a product that should be kept from children, such as prescription medicine, over-the-counter medicine, medical devices or other products that may be harmful if handled inappropriately by a small child. The product may also be cleaning supplies or other household or personal items that could be misused by a child.

[0069] A small child, for example, who should not have access to the product may discover the package. Children tend to be curious and often seek to open packages. A small child generally takes a direct approach, such as by picking at the package to get it open. Here, the perforations in the paperboard material that form the frangible portion may be picked at by a small child, for example using their fingernails, and will a little persistence opened. The present invention seeks to distract the attention of the small child from the access portion to at least delay and possibly prevent the child from opening the package. Distraction is achieved by a distraction pattern on the package in the area of the access portion. The distraction pattern here is printed on the surface of the paperboard material.

[0070] In other embodiments, the distraction pattern may be embossed in the surface, applied to the surface, provided on an underlying surface beneath a clear or semitransparent outer member, or otherwise made visible. The distraction pattern may be applied on an outer surface of the package or on a surface that is revealed when the package is opened or partially opened, such as by being removed from an outer cover or sleeve.

[0071] The distraction pattern of the illustrated embodiment is a visually complex pattern that causes visual confusion. Some of the distraction patterns have a three dimensional appearance, although this is not required. A person viewing the distraction pattern will have a hard time seeing the perforations that form the frangible portions. A small child will have a particularly hard time seeing the perforations and so will not be lead to picking at the perforations. At the very least, the distracting and visually confusing pattern increases the amount of time that the child requires to discover the perforations and for some children the child may not notice the perforations at all. Thus, the child does not access the package through the frangible portions. The distraction pattern is visually confusing to the child and as a result the child will typically look elsewhere at an object that is not visually confusing, such as by looking at another part of the package or even to some other object in the child's environment.

[0072] The adult user looking at the package may also be visually confused by the distraction pattern, but in looking elsewhere on the package would see the bubbles extending out of the other side of the package and from experience would know to press the bubbles to release the pill from the package. Even if not experienced in such packaging, the adult would see written instructions as to how to release the pill from the package. The young child would not be able to read the instructions and likely would not have experience with release of products from bubbles or blisters and so would be unable to determine how to manipulate the package to release the pills. The young child may attempt to pick at, poke or otherwise manipulate the bubbles but would be unable to open the package since the bubbles are fairly resistant to being opened by this behavior of a young child. In other words, the bubble side of the package has fewer pick points than the perforated side.

[0073] The distraction pattern may include a pattern that mimics or camouflages the access portion. For instance, where perforations are circular or oval, the pattern can include circular or oval visual elements so that the view is distracted from the edges of the perforations by similarly shaped and sized visual elements in the distraction pattern. The distraction pattern preferably includes many other visual elements as well in addition to those that mimic the access portion. One possible embodiment has multiple indentations or embossments on the surface of the sheet in the shape of the perforations so that a person viewing the sheet even at an angle to the light cannot distinguish the perforations from the indentations or embossments.

[0074] According to another aspect of the invention, a distraction pattern is used that does not contain visual elements to mimic the access portion. The distraction pattern may have various shapes, shadings, colors or patterns but none that specifically are the shape and/or size of the access portion.

[0075] The distraction pattern is very busy with many visual elements in various positions and of various sizes. The distraction pattern is visually confusing to the viewer. Children, and in particular young children, are less adept at ignoring the distraction pattern and seeing the access portion of the package and so do not recognize the access portion as a location at which to access the product. The distraction pattern may use color, texture, shading, lines, shapes, and other physical and visual elements to distract the viewer and in particular the younger viewer from the nature of the access portion. The distraction pattern is provided on, over or under the access portion and preferably extends over an area of the access portion but in the preferred embodiment does not extend over the entire package.

[0076] The distraction pattern may be unpleasant for the person, and particularly a small child, to look at. The visual confusion of the pattern may cause some children to avoid looking at the distraction pattern for long enough to discern how to open the package.

[0077] According to another embodiment, a distraction pattern is provided on the package at a location spaced from the access portion and the distraction pattern is such that the young child's attention is drawn to the distraction pattern instead of to the access portion. This attractive distraction pattern may be configured to appear as if the area of the pattern provides access when in fact it does not. The attractive distraction pattern may include colors or patterns that are attractive to children.

[0078] Although other modifications and changes may be suggested by those skilled in the art, it is the intention of the inventors to embody within the patent warranted hereon all changes and modifications as reasonably and properly come within the scope of their contribution to the art.

We claim:

1. An apparatus for distracting a person from a portion of a product package, comprising:

a product package body enclosing a product;
an access portion of said package body, said access portion providing access to the product by manipulation; and
a pattern at a portion of said package body, said pattern providing a distraction to the person from said access portion.

2. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said access portion is a physical structure, and said pattern includes visual elements to mimic said physical structure.

3. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said access portion is a physical structure, and said pattern includes visual elements to confuse a viewer as to the physical structure of the access portion.

4. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said pattern includes a printed pattern.

5. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said pattern is an embossed pattern.

6. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said pattern is a camouflage pattern including visual elements to mimic physical features of the access portion.

7. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said pattern is a distraction pattern lacking visual elements to mimic physical features of the access portion.

8. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said pattern and said access portion are spaced apart from one another.

9. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said pattern is provided at a same portion of said package body as said access portion.

10. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said access portion includes a bubble pack with a frangible membrane and said pattern includes visual elements having a bubble appearance.

11. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said access portion includes a linear slit in said package body, and said pattern includes linear elements.

12. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said access portion includes at least one tear-off tab for access to the product.

13. An apparatus as claimed in claim 12, further comprising: a plurality of further tear-off tabs on said package body, said further tear-off tabs being formed to permit said further tabs to be torn from said package body without providing access to the product.

14. A product package for a product, comprising:

a first sheet having a plurality of frangible portions;
a second sheet affixed to said first sheet, said second sheet defining a plurality of openings, said openings being in registration with said frangible portions when said second sheet is affixed to said first sheet;
at least one blister membrane having a plurality of blisters extending through said openings in said second sheet to define product compartments;
a product in ones of said product components, said product being removable from said package by pressing said blister membrane to force so that the product presses

against said frangible portion to cause said frangible portion to open and release the product; and
a distraction pattern on said first sheet at a region including said frangible portions.

15. A product as claimed in claim **14**, wherein said first and second sheets are of paperboard and said frangible portions are cut nearly free from said first sheet.

16. A product package for a product, comprising:
a first sheet having a plurality of frangible portions;
a second sheet affixed to said first sheet, said second sheet defining a plurality of blisters, said blisters being in

registration with said frangible portions, said blisters defining product compartments;
a product in ones of said product components, said product being removable from said package by pressing said blister to force so that the product presses against said frangible portion to cause said frangible portion to open and release the product; and
a distraction pattern on said first sheet at a region including said frangible portions.

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