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Declarations under Rule 4.17:

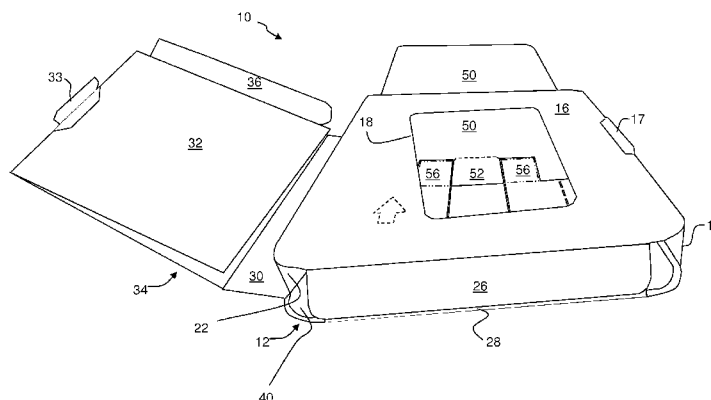
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(54) **Title:** PACKAGING SYSTEM AND A BLANK FOR FORMING THE SAME

FIGURE 5B



(57) **Abstract:** A container (10) houses a tray or blister pack (50). The container is formed from paperboard and includes front (16) and back (12) panels, a retainer panel (40) with a slot (49) bounded by at least one rail (42), opposing side panels (14, 30), and at least one end panel (26, 28). The panels define an interior with one open end for receiving and securing a tray-like apparatus. The front panel includes a cutout (18) exposing the interior. A retaining flap (20) along an edge of the cutout extends into the interior. A cover panel (32, 34) can be provided for covering the front panel. A tray or blister pack (50) housed in the package may have an anchor (52) which slides in the slot. The anchor may have at least one anchor wing (56) that slides in the rail and secures the tray or blister pack from being completely removed from the package.



PACKAGING SYSTEM AND A BLANK FOR FORMING THE SAME

REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

[0001] This application claims the benefit of priority under 35 U.S.C. §119(e) of United States provisional application serial number 61/562,007 filed on November 21, 2011, which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Disclosed is a packaging system for housing a receptacle such as a tray-like member, blister pack or the like. The packaging system is formed from a paperboard blank or blank formed of any other foldable sheet material and includes a front panel, a back panel, opposing side panels and at least one end panel adhered together such that the container defines an interior chamber with at least one open end for receiving and securing a tray-like apparatus or other receptacle. The receptacle may include as least one cavity for receiving an item, such as a blister for receiving a medication or other item. The front panel includes: (i) a substantial cut out area exposing the interior chamber and may include (ii) a retaining flap along a creased edge of the cut out area, the retaining flap extending into the interior chamber. The retaining flap functions to obstruct the movement of the tray-like apparatus or receptacle into and out of the interior chamber such that an external force is necessary to overcome the obstruction while inserting and removing the tray-like apparatus into and out of the interior chamber of the container. The container may include an internal retainer panel with a slot for receiving an anchor of a tray or blister pack or other receptacle. The anchor may be sized and shaped to fit in the slot, for example taking the form of a T-shaped portion cut-out or formed in the tray or blister pack or other receptacle. At least one cover panel can be coupled with the container for covering the front panel when the container is not in use. The at least one cover panel may have various locking and or attachment elements to keep the flap closed like a book when the package is not in use and may serve as a product retaining feature if the locking tab covers the container opening.

[0003] The packaging system container may also include a pair of tear-away closure flaps adhered to one another and that may covering the open end of the container. At least one closure flap may be coupled to the container by means of a perforated crease.

[0004] The container can also include a locking tab and a locking tab insert for securing the cover to the container. The locking tab insert can be located on the front panel and the locking tab is located on one of the at least one cover panels. Alternatively, the locking tab can be located on the front panel and the locking tab insert is located on one of the at least one cover panels. The locking tab may also be located on an extension of the front panel and the locking tab insert may be located on the back panel of the product containing portion, the side panel parallel to the spine panel, or on the front panel of the product containing portion or on any other panel other than the cover panel itself.

[0005] Another packaging system with some similar elements is disclosed in International Application WO2011116259.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] Figure 1 is an illustration of a paperboard blank that can be assembled into a container for housing a blister pack or tray according to an embodiment of the invention.

[0007] Figure 2 is a perspective view of a partially assembled container for housing a blister pack or tray.

[0008] Figure 3 is a perspective view of the partially assembled container, with a blister pack or tray being inserted into a first end of the container.

[0009] Figure 4 is a perspective view of the partially assembled container, with the blister pack or tray further inserted into the container.

[0010] Figure 5A is a perspective view of the partially assembled container, with the blister pack or tray extended out the other end of the container.

[0011] Figure 5B is a perspective view of the partially assembled container of Figure 5A, with an end now closed.

[0012] Figure 6 is a detail view of the partially assembled container, showing a connection between the blister pack or tray and the inside of the container.

[0013] Figure 7 is a perspective view of the assembled container in use and containing a blister pack.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0014] Figure 1 is an illustration of a blank 10 formed from paperboard or any other foldable sheet material such as a plastic sheet, paper-plastic composite sheet, paper-plastic laminated sheet or the like so that the blank 10 can be assembled into a container for housing a receptacle, such as a blister pack or tray 50, according to an embodiment of the invention. In general, the paperboard blank 10 can be functionally separated into two sections. The first section is the container and the second section is the container cover. The container section when assembled forms a box-like structure having an interior chamber that can house a receptacle such as a blister pack or other tray-like apparatus. The container cover section folds over the top of the container section and is attachable to the container section to resemble the cover of a book with the cover hinged at the outer spine panel.

[0015] The container section is generally comprised of a back panel 12, a front panel 16, a right side wall 14, and a left side wall 22. The container also may include first and second end panels 26, 28 that seal one end of the container.

[0016] More specifically, the back panel 12 may include a first end panel 26 attached at one end. The connection between the first end panel 26 and the back panel 12 may form a crease along which the first end panel 26 can be folded. A first closure flap 38 may be attached at the other end of the back panel 12. The connection between the first closure flap 38 and the back panel 12 may be a perforated crease along which the first closure flap 38 may be torn and separated from the back panel 12. On one side of back panel 12 may be a cover side wall 30 that may be coupled with back panel 12 along a crease that may be folded. On the other side of back panel 12 may be a right side wall 14 that may be coupled with back panel 12 along a crease that can be folded.

[0017] The front panel 16 may be coupled to the back panel 12 by way of right side panel 14. The other edge of right side wall 14 may be coupled with front panel 16 along a crease that can be folded. Front panel 16 may also include a second end panel 28. The connection between the second end panel 28 and the front panel 16 forms a crease along which the second end panel 28 may be folded. On the side opposite right side wall 14 there may be a left side wall 22 coupled to the front panel 16 along a crease that can be folded. The other side of left side wall 22 is coupled with a retainer panel 40 along a crease that can be folded. The front panel 16 may include a front panel cut out 18 that may expose a substantial portion of the front panel 16 to the interior chamber. The front panel cut out 18 allows direct access to the blister pack or other tray that is contained by the package. However, this direct access is not designed to allow the user to retrieve the contents of the blister pack or tray. Rather, the front panel cut out 18 is designed to let the user urge the blister pack or tray out of the open end of the container. The open end of the container may be along the top of the product container in place of flaps 38 and 36, in place of the left side wall 22, in place of right side wall 14, or in place of end panels 26 and 28. It is to be understood that manufacturing preferences will dictate which location for the opening is preferred and the package blank may be adjusted to accommodate that preference. For example to close the top of the container flap 36 may need to be moved to front panel 16.

[0018] The front panel 16 may include another flap termed the retaining and indexing flap 20. This retaining and indexing flap 20 is shown only in Figure 1, and is described in detail in International Application PCT/US11/28945 (published as WO2011116259). As shown in Figure 1, the retaining and indexing flap 20 may be attached to the top edge of the front panel cutout 18 closest to the open end of the container. If the open end of the container is in another location retaining flap 20 may be oriented so that it lays in that orientation parallel to the opening. Its function will be described more fully below. A locking tab insert 17 may be cut out of the front panel 16 along the crease/edge that is shared with the right side wall 14. The locking tab insert 17 is designed to accept a locking tab 33 located on the container cover section. Locking tab insert 17 may be positioned on back panel 12 and/or on top or bottom end panels 36 (if oriented off of front panel 16), 38, 26 and/or 28. The locking tab insert 17 may for example be a slot or slit to receive the locking tab. The locking tab insert 17 may be formed along the fold line between two panels, for example along fold line 21 between front panel 16 and right side wall 14, or along the fold line 15 between back panel 12 and right side wall 14.

[0019] The container cover section may be comprised of first and second cover panels 32, 34. It should be noted that a single cover panel could be employed. Use of a second cover panel adds to the strength and durability of the overall structure but is not functionally necessary. The first and second cover panels 32, 34 may share a common edge that is creased. A locking tab 33 may be formed along this crease by cutting out a portion of the first cover panel 32. This cut out portion forms the locking tab 33. Locking tab 33 may be cut long enough to wrap around and connect with a locking tab insert 17 located on the back of panel 12. Locking tab 33 may be formed in the blank such that when the cover is folded over the top of front panel 16, the locking tab 33 may be hingedly folded approximately perpendicular to second cover panel 34, and connects with locking tab insert 17 (for example, fitting into a slot) located on the top end panel 38 or 36 (if oriented off of front panel 16) or the back of panel 12.

[0020] The second cover panel 34 further may include a second closure flap 36 along its top edge. The second closure flap 36 may be coupled to the top edge of the second cover panel along a perforated crease. The entire container cover section may be coupled to the container section by a cover side wall 30 that may be disposed between one edge of the second cover panel and one edge of the back panel, each of these edges being creased.

[0021] It should be noted that the order of the folds about to be described may not necessarily be the only order that the paperboard blank can be folded to achieve the resulting container.

[0022] As shown on Figure 2, to form the cover section, the first cover panel 32 may be folded atop the second cover panel 34 along their shared crease 35 and may optionally be sealed together with glue or other sealing means.

[0023] To form the container section, the front panel 16 may be folded atop the back panel 12 along the creases 21, 15 that separate the right side wall 14 from both the front panel 16 and the back panel 12 such that the front panel 16 and the back panel 12 may be separated by a distance that corresponds to the width of right side wall 14 and left side wall 22. The left side wall may be folded downward along its crease 25 with the front panel while the retainer panel 40 may be folded inward along its crease 27 with the left side wall 22. The retainer panel 40 may now be in a position that allows it to be rested upon (and glued or partially glued to) the back panel 12 thereby forming the basic structure of the container. The retainer panel may include a longitudinal retainer slot 49 oriented in the direction between the ends of

the package, the retainer slot 49 being bounded by at least one rail 42. The retainer slot may extend less than the full distance between the ends of the package. The retainer slot may be oriented generally perpendicular to at least one end of the package. The rail 42 may be a portion of the retainer panel that is not glued to back panel 12, so that anchor wing 56 (described below) may slide between the rail 42 and the back panel 12.

[0024] Now that the front, back and sides have been assembled, the blister pack or tray 50 may be inserted into the package. The blister pack or tray 50 may include an anchor 52 attached to or formed in the blister pack or tray 50, for example as a cutout portion hingedly attached to the blister pack or tray 50. The anchor 52 for example may have the form of a “T” and may have one or more anchor wings 56. As shown in Figure 3, tray 50 may be inserted along the direction B1 from the first end of the container (e.g. where the end flaps 26, 28 are located).

[0025] As the tray 50 is further inserted into the package according to movement B2, as shown in Figure 4, the anchor wings 56 may be slid under the lead-in ramps 45 to occupy positions under rails 42 of the retainer panel 40. The neck 54/58 of the anchor 52 may thus slide forward in the retainer slot 49 formed in the retainer panel 40. The tray 50 may thus be completely received into the package 10.

[0026] As seen in Figures 1 and 2, lead-in ramps 45 may be hingedly attached to the retainer panel 40 along crease lines 46. Rail 42 may be partially defined by crease or score lines 43 and rail 42 may thereby be slightly raised above retainer panel peripheral areas 44. Alternately the crease or score lines 43 may be omitted and rail 42 may be approximately in the same plane as retainer panel peripheral areas 44.

[0027] As shown in Figure 5A, tray 50 may be moved further into the package according to movement B3, and out the opposing end of the package, until the anchor wings 56 reach the limit of travel afforded along retainer slot 49. At this point the tray 50 cannot move further out of the package, but can be moved back into the package.

[0028] As the blister pack is inserted, the retaining and indexing flap 20 (if used, see Figure 1) may be folded along its crease 43 with the top edge of the front panel cut out 18 to protrude into the interior chamber, and may engage each row of blisters of a blister pack. Once fully inserted, the retaining and indexing flap 20 may help retain the blister pack within the interior chamber of the container. Retaining indexing flap 20 is optional. If the opening of the inner

chamber of the container is toward the outer spine (that is, the juncture between the container body and the cover panel(s), the outer spine 30 may retain the inner blister card or tray within the container without the retaining flap 20. In addition a locking tab 33 may serve as a retention means for the inner blister card or tray by folding over the opening of the container such that the blister card or tray may not be removed until locking tab 33 is removed from the locking tab insert 17.

[0029] Now that the blister card has been inserted into the container, the ends of the container can be formed. See Figure 5B. First end panel 26 may folded along its shared crease 29 with back panel 12 while second end panel 28 may folded along its shared crease 31 with front panel 16. The end panels 26, 28 overlap one another and can be glued (or otherwise fastened) together to form a closed end for the container.

[0030] The container cover section may be folded atop the front panel 16 along the creases 33A, 37 that couple the cover side wall 30 to the back panel 12. The locking tab 33 may be aligned to enter the locking tab insert 17 to maintain the entire package in a closed position. Prior to initial use the open end of the container may be sealed by means of the first and second closure flaps 38, 36. First closure flap 38 shares a perforated crease 39 with the top edge of back panel 12. Second closure flap 36 may share a perforated crease 41 with the top edge of second cover panel 34. Alternatively second closure flap 36 may extend off of front panel 16. Each of the closure flaps 38, 36 may be folded over one another and glued (or otherwise fastened) together. To initially access the contents in this container embodiment (blister pack or other tray apparatus) of the container, a user may first remove the closure flaps 38, 36. This is done by gripping one end of the closure flaps 38, 36 and tearing along the perforated creases 39, 41 to completely remove the closure flaps 38, 36 leaving an open end to the container. Even though there may be an open end to the container after removal of the closure flaps 38, 36 the blister pack will not fall out because of friction between the anchor wings 56 and rails 42 of the retainer panel 40, which prevents unwanted outward movement of the blister pack, and because of the anchor 52 cannot pass beyond the end of the retainer slot 49. If an optional retaining and indexing flap 20 is used, this may also act to block the path of the blister pack.

[0031] Figure 6 shows a detail view of the connection between the tray 50 and its anchor 52 with the retainer panel 40. Anchor 52 has wings 56 that slide under the rails 42 while the anchor neck 54 slides along in retainer slot 49. The fit between the anchor 52 and retainer

slot 49 may be adjusted according to manufacturing preference. For example a tighter fit may be achieved by making the neck 54 nearly as wide as the retainer slot 49, making wing tabs 56 wider or longer, and/or by shortening the height of neck 58. A looser fit may be achieved by making neck 54 narrower relative to the width of retainer slot 49, making wings 56 narrower or shorter, and/or by lengthening the height of neck 58 larger. The retainer slot 49 may be made narrower toward the open end of the container, to provide progressively more friction as the tray 50 is moved toward its fullest outward extent.

[0032] As shown in Figure 7, the user must overcome the friction between the anchor 52 and retainer panel 40 (and /or the retaining and indexing flap 20 if used) to remove the blister pack 50 from the assembled container 60. This is done by opening the cover section to expose the front panel cut out 18. The user can then push against the blister pack 50 using, for instance, a thumb to urge it out of the open end of assembled container 60. Each row of blister pack 50 may encounter the optional retaining and indexing flap 20 and cause it to fold up along its crease 43 until that row clears the retaining and indexing flap 20 and the leading edge of blister pack 50 emerges from the open end of assembled container 60.

[0033] To replace the blister pack 50 in the assembled container 60, the user simply reverses the process and pushes the blister pack 50 back into the interior chamber. The optional retaining and indexing flap 20 will slide up over each row of blisters until the blister pack 50 is fully inserted.

[0034] This disclosure should not be read as being limited only to the foregoing examples or only to the designated preferred embodiments.

Claims

1. A packaging system comprising:

a plurality of panels interconnected to form a sleeve structure, an internal retainer panel disposed within the sleeve structure, and at least one end panel closing at least one of opposed ends of the sleeve structure, wherein the sleeve structure defines an interior chamber for receiving and securing a receptacle,

wherein the retainer panel has a retainer slot defined therein for guiding a receptacle,

wherein the retainer slot extends generally along a sleeve axis of the sleeve structure,

wherein the retainer slot has a length along the sleeve axis, the length being less than a distance between the opposed ends of the sleeve structure.

2. The packaging system of claim 1, wherein the plurality of panels include a front panel which has a cutout area exposing the interior chamber.

3. The packaging system of claim 2, wherein the front panel is provided with a retaining flap hinged thereto along an edge of the cutout area, the retaining flap extending into the interior chamber, the edge of the cutout area being generally perpendicular to the sleeve axis.

4. The packaging system of claim 2, further comprising at least one cover panel hinged to the sleeve structure for covering the cutout area.

5. The packaging system of claim 1, further comprising a receptacle for receiving at least one article, the receptacle being received in the sleeve structure and connected to the retainer panel for sliding movement along the sleeve axis.

6. The packaging system of claim 5, wherein the receptacle is a tray-like member having at least one cavity for receiving at least one article.

7. The packaging system of claim 6, wherein the tray-like member is a blister pack having at least one row of raised blisters.

8. The packaging system of claim 5, wherein the receptacle includes an anchor slidably received in the retainer slot so that the receptacle is slidingly movable along the sleeve axis.
9. The packaging system of claim 8, wherein the anchor comprises at least one anchor wing disposed between the retainer panel and one of the plurality of panels.
10. The packaging system of claim 4, further comprising a locking tab and a locking tab insert for securing the at least one cover panel to the sleeve structure.
11. The packaging system of claim 10, wherein the locking tab insert is located on one of the plurality of panels, and the locking tab is located on the at least one cover panel.
12. The packaging system of claim 10, wherein the locking tab is located on one of the plurality of panels, and the locking tab insert is located on the at least one cover panel.
13. The packaging system of claim 10, wherein the plurality of panels include a back panel, and the locking tab insert is on the back panel.
14. The packaging system of claim 10, wherein the locking tab is connected to, and extends from, the at least one cover panel.
15. A blank for forming a packaging system comprising:
 - a plurality of panels hinged together to form a sleeve structure when the blank is erected into a packaging system, the plurality of panels including a front panel having a cutout area and a back panel to be disposed at a position opposed to the front panel when the sleeve structure is formed;
 - a retainer panel hinged to one of the plurality of panels to be disposed in flat face contacting arrangement with an inside surface of the back panel when the sleeve structure is formed; and
 - at least one first end panel hinged to at least one of the plurality of panels along a fold line to provide a first end closure for closing one of opposed ends of the sleeve structure,wherein the retainer panel has a retainer slot defined therein,

wherein the retainer slot extends generally perpendicularly to the fold line,

wherein the retainer slot has a length less than a length of either of the front and back panels.

16. The blank of claim 15 further comprising a retaining flap hinged to the front panel along an edge of the cutout area, the edge being disposed generally perpendicularly to the retainer slot.

17. The blank of claim 15, further comprising:

at least one cover panel; and

first and second end closure panels for closing the other of the opposed ends of the sleeve structure,

the first closure flap being hinged to one of the plurality of panels along a first severance line; and

the second closure flap being hinged to the at least one cover panel along a second severance line.

18. The blank of claim 17, further comprising:

a locking tab located on the at least one cover panel; and

a locking tab insert located on the front panel.

19. The blank of claim 17, wherein the at least one cover panel comprises first and second cover panels hinged together along a fold line.

20. The blank of claim 15, wherein the retainer slot has an inlet end which opens to a rear end edge of the retainer panel, the rear end edge being disposed generally perpendicularly to the retainer slot, and wherein the retainer panel is provided with a pair of lead-in ramp tabs hinged to the rear end edge on opposite sides of the inlet end.

FIGURE 2

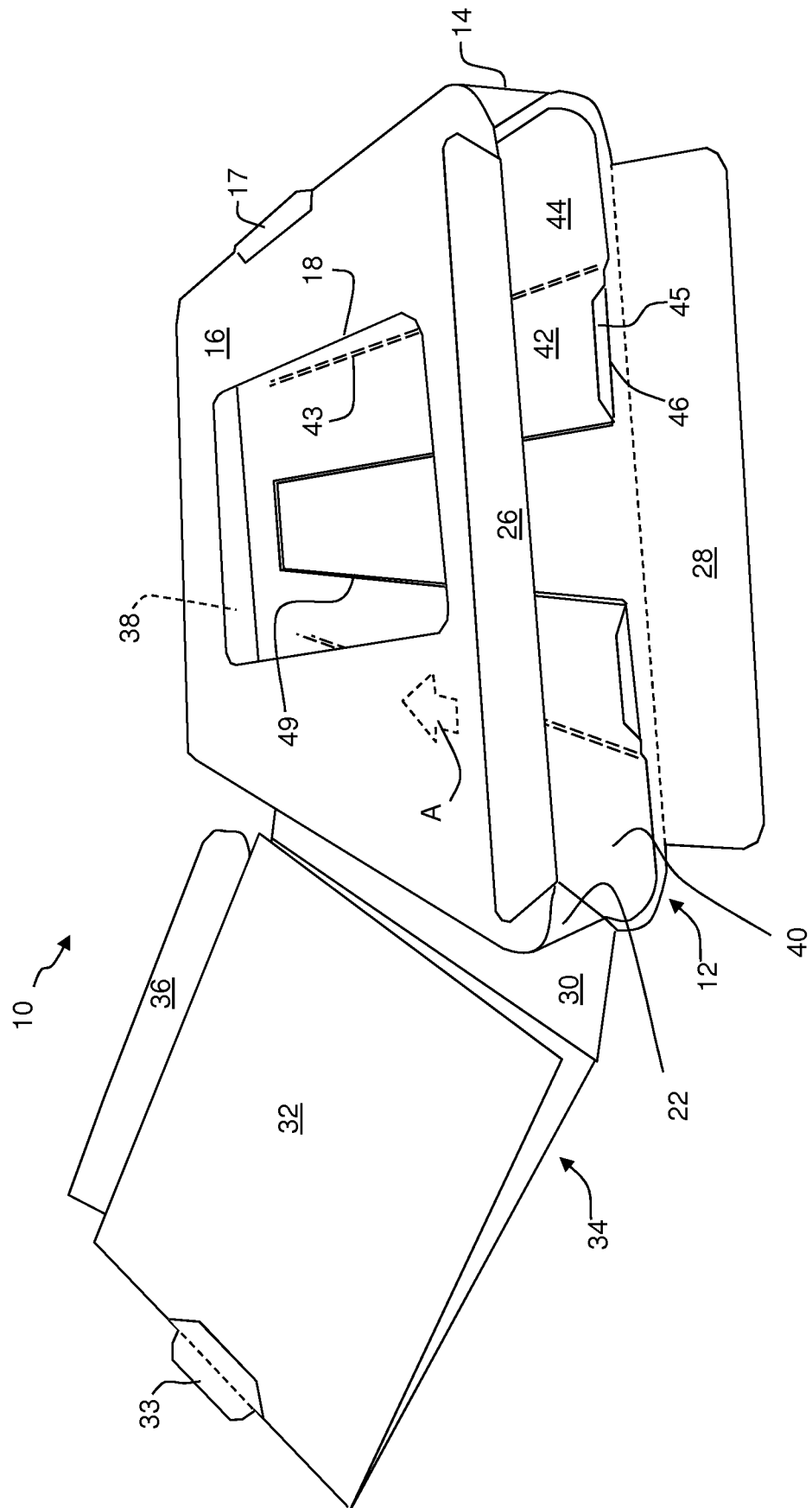


FIGURE 3

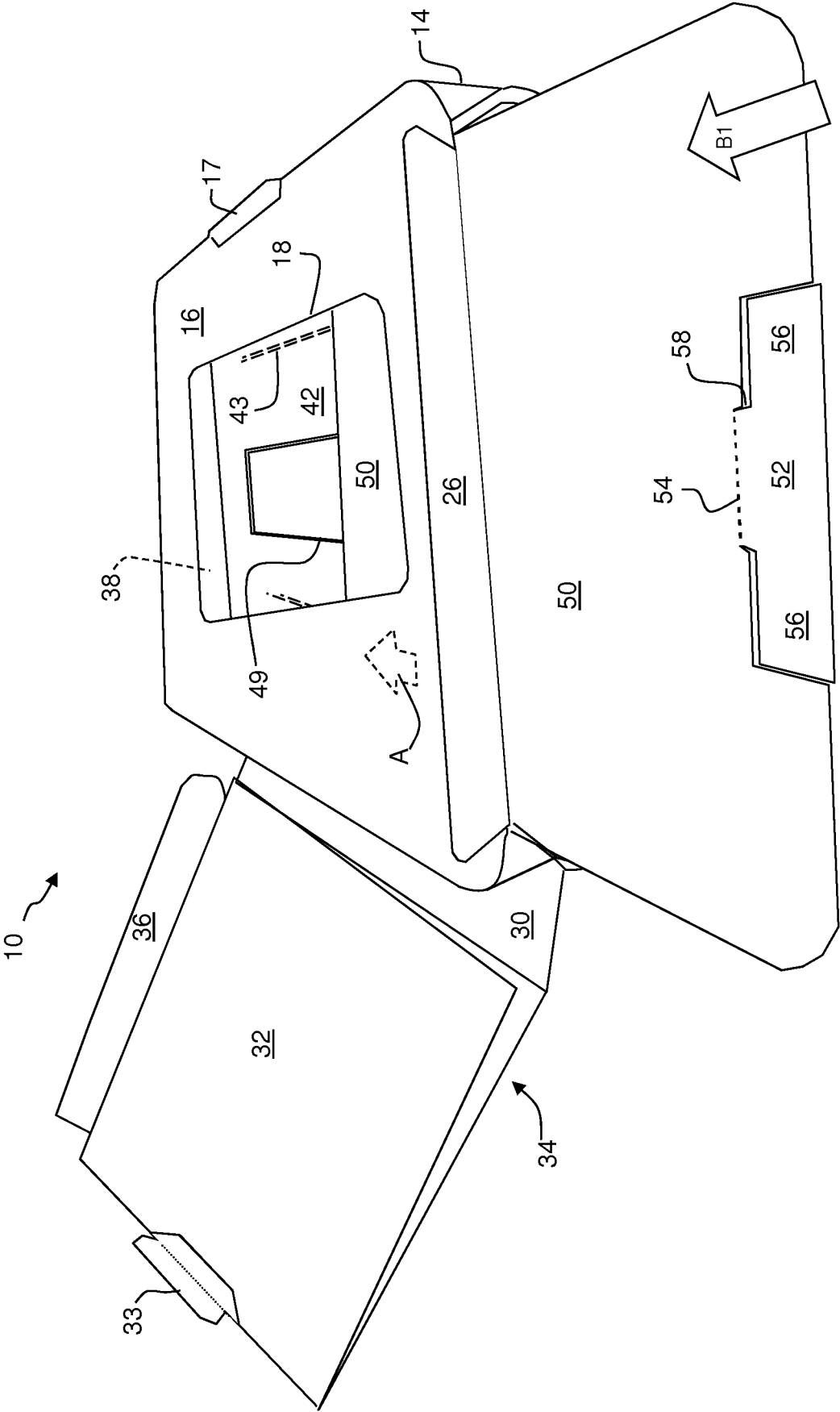


FIGURE 4

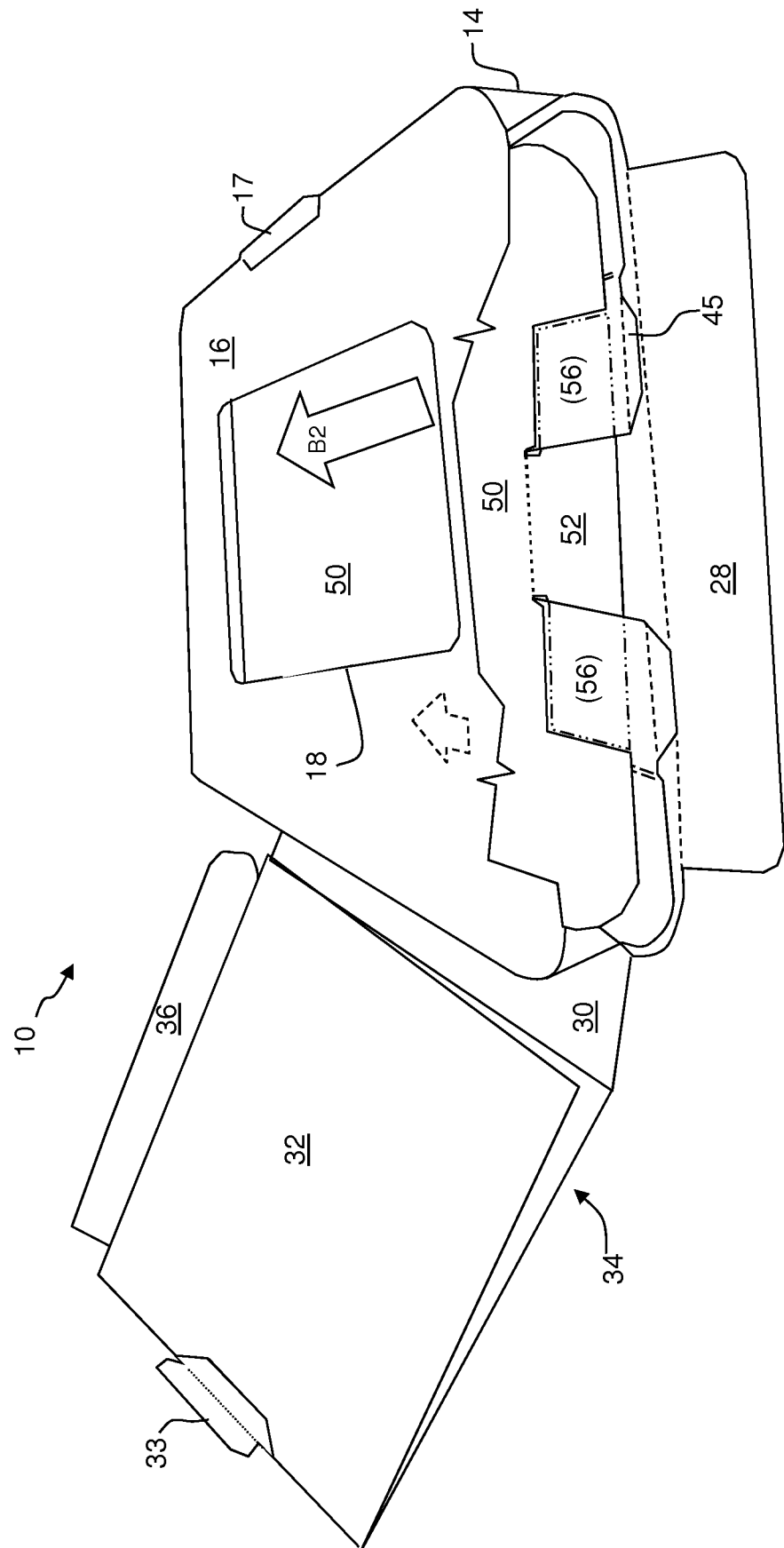


FIGURE 5A

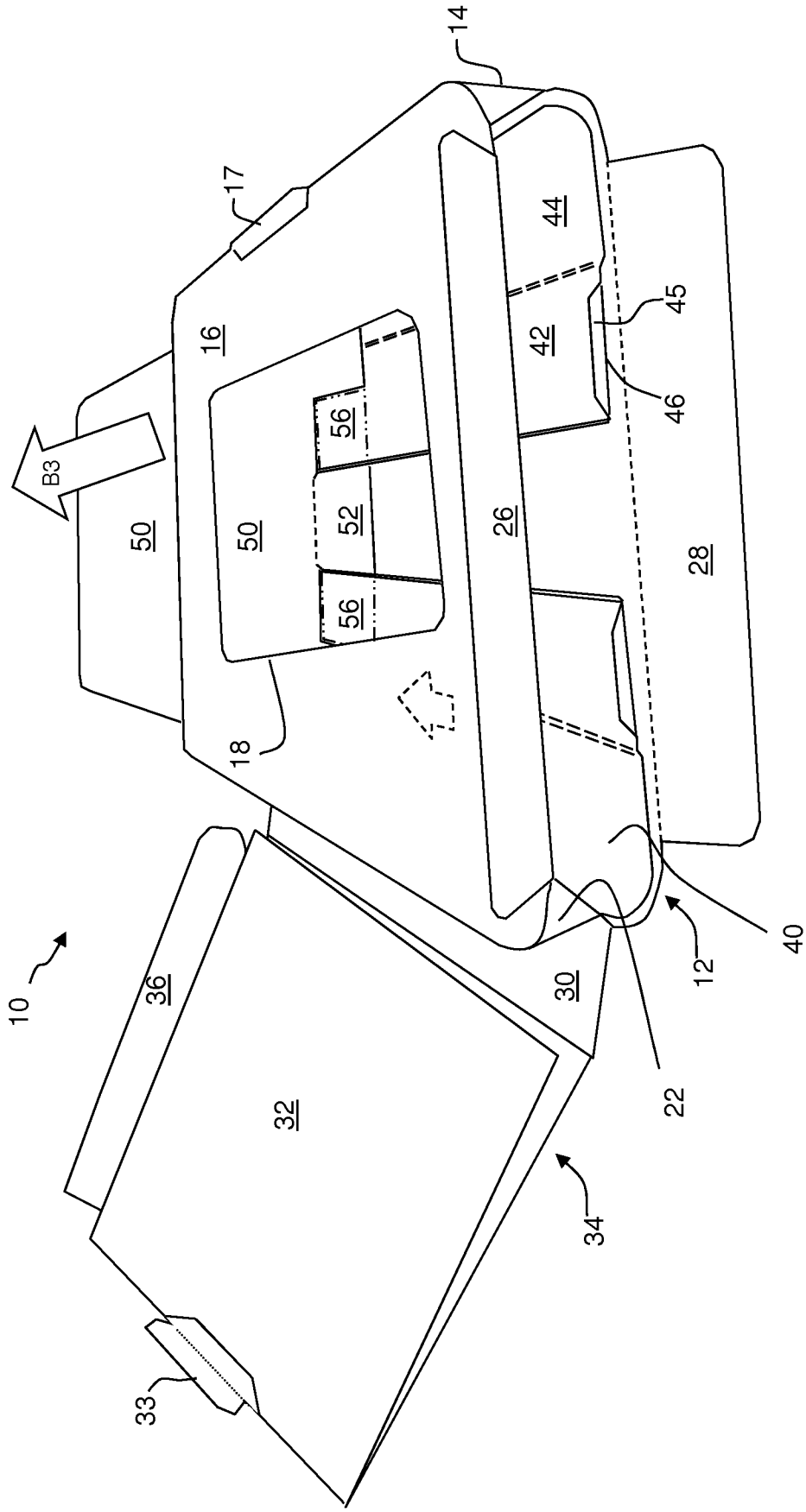


FIGURE 5B

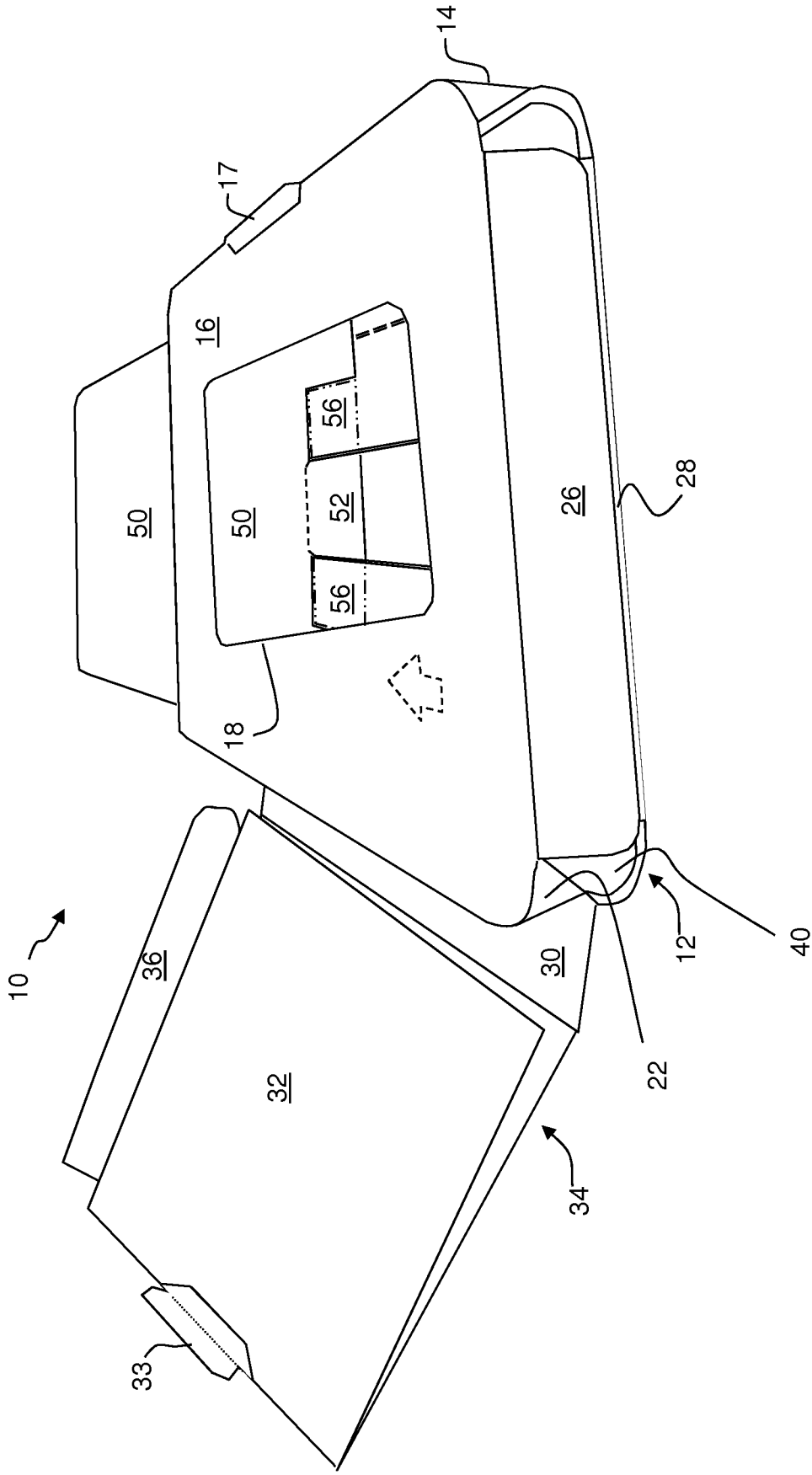


FIGURE 6

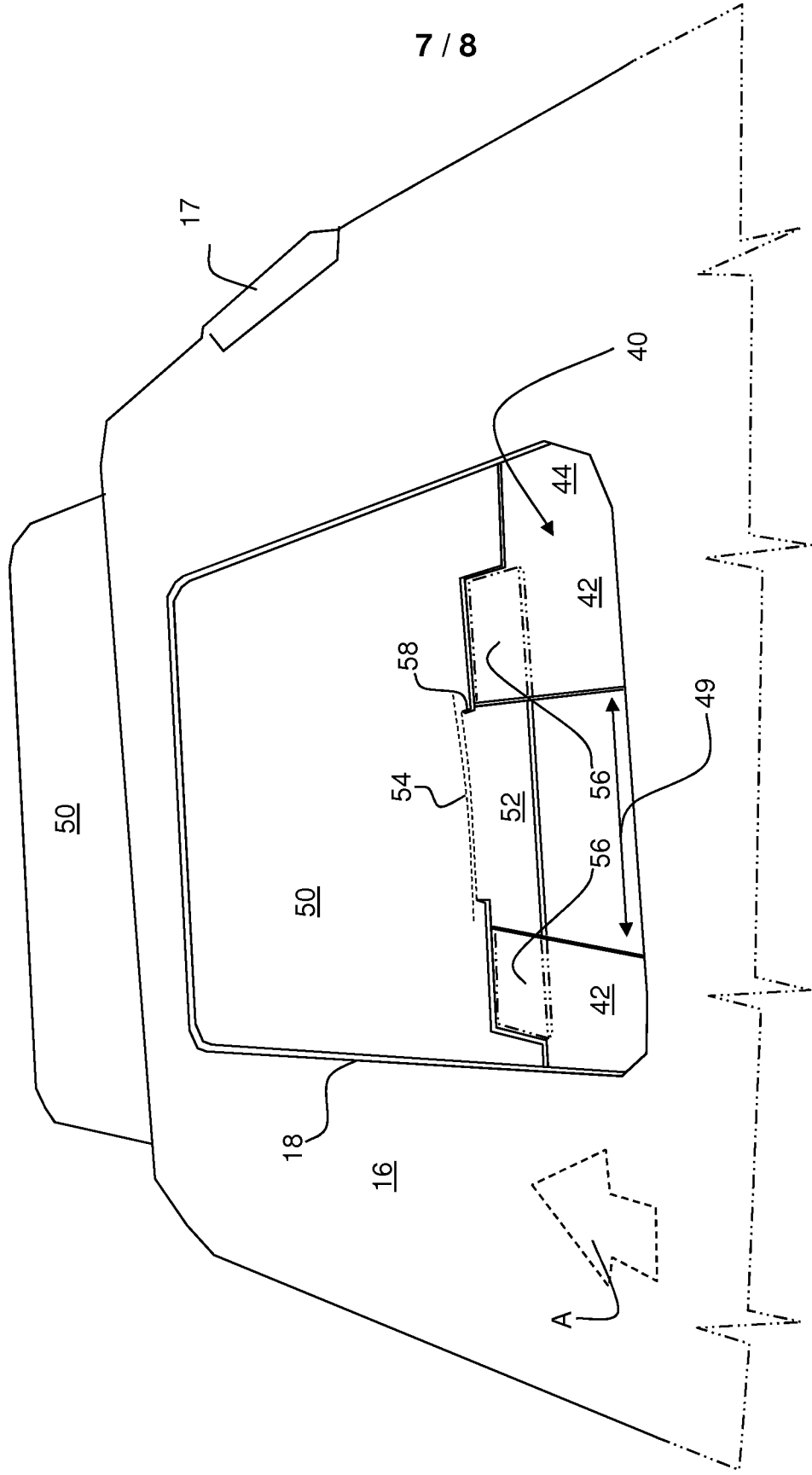
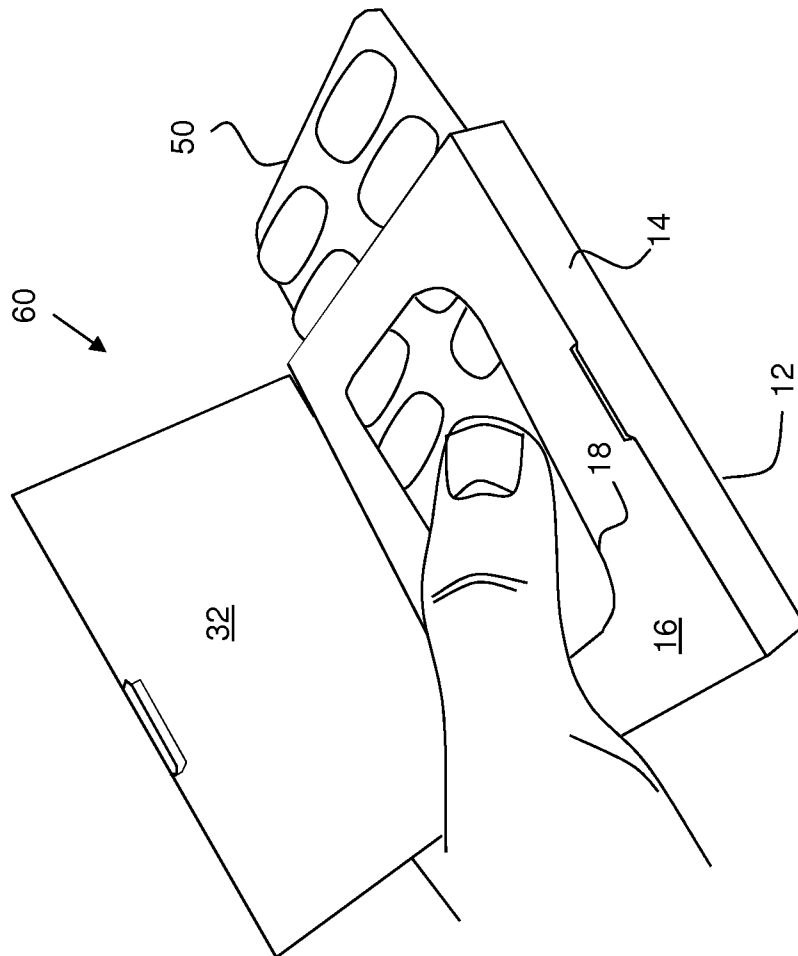


FIGURE 7



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 INV. B65D83/04
 ADD.

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

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
 B65D

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

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

EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	FR 712 623 A (NUYTS FRERES ETS) 6 October 1931 (1931-10-06) page 1, line 49 - line 57 page 2, line 14 - line 31; figures 4, 6 -----	1,15
A	WO 2011/116259 A1 (MEADWESTVACO CORP [US]; LOFTIN CALEB S [US]; BAILEY RYAN A [US]) 22 September 2011 (2011-09-22) cited in the application the whole document -----	1,15



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

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26/02/2013

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

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Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
FR 712623	A	06-10-1931	NONE	

WO 2011116259	A1	22-09-2011	NONE	
