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(54) **PACKAGING**

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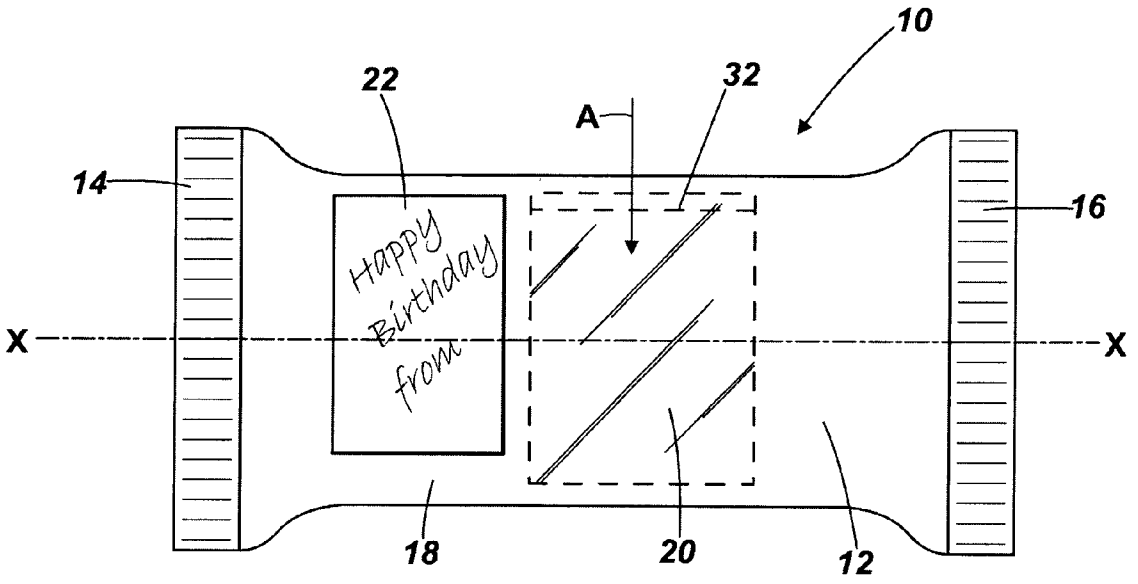
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A packaging (**10**) comprises a wrapper (**12**) of flexible material for encasing a product. The wrapper has a pouch (**20**,**120**) into which a message card (**22**) can be inserted and at least part of the pouch is see-through so that the message card can be seen when it is located in the pouch. In one aspect, the wrapper (**12**) is made of a laminated material comprising an outer layer bonded to an inner layer and the pouch (**20**) is defined between the inner and outer layers. In an alternative aspect, the pouch (**120**) is formed by attaching a label to the outer surface of the wrapper.



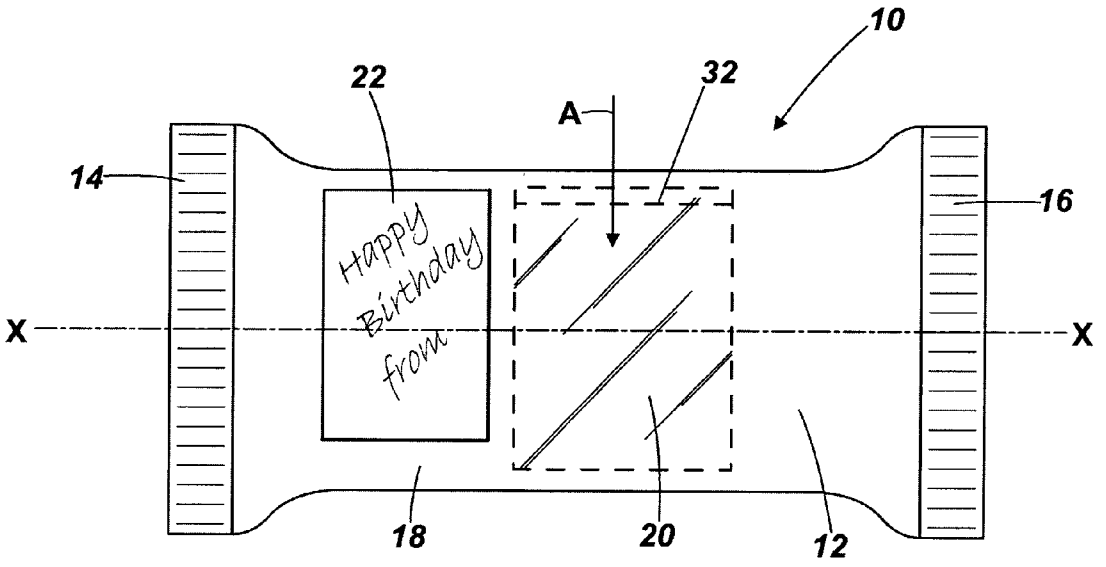


Fig. 1

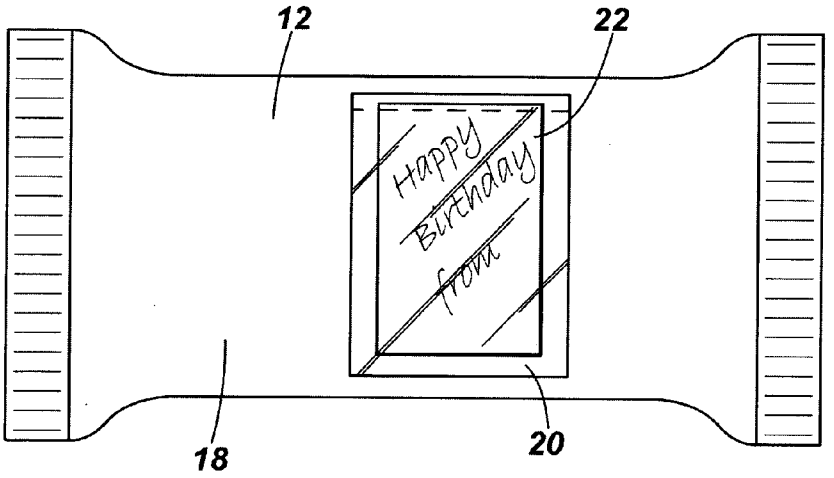


Fig. 2

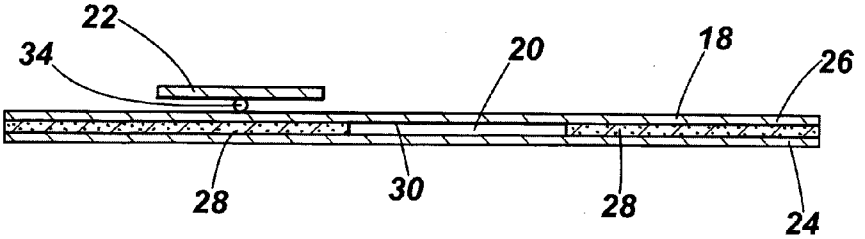


Fig. 3

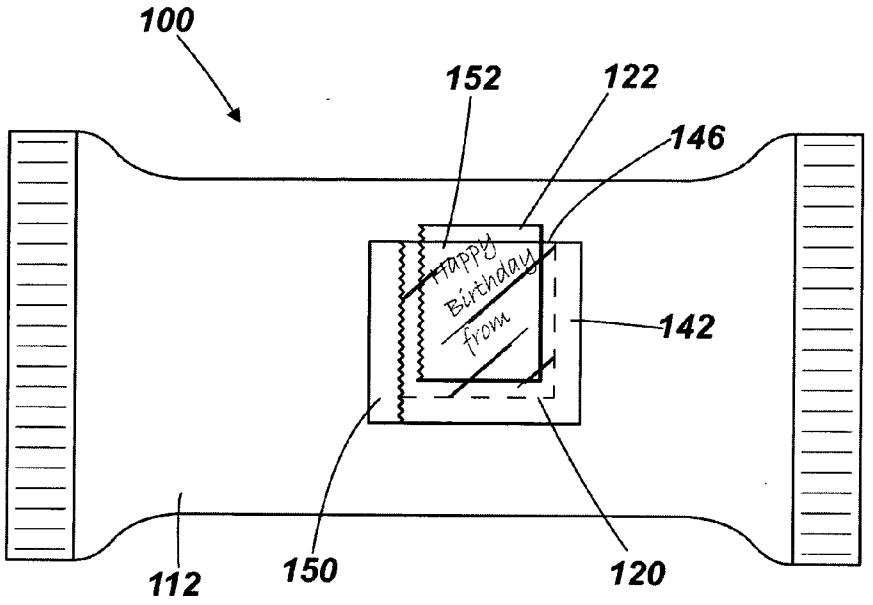


Fig. 4

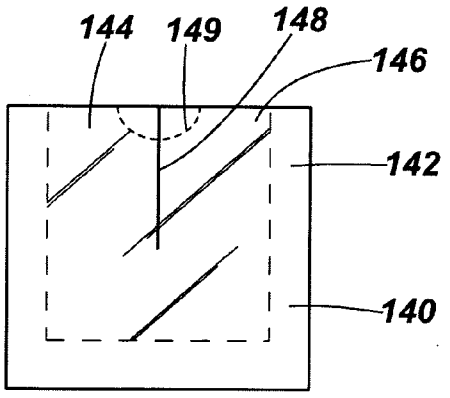


Fig. 5

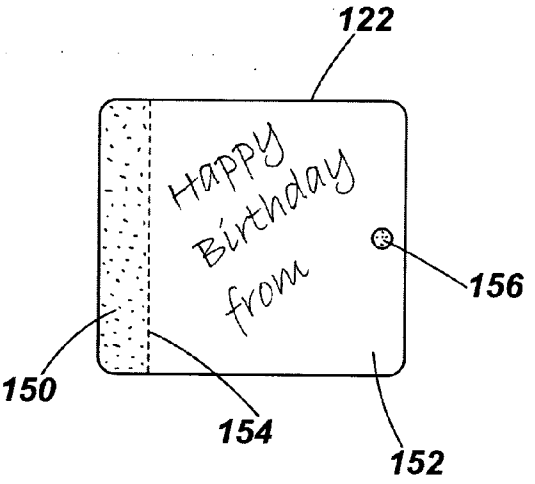


Fig. 6

PACKAGING

TECHNICAL FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates to packaging, and in particular but not exclusively, to packaging for food and confectionery items including generally block-shaped products. The present invention is also directed to a method of packaging, to methods of manufacturing a wrapper for a packaging and to a kit of parts from forming a packaging.

BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

[0002] It is known to package products in a flexible wrapper which is folded about the product and seams formed between overlapping edge regions of the wrapper so as to encase the product. This type of packaging is often used for packaging generally block-shaped food products, including chocolate bars and other snack type confectionery products. In order to protect the food product, the wrapper is typically fabricated from a substantially gas and moisture impervious material, such as a metal foil, or a plastics material (including a laminate of either or both materials) so as to provide a hermetically sealed container for the product.

[0003] Such known wrappers may be formed from a length of flat, foldable material having an inner surface directed to the food product and an outer surface. The outer surface may be printed on or otherwise be provided with information for the consumer. The material is folded about the product and the longitudinal side edges are bonded together to form a longitudinal sealed seam extending the length of the product, sometimes referred to as a "fin seal" or "fin seam". The material extends beyond the ends of the product and opposing edge regions at either end of the wrapper are bonded together to form transverse end seams. The seams may be formed using an adhesive to bond the opposing surfaces of the wrapper or by heating the material under pressure so that the opposing surfaces melt and fuse together to form a welded seam.

[0004] Packaging of this nature can be produced using a flow-wrap method in which a film of material is supplied in a roll to package a number of products in a substantially continuous process. The material is fed through a machine which folds it about each product in turn so that opposing side edges are brought into contact and bonded together to form the longitudinal seam, which usually extends along a rear face of the product. The material is crimped at either end of the product to form the end seams and the material is cut to separate each package from the remainder of the film. Alternatively, packaging of this nature may also be formed by envelope or sheet feeding and sealing effected by means of pressure and/or heat.

[0005] The known packaging forms a fully sealed container for the product, which is substantially gas and moisture impervious and may be printed on to make the packaging attractive to customers.

[0006] Confectionary products such as chocolate bars are often given as gifts on special occasions or as a thank you present. In order to personalize a gift, the giver may wish to add a message but the wrappers currently used are not amenable for writing on or there may be no suitable blank area on which a message can be placed. To overcome this problem, a giver currently has the option of writing a message on a gift card which can be attached to the wrapper or provided separately from the gift itself. This is not particularly convenient as it requires the giver to purchase a gift card and either find a means of attaching it to the existing packaging or run the risk of the card being separated from the gift.

[0007] It is an object of the invention to provide an improved packaging which overcomes or at least mitigates some or all of the above disadvantages.

[0008] It is a further object of the invention to provide an improved method of packaging which overcomes or at least mitigates some or all of the above disadvantages.

[0009] It is a still further object of the invention to provide a kit of parts for forming a packaging which overcomes or at least mitigates some or all of the disadvantages of the prior art.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] In accordance with a first embodiment of the invention, there is provided packaging for a product, the packaging comprising a wrapper of flexible material encasing the product, the wrapper having a pouch into which a message card can be inserted, at least part of the pouch being see-through so that at least part of a message card can be seen when it is located in the pouch, in which the wrapper is formed from a laminated material comprising an outer layer bonded to an inner layer over the majority of its surface area and in which a region of the outer layer is not bonded to the inner layer to define the pouch between the inner and outer layers.

[0011] A slit or line of weakness may be provided in the outer layer within or adjacent to the un-bonded region to provide an opening region through which the card may be inserted between the outer and inner layers. Typically, the slit or line of weakness will be formed along an edge of the un-bonded region

[0012] In accordance with a second embodiment of the invention, there is provided packaging for a product, the packaging comprising a wrapper of flexible material encasing the product, the wrapper having a pouch into which a message card can be inserted, at least part of the pouch being see-through so that a message card can be seen when it is located in the pouch, in which the pouch is formed by means of a label affixed to the wrapper.

[0013] One or more edge regions of the label may be bonded to the wrapper with at least one edge region being unattached to the wrapper to form an inlet opening through which a card may be introduced into the pouch. Alternatively, a slot or line of weakness may be provided within an inner region of the label to provide an inlet opening region through which a card may be inserted into the pouch and an edge region of the label surrounding the inner region can bonded to the wrapper.

[0014] Packaging in accordance with either one of the first and second embodiments of the invention may further comprise a message card releasably mounted to the wrapper. The card may be releasably mounted to the wrapper by means of an adhesive. For example, one or more spots of adhesive may be used to releasably mount the card. The adhesive may be a peelable adhesive. In an alternative embodiment, the card has a mounting portion which is affixed to the wrapper and a message portion removably attached to the mounting portion for insertion into the pouch. The message portion and the mounting portion may be separated by means of a line of weakness. In further alternative embodiments, the message card may be releasably attached to a label which is itself attached to the wrapper or the message card may be releasably mounted to the wrapper by inserting it into the pouch. The

message card can be made of any suitable material, including but not limited to: paper, cardboard, fibreboard, cartonboard, or polymer based materials.

[0015] In packaging in accordance with either one of the first and second embodiments, the wrapper may have a fin seal extending longitudinally along one side of the product and end seams extending transversely at either end of the product. The pouch may be provided on a face of the wrapper which is positioned on the opposite side of the product from the fm seal. The wrapper may be a flow-formed wrapper.

[0016] In packaging in accordance with either one of the first and second embodiments, the wrapper may form a hermetically sealed container for the product.

[0017] In packaging in accordance with either one of the first and second embodiments, the product may be a food product and may be a generally block-shaped food product. The product may be a confectionery product such as a chocolate bar or the like.

[0018] In accordance with a third embodiment of the invention, there is provided a method of packaging a product, the method comprising:

[0019] providing a wrapper of flexible material having a pouch into which a message card can be inserted, at least part of the pouch being see-through so that a message card can be seen when it is located in the pouch; and

[0020] encasing the product in the wrapper of flexible material.

[0021] The wrapper may comprise an outer layer attached to an inner layer and the method may comprise forming a pouch in the wrapper by bonding the outer layer to the inner over the majority of its surface area but leaving a region of the outer layer un-bonded to the inner layer to define a pouch between the inner and outer layers. The method may comprise forming a slit or line of weakness in the outer layer within or adjacent to un-bonded region to provide an opening region through which the card may be inserted between the outer and inner layers. The method may comprise forming the slit or line of weakness along a side of the un-bonded region.

[0022] Alternatively, the method in accordance with the third embodiment may comprise forming a pouch by affixing a label to the wrapper. The method may include bonding one or more edge regions of the label to the wrapper and leaving at least one edge region unattached to form an opening through which the card may be inserted into the pouch. In a further alternative, the label can be provided with a slot or line of weakness within an inner region of the label to form an inlet opening region through which a card may be inserted into the pouch and the method can comprise bonding an edge region of the label surrounding the inner region to the wrapper.

[0023] The method in accordance with the third embodiment may comprise forming the pouch before the wrapper is applied to the product.

[0024] In accordance with a fourth embodiment of the invention, there is provided a method of packaging a product, the method comprising:

[0025] encasing the product in a wrapper of flexible material; and,

[0026] subsequently affixing a label to the wrapper to form a pouch into which a message card can be inserted.

[0027] The method of packaging a product in accordance with the fourth embodiment may comprise bonding one or more edge regions of the label to the wrapper and leaving at least one edge region unattached to form an opening through which the card may be interested into the pouch. Alternatively the label may have a slot or line of weakness within an inner region of the label to form an inlet opening region through which a card may be inserted into the pouch and the method may comprise bonding an edge region of the label surrounding the inner region to the wrapper.

[0028] The method of packaging a product in accordance with either one of the third and fourth embodiments may comprise releasably mounting a message card to the wrapper. The method may comprise releasably attaching the card to the wrapper by means an adhesive. The method may comprise releasably attaching the card to the wrapper using one or more spots of adhesive. The method may comprise using a peelable adhesive. In alternative arrangements, the card may have a mounting portion and a message portion removably attached to the mounting portion for insertion into the pouch and the method may comprise affixing the mounting portion to the wrapper or to a label forming the pouch. The method may comprise bonding the mounting portion to the wrapper or label. The method may comprise producing a message card having a mounting portion and a message portion separated by a line of weakness between the mounting portion and the message portion. In further alternative arrangements, the method may comprise releasably attaching the card to a label and attaching the label to the wrapper or releasably mounting the card to the wrapper by inserting the card into the pouch.

[0029] The method in accordance with either one of the third and fourth embodiments of the invention may comprise releasably attaching the message card to the wrapper before or after the wrapper is applied to the product.

[0030] In the method according to either one of the third and fourth embodiments of the invention, the step of encasing the product in the wrapper may comprise folding the wrapper about the product and bonding opposed surfaces of the wrapper to form sealed seams. The method may comprise forming a fin seal extending longitudinally along one side of the product and end seams extending transversely at either end of the product. The method may comprise positioning the pouch on a face of the wrapper which is located on the opposite side of the product from the fin seal. The method may comprise forming the packaging using flow-wrap techniques, the wrapper being provided as part of a roll of material, the material being folded about the product so that opposing longitudinal edge regions of the material are brought into contact and bonded together to form the longitudinal seam, opposing regions of the material at either end of the product being brought into contact and bonded to form the transverse end seams and the material being cut to separate the package from the remainder of the material. For use in the method according to the second embodiment, material in the roll may be provided with a plurality of pouches spaced along its length and the method may comprise positioning the material about each product so that a pouch is provided on a face of each completed packaging located opposite from the longitudinal seam.

[0031] The method in accordance with either one of the third and fourth embodiments of the invention may comprise encasing the product in the wrapper so as to form a hermetically sealed container for the product.

[0032] In the method according to either one of the third and fourth embodiments of the invention, the product may be a food product which may be generally block shaped. The product may be a confectionery product such as a chocolate bar or the like.

[0033] In accordance with a fifth embodiment of the invention, there is provided a method of forming a flexible wrapper having a pouch for receiving a message card for use in the packaging in accordance with the first embodiment of the invention or for use in the method of any one of the third and fourth embodiments of the invention, the method comprising:

[0034] forming the wrapper as a laminated material having an inner layer and an outer layer;

[0035] bonding the outer layer to the inner layer over the majority of its surface area but leaving a region of the outer layer un-bonded to the inner layer to define a pouch between the inner and outer layers.

[0036] The method may comprise forming a slit or line of weakness in the outer layer within or adjacent the un-bonded region to provide an opening region through which a card may be inserted between the outer and inner layers. The method may comprise forming the slit or line of weakness along an edge of the un-bonded region.

[0037] The method may comprise forming the wrapper as part of a continuous film of wrappers such that a plurality of pouches are spaced along the length of the film. The method may comprise forming the film into a roll.

[0038] In accordance with a sixth embodiment of the invention, there is provided a method of forming a flexible wrapper having a pouch for receiving a message card for use in the packaging in accordance with the second embodiment of the invention or for use in the method of any of the third and fourth embodiments of the invention, the method comprising:

[0039] affixing a label to an outer surface of the wrapper and forming an inlet opening region through which a message card may be inserted into the pouch.

[0040] The method may comprise bonding the label to the wrapper along one or more edge regions of the label, at least one edge region of the label being unattached to the wrapper to form the inlet opening region. Alternatively, the method may comprise forming a slot or line of weakness within an inner region of the label to provide the opening region through which a card may be inserted into the pouch and bonding an edge region of the label surrounding the inner region to the wrapper. The step of forming the slot or line of weakness may be carried out before the step of bonding the edge region to the wrapper.

[0041] The method may comprise forming the wrapper as part of a continuous film of wrappers such that a plurality of pouches are spaced along the length of the film. The method may comprise forming the film into a roll. Alternatively, the method may comprise affixing the label to the wrapper after it has been applied to a product.

[0042] In accordance with a seventh embodiment of the invention, there is provided a kit of parts for forming a packaging for a product, the kit comprising a wrapper of flexible material for encasing the product, the wrapper having a pouch into which a message card can be inserted, at least part of the pouch being see-through so that a message on a card can be seen when it is located in the pouch and a message card for insertion into the pouch. The kit may comprise a see-through label for affixing to the wrapper to form the pouch.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0043] An embodiment of the invention will now be described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

[0044] FIG. **1** is a plan view of a packaging in accordance with a first embodiment of the present invention;

[0045] FIG. **2** is a view similar to that of FIG. **1** but showing a message card inserted into a pouch;

[0046] FIG. **3** is a longitudinal cross-sectional view through part of a front face region of the packaging of FIG. **1** taken on line X-X;

[0047] FIG. **4** is a plan view of a packaging in accordance with a second embodiment of the present invention, shown the packaging with a message card inserted in a pouch;

[0048] FIG. **5** is a plan view of a see-through label forming part of the packaging of FIG. **4**; and

[0049] FIG. **6** is a plan view of a message card forming part of the packaging of FIG. **4**.

[0050] The same reference numerals but increased by 100 in each case are used in relation to the various embodiments described below.

[0051] Referring initially to FIGS. **1** to **3**, packaging in accordance with a first embodiment of the invention is indicated generally at **10**.

[0052] The packaging **10** comprises a wrapper **12** of flexible material which is folded around the product and sealed to fully enclose the product. Over lapping longitudinal edge regions of the wrapper **12** are bonded together to form a longitudinal fin seam (not shown) which extends along a rear face of the packaging. Opposing end edge regions of the material are bonded together to form transverse sealed seams **14**, **16** at either end of the product.

[0053] The longitudinal fin seam and the transverse seams **14**, **16** can be formed using an adhesive to bond the opposing surfaces of the wrapper or by heating the material under pressure so that the opposing surfaces melt and fuse together to form a welded seam. Alternatively, an ultrasonic means of bonding the opposing surfaces together may be employed.

[0054] The wrapper **12** can be made of any flexible, foldable material suitable for packaging the product concerned. Where the product is a food product, the material may be substantially moisture and gas impervious so that when it is fully sealed, the packaging provides a hermetically sealed container for the product. Alternatively, the package may be vented so as to enable the food product to be stored for longer periods (for example, Turkish Delight products require venting so as to prevent microbial activity during storage). Examples of typical materials that can be used include: paper based materials, one or more polymeric materials, and metallic foils. The wrapper may also be a lamination comprising layers of the same or different materials, which may include any of those mentioned above in any suitable combination.

[0055] The general construction of the wrapper is largely conventional and so is not described in detail. FIGS. **1** and **2** show a front face **18** of the packaging which is typically displayed to customers at the point of sale. The fin seal will typically be positioned along the rear face of the product opposite front face and so is not shown in the illustrations.

[0056] In accordance with the invention, the wrapper **12** has an externally accessible pouch or pocket **20** for receiving a message card **22**. The pouch **20** is dimensioned to receive the card **22** and to retain the card securely once it is inserted in the pouch. At least an outer face region of the pouch is see-through so that a message card **22** can be read whilst it is located in the pouch. In the present embodiment, the pouch **22** is located on the front face **18** of the packaging **10** but this is not essential and the pouch can be provided at any suitable location on the finished wrapper.

[0057] The pouch **20** provides a convenient means for securely affixing a message card **22** to a product which is

packaged in a flexible wrapper in order to make an attractive gift. The card **22** may be printed on to provide a suitable design and may include a pre-printed message or legend such as "Happy Birthday" or "Thank You" and/or may have a space in which a user can add the name of the intended recipient and/or a personalised message. A range of different message cards **22** may be produced.

[0058] Message cards **22** may be supplied separately at the point of sale. However, in a particularly convenient arrangement a message card **22** is releasably mounted to the wrapper **12**. As shown in FIG. **1**, for example, a message card can be releasably mounted to the front face **18** of the packaging adjacent the pouch **20** where it can be easily seen at the point of sale so that customer can select a product with an appropriate message card **22**. The user can subsequently remove the card **22** from the wrapper, write a message on the card **22** and insert it into the pouch **20** so that the message can be read as illustrated in FIG. **2**. The message card **22** can be made of any suitable material, including but not limited to: paper, cardboard, fibreboard, cartonboard, or polymer based materials.

[0059] Any suitable means can be used to form the pouch **20**. In the present embodiment and as best seen in FIG. **3**, the wrapper **12** is formed from a laminated material having an inner layer or web **24** and an outer layer or web **26**. The inner layer **24** may be a single layer of material or it may be itself be of laminated construction. For example, the inner layer may be a laminate of a metal foil, which may be an aluminium foil, on one side and a plastics material on the other side. When the material is formed into the package, the metallic foil is positioned on the inside facing the product and the plastics material is on the outside.

[0060] The outer layer **26** is bonded to the inner layer **24** by means of an adhesive **28** over the majority of its surface area. However, in a region **30** which defines the pouch **20**, no adhesive is used so that the outer layer is not bonded to the inner layer. At least one of the inner and outer layers may be printed on or otherwise provided with information for the consumer. However, at least part of the outer layer in the un-bonded region is see-through or transparent so that a message card **22** can be read through the outer layer when inserted in the pouch. Conveniently, the outer layer **24** is formed from a transparent material but may be printed on whilst leaving at least part of the un-bonded region clear. The outer layer may also be a lamination comprising more than one layer of material.

[0061] A slit or opening or a line of weakness **32** is formed in the outer layer **26** along one edge of the un-bonded region to provide an opening region through which a card **22** can be inserted between the inner and outer layers as indicted by arrow A in FIG. **1**. Where a line of weakness is provided, this can be produced by means of scoring or by means of a line of perforations. In order to insert a message card **22**, a user simply breaks the outer layer along the line of weakness. This may be done using an edge or corner of the card **22** itself. The use of a line of weakness has the advantage that foreign matter cannot easily enter the pouch **20** before a user inserts a message card **22**. The position of the slot or line of weakness can be varied as desired provided the card can be inserted into the pouch.

[0062] The pouch **20** is shaped and dimensioned to receive the card **22**. In the embodiments shown, the card and pouch are generally rectangular in shape but this is not essential. The external pouch **20** is easily accessible to a user without opening the packaging.

[0063] Where a message card **22** is releasably mounted to the package **10**, any suitable means for mounting the card can be used provided the card **22** can be removed from the wrapper **12** without causing significant damage to the wrapper **12** or the card. In the first embodiment, the card **22** is secured to the wrapper using one or more spots **34** of adhesive, which may be a peelable adhesive. However, in alternative arrangements, the card **22** could be removably inserted in the pouch **20** or it could be mounted to a label which is itself fastened to the wrapper **12**.

[0064] The packaging **10** can be produced using a flow-wrap method in which a continuous film of material having a number appropriately positioned pouches **20** disposed along its length is supplied in a roll to package products in a substantially continuous process. The material is fed through a machine which folds it about each product in turn so that opposing longitudinal edge regions are brought into contact and bonded together to form the longitudinal seam. The material is crimped at either end of the product to form the transverse end seams **14**, **16** and the material is cut to separate each package from the remainder of the film.

[0065] A second embodiment of the invention is illustrated in FIGS. **4** to **6**. The packaging **100** in accordance with the second embodiment is similar to the first embodiment and comprises a flexible wrapper **112** folded about the product and sealed as described in relation to the first embodiment. The main differences between the second embodiment and the first is the method of forming the pouch and the method of releasably attaching a message card and these will be described further.

[0066] In the second embodiment **100**, the pouch **120** is formed by means of a label **140** which is affixed to the outer surface of the wrapper **112**. An outer edge region **142** of the label is bonded to the wrapper so that an inner region **144** of the label is remains un-bonded to form a pouch between the label **140** and the wrapper **112**. In the embodiment as shown, one edge **146** of the label is not bonded to the wrapper to form an opening by means of which a message card **22** can be inserted between the label and the wrapper. In the embodiment shown, the label **140** is generally rectangular in shape and is affixed to the wrapper **112** along three edges. The fourth edge is left free to provide the opening into the pouch. At least part of the inner region **144** of the label is see-through so that a card **22** can be read when inserted in the pouch.

[0067] In an alternative arrangement (not shown), the label **140** has an inner region **140** in which a slit or a line of weakness is provided to form an inlet opening through which a message card can be inserted and the entire edge region of the label **140** surrounding the inner region is bonded to the wrapper.

[0068] As shown in FIG. **4**, a slit **148** may be formed in the label extending inwardly from the centre of the free edge to make it easier for a message card to be inserted and removed from the pouch. Alternatively, a small cut-out or recess could be provided in the label adjacent the free edge to make it easier to insert a card **122** and to enable the card to be gripped for removal from the pocket. The cut-out could be semi-circular in shape as indicated by the dashed lines **149** in FIG. **4**. Where the label is bonded to the wrapper along all its edges, the slit **148** or cut-out **149** would be provided adjacent the inlet opening slit. Where the inlet opening is defined by means of a line of weakness, the slit **148** or cut-out **149** could also be defined by means of the line of weakness. Similar arrangements can be provided in first embodiment **10** described

above with the slit **148** or cut-out **149** being formed in the un-bonded region of the outer layer **26** adjacent the opening slit or line of weakness **32**.

[0069] The message card **122** in the second embodiment has a mounting portion **150** and a message portion **152**. The mounting portion **150** and the message portion are separated by means of a line of weakness **154** or by any other suitable means so that the message portion can be detached from the mounting portion by a user. The mounting portion **150** is permanently secured to the wrapper **112** or to a part of the label **140** by means of an adhesive. The message portion **152** may be releasably secured to the wrapper by means of one or more spots **156** of adhesive to prevent it becoming bent or damaged prior to removal by a user. A user detaches the message portion **152** of the card from the mounting portion **150** by tearing along the line of weakness. The user can then write on the message portion **152** before inserting it into the pouch.

[0070] In the embodiment shown, the mounting portion **150** is attached along one of the side edges of the label which is affixed to and can be considered to be part of the wrapper in the finished packaging. This advantageous as the mounting portion stub **150** left behind when the message portion is removed is neatly located on the edge of the label. However, the mounting portion can be attached to the wrapper **112** at any suitable location. Rather than being attached to the wrapper, the mounting portion could be attached to a product label which is itself attached to the wrapper.

[0071] The two part message card **122** and its method of attachment can be used with a wrapper **12** as described above in relation to the first embodiment **10**. Similarly, any of the methods of releasably mounting a message card discussed above in relation to the first embodiment **10** can be adopted for use with the wrapper **112** and label **140** arrangement of the second embodiment **100**.

[0072] Packaging **100** in accordance with the second embodiment can be formed using flow-wrap methods in which wrapper **112** are provided as part of a continuous film of material in a roll in the manner described above in relation to the first embodiment. Labels **140** to form the pouches **120** may be pre-applied to the material before it is formed into a roll separately from the wrapping process. Alternatively, labels **140** could be applied to the wrapper material as part of the wrapping process. In one such method, labels **140** are affixed to the wrapper material in a process step before the material is folded about the products. Alternatively, a label **140** can be affixed to outer surface of each completed wrapper after it has been folded about the product.

[0073] The packaging **10**, **100** in accordance with the invention is particularly suited for packaging generally block shaped food products such as chocolate bars or other similar confectionery products. However, the packaging **10**, **100** can be adapted for packaging other products and in particular other generally block shaped products. The packaging **10**, **100** can also be used to package products provided in two or more generally block shaped portions. For example, the packaging **10**, **100** could be used to package multiple chocolate or other confectionery bars arranged in-line or side-by-side.

[0074] The invention is not limited to packaging comprising a longitudinal seam or which is formed using a flow-wrap method and apparatus but can be adapted for use with any packing comprising a flexible wrapper which encases the product. For example, in one alternative embodiment the packaging is formed from two sheets of flexible material positioned on opposite sides of the produced that are connected together along opposing edge portions surrounding the product.

[0075] The foregoing embodiments are not intended to limit the scope of protection afforded by the claims, but rather to describe an example as to how the invention may be put into practice.

1. A packaging for a product, the packaging comprising a wrapper of flexible material encasing the product, the wrapper having a pouch into which a message card can be inserted, at least part of the pouch being see-through so that a message card can be seen when it is located in the pouch, in which the wrapper is made of a laminated material comprising an outer layer bonded to an inner layer over the majority of its surface area and in which a region of the outer layer is not bonded to the inner layer to define the pouch between the inner and outer layers.

2. A packaging as claimed in claim **1**, in which a slit or line of weakness is provided in the outer layer within or adjacent the un-bonded region to provide an opening region through which the card may be inserted between the outer and inner layers.

3. A packaging for a product, the packaging comprising a wrapper of flexible material encasing the product, the wrapper having a pouch into which a message card can be inserted, at least part of the pouch being see-through so that a message card can be seen when it is located in the pouch, in which the pouch is formed by means of a label affixed to the wrapper.

4. A packaging as claimed in claim **3**, in which one or more edge regions of the label are bonded to the wrapper with at least one edge region being unattached to the wrapper to form an opening through which a card may be inserted into the pouch.

5. A packaging as claimed in claim **3**, in which a slit or line of weakness is provided within an inner region of the label to provide an inlet opening region through which a card may be inserted into the pouch and an edge region of the label surrounding the inner region is bonded to the wrapper.

6. A packaging as claimed in claim **3**, in which the packaging further comprises a message card releasably mounted to the wrapper.

7.-**9**. (canceled)

10. A packaging as claimed in claim **6**, in which the card comprises a mounting portion which is affixed to the wrapper and a message portion removably attached to the mounting portion for insertion into the pouch.

11. (canceled)

12. A packaging as claimed in claim **6**, in which the message card is releasably attached to a label which is itself attached to the wrapper.

13.-**17**. (canceled)

18. A packaging as claimed in claim **6**, in which the packaging is configured for use with a food product.

19. A packaging as claimed in claim **6**, the packaging being configured for use with a generally block-shaped food product.

20. A packaging as claimed in claim **18**, in which the packaging is configured for use with a confectionery product.

21. A method of packaging a product, the method comprising:

a. providing a wrapper of flexible material having a pouch into which a message card can be inserted, at least part of the pouch being see-through so that a message card can be seen when it is located in the pouch; and

b. encasing the product in the wrapper of flexible material.

22. A method as claimed in claim **21**, in which the wrapper comprises an outer layer attached to an inner layer and the method comprises forming a pouch in the wrapper by bonding the outer layer to the inner over the majority of its surface area but leaving a region of the outer layer un-bonded to the inner layer to define a pouch between the inner and outer layers.

23. A method as claimed in claim **22**, the method comprising forming a slit or line of weakness in the outer layer within or adjacent the un-bonded region to provide an opening region through which the card may be inserted between the outer and inner layers.

24. A method as claimed in claim **21**, the method comprising forming a pouch by affixing a label to the wrapper.

25. A method as claimed in claim **24**, the method comprising bonding one or more edge regions of the label to the wrapper and leaving at least one edge region unattached to form an opening through which the card may be inserted into the pouch.

26. A method as claimed in claim **24**, in which the label has a slit or line of weakness within an inner region of the label to form an inlet opening region through which a card may be inserted into the pouch and the method comprises bonding an edge region of the label surrounding the inner region to the wrapper.

27. A method as claimed in claim **21**, in which the pouch is formed before the wrapper is applied to the product.

28. A method of packaging a product, the method comprising:

a. encasing the product in a wrapper of flexible material; and,

b. subsequently affixing a label to the wrapper to form a pouch into which a message card can be inserted.

29. A method as claimed in claim **28**, the method comprising bonding one or more edge regions of the label to the wrapper and leaving at least one edge region unattached to form an opening through which the card may be inserted into the pouch.

30. A method as claimed in claim **28**, in which the label has a slit or line of weakness within an inner region of the label to form an inlet opening region through which a card may be inserted into the pouch and the method comprises bonding an edge region of the label surrounding the inner region to the wrapper.

31. A method of packaging a product as claimed in claim **21**, the method comprising releasably mounting a message card to the wrapper.

32.-**34**. (canceled)

35. A method as claimed in claim **31**, in which the card has a mounting portion and a message portion removably attached to the mounting portion for insertion into the pouch, the method comprising affixing the mounting portion to the wrapper.

36. A method as claimed in claim **35**, in which the method comprises bonding the mounting portion to the wrapper or to a label on the wrapper forming the pouch.

37. (canceled)

38. A method as claimed in claim **31**, the method comprising releasably affixing the card to a label and affixing the label to the wrapper.

39. A method as claimed in claim **31**, the method comprising releasably mounting the card to the wrapper by inserting the card into the pouch.

40. A method as claimed in claim **31**, in which message card is releasably mounted to the wrapper after the wrapper is applied to the product.

41. A method as claimed in claim **21**, in which the step of encasing the product in the wrapper comprises folding the wrapper about the product and bonding opposed surfaces of the wrapper to form sealed seams.

42. A method as claimed in claim **41**, the method comprising forming a fin seal extending longitudinally along one side of the product and end seams extending transversely at either end of the product.

43. A method as claimed in claim **42**, the method comprising positioning the pouch on a face of the wrapper which is located on the opposite side of the product from the fin seal.

44. A method as claimed in claim **41**, the method comprising forming the packaging using flow-wrap techniques, the wrapper being provided as part of a roll of material, the material being folded about the product so that opposing longitudinal edge regions of the material are brought into contact and bonded together to form a longitudinal seam, opposing regions of the material at either end of the product being brought into contact and bonded to form transverse end seams and the material being cut to separate the package from the remainder of the material.

45. A method as claimed in claim **44**, in which the material in the roll is provided with a plurality of pouches spaced along its length, the method comprising positioning the material about each product so that a pouch is provided on a face of each completed packaging located opposite from the longitudinal seam.

46. A method as claimed in claim **21**, the method comprising encasing the product in the wrapper so as to form a hermetically sealed container for the product.

47. A method as claimed in claim **21**, in which the product is a food product.

48. A method as claimed in claim **47**, in which the product is generally-block shaped.

49. A method as claimed in claim **47**, in which the product is a confectionery product.

50. A method of forming a flexible wrapper having a pouch for receiving a message card for use in the packaging of claim **1**, the method comprising:

a. forming the wrapper as a lamination having an inner layer and an outer layer;

b. bonding the outer layer to the inner layer over the majority of its surface area but leaving a region of the outer layer un-bonded to the inner layer to define a pouch between the inner and outer layers.

51. A method of forming a flexible wrapper as claimed in claim **50**, the method comprising forming a slit or line of weakness in the outer layer within or adjacent the un-bonded region to provide an opening region through which a card may be inserted between the outer and inner layers.

52. A method of forming a flexible wrapper having a pouch for receiving a message card for use in the packaging of claim **3**, the method comprising:

a. affixing a label to an outer surface of the wrapper; and

b. forming an inlet opening region through which a message card may be inserted into the pouch.

53. A method as claimed in claim **52**, the method comprising bonding the label to the wrapper along one or more edge regions of the label, at least one edge region of the label being unattached to the wrapper to provide the inlet opening region.

54. A method as claimed in claim **52**, the method comprising:

a. forming a slit or line of weakness within an inner region of the label to provide the opening region through which a card may be inserted into the pouch; and

b. bonding an edge region of the label surrounding the inner region to the wrapper.

55. A method as claimed in claim **54**, in which the step of forming a slit or line of weakness within an inner region of the label to form an opening region through which a card may be inserted into the pouch is carried out before the edge region of the label is bonded to the wrapper.

56. A method of forming a flexible wrapper as claimed in claim **50**, the method comprising forming the wrapper as part of a continuous film of wrappers such that a plurality of pouches are spaced along the length of the film.

57. A method of forming a flexible wrapper as claimed in claim **56**, the method comprising forming the film into a roll.

58. A method of forming a flexible wrapper as claimed in claim **52**, the method comprising affixing the label to the wrapper after it has been applied to a product.

59.-**60**. (canceled)

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