(19) Europäisches Patentamt
European Patent Office
Office européen des brevets

(11) Publication number : **0 587 315 A1**

(12) EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(21) Application number : **93306317.4**

(22) Date of filing : **10.08.93**

(51) Int. Cl.[5] : **B42D 5/02,** B42D 15/08, B65D 27/04

(30) Priority : **26.08.92 US 935423**

(43) Date of publication of application : **16.03.94 Bulletin 94/11**

(84) Designated Contracting States : **DE FR GB NL**

(71) Applicant : **MOORE BUSINESS FORMS, INC.**
300 Lang Boulevard
Grand Island New York 14072-1697 (US)

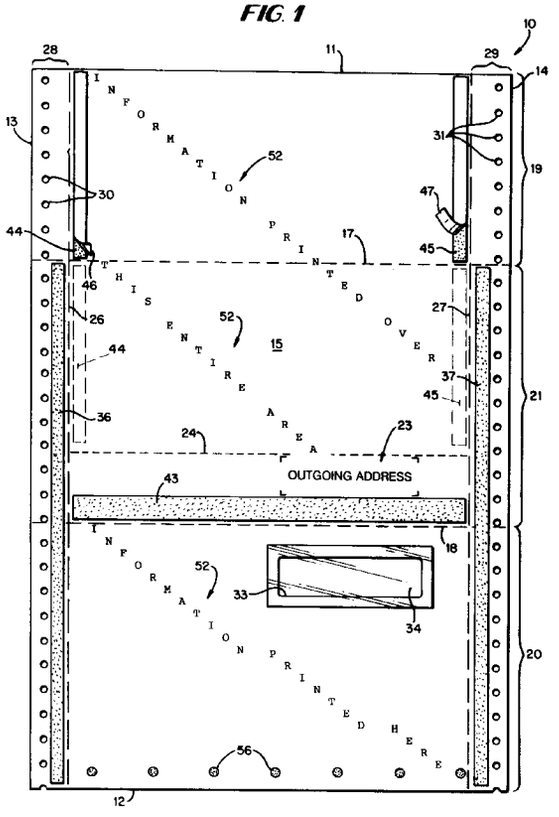
(72) Inventor : **Sauerwine, Dean N.**
337 Iroquois Street
Emmaus, Pennsylvania 18049 (US)

(74) Representative : **Spence, Anne et al**
Fry, Heath & Spence St. Georges House 6
Yattendon Road
Horley Surrey RH6 7BS (GB)

(54) Mailer and intermediate for constructing a mailer.

(57) An intermediate for a mailer type business form, and the mailer type business form constructed from the intermediate, provide a construction in which a minimum amount of paper can be utilized to provide the maximum amount of information, yet allow easy construction of a return envelope (Figure 5) from the original components of the mailer. The mailer constructed according to the invention is also thin. The intermediate has three panels (19, 20, 21) which are eccentrically C-folded with the outgoing address (23) visible through a cutout (33) (with transparent patch) in an outer panel (20). The return envelope is constructed by the recipient by removing release liner strips (46, 47) from pressure sensitive adhesive strips (44, 45) inside the mailer, forming the sides of the return envelope. The recipient of the return envelope can easily tell who the return envelope is from since the outgoing address (23) is provided on the inner portion of the flap (59) of the return envelope.

FIG. 1



EP 0 587 315 A1

BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Relatively recent United States Postal Service regulations have made it imperative that reusable mailer components do not have any of the outgoing address information (including bar coding) or outgoing postage thereon when they are used in the return configuration. According to the present invention, a reusable mailer meeting these requirements is provided that can be constructed in a simple and inexpensive manner from a single sheet of paper.

The mailer according to the present invention is also desirable in that it allows a great deal of information to be printed within the mailer for viewing by the recipient. Essentially one entire face of the sheet of paper which is used to form the mailer (which may be 9 1/2 by 14 inches, 9 1/2 by 17 inches, or 9 1/2 by 12 inches) may be printed with useful information, the return envelope construction provided by the mailer not interfering with the transmission of the desired information. Also, the mailer according to the present invention is advantageous in that it is easy. for the entity receiving the return envelope to know who it is from because the outgoing address for the mailer is printed on what becomes the inner portion of the flap of the return envelope.

The mailer according to the invention is constructed very simply by an eccentric C-fold, providing a very thin construction. Also, because of the location of the components the outgoing address -- which is viewed through a cut out (preferably with a transparent patch) from the outside of the mailer -- cannot be blocked by interior components.

According to one aspect of the present invention an intermediate for a mailer type business form is provided. The intermediate comprises the following elements: A sheet of paper having a rectangular configuration with first and second end, parallel edges; and third and fourth side, parallel edges; a first dimension between the end edges being greater than a second dimension, between the side edges; and having a first face and a second face. First and second fold lines parallel to the first and second edges, dividing the sheet into three panels, including a first panel of a first length adjacent the first edge, a second panel adjacent the second edge, and a third panel between the first and second panels, the second and third panels each having a second length, which is greater than the first length by at least the height of a complete outgoing address. Means defining first and second lines of weakness in each of the first, second, and third panels, the lines of weakness parallel to the third and fourth edges, and spaced a small distance therefrom. Outgoing address indicia printed on the first face of the third panel on a portion thereof adjacent, but spaced from, the second fold line, and wherein the first panel when folded about the first fold line is dimensioned so that it will not cover or obscure the outgoing address indicia. And means defining a cutout in the second panel adjacent, but spaced from, the second fold line, the cutout dimensioned and positioned so that when the second panel is folded about the second fold line the outgoing address indicia is visible through the cutout.

The intermediate further preferably comprises a strip of adhesive, such as rewettable adhesive for forming a return envelope disposed on the first face of the third panel between the outgoing address indicia and the second fold line. Also, there are dormant adhesive patterns requiring activation by the recipient of a mailer constructed from the intermediate disposed adjacent the first and second lines of weakness. Preferably, these dormant adhesive patterns comprise first and second strips of pressure sensitive adhesive adjacent the first and second lines of weakness, disposed on the first panel, and covered by release strips (that is, the first and second strips of adhesive are constructed from transfer tape). Also, the second fold line is preferably a line of weakness, and preferably a transparent patch covers the cutout.

Reply address indicia is printed on the second face of the first panel, indicating where the return envelope will be sent. Also, return address and postage indicating indicia are preferably printed on the second face of the second panel. Because of the utilization of the dormant strips of adhesive to form the return envelope, information desirably transmitted to the recipient of the mailer constructed from the intermediate is printed on the first face of each of the first, second, and third panels, substantially covering those panels.

According to another aspect of the present invention a mailer type business form is provided. The mailer comprises: First and second end, parallel edges. Third and fourth side, parallel edges. First, second, and third panels formed from an eccentric C-folded single sheet of paper, the second and third panels having outer faces and inner faces, and the first panel having first and second faces, and the first panel being sandwiched between the second and third panels, and leaving uncovered a portion of the inner face of the third panel adjacent the second end edge of the mailer. Outgoing address indicia printed on the uncovered portion of the inner face of the third panel. Means defining a cutout in the second panel overlying the outgoing address indicia so that the indicia is visible from the exterior of the second panel. And permanent adhesive means disposed along the side edges for holding the panels together.

The mailer further comprises lines of weakness formed in the panels parallel to and adjacent the side edges, the permanent adhesive means disposed between the lines of weakness and the side edges. Also, a first strip of dormant adhesive, such as rewettable adhesive, is disposed between the second end

edge of the mailer and the outgoing address indicia on the inner face of the third panel for sealing a return envelope constructed from the first and third panels. Also, second and third strips of dormant adhesive, such as pressure sensitive adhesive covered by release liner strips, are disposed on the first face of the first panel adjacent the lines of weakness, for constructing a return envelope.

The invention also contemplates a return envelope constructed from a reusable mailer. The return envelope comprises: A single sheet of paper having first and second parallel end edges, and third and fourth parallel side edges, and a fold line parallel to the end edges and defining the sheet into first and third panels, the dimension of the first panel between the fold line and the first edge being substantially less than the dimension of the third panel between the fold line and the second edge to define a return envelope flap in the third panel, and each panel having first and second faces. Reply address indicia printed on the second face of the first panel. Outgoing address indicia printed on the first face of the third panel, on the flap. A first strip of dormant adhesive disposed on the first face of the third panel, on the flap, adjacent the second end of the sheet of paper. And means for holding the first faces of the first and third panels together to define a return envelope.

The means for holding the first faces of the first and third panel together preferably comprise second and third strips of dormant adhesive, such as strips of pressure sensitive adhesive covered by release liner strips formed on the first face of the first panel. Also, indicia may be printed on the first faces of the first and third panels and covering substantially the entire first faces except for the flap.

It is a primary object of the present invention to provide an advantageous mailer which is reusable, a return envelope easily constructed therefrom, and an intermediate for making the mailer which utilizes only a single sheet of paper, yet conveys a maximum amount of information and meets USPS requirements. This and other objects of the invention will become clear from an inspection of the detailed description of the invention, and from the appended claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIGURE 1 is a top plan view of a first face of an intermediate for a mailer type business form according to the present invention;

FIGURE 2 is a top plan view of the second face of the intermediate of FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 3 is a side view of a mailer being constructed from the intermediate of FIGURES 1 and 2;

FIGURE 4 is a perspective view of the intermediate of FIGURES 1 and 2 being folded into a mailer; and

FIGURE 5 is a front view of an exemplary return envelope being constructed from the mailer of FIGURES 3 and 4 by the recipient.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

An intermediate for a mailer type business form according to the present invention is formed by a single sheet of paper 10, illustrated in FIGURES 1 and 2. The sheet of paper 10 may have a number of different sizes depending upon how much information it is desired to transmit. Typical sizes are 9 1/2 by 12 inches, 9 1/2 by 14 inches and 9 1/2 by 17 inches. For a 9 1/2 by 14 inch construction, the outgoing mailer has dimensions of about 5 1/8 by 8 3/4 inches, while the return envelope formed from the intermediate 10 has a size of about 3 3/4 inches by 8 3/4 inches.

The sheet of paper 10 has a rectangular configuration with first and second end edges 11, 12, respectively, which are parallel to each other, and third and fourth side edges 13, 14 which are also parallel to each other, but perpendicular to the edges 11, 12. Note that the dimension between the end edges 11, 12 (e.g., 14 inches) is greater than the dimension between the side edges 13, 14 (e.g., 9 1/2 inches). The sheet of paper 10 has a first face 15 (see FIGURE 1) and a second face 16 (see FIGURE 2).

The sheet 10 has first and second fold lines 17, 18 parallel to the edges 11, 12, dividing the sheet 10 into three panels including a first panel 19 between the first edge 11 and the first fold line 17, a second panel 20 between the second edge 12 and the second fold line 18, and a third panel 21 between the panels 19, 20, and defined by the fold line 17, 18. Note that the first panel 19 has a first length between the edge 11 and the first fold line 17 which is less than the length of the panels 20, 21 (that is, between the second edge 12 and the fold line 18, or between the fold lines 17, 18). The panels 20, 21 have substantially the same length, but the first panel 19 is smaller than the second and third panels 20, 21 by a distance corresponding to at least the height of an outgoing address 23. Outgoing address indicia 23 is printed on the first face 15 of the third panel 21 adjacent, but spaced from, the second fold line 18, as seen in FIGURE 1. The outgoing address area containing indicia 23 preferably has dimensions of about 3/4 inches by 2 3/4 inch. When the first panel 19 is folded about the first fold line 17, the edge 11 does not cover the outgoing address 23. Typically, the edge 11 becomes commensurate with the optional third fold line 24.

Normally, the first fold line 17 is just a score line, and the third fold line 24, if provided, is merely a score line. However, the second fold line 18 preferably is a line of weakness, such as a perforation line.

The intermediate 10 also comprises means defining first and second lines of weakness 26, 27, respectively, in each of the panels 19 through 21, the

lines of weakness 26, 27 parallel to the third and fourth edges 13, 14, respectively, and spaced a small distance therefrom, defining edge portions 28, 29 that are detachable from the main bodies of the panels 19 through 21. The lines of weakness 26, 27 preferably are perf lines, and tractor drive openings 30, 31 are typically provided in the detachable edge portions 28, 29.

The intermediate 10 also comprises means defining a cutout 33 (see FIGURE 2) in the second panel 20 adjacent, but spaced from the second fold line 18. The cutout 33 may be covered by a transparent (e.g., glassine) patch 34 if desired. If the cutout 33 has substantially the same dimensions as the outgoing address 23, and overlies it when the panel 20 is folded about the second fold line 18, so that the outgoing address 23 is visible from the exterior of the panel 20 through the cutout 33 in the final mailer constructed.

In order to hold the components of the intermediate 10 together to form a mailer, permanent adhesive patterns 36, 37 are preferably provided, formed in the detachable margin portions 28, 29. The patterns 36, 37 preferably -- as illustrated in FIGURE 1 -- are continuous strips of heat seal glue parallel to the perf lines 26, 27 within the marginal portions 28, 29. Preferably, the strips 36, 37 are disposed on the first face 15 of the second and third panels 20, 21, although they can be in addition, or partially instead, disposed in the edge portions 28, 29 on the first face 15 of the first panel 19.

As can be seen in FIGURE 2, the second face 16 of the second panel 20 is preferably printed with an outgoing return address 39, as well as a postage area 40. Also, instructions can be printed in the detachable edge portions (not shown) for telling the recipient how to open the mailer. Also, note that the area between the second fold line 18 and the cutout 33 -- indicated by reference numeral 41 in FIGURE 2 -- is large enough to receive USPS bar coding thereon.

While the intermediate 10 heretofore described can be used to construct a mailer that does not have a return envelope, preferably the mailer that is constructed does have a return envelope. The return envelope is constructed by the recipient of the mailer from intermediate 10, using the first and third panels 19, 21, the second panel 20 being removed along the perf line 18.

The return envelope (see FIGURE 5) is constructed utilizing three strips (or other patterns) of dormant adhesive, a first strip 43 (see FIGURE 1), a second strip 44, and a third strip 45. The strip 43 is preferably rewettable glue, and is immediately adjacent and parallel to the second fold line 18, disposed on the first face 15 of the third panel 21. The strips 44, 45 are formed on the first face 15 of the intermediate 10, either on the portion of the third panel 21 between the outgoing address 23 and the first fold line 17 adjacent the perforations 26, 27, or preferably -- as illustrated in FIGURE 1 -- on the first 15 of the first panel 19 adjacent the perforations 26, 27. The dormant adhesive provided by the strips 44, 45 is preferably pressure sensitive adhesive covered by release liner strips 46, 47, respectively. The strips 44, 45, with release liners 46, 47, are most easily constructed by applying transfer tape to the face 15 of the first panel 19.

Also, providing part of the return envelope is the reply address indicia 49 printed on the second face 16 of the first panel 19 (see FIGURE 2), which also may include preprinted reply bar address bar coding 50.

Because the return envelope is constructed by the recipient of the mailer, virtually the entire first face 15 of the intermediate 10 can be printed with information that is desirably transmitted to the recipient. As indicated by the indicia 52 in FIGURE 1, virtually the entire face 15 (except where the outgoing address 23, the cutout 33, and the glue strips are provided) is printed with the information 52.

The intermediate 10 is used to construct the final mailer 55, illustrated in FIGURES 3 and 4. The intermediate is folded about the fold lines 17, 18 so that the first face 15 of the first panel 19 comes in contact with the first face 15 of the third panel 21, and the first face 15 of the second panel 20 comes in contact with part of the first face 15 of the third panel 21 and the entire second face 16 of the first panel 19, the first panel 19 being sandwiched between the panels 20, 21. This folding action is an eccentric C-fold. FIGURE 3 illustrates the construction inside of the edge portions 28, 29. When the C-folding takes place, however, the mailer 55 is run through a heat sealer, which seals the strips 36, 37 thereby attaching all of the panels 19 through 21 together. If desired or necessary, spot glue portion 56 (see FIGURES 1 and 3) may also be provided, of heat seal adhesive, or water activated adhesive, to seal the panel 20 first face 15 to the first panel 19 second face 16 adjacent the first fold line 17.

Because of the particular construction of the mailer 55, it is impossible for the outgoing address 23 to be covered, since there are no interior components of the mailer that may be jostled and thereby obscure the return address 23. Rather, it is clearly visible through the cutout 33. Also, the outgoing mailer is thin, yet a large amount of information 52 is provided thereon. Further, there is room in the area 41 for the USPS to print outgoing addressee bar coding if not already provided in the outgoing address 23 (which includes at least name, street address or post office box, city and state, and/or country).

FIGURE 5 illustrates a return envelope 58 that is constructed from the mailer of FIGURES 3 and 4, which in turn has been constructed from the intermediate 10 of FIGURES 1 and 2. The recipient of the mailer 55 detaches along the perforations 26, 27 to remove the side edges 28, 29. That allows the entire

first face 15 of the panels 19 through 21 to be unfolded (as in FIGURE 1, but with the side strips 28, 29 removed).

After the recipient reads the desired information 52, and detaches the second panel 20 along the perf line 18, the recipient constructs the return envelope 58 by removing the release liner strips 46, 47 from the pressure sensitive adhesive strips 44, 45, folding the first panel 19 about the first fold line 17 so that the strips 44, 45 are in contact with the first face 15 of the third panel 21, and pressing along down those strips 44, 45. The substantially completed return envelope 58 is illustrated in FIGURE 5. The area between the optional third fold line 24 and what is now the edge 18 defines a flap 59, the flap 59 containing the rewettable adhesive strip 43 and the outgoing address 23. After the appropriate inserts have been placed in the return envelope 58 through the open edge adjacent the flap 59, the adhesive strip 43 is wet, and the flap 59 is bent about the fold line 24 so that the adhesive 43 comes in contact with the second face 16 of the first panel, sealing the envelope 58 closed. The reply address 49, including bar coding 50, is readily visible from the outside of the envelope 58. Because the outgoing address information 23 is an integral part of the envelope 58 (yet is not visible from the exterior of the envelope 58 when mailed, so that USPS requirements are complied with), the ultimate recipient of the return envelope 58 knows who the envelope came from, in case that person inadvertently forgot to include identifying information within the envelope 58.

It will thus be seen that according to the present invention an advantageous intermediate for a mailer type business form, a mailer type business form itself, and a return envelope for a mailer type business form, have been provided which are simple and easy to use and construct, yet extremely effective, having a number of advantages, and complying with USPS requirements. While the invention has been herein shown and described in what is presently conceived to be the most practical and preferred embodiment, it will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art that many modifications may be made thereof within the scope of the invention, which scope is to be accorded the broadest interpretation of the appended claims so as to encompass all equivalent structures and devices.

Claims

1. An intermediate for a mailer type business form, comprising:

a sheet of paper (10) having a rectangular configuration with first and second end, parallel edges (11, 12); and third and fourth side, parallel edges (13, 14); a first dimension between the end edges being greater than a second dimension, between the side edges; and having a first face (15) and a second face (16);

first and second fold lines (17, 18) parallel to said first and second edges, dividing said sheet into three panels (19, 20, 21), including a first panel (19) of a first length adjacent said first edge (11), and a second panel (20) adjacent said second edge (12); and a third panel (21) between said first and second panels, said second and third panels each having substantially a second length, which is greater than the first length by at least the height of a complete outgoing address (23);

means defining first and second lines of weakness (26, 27) in each of said first, second, and third panels, the lines of weakness parallel to said third and fourth edges, and spaced a small distance therefrom;

outgoing address indicia (23) printed on said first face of said third panel on a portion thereof adjacent, but spaced from, said second fold line (18), and wherein said first panel (19) when folded about said first fold line is dimensioned so that it will not cover or obscure said outgoing address indicia (23); and

means defining a cutout (33) in said second panel adjacent, but spaced from, said second fold line (18), said cutout dimensioned and positioned so that when said second panel (20) is folded about said second fold line (18) said outgoing address indicia is visible through said cutout.

2. An intermediate as recited in claim 1 characterised in that permanent adhesive patterns (36, 37) are disposed between said first and second lines of weakness (26, 27) and said third and fourth edges (13, 14) of said sheet of paper on said first face (15) of said second and third panels (20, 21), for sealing said panels together when folded about said first and second fold lines.

3. An intermediate as recited in claim 1 or claim 2 characterised by a strip of activatable adhesive (43) for forming a return envelope disposed on said first face (15) of said third panel (21) between said outgoing address indicia (23) and said second fold line (18).

4. An intermediate as recited in any of claims 1 to 3 characterised by dormant adhesive patterns (44, 45), requiring activation by the recipient of a mailer constructed from said intermediate, disposed adjacent said first and second lines of weakness (26, 27) on the opposite sides thereof from said third and fourth edges (13, 14), said dormant adhesive patterns disposed on said first face (15) of said sheet on one or both of said first panel and

said third panel between said first fold line and said outgoing address indicia.

5. An intermediate as recited in claim 4 characterised in that said dormant adhesive comprises first and second strips of pressure sensitive adhesive adjacent said first and second lines of weakness, respectively, and covered by release strips (46, 47).

6. An intermediate as recited in any of claims 1 to 5 characterised by reply address indicia (49) printed on said second face (16) of said first panel (19).

7. An intermediate as recited in any of claims 1 to 6 characterised by return address (39) and postage indicating indicia (40) printed on said second face (16) of said second panel (20).

8. An intermediate as recited in any of claims 1 to 7 characterised by information (52) desirably transmitted to the recipient of a mailer constructed from said intermediate, printed on said first face (15) of each of said first, second, and third panels (19, 20, 21).

9. A mailer type business form (55) comprising:

first and second end, parallel edges (17, 18);

third and fourth side, parallel edges (13, 14);

first, second, and third panels (19, 20, 21) formed from an eccentric C-folded single sheet of paper (10), said second and third panels (20, 21) having outer faces (16) and inner faces (15), and said first panel (19) having first and second faces (15, 16), and said first panel (19) being sandwiched between said second and third panels(20, 21), and leaving uncovered a portion of said inner face of said third panel adjacent said second end edge (18) of said mailer;

outgoing address indicia (23) printed on said uncovered portion of said inner face of said third panel;

means defining a cutout (33) in said second panel overlying said outgoing address indicia so that said indicia is visible from the exterior of said second panel; and

permanent adhesive means (36, 37) disposed along said side edges for holding said panels together.

10. A mailer according to claim 9 made from an intermediate according to any of claims 2 to 8.

11. A return envelope (58) constructed from a reusable mailer (55), comprising:

a single sheet of paper having first and second parallel end edges (11, 18), and third and fourth parallel side edges (13, 14), and a fold line (17) parallel to said end edges and defining said sheet into first and third panels (19, 21), the dimension of said first panel (19) between said fold line (17) and said first edge (11) being substantially less than the dimension of said third panel (21) between said fold line (17) and said second edge (18) to define a return envelope flap (59) in said third panel, and each panel having first and second faces (15, 16);

reply address indicia (49) printed on said second face (16) of said first panel (19);

outgoing address indicia (23) printed on said first face (15) of said third panel (21), on said flap (59);

a first strip of dormant adhesive (43) disposed on said first face of said third panel, on said flap, adjacent said second end of said sheet of paper; and

means (44, 45) for holding said first faces (15) of said first and third panels together to define a return envelope.

12. A return envelope according to claim 11 constructed from an intermediate according to any of claims 2 to 8.

FIG. 1

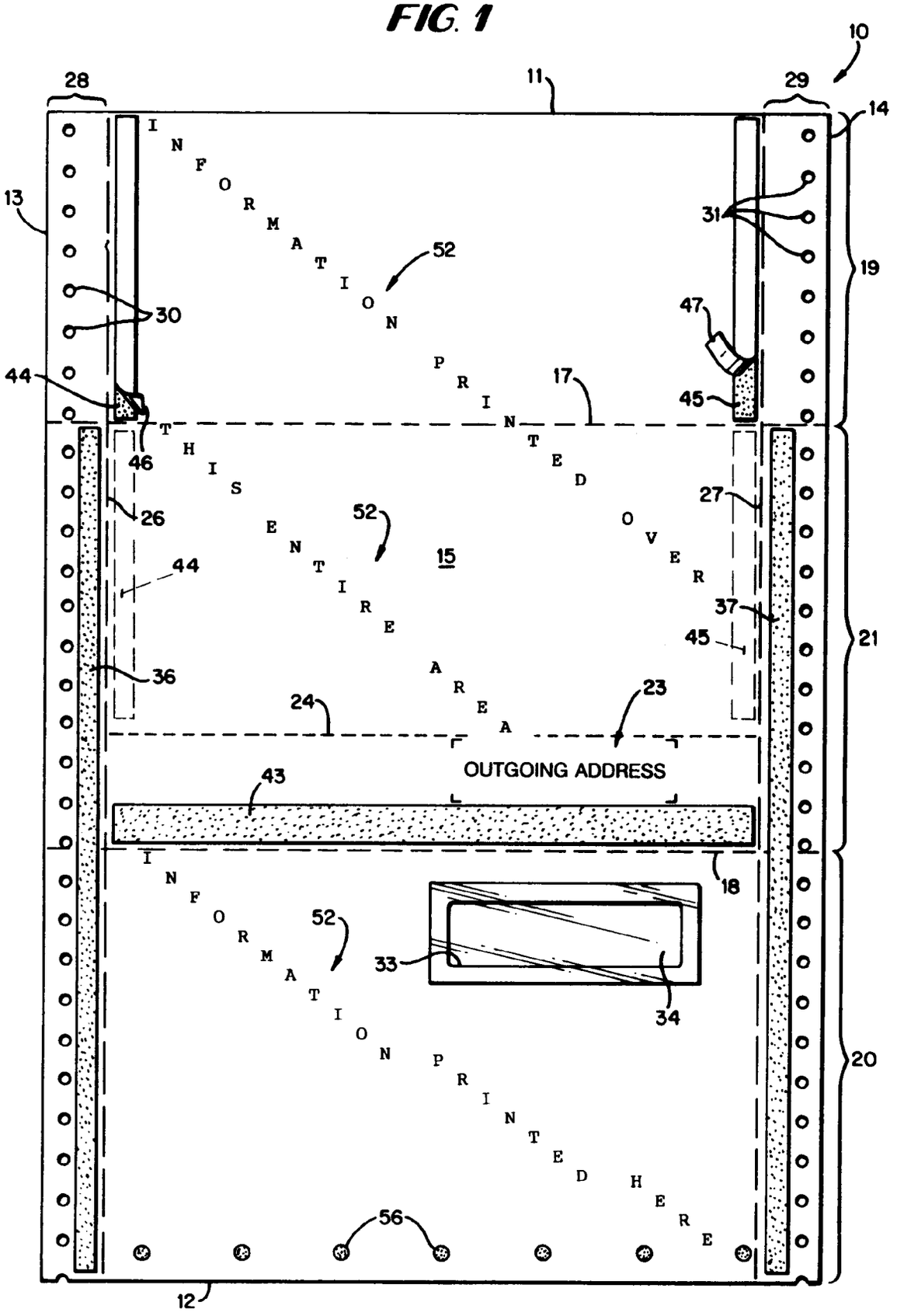

10
11
12
13
14
15
17
18
19
20
21
23
24
26
27
28
29
30
31
33
34
36
37
43
44
45
46
47
52
56
INFORMATION PRINTED
THIS ENTIRE AREA
OVER
OUTGOING ADDRESS
INFORMATION PRINTED HERE

FIG. 2

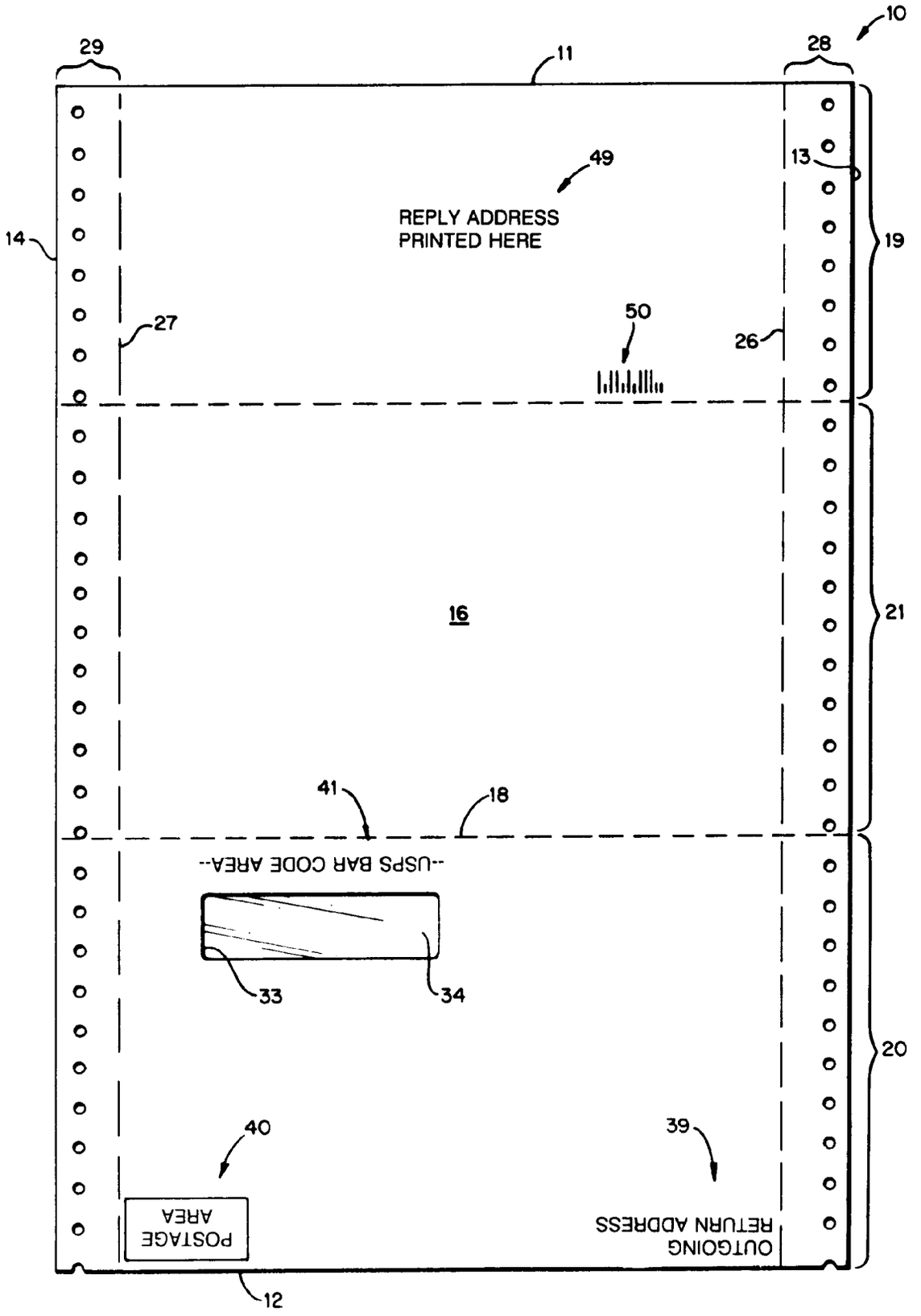
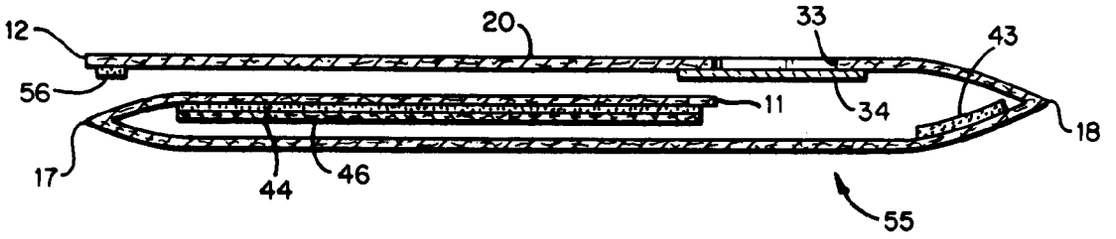

10
29
28
11
49
13
REPLY ADDRESS
PRINTED HERE
14
19
27
50
26
16
21
41
18
--USPS BAR CODE AREA--
33
34
20
40
39
POSTAGE
AREA
OUTGOING
RETURN ADDRESS
12

FIG. 3



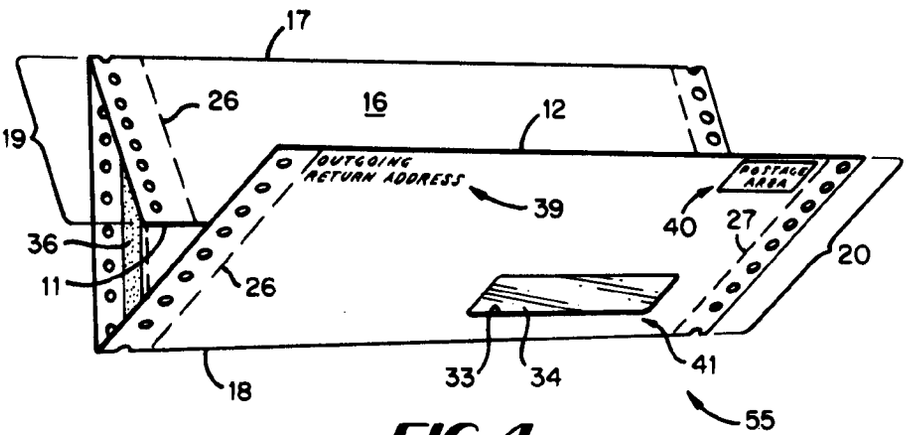
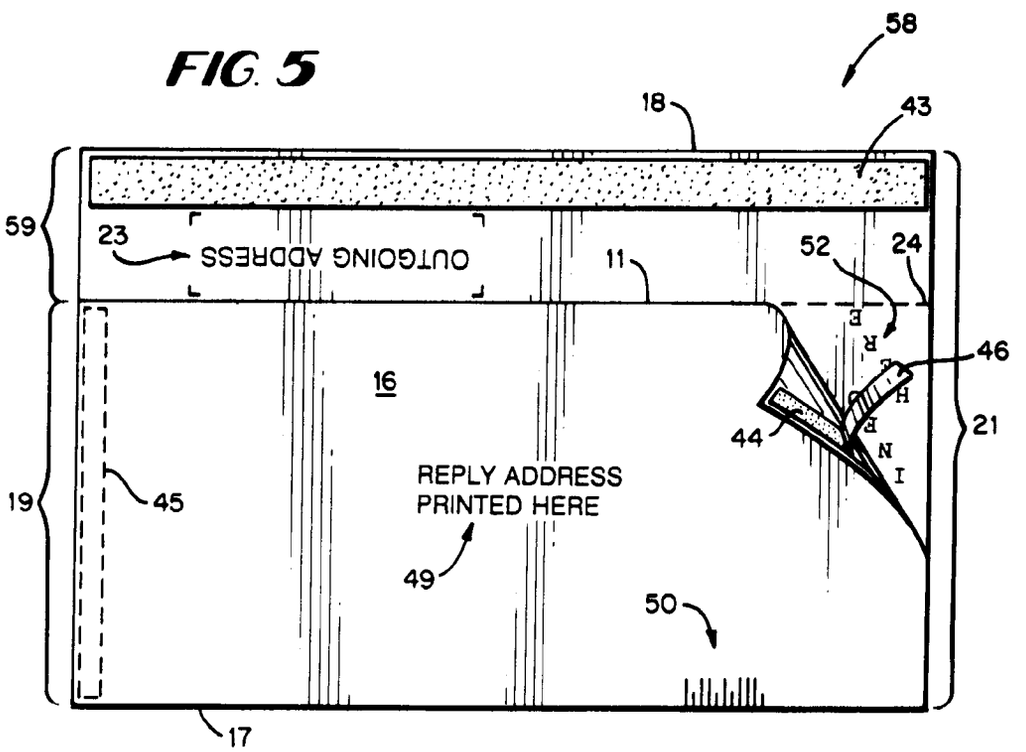


FIG. 4

FIG. 5



European Patent Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 93 30 6317

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.5)
A	EP-A-0 331 110 (STEP) * column 5, line 21 - line 45; figure 6 * ---	1,9	B42D5/02 B42D15/08 B65D27/04
A	US-A-3 113 716 (HOWARD) * the whole document * ---	1,9	
A	US-A-3 982 689 (RETRUM) * the whole document * -----	11	

TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.5)
B42D B65D

The present search report has been drawn up for all claims

Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE	20 December 1993	Evans, A

CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS

X : particularly relevant if taken alone
Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category
A : technological background
O : non-written disclosure
P : intermediate document

T : theory or principle underlying the invention
E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date
D : document cited in the application
L : document cited for other reasons

& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document

EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)