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(54) **Identification system**

Identifikationssystem

Système d'identification

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Description

[0001] The present invention relates to an identification system.

[0002] There are a large number of circumstances in which there is a need to provide personnel and/or machinery such as a vehicle with a visible means of identification. Typically, these are in the form of an identity badge prominently worn by or carried by a person or an identity badge or plate for a piece of apparatus such as a vehicle. This can serve to indicate that a person is suitably qualified, a member of a particular organisation, the apparatus is licensed for use, and so forth. In many cases, the identity of the particular individual will also be shown, both typographically and as a photographic representation. One specific example is the identity and licence card issued by local or national authorities to a taxi driver and the licence plate issued for a vehicle. Thus, the information presented in identity identification devices issued by any organisation typically has a fixed component that identifies the purpose of the badge, identifies the issuing organisation, and so forth, and a variable component which identifies the individual person or piece of apparatus.

[0003] Preferably, the fixed component of the information presented by an identification device has a degree of complexity that renders unauthorised copying difficult. Moreover, such information must be presented in a medium that is light-fast and weather-resistant. This has a side-effect in that it is more difficult for those properly authorised people to produce identification devices. Typically, high-quality printing apparatus must be used to reproduce the fixed component. Such apparatus may not be affordable by many organisations, and may be time consuming to produce. Therefore, the production of such identification devices must be entrusted to a specialist printer resulting in delay and cost. This is especially disadvantageous where the identification devices are produced on an occasional or on-demand basis, rather than in large batches.

[0004] EP-A-0 371 301 discloses an identification card that has a base that contains fixed information, a photograph, and a flexible transparent cover on which variable information can be recorded. The variable information is recorded on an outer surface, leaving it exposed to wear through abrasion from the environment and possible fraudulent alteration.

[0005] It is therefore an aim of this invention to provide a system whereby identification device can be produced as required using equipment likely to be accessible to most businesses, and can be completed and issued on demand in a little time. Moreover, it is an aim of the invention to provide an identification device that presents clear evidence of any attempt to alter the variable information that it presents.

[0006] Accordingly, from a first aspect, the invention provides an identification device as set forth in claim 1.

[0007] The identification device may take various forms. For example, it may be (amongst other things) a personal identity badge or it may be a plate (sometimes referred to as a "sign") for a vehicle. It may also be a sign or a signage system.

[0008] The substrate can therefore present the fixed component of the identity information while the overlay can contain the variable portion. This permits an organisation to obtain a stock of substrate components and apply to them overlays containing the variable component of information as and when required.

[0009] The variable indicia on the overlay may conveniently be produced by a conventional computer printer, such as a laser printer, or an ink-jet printer. Such devices are commonly available to most businesses and are not costly. The variable indicia displayed on it may be monochrome and the variable information may comprise text, numerical or symbolic information.

[0010] Typically, the variable indicia are generated by a suitable computer program. The program may receive manual input from a user. Alternatively or additionally, it may receive data from a database of information whereby the variable indicia can be generated automatically. The database may contain digital photographic representations of individuals to whom badges are to be issued.

[0011] In certain circumstances, the variable information may be hand-written. This may be useful in circumstances where a computer or similar equipment is not available, such as during a power failure or in sites that are remote or unsuited to electronic equipment.

[0012] The overlay may be a film of suitable transparent plastic material. Most preferably, the overlay has an adhesive surface by which it can be bonded to the substrate. In a preferred embodiment, the overlay is a self-adhesive label. Such a label may be one of several on a common backing sheet, whereby several overlays can be printed in a single operation. It will be recognised that the use of an overlay of this type has the advantage that the overall size of the identification device is not limited by the maximum print area of the apparatus used to print the variable information. The identification device may be any size, or may be a variety of sizes, without giving rise to the need to change the size of the overlay.

[0013] In many embodiments, a photographic representation of an individual will be provided on the identity badge. The photographic representation may be of a conventional type of photograph that may typically be disposed between the substrate and the overlay. Alternatively, the photographic representation may be printed as part one of the variable indicia.

[0014] The substrate is typically formed of paper, card or thin plastic. It may be printed by any suitable printing process. It may also include additional features to render copying more difficult. For example, it may include a hologram such as a tamper-evident hologram and/or complex printing such as multiple colour printing. It will be appreciated that an organisation can obtain stocks of the substrate in bulk, so benefiting from the savings associated with bulk printing. Moreover, it is not necessary to obtain

a substrate specially printed for a particular badge. Therefore, provided that a stock of substrate is maintained, a badge for an individual can be printed at any time.

[0015] A protective enclosure of embodiments of the invention is preferably constructed such that the substrate and the overlay cannot be removed from it without causing them to be severely damaged or destroyed. This reduces the possibly of the badge being fraudulently tampered with. The enclosure most preferably includes formations by means of which it can readily be carried on a person. Such formations may include a clip or a pin for attachment to an article of clothing, and/or a hole through which a chain can be passed in order that the badge may be worn suspended from a person's neck.

[0016] From another aspect, the invention provides a driver and vehicle licensing system as set forth in claim 18.

[0017] In a modification of any of the above aspects, the invention may be applied to a sign or a signage system. In such embodiments, the fixed information may, for example, be characterised by an organisation or a building, and the variable information may, for example, identify a location or provide directions. This provides signs with a uniform and, if required, complex background so that signs of a uniform appearance can be produced as and when required.

[0018] Embodiments of the invention will now be described in detail, by way of example only, and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 shows an identity badge being an embodiment of the invention;
Figure 2 illustrates a plurality of overlays printed with variable indicia and carried on a common carrier;
Figure 3 shows a single substrate being a component of the badge of Figure 1;
Figure 4 is a cross-sectional view along line A-A of the badge of Figure 1 prior to a final sealing operation being performed;
Figure 5 is a cross-sectional view of the badge of Figure 1 in completed form;
Figure 6 shows a vehicle licence plate embodying the invention;
Figure 7 shows a backing sheet being part of the plate of Figure 6; and
Figure 8 is a cross-sectional view along line A-A of the plate of Figure 6 (with an enlarged break-out) of the plate of Figure 6.

[0019] With reference to the figures, there is shown an identity badge 10. The badge 10 might, for example, be used to display confirm the identity of a taxi driver, and to confirm that the driver is properly licensed. The badge displays a range of information. There is a fixed portion of information, which is the same for each badge issued. This fixed portion of the information includes indicia such as text 12, a hologram 14, logos, and a patterned and coloured background (not shown). Most typically, the fixed portion of the information will identify the organisation that has issued the badge and to indicate the status and/or the qualification of the individual to whom it relates. Additionally, there is a variable portion of information, which, in this embodiment includes text 16 relating to an individual and a photograph 24 of the individual.

[0020] The construction of the badge 10 will now be described in detail.

[0021] The badge comprises a substrate 20. In this embodiment, the substrate 20 is formed from paper backed with adhesive. When manufactured, the adhesive is covered by a cover sheet that can subsequently be removed to expose the adhesive. Other materials, such as card or plastic, could alternatively be used. The entire fixed portion of the information is printed or otherwise formed on a display surface of the substrate 20. The fixed portion of the information is designed so as to be distinctive, readily recognisable, and difficult to copy.

[0022] The hologram is a conventional security hologram of a type well known to those familiar with security products. The hologram 14 is applied to the substrate onto which it is secured by adhesive. The appearance of the hologram constitutes a part of the fixed portion of the information.

[0023] The display surface of the substrate 20 is almost entirely covered by an overlay 22. The overlay is formed as a thin, flexible sheet of transparent plastic material. An adhesive layer is provided on one surface (which will be referred to as the rear surface) of the overlay. The adhesive layer serves to bond the overlay 22 onto the display surface of the substrate 20. Bearing in mind that the overlay is transparent, it will be realised that the display surface of the substrate 20, and other components of the fixed portion of information such as a hologram, will be visible though it.

[0024] The surface of the overlay 22 opposite that on which the adhesive layer is provided will be referred to as the front surface. Upon the front surface indicia are printed. These indicia form part of the variable portion of the information displayed by the badge. With the overlay 22 in place on the substrate 20, the indicia will be seen set against a background of the display surface and the information that appears there.

[0025] In most cases, the variable portion of the information will include a visual representation of the rightful user of the badge. In this embodiment, this is achieved by placing a photographic representation 24 on the substrate 20. Application of the overlay 22 then retains the photograph 24 in place. Optionally, the photograph 24 is secured to the substrate 20 by adhesive.

[0026] An alternative to the arrangement described in the last-preceding paragraph is to print an image being a photographic representation of the individual onto the front surface of the overlay 22 along with the other indicia.

[0027] The assembly comprising the substrate 20, the overlay 22, and the photograph 24 are contained within an enclosure 28. The enclosure 28 comprises front and

rear leaves 30,32. Each leaf 30,32 is formed of tough plastic material. At least the front leaf 30 is transparent. The leaves 30,32 are approximately rectangular in shape and substantially the same size. The front and rear leaves 30,32 are bonded together along an edge region 44 such that the can overlie one another. An adhesive layer is provided on the front leaf 30 on the surface, which lies adjacent to the rear leaf 32. On manufacture, the adhesive layer is covered by a protective sheet (not shown) that can be removed to expose the adhesive.

[0028] Several apertures 40 are formed through the edge region 44 through which retention formations can be secured to the badge. The retention formations serve to retain the badge for display or for carrying on a person.

[0029] To complete assembly of the badge, the cover sheet is removed from the substrate 20 and the substrate (and the overlay 22) is applied to the rear leaf 32 of the enclosure 28, such that the display surface of the substrate 20 faces towards the front leaf 30. (The front leaf 30 can be folded back (as shown in Figure 4) to gain access to the rear leaf 32.) The protective sheet is then removed from the front leaf 30 to expose the adhesive and the front leaf is then pressed down onto the rear leaf 32. This produces a sealed, laminated assembly with a cross-section as shown in Figure 5.

[0030] Advantageously, the adhesive on the front leaf 30 is of a high strength and tack such that any attempt to separate the leaves 30,32 will pull apart the assembly of the substrate 20 and overlay 22 and damage its components. This ensures that the variable information, including the photographic representation of the individual, cannot be replaced without leaving evidence that the badge has been tampered with.

[0031] For use, an organisation can procure supplies of the substrate 20 from a specialist supplier. This avoids the need for the organisation to poses the specialist printing equipment necessary to produce a substrate of sufficient visual complexity to render unauthorised reproduction difficult. On the other hand, the organisation will normally produce its own overlays in order that a badge can be produced as and when required and at low cost.

[0032] As shown in Figure 2, the overlays 22 may suitably be formed from self-adhesive labels, which can be obtained in sheets 42, as shown in Figure 2. Each sheet carries several labels (for example, 6, 8, 10, 12 or 16 labels). Labels are peeled from the sheet 42 (which protects their adhesive surface) for use. Indicia are, for example, printed onto multiple labels in one printing operation by a printer controlled by a suitably programmed computer. Any suitable printer may be used provided that it is compatible with the indicia to be printed and with the material from which the overlays.

[0033] For example, in many cases (particularly where a separate photograph is to be included) the indicia carried on the overlay 20 may be satisfactorily reproduced in monochrome. In such cases, a laser printer may be used. Where a photograph is to be generated on the overlay, a colour laser printer or an ink-jet printer may be more suitable.

[0034] With reference now to Figures 6 and 7, there is shown a licence plate 110 for a vehicle embodying the invention. The licence plate might, for example, display licensing information for a vehicle such as a taxi or private hire vehicle. The plate 110 displays a range of information. There is a fixed portion of information that is the same for each plate issued. The fixed portion of the indicia includes information such as text 112, a hologram 114 and logos 124 that identify the organisation that issued the plate and indicate the status (for example, as a private hire vehicle) of the vehicle to which the plate is affixed. In addition, there is a variable portion of the information 116 that relates to one particular licence plate. For example, the variable portion of the information may include such matter as a registration number of the vehicle to which the plate has been issued, the expiry date of the licence, a description of the vehicle, and so forth.

[0035] The construction of a first example of such a plate 110 will now be described with reference to Figures 6 to 8.

[0036] The plate 110 comprises a base sheet 130 shaped and dimensioned to the size of plate required. The base sheet 130 is formed from a clear plastic material of suitable toughness and rigidity for use on a vehicle. For example, a material such as a shatter-resistant polycarbonate or an acrylic may be suitable. A rear surface 132 has a transparent layer of high-tack adhesive applied to it, which is protected by a removable cover sheet (not shown) during manufacture. Holes 140 are provided through the base sheet 140 as required to facilitate mounting of the plate on a vehicle.

[0037] A backing sheet 142 covers substantially the entire rear surface 132 of the base sheet 130. The backing sheet 142 has a display surface, in contact with the rear surface 132 where it is help by the adhesive. The display surface carries the fixed portion of the information, which is visible through the base sheet 130. Additionally, a hologram 114 is preferably adhered to the backing sheet before it is applied to the base sheet 130, such that the hologram 114 is also visible through the base sheet 130. In this embodiment, the backing sheet 130 is formed from thin opaque plastic material, printed with coloured indicia as required.

[0038] A transparent sheet 136 is adhered to a region of the rear surface 132. The variable portion of the indicia is printed on the transparent sheet, using methods much as those described above. The transparent sheet 136 is formed from thin, flexible, transparent plastic material. For example, the adhesive labels described above with reference to Figure 2. In such a case, the front, adhesive surface of the label is applied to a suitable part of the display surface of the backing sheet 142, preferably to overlie the hologram 114, before the backing sheet 142 is applied to the base sheet 130.

[0039] Thus, it will be understood that a vehicle plate can be constructed with the entirety of its variable information 116 printed onto the transparent sheet 136 using

simple and inexpensive printing apparatus.

[0040] Preferably, the adhesive layer of the base sheet 130 is of greater strength than the adhesive that holds the hologram 114 onto the backing sheet 142. If an attempt is made to peel the baking sheet 142 away from the base sheet 130, the hologram 114 will be pulled off the backing sheet 142, causing it to be damaged in the process. This provides clear evidence of an attempt to tamper with the plate. Thus, an attempt to alter or otherwise tamper with the variable portion of the information will result in destruction of the plate. It will therefore be understood that a plate embodying the invention has inherent tamper-resistant properties. Similar considerations apply to an identity badge embodying the invention. The properties of the various adhesives used in embodiments of the invention are selected as to maximise the disruption and damage caused to the various components of the device during an attempt to separate its layers after it has been assembled.

[0041] When assembled into a plate, the base sheet 130, hologram 114, and backing sheet 142 are disposed in layers, one on another, as shown in Figure 8.

[0042] Many other embodiments can readily be conceived. For example, an opaque border or borders may be provided on the base sheet to provide a neat appearance to the periphery of the licence plate. A plurality of transparent sheets 136 may be applied to display variable information at various parts of the licence plate.

[0043] In another embodiment, the backing sheet 130 is formed from highly reflective material. This can enhance the legibility of the licence plate in conditions of poor lighting. This is especially important where the plate is to be inspected at night by the light of a hand-held torch or by vehicle headlights.

[0044] In a simple embodiment, a program may receive information entered manually by a user for direct reproduction as variable information for a badge or a plate. Alternatively, the data may be derived from a database. The database may also contain digitised images from which photographic representations of the individuals can be printed. This arrangement allows for badges for a number of authorised individuals to be produced automatically in a batch.

[0045] As will be appreciated, the same hardware can be used to produce both badges and licence plates. Therefore, in a preferred system, there a database contains information relating to both drivers and their vehicles. This permits a common hardware and software system to be used to produce both badges for a licensed driver and plates for a licensed vehicle.

[0046] At another level of complexity, the software system may contain a list of vehicle manufacturers and models that can automatically be included within the variable data to be printed on a vehicle licence.

[0047] The software system could be extended, for example, to acquire data from a driver or vehicle testing establishment in order that identity badges and/or license plated can be issued only to an authorised individual or vehicle.

[0048] In a further application of any of the above embodiments of the invention, a sign can be produced. Examples of such a sign might identify a location or provide directions in a building. In such embodiments, the substrate may, for example, carry indicia that identify an organisation such as a company, a government body, or any other institution. The overlay may carry any information of a type normally displayed on a sign. Such information might identify a location (a room, for example) or provide directions to a location. In this way, an organisation can produce signs as and when required with a uniform appearance, for example, in order to maintain a corporate identity within a building.

Claims

1. An identification device (10) comprising a substrate (20) having a display surface on which indicia (12,14) are displayed and an overlay (22) applied to cover at least part of the display surface of the substrate (20), wherein the overlay is, at least in part, transparent such that the indicia on the display surface are visible through it, and indicia (16,24) (referred to as "the variable indicia") are presented on the overlay (22) which are visible in juxtaposition with the indicia (12,14) on the display surface, **characterised in that** the substrate and the overlay are encapsulated in a protective enclosure (28), the protective enclosure having first and second plastic leaves (30,32), at least one of which is coated with an adhesive, whereby the combined substrate and the overlay can be retained between the leaves (30,32).

2. An identification device according to claim 1 in which the enclosure (28) is constructed such that the substrate (20) and the overlay (22) cannot be removed from it without causing them to be severely damaged or destroyed.

3. An identification device according to claim 1 or claim 2 in which at least some of the variable indicia (16,24) on the overlay (22) are produced by a conventional computer printer, such as a laser printer, or an inkjet printer.

4. An identification device according to any preceding claim in which at least some of the variable indicia (16,24) on the overlay (22) are hand-written.

5. An identification device according to any preceding claim in which the variable indicia (16,24) displayed on the overlay (22) comprises text, numerical or symbolic information.

6. An identification device according to any preceding

claim in which the overlay (22) is a film of transparent plastic material.

7. An identification device according to any preceding claim in which the overlay (22) has an adhesive surface by which it can be bonded to the substrate.

8. An identification device according to claim 7 in which the overlay (22) is a self-adhesive label.

9. An identification device according to claim 8 in which the label is one of several on a common backing sheet.

10. An identification device according to any preceding claim in which the substrate (20) is formed of paper, card or thin plastic.

11. An identification device according to any preceding claim in which the substrate (20) includes features that act to reduce the ease with which it may be copied.

12. An identification device according to claim 11 in which the said features include a hologram (14) and/or complex printed matter.

13. An identification device according to any preceding claim being an identity badge for an individual (Fig 1).

14. An identification badge according to claim 13 in which a photographic representation (24) of an individual is provided on the identity badge.

15. An identification badge according to claim 14 in which the photographic representation (24) is disposed between the substrate (20) and the overlay (22).

16. An identification badge according to claim 14 in which the photographic representation (24) is printed on the overlay (22) as part of the variable indicia.

17. An identification device according to any one of claims 1 to 12 being a licence plate for a vehicle (Fig 6).

18. A driver and vehicle licensing system comprising a programmed computer and a printer wherein the program operates to retrieve data from a database to generate variable indicia in to produce an identity badge for a driver according to any one of claims 1 to 16 and a licence plate for a vehicle according to claim 17.

19. A signage system comprising a programmed computer and a printer wherein the program operates to retrieve data from a database to generate variable indicia in to identify a location or provide directions according to any one of claims 1 to 16.

Patentansprüche

1. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung (10), die ein Substrat (20) umfasst, welches eine Displayfläche, auf der Indicia (12, 14) angezeigt werden, und eine Auflage (22), die zur Abdeckung von zumindest einem Teil der Displayfläche des Substrats (20) angewendet wird, besitzt, wobei die Auflage zumindest teilweise transparent ist, so dass die Indicia auf der Displayfläche da hindurch sichtbar sind, und Indicia (16, 24) (auf die als "die variablen Indicia" Bezug genommen wird) sind auf der Auflage (22) dargestellt, die in Nebeneinanderstellung mit den Indicia (12, 14) auf der Displayfläche sichtbar sind, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass** das Substrat und die Auflage in einer Schutzhülle (28) eingeschlossen sind, wobei die Schutzhülle ein erstes und ein zweites Kunststoffblatt (30, 32) besitzt, wobei mindestens eines von ihnen mit einem Klebstoff beschichtet ist, wodurch das kombinierte Substrat und die Auflage zwischen den Blättern (30, 32) aufbewahrt werden können.

2. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, bei der die Hülle (28) so konstruiert ist, dass das Substrat (20) und die Auflage (22) nicht daraus entfernt werden können, ohne sie in schwerwiegender Weise zu beschädigen oder zu zerstören.

3. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1 oder nach Anspruch 2, bei der zumindest einige der variablen Indicia (16, 24) auf der Auflage (22) von einem herkömmlichen Computerdrucker, wie zum Beispiel einem Laserdrucker oder einem Tintenstrahldrucker, hergestellt werden.

4. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, bei der zumindest einige der variablen Indicia (16, 24) auf der Auflage (22) von Hand geschrieben sind.

5. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, bei der die auf der Auflage (22) angezeigten variablen Indicia (16, 24) Text, numerische oder symbolische Informationen umfassen.

6. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, bei der die Auflage (22) ein Film aus transparentem Kunststoff ist.

7. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, bei der die Auflage (22) eine adhäsive Oberfläche besitzt, über die sie mit dem Substrat verbunden werden kann.

8. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 7, bei der die Auflage (22) ein selbstklebendes Etikett ist.

9. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 8, bei der das Etikett eines von mehreren auf einem gemeinsamen Abdeckbogen ist.

10. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, bei der das Substrat (20) aus Papier, Karton oder dünnem Kunststoff besteht.

11. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, bei der das Substrat (20) Leistungsmerkmale einschließt, die dazu dienen, die Leichtigkeit, mit der es kopiert werden kann, zu reduzieren.

12. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 11, bei der die besagten Leistungsmerkmale ein Hologramm (14) und/oder komplexe Drucksachen einschließen.

13. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei diese eine Identitätsplakette für eine natürliche Person (Fig. 1) ist.

14. Eine Identitätsplakette nach Anspruch 13, bei der eine fotografische Darstellung (24) einer natürlichen Person auf der Identitätsplakette vorgesehen ist.

15. Eine Identitätsplakette nach Anspruch 14, bei der die fotografische Darstellung (24) zwischen dem Substrat (20) und der Auflage (22) angeordnet ist.

16. Eine Identitätsplakette nach Anspruch 14, bei der die fotografische Darstellung (24) als Teil der variablen Indicia auf der Auflage (22) aufgedruckt ist.

17. Eine Identifikationsvorrichtung nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 12, wobei diese ein Zulassungsschild für ein Fahrzeug (Fig. 6) ist.

18. Ein Fahrer- und Fahrzeugzulassungssystem, das einen programmierten Computer und einen Drucker umfasst, wobei das Programm in Betrieb ist, um Daten von einer Datenbank abzurufen, um variable Indicia zu erzeugen, um eine Identitätsplakette für einen Fahrer gemäß einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 16 und ein Zulassungsschild für ein Fahrzeug gemäß Anspruch 17 herzustellen.

19. Ein Beschilderungssystem, das einen programmierten Computer und einen Drucker umfasst, wobei das Programm in Betrieb ist, um Daten von einer Datenbank abzurufen, um variable Indicia zu erzeugen, um eine Örtlichkeit zu identifizieren oder Adressen zur Verfügung zu stellen, gemäß einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 16.

Revendications

1. Un dispositif d'identification (10) comprenant un support (20) ayant une surface d'affichage sur laquelle des indications (12, 14) sont affichées et un revêtement (22) appliqué pour couvrir au moins une partie de la surface d'affichage du support (20), sur lequel le revêtement est, au moins en partie, transparent de sorte que les indications sur la surface d'affichage soient visibles à travers lui, et des indications (16, 24) (appelées « les indications variables ») sont présentées sur le revêtement (22) lesquelles sont visibles par juxtaposition avec les indications (12, 14) sur la surface d'affichage, **caractérisé en ce que** le support et le revêtement sont scellés dans une enveloppe protectrice (28), l'enveloppe protectrice possédant une première et une seconde feuilles de plastique (30, 32), dont au moins l'une est enduite d'un adhésif, par lequel le support combiné et le revêtement peuvent être retenus entre les feuilles (30, 32).

2. Un dispositif d'identification selon la revendication 1 dans lequel l'enveloppe (28) est conçue pour que le support (20) et le revêtement (22) ne puissent pas en être retirés sans que ces derniers soient gravement endommagés ou détruits.

3. Un dispositif d'identification selon la revendication 1 ou la revendication 2 dans lequel au moins certaines des indications variables (16, 24) sur le revêtement (22) sont produites par une imprimante d'ordinateur traditionnelle, telle qu'une imprimante à laser, ou une imprimante à jet d'encre.

4. Un dispositif d'identification selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes dans lequel au moins certaines des indications variables (16, 24) sur le revêtement (22) sont manuscrites.

5. Un dispositif d'identification selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes dans lequel les indications variables (16, 24) affichées sur le revêtement (22) comprennent du texte, des informations numériques ou symboliques.

6. Un dispositif d'identification selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes dans lequel le revêtement (22) est un film en matériau plastique transparent.

7. Un dispositif d'identification selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes dans lequel le revêtement (22) présente une surface adhésive par laquelle il peut être fixé au support.

8. Un dispositif d'identification selon la revendication 7 dans lequel le revêtement (22) est une étiquette

autocollante.

9. Un dispositif d'identification selon la revendication 8 dans lequel l'étiquette est l'une parmi plusieurs sur une feuille de support ordinaire.

10. Un dispositif d'identification selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes dans lequel le support (20) est formé de papier, d'une carte ou de plastique fin.

11. Un dispositif d'identification selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes dans lequel le support (20) comporte des caractéristiques qui interviennent pour réduire la facilité avec laquelle il peut être copié.

12. Un dispositif d'identification selon la revendication 11 dans lequel lesdites caractéristiques comportent un hologramme (14) et/ou un imprimé complexe.

13. Un dispositif d'identification selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes qui est un badge d'identité pour une personne individuelle (Fig. 1).

14. Un badge d'identification selon la revendication 13 dans lequel une représentation photographique (24) d'une personne individuelle figure sur le badge d'identité.

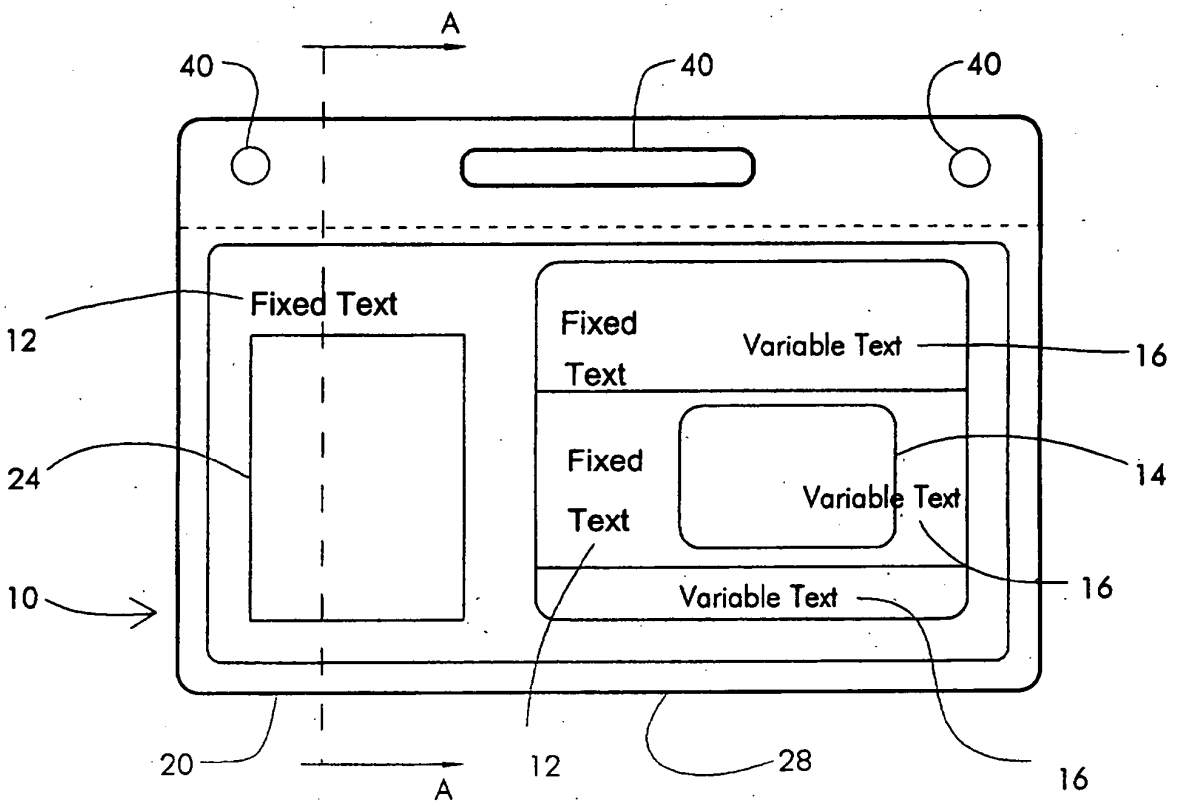
15. Un badge d'identification selon la revendication 14 dans lequel la représentation graphique (24) est placée entre le support (20) et le revêtement (22).

16. Un badge d'identification selon la revendication 14 dans lequel la représentation graphique (24) est imprimée sur le revêtement (22) en tant que partie des indications variables.

17. Un dispositif d'identification selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 12 qui est une plaque d'immatriculation pour un véhicule (Fig. 6).

18. Un système de gestion des licences pour un conducteur et un véhicule comprenant un ordinateur programmé et une imprimante, dans lequel le programme fonctionne pour récupérer des données dans une base de données pour générer des indications variables afin de produire un badge d'identité destiné à un conducteur selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 16 et une plaque d'immatriculation pour un véhicule selon la revendication 17.

19. Un système de signalisation comprenant un ordinateur programmé et une imprimante, dans lequel le programme fonctionne pour récupérer des données dans une base de données pour générer des indications variables afin d'identifier un endroit ou indiquer des directions selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 16.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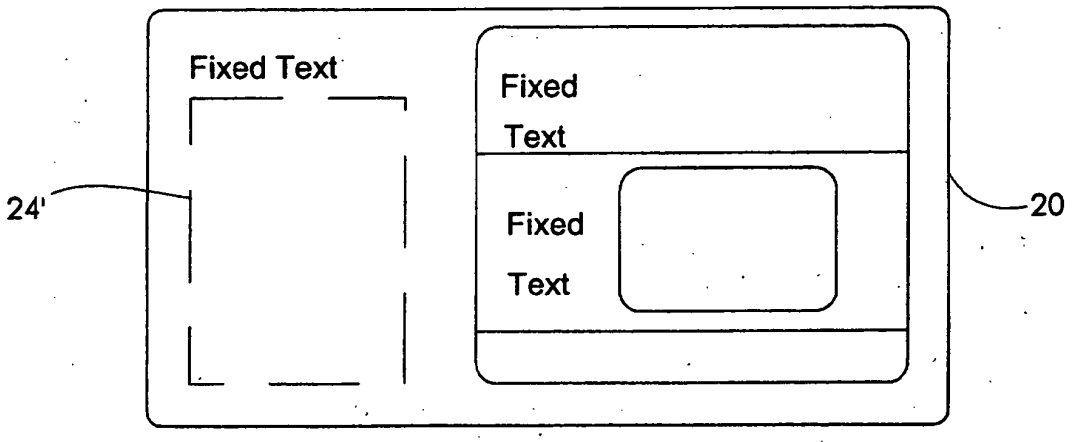
40
40
Fixed Text
12
Fixed
Text
Variable Text
16
24
Fixed
Text
Variable Text
14
16
10
Variable Text
20
A
12
28
16

Fig 1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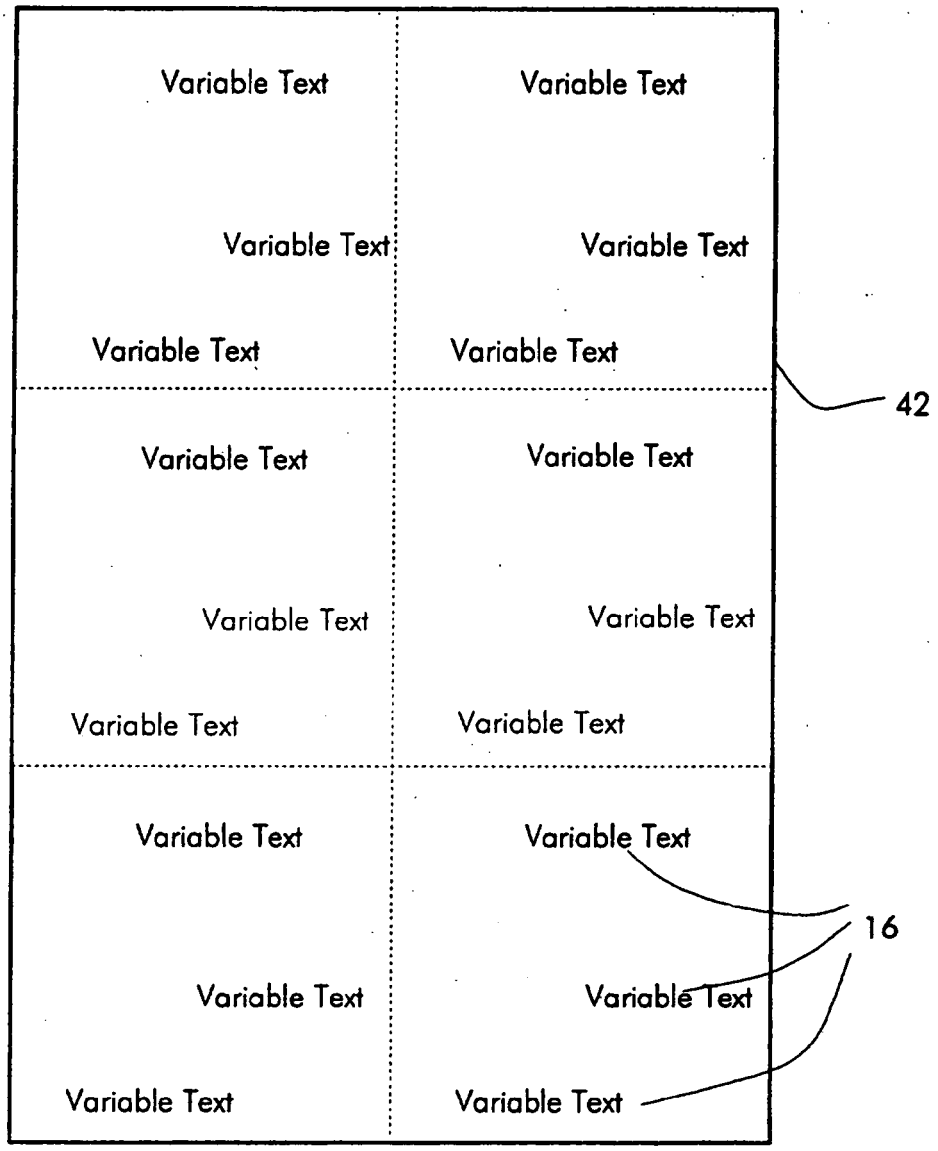
Text
24'
Fixed
Text
20

Fig 3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42
16

Fig 2

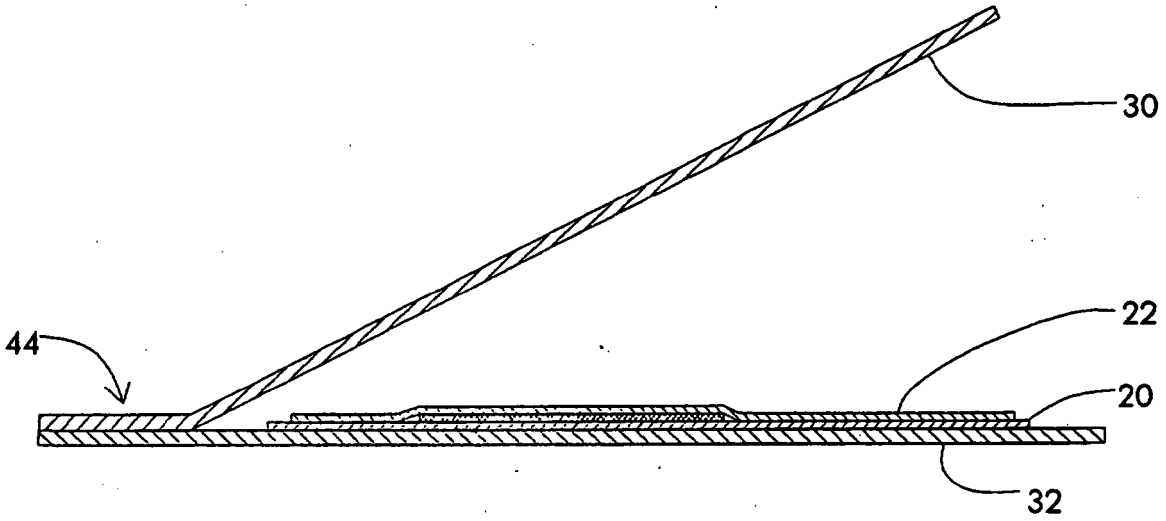


Fig 4

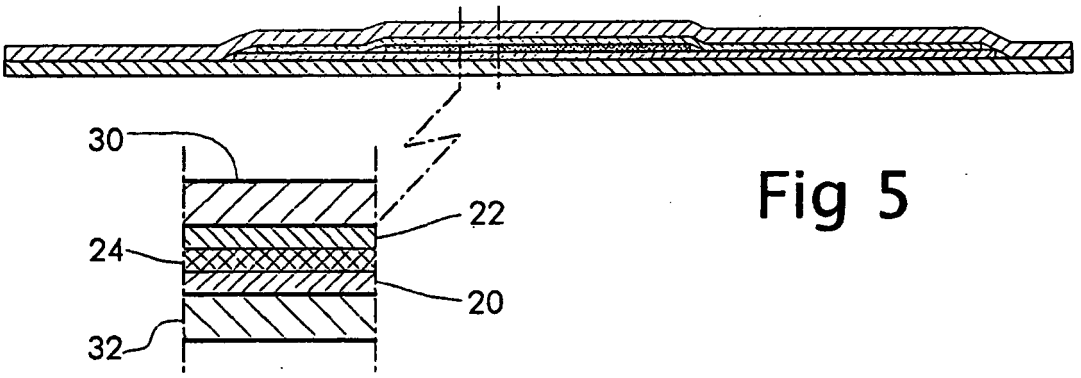
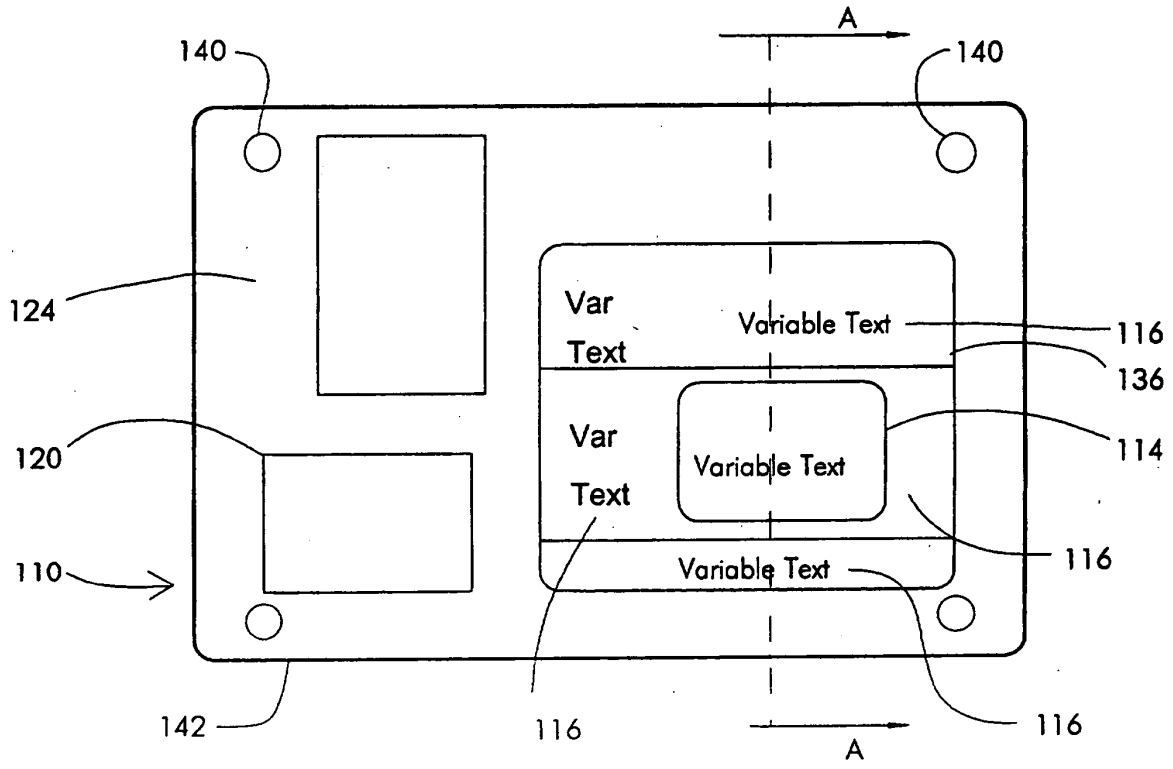


Fig 5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Variable Text
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116
116
A

Fig 6

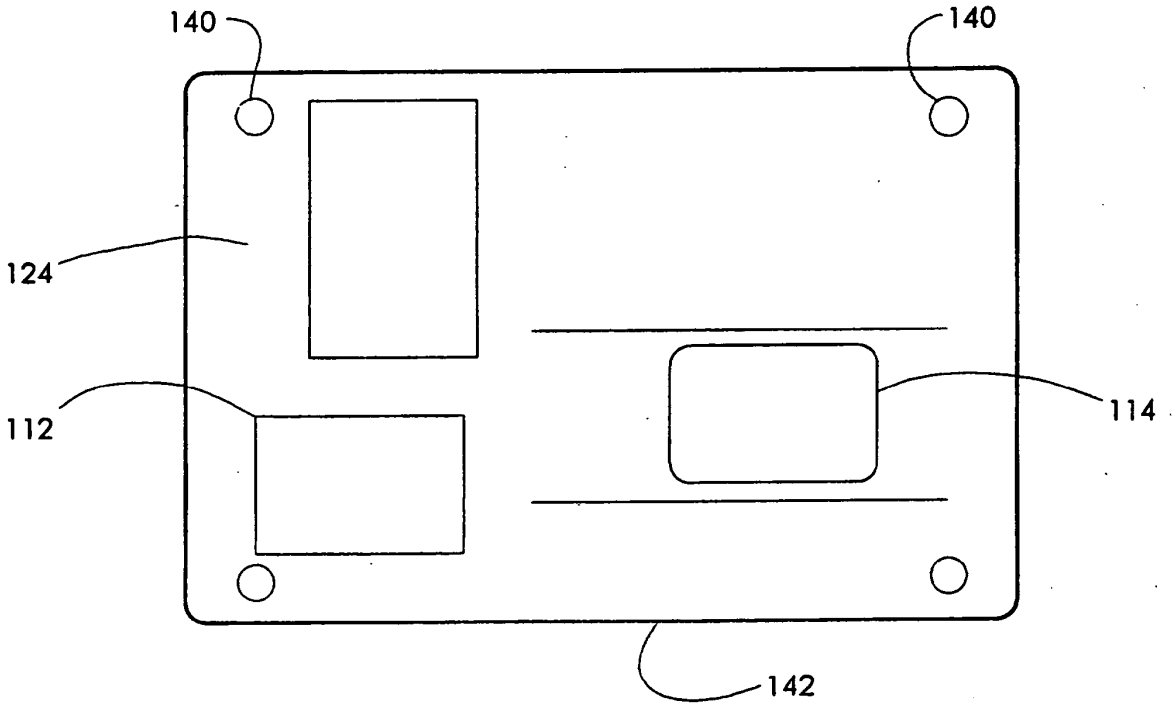
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Fig 7

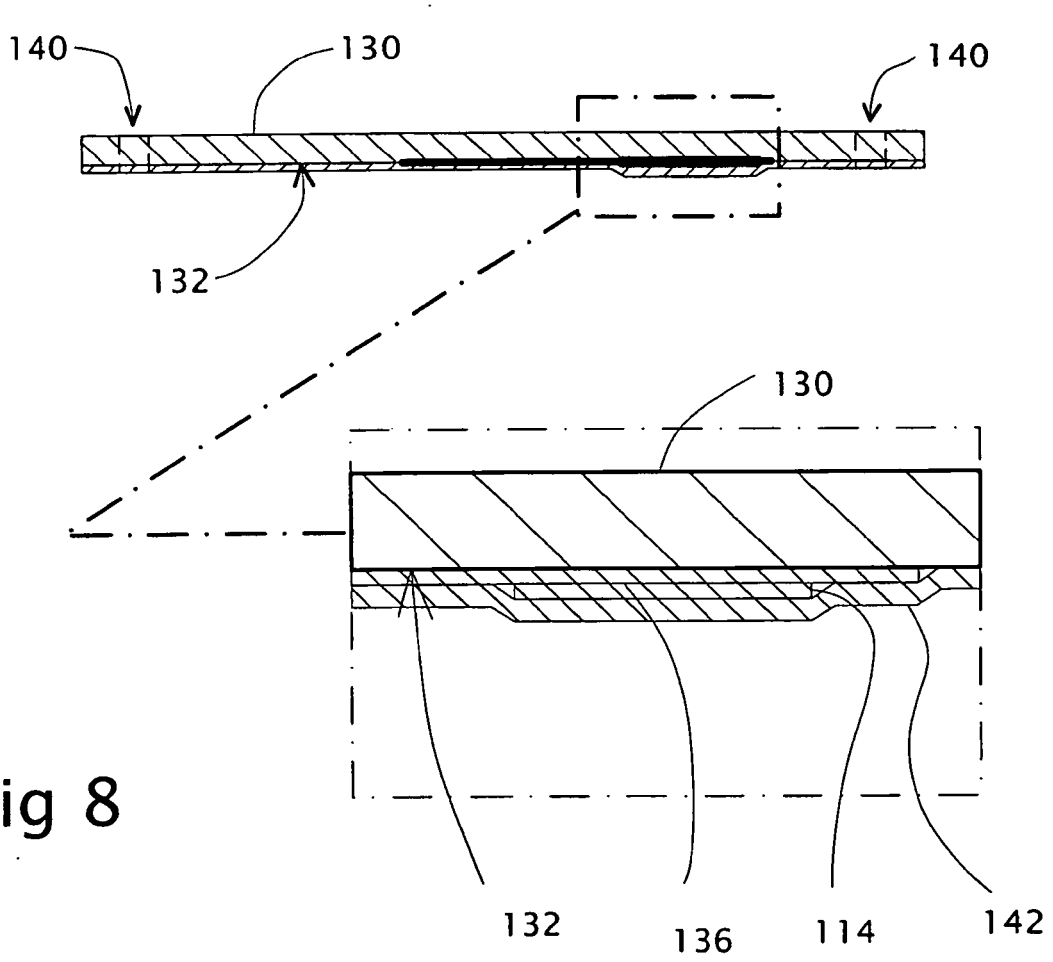

Fig 8