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Description

Field of Invention

[0001] The present invention relates to an open top dispenser. In particular, the present invention relates to a dispenser that allows for easy loading and reloading of pads of repositionable notes of different sizes. The dispenser is particularly suited for dispensing repositionable notes in a z-stacked configuration.

Background

[0002] Repositionable paper notes are used widely today. Some notes are assembled in a z-stacked (also referred to as "fan fold") construction. In such a construction, the note, typically square, but can also be rectangular, or special die cut shaped, has opposing front and back surfaces. On the back surface, along an edge or region of the note is a stripe of repositionable adhesive. The front of the note may contain a release coating. The notes are stacked so that the adhesive stripe of each note is positioned on alternating ends of the pad of notes. Commercially available pads of repositionable notes are available from 3M Company under the Post-it® brand.

[0003] There are a wide variety of dispensers for pads of repositionable notes. Examples of commercially available dispensers include those from 3M Company, St. Paul, Minnesota, such as the Designer Series Pop-Up Notes Dispenser, DS440-VP or DS330-VA for 10,16 by 10,16 cm or 7,62 by 7,62 cm (4 by 4 inch or 3 by 3 inch) notes respectively, the Professional Design Pop-Up Notes Dispenser, PRO440-VP or PRO330 for 10,16 by 10,16 cm or 7,62 by 7,62 cm (4 by 4 inch or 3 by 3 inch) notes respectively. 3M also offers a Professional Design Pop-Up Dispenser PRO331-RB for 7,62 by 7,62 cm (3 by 3 inch)note with a pen holder where the dispenser is mountable on a vertical surface.

[0004] These dispensers offer attractive designs and are functional.

[0005] There is a continuing need for different dispensers for the market place.


Summary

[0007] In one aspect, the invention pertains to a dispenser having a primary cavity having first and second sides and an open end and a closed end, the open end allowing for the insertion and the removal of a pad of notes. The dispenser further comprises a base defining the closed end of the dispenser; front and rear portions, each portion having first and second ends and opposing inside and outside surfaces, the front and rear portions disposed on the base such that the second end of each portion is proximate to the base, the front portion comprises a slot extending from the first end to the second end; and a biasing mechanism disposed proximate the rear portion.

[0008] An advantage of the present invention is that it provides the user with the versatility of using differently sized pads of repositionable notes. In one exemplary application, the dispenser is mounted on a vertical surface and has a cavity for holding writing instruments providing the user with added convenience.

[0009] Most commercially available dispensers require two motions or steps to load a pad of repositionable notes, such as, e.g., one motion to open a cover and a second motion to load the pad. Alternatively, one motion is used to depress a plunger in the dispenser and another motion is used to slide in the pad. One advantage of present invention is that it allows the loading of the pad in one motion, simply by sliding the pad into the opening of the dispenser. The sliding action simultaneously depresses a plate on the biasing mechanism and loads the pad, as further explained in detail below.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0010] The invention can be better described with reference to the following drawings, wherein:

- Figure 1 is a perspective view of one exemplary embodiment of the present invention;
- Figure 2 is a top plan view of the embodiment of Figure 1;
- Figure 3 is a front plan view of the embodiment of Figure 1;
- Figure 4 is a bottom plan view of the embodiment of Figure 1;
- Figure 5 is a partial fragmented view of an exemplary biasing mechanism for use with an embodiment of the present invention;
- Figure 6a is a side cross sectional view of the embodiment of Figure 2 taken along line 6a—6a;
- Figure 6b is a side cross sectional view of the embodiment of Figure 6a loaded with a pad of notes;
- Figure 7 is a perspective view of the embodiment of Figure 1 loaded with a pad of notes and utensils; and
- Figure 8 is a partial fragmented view of another exemplary biasing mechanism for use with an embodiment of the present invention; and
- Figure 9 is a top plan view of another exemplary embodiment of the invention.

[0011] These figures are idealized, are not drawn to scale, and are intended merely for illustrative purposes.

Detailed Description

[0012] Figure 1 shows a perspective view of an exemplary dispenser 1 having base 10, front portion 20 and rear portion 30 together forming primary cavity 12 having first side 50a and second side 50b. The front portion has first edge 23 defining the open end of the dispenser, sec-
ond edge 24 and opposing inside surface (not shown) and outside surface 21. Similarly, the rear portion has first edge 33 defining the open end of the dispenser, second edge 34, and opposing inside surface 32 and outside surface 31. The front portion includes first front portion 20a and second front portion 20b divided by slot 28. Optionally, the first and second front portion includes aperture 28a and 28b respectively. The slot extends from first edge 23 to second edge 24. The front and rear portions are disposed on the base such that the second edge of each portion 24, 34 respectively lie proximate to the base thereby defining the closed end of the dispenser. Proximate to the first side of the dispenser lies internal wall 13 extending from rear portion. The presence of the internal wall forms secondary cavity 14.

[0013] In this particular embodiment, the front and rear portions are separate components joined together at side seams 50a and 50b. In another exemplary embodiment, the front and rear portions and the base are formed as an integral unit. In yet another exemplary embodiment, the front and rear portions can be made with translucent materials and can further include indicia and/or graphics. Figure 1 also shows exemplary biasing mechanism 40 that can be used in the present invention. As further described below, the biasing mechanism biases a pad of notes (not shown) against the inner surface of front portion 20.

[0014] Figure 2, 5, 6a and 6b show various views of the dispenser of Figure 1 and particularly to biasing mechanism 40. The dispenser has a length dimension L and a depth dimension D. As can be seen in Figure 6a, when the dispenser is not loaded with a pad of repositionable notes, biasing mechanism extends from inside surface 32 of rear portion 30 to inside surface 22 of front portion 20 to bias a pad of repositionable notes against the inside surface of the front portion. Figure 5 better shows the biasing mechanism, which includes arms 42 having means for attaching the mechanism to the rear portion. One exemplary means for attaching the mechanism include pins 44 adapted for engagement with opening 35 in the rear portion. Extending from the arm is plate 46 having opposing mounting surface 46a and support surface 46b. Optionally, ribs 49 extend from the edge of plate 46. In one embodiment, the ribs are spaced to accommodate a specific size pad of repositionable notes, such as a pad of 3 inch by 3 inch notes. The ribs help control the shutting of the pad during dispensing. In another embodiment to control the shutting of the pad, in place of or in addition to ribs 49, the dispenser may further include a pair of guides disposed in the interior surface of the front portion spaced to accommodate a specific size pad of repositionable notes. Spring 48, disposed on inside surface 32 of the rear portion, supports and biases the plate towards the front portion. When pad 70 of repositionable notes is inserted into the dispenser, the plate moves from its first position of less compression (shown in Figure 6a) to its second position of more compression (shown in Figure 6b).

[0015] Disposed on outside surface 31 of the rear portion is means for attaching the dispenser to a surface, such as work surfaces, walls, refrigerator doors, and the like. This particular embodiment shows that one exemplary means for attaching the dispenser is a composite 60 having releasable adhesive strip 62 and hooking devices 64 that would mate with complementary hooking devices pre-attached to the surface. Exemplary releasable adhesive strip products are available from 3M Company under the Command™ brand of product lines.

[0016] Figure 8 shows an exploded view of another exemplary biasing mechanism that can be used for the dispenser of the present invention. The biasing mechanism includes plate 146 having mounting surface 146a and opposing support surface (not shown). A pair of pins 144 extend from opposing side edges 146c and 146d near top edge 146b of the plate. The pins are adapted for engagement with a pair of hooks 135 extending from the interior surface of the rear portion in the primary cavity. The pins and hooks together create a hinge. Torsion spring 148, having a central coil mounted on extension 149, has two arms, the first arm contacting inside surface 132 of rear portion 130 and a second arm contacting the support surface of the plate. The extension upon which the torsion spring is lies mounted between the hooks.

[0017] Figure 3 shows a front plan view of the dispenser of Figure 1 having a height dimension H. Aperture 28a in first front panel 20a and aperture 28b in second front panel 20b provides decorative features to the dispenser, especially where a multicolored pad of notes is used. For example, a pad of notes may contain alternating blue color and green color notes, so that as a blue note is being dispensed a green note can be seen. In this way, the dispenser provides a decorative design element to its environment. Slot 28, rounded at first edge 23, has a spacing dimension S1 at the first edge. Away from first edge 23, the walls of the slot become substantially straight and have a spacing dimension S2 approaching second end 24 of the front portion. As shown, S1 is greater than S2. The wider width of the slot near the first edge of the dispenser aids loading the pad of notes as the first note can be funneled into the slot at the wider radius opening. In yet another embodiment, the slot has a dimension where the spacing S1 is smaller than the spacing S2 so that there slot has a necked down region near top edge 23 of the front portion.

[0018] Figure 4 shows a bottom plan view of the dispenser of Figure 1 showing an exposed surface of the base 10 having an oblong shape with rounded sides. Other shapes can be used, such as, but not limited to, rectangles.

[0019] Figure 7 shows a perspective view of the embodiment of Figure 1 loaded with pad of repositionable notes 70 where first note 71 extends through the slot. Writing utensils 80 have been inserted into the secondary cavity. The pad of repositionable note has two opposing edges that contain stripes of repositionable adhesive on
a backside of each note. The pad is loaded into the dispenser such that the stripes of repositionable adhesive is substantially parallel to the slot.

[0020] Figure 9 shows a top plan view of another embodiment of the invention. For ease of understanding, the dispenser is shown without a biasing mechanism and without a means for attaching the dispenser to a surface.

First internal wall 113 lies proximate to first side 150a to form secondary cavity 114. The internal wall extends from the inside surface of the rear portion towards the front portion. In another embodiment, the internal wall extends from the inside surface of the rear portion to the inside surface of the front portion. In one application, the secondary cavity can be used to hold writing instruments, such as pens, markers, and the like. Optionally, second internal wall 115 can be added proximate second side 150b. Optionally, a pair of guides 125 extend from internal surface 122 of front portion 120. In one embodiment, the distance between the first and second internal walls accommodates a specific pad size, such as, e.g., a pad of 10.16 by 10.16 cm (4 inch by 4 inch) repositionable notes. In one embodiment, the front portions are translucent. In such a case, it may be desirable not to have internal walls 113 and 115 that extend from the rear portion to be in contact with front portions.

The dispenser can be made of a variety of materials including, plastics, metals, and woods. Suitable plastic materials include, but not limited to, ABS (acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene polymer) and polystyrene.

[0022] In one embodiment, the dispenser has a length L of 13.97 cm (5 1/2 inch), a height H of 9.2202 cm (3.63 inch), and a depth D of 2.54 cm (1 inch). The dispenser has a first internal wall disposed 2.54 cm (1 inch) from its first side (depicted schematically as L2 in Fig. 9) such that the primary cavity is 11.43 cm (4 1/2 inches). The dispenser has a second internal wall disposed 0.635 cm (1/4 inch) from its second side (depicted schematically as L3 in Fig. 9). The distance between the first and second internal walls is 10.4775 cm (4.125 inch). The dispenser also has a pair of guides, extending from the interior surface of the front portion, spaced 7.9375 cm (3.125 inches) apart. In this way, this particular dispenser is capable of holding two sizes of pads of repositionable notes, a 10.16 by 10.16 cm (4 inch by 4 inch) pad and a 7.62 by 7.62 cm (3 inch by 3 inch) pad.

Claims

1. A dispenser (1) for dispensing repositionable notes (71) from a pad (70) having a primary cavity (12) having first and second sides (50a, 50b) and an open end and a closed end, the open end allowing for the insertion and the removal of a pad (70) of notes (71), the dispenser (1) further comprising:

   a base (10) defining the closed end of the dispenser (1);

   a backside of each note. The pad is loaded into the dispenser such that the stripes of repositionable adhesive is substantially parallel to the slot.

2. The dispenser (1) of claims 1 wherein the biasing mechanism (40) lies between the internal surfaces of the dispenser (10) of front and rear portions (20, 30), each portion having first and second ends and opposing inside and outside surfaces (32, 31), the front and rear portions disposed on the base (10) such that the second end of each portion is proximate to the base (10), the front portion comprising a slot (28) extending from the first end of the front portion (20) to the second end of the front portion (20) proximate the base (10), the slot (28) being wider near the first end than near the second end and the slot allowing for removal of notes (71) from the primary cavity (12), and a biasing mechanism (40) disposed proximate the rear portion (30).

3. The dispenser (1) of claim 1, further comprising first an internal wall (13) proximate to the first side of the primary cavity forming a secondary cavity (14) and a second internal wall proximate to the second side of the primary cavity (12) extending from the inside surface of the rear portion (30).

4. The dispenser (1) of claim 3, wherein the first portion further comprises a pair of guides (49) extending off its internal surface, the distance between the guides being smaller than the distance between first and second internal walls.

5. The dispenser (1) of claim 1, wherein the biasing mechanism comprises:

   an arm (42) having means (44) for attaching the mechanism;
   a plate (46) extending from the arm, the plate having opposing side edges and opposing mounting and supporting surfaces;
   a spring (48) disposed on the inside surface of the rear portion (30), the spring in communication with the supporting surface of the plate and biasing the plate towards the inside surface of the front portion (20).

6. The dispenser (1) of claim 1, wherein the biasing mechanism (40) comprises a plate having opposing side edges, a top edge, and opposing mounting surface and support surfaces;

   a hinge extending from the interior surface of the rear portion (30);
   a pin (146) extending from the side edges of the plate proximate to its top edge, the pin in communication with the hinge;
   a torsion spring (148) mounted on an extension disposed proximate to the hinge, the torsion spring having two arms, the first arm contacting the interior sur-
face (132) of the rear portion (130), the second arm contacting the support surface of the plate.

7. The dispenser (1) of claim 1, wherein the rear portion (30) comprises means for attaching the dispenser (1) to a surface.

8. The dispenser (1) of claim 1, wherein the at least one of the front portion (20) and rear portion (30) is translucent.

Patentansprüche

1. Spender (1) zum Spenden mehrmals verwendbarer Haftnotizzettel (71) von einem Block (70), der eine Hauptkammer (12) aufweist, die erste und zweite Seiten (50a, 50b) und ein offenes Ende und ein geschlossenes Ende aufweist, wobei das offene Ende das Einsetzen und das Entfernen eines Blocks (70) von Notizzetteln (71) ermöglicht, wobei der Spender (1) ferner Folgendes aufweist:
   einen Boden (10), der das geschlossene Ende des Spenders (1) definiert;
   vordere und hintere Abschnitte (20, 30), wobei jeder Abschnitt erste und zweite Enden und gegenüberliegende Innen- und Außenflächen (32, 31) aufweist, wobei die vorderen und hinteren Abschnitte derart auf dem Boden (10) angeordnet sind, dass das zweite Ende jedes Abschnitts dem Boden (10) nahegelegen ist, wobei der vordere Abschnitt einen Schlitz (28) aufweist, der sich vom ersten Ende des vorderen Abschnitts (20) zum zweiten Ende des vorderen Abschnitts (20) erstreckt, das dem Boden (10) nahegelegen ist, wobei der Schlit (28) nahe dem ersten Ende breiter als nahe dem zweiten Ende ist und der Schlit das Entfernen von Notizzetteln (71) aus der Hauptkammer (12) ermöglicht, und
einen Vorspannmechanismus (40), der dem hinteren Abschnitt (30) nahegelegen angeordnet ist.

2. Spender (1) nach Anspruch 1, wobei der Vorspannmechanismus (40) zwischen den Innenflächen der vorderen und hinteren Abschnitte (20, 30) liegt.

3. Spender (1) nach Anspruch 1, der ferner eine erste Innenwand (13), die der ersten Seite der Hauptkammer nahegelegen ist, eine Nebenkammer (14) bildend, und eine zweite Innenwand aufweist, die der zweiten Seite der Hauptkammer (12) nahegelegen ist, sich von der Innenfläche des hinteren Abschnitts (30) erstreckend.

4. Spender (1) nach Anspruch 3, wobei der erste Abschnitt ferner ein Paar Führungen (49) aufweist, die sich von seiner inneren Fläche aus erstrecken, wobei der Abstand zwischen den Führungen kleiner als der Abstand zwischen ersten und zweiten Innenwänden ist.

5. Spender (1) nach Anspruch 1, wobei der Vorspannmechanismus Folgendes aufweist:
   einen Arm (42), der Mittel (44) zum Anbringen des Mechanismus aufweist;
   eine Platte (46), die sich vom Arm erstreckt, wobei die Platte gegenüberliegende Seitenränder und gegenüberliegende Befestigungs- und Stützflächen aufweist;
   eine Feder (48), die auf der Innenfläche des hinteren Abschnitts (30) angeordnet ist, wobei die Feder mit der Stützfläche der Platte in Berührung steht und die Platte auf die Innenfläche des vorderen Abschnitts (20) zu vorspannt.

6. Spender (1) nach Anspruch 1, wobei der Vorspannmechanismus (40) eine Platte aufweist, die gegenüberliegende Seitenränder, einen oberen Rand und gegenüberliegende Befestigungsflächen und Stützflächen aufweist;
   wobei ein Scharnier sich von der inneren Fläche des hinteren Abschnitts (30) erstreckt;
   wobei ein Stift (146) sich von den Seitenrändern der Platte ihrem oberen Rand nahegelegen erstreckt, wobei der Stift in Kommunikation mit dem Scharnier ist;
   wobei eine Torsionsfeder (148) auf einem Ansatzstück befestigt ist, das dem Scharnier nahegelegen ist, wobei die Torsionsfeder zwei Arme aufweist, wobei der erste Arm die innere Fläche (132) des hinteren Abschnitts (130) berührt, wobei der zweite Arm die Stützfläche der Platte berührt.

7. Spender (1) nach Anspruch 1, wobei der hintere Abschnitt (30) Mittel zum Anbringen des Spenders (1) an einer Fläche aufweist.

8. Spender (1) nach Anspruch 1, wobei der vordere Abschnitt (20) und/oder der hintere Abschnitt (30) transluzent sind.

Revendications

1. Distributeur (1) pour distribuer des feuillets reposant sur un bloc-notes (70) ayant une cavité primaire (12) ayant des premier et deuxième côtés (50a, 50b) et une extrémité ouverte et une extrémité fermée, l’extrémité ouverte permettant l’insertion et le retrait d’un bloc-notes (70) contenant des feuillets (71), le distributeur (1) comprenant en outre :
une base (10) définissant l’extrémité fermée du distributeur (1) ; des portions avant et arrière (20, 30), chaque portion ayant des première et deuxième extrémités et des surfaces intérieure et extérieure opposées (32, 31), les portions avant et arrière étant disposées sur la base (10) de telle sorte que la deuxième extrémité de chaque portion soit proche de la base (10), la portion avant comprenant une fente (28) s’étendant depuis la première extrémité de la portion avant (20) jusqu’à la deuxième extrémité de la portion avant (20) proche de la base (10), la fente (28) étant plus large à proximité de la première extrémité qu’à proximité de la deuxième extrémité et la fente permettant le retrait de feuillets (71) de la cavité primaire (12), et un mécanisme de sollicitation (40) disposé à proximité de la portion arrière (30).

2. Distributeur (1) selon la revendication 1, dans lequel le mécanisme de sollicitation (40) se situe entre les surfaces intérieures des portions avant et arrière (20, 30).

3. Distributeur (1) selon la revendication 1, comprenant en outre une première paroi interne (13) à proximité du premier côté de la cavité primaire, formant une deuxième cavité (14) et une deuxième paroi interne à proximité du deuxième côté de la cavité primaire (12) s’étendant depuis la surface intérieure de la portion arrière (30).

4. Distributeur (1) selon la revendication 3, dans lequel la première portion comprend en outre une paire de guides (49) s’étendant à l’écart de sa surface interne, la distance entre les guides étant plus petite que la distance entre les première et deuxième parois internes.

5. Distributeur (1) selon la revendication 1, dans lequel le mécanisme de sollicitation comprend :

   un bras (42) ayant des moyens (44) pour attacher le mécanisme ;
   une plaque (46) s’étendant depuis le bras, la plaque ayant des bords latéraux opposés et des surfaces de montage et de support opposées ;
   un ressort (48) disposé sur la surface intérieure de la portion arrière (30), le ressort étant en contact avec la surface de support de la plaque et sollicitant la plaque vers la surface intérieure de la portion avant (20).

6. Distributeur (1) selon la revendication 1, dans lequel le mécanisme de sollicitation (40) comprend une plaque ayant des bords latéraux opposés, un bord supérieur, et une surface de montage et des surfaces de support opposées ;
   une charnière s’étendant depuis la surface intérieure de la portion arrière (30) ;
   une goupille (146) s’étendant depuis les bords latéraux de la plaque à proximité de son bord supérieur, la goupille étant en communication avec la charnière ;
   un ressort de torsion (148) monté sur une extension disposée à proximité de la charnière, le ressort de torsion ayant deux bras, le premier bras venant en contact avec la surface intérieure (132) de la portion arrière (130), le deuxième bras venant en contact avec la surface de support de la plaque.

7. Distributeur (1) selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la portion arrière (30) comprend un moyen pour attacher le distributeur (1) à une surface.

8. Distributeur (1) selon la revendication 1, dans lequel l’au moins une de la portion avant (20) et de la portion arrière (30) est translucide.
REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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Patent documents cited in the description

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