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(54) **A container, such as a bag or pouch, for containing a liquid or pasty material**

(57) A container, such as a bag or pouch (10), for containing a liquid or pasty material comprises first and second opposite sidewalls (12, 13), which may be made from flexible sheet material. An open pocket (17) is formed on the outer side surface of the first sidewall (12). A holder (11) for the bag or pouch (10) forms a housing having a pair of spaced front and rear walls (20, 21) for receiving the bag or pouch there between, and the front wall (20) of the housing has an upper free end adapted to be received in the pocket (17) of the bag or pouch (10) when the bag is arranged in the holder. Illustrative, advertising and/or informative matter may be printed on or otherwise applied to the front surface (15) of the pocket.

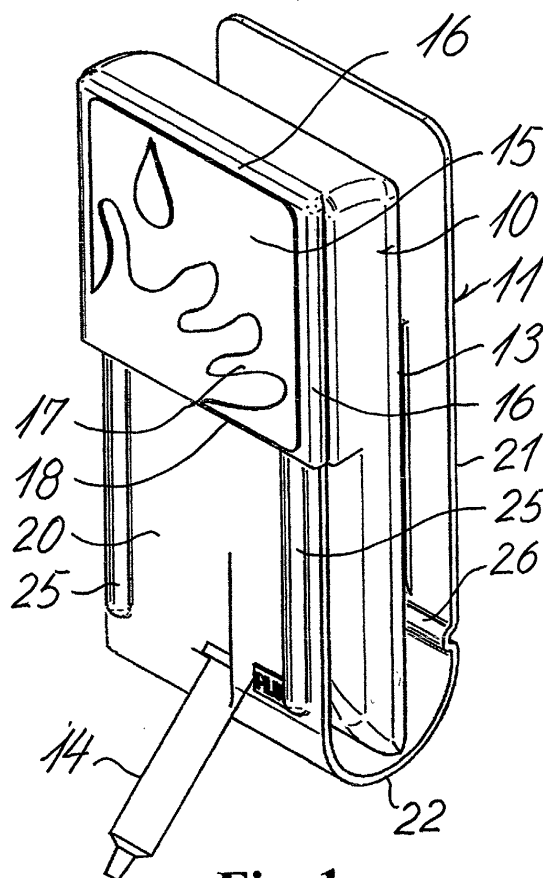


Fig. 1

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Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a container, such as a bag or pouch, for containing a liquid or pasty material, such as liquid soap, detergent, lotion, etc. Such bags may be made from plastic film, metal foil, liquid tight paper or the like. The bags or pouches of this type may, for example, be made from a pair of oppositely arranged sheet layers, which are sealed along the edge portions. Examples of such known bags or pouches are disclosed in EP-B-0690811 and WO 96/11854.

[0002] When the contents of such filled bag is to be used the bag or pouch is suspended in a holder or a dispensing device. Therefore, the known bags of this type are provided with through openings for receiving supporting pins or studs formed on the holder or dispensing device. Dispensing devices of this known type are disclosed in for example EP-A-226-290, EP-A-0 329 532, EP-A-0 433 905, US-A-4.932.562, US-A-5.016.779, WO 93/1298, and WO 94/17712

[0003] When a filled bag or pouch of the known type is suspended in a dispenser by means of pins or studs engaging with trough holes in edge portions of the pouch walls these walls are heavily stressed locally which gives rise to undesired distortion of the bag or pouch

[0004] The present invention provides a container for containing a liquid or pasty material and comprising first and second opposite walls, and suspension means for suspending the container, and the container according to the invention is characterised in that the suspension means comprises an open pocket or channel defined by said first wall on the outer side surface thereof for receiving a support member so as to support the container in a suspended condition. The term "pocket" should be interpreted in a broad sense. Thus, the pocket may be open at one side or at two opposite sides or ends. The pocket may have a rectangular outline so that the width of the pocket is substantially the same along the length thereof, or the width of the pocket may decrease continuously or in steps from an insertion opening towards an opposite end of the pocket, which may be open or closed as desired. Furthermore, the pocket and the support member may be shaped and sized so as to obtain an optimum support of the container. As an example, the support member may be a plate- or frame-like member, which extends into the pocket laterally. Alternatively, the support member may be positioned substantially vertically or it may have an oblique position, whereby the container may to some extent rest on the support member, so that not all of the weight of the container need be taken up by the pocket.

[0005] The container may exclusively or partly be made from a stiff plate or sheet material. Alternatively and preferably the container is in the form of a bag or pouch, wherein said opposite walls are made from flexible sheet material. The bag or pouch according to the invention may be made from any suitable flexible sheet material, such as paper, aluminium foil, plastic film or

laminates thereof.

[0006] The opposite walls of the container may be made from first and second layers of sheet material sealingly interconnected along at least part of the circumference of said layers, and these opposite layers may be made from the same or from different materials, such as different plastic materials. When said first and second layers are layers of plastic film, such films are advantageously interconnected, for example by heat-sealing along their edge portions.

[0007] The container according to the invention may be made in any suitable manner. Preferably, however, at least one third layer of sheet material covering at least part of the outer surface of said first layer is connected to said first layer so as to form said open pocket. As an example, the pocket may be formed by two or more separate pieces or strips of sheet material forming said third layer and being arranged in side by side relationship. Such strips may be connected to the adjacent said first layer at their opposite ends so as to form in combination a pocket having a uniform width or a continuously or stepwise decreasing width from the insertion opening of the pocket towards its opposite end. Advantageously, the first and second layers have the same size and shape. Therefore, the third layer is advantageously connected along a seam or line extending adjacent to the circumference or edge portions of said first and second layers. The third layer may cover a first end portion, only, of said first layer and may then be connected to said end portion along the outer edge portions thereof.

[0008] When the container is a bag or pouch it may be opened by cutting a portion, such as a corner portion, therefrom or by puncturing the filled bag or pouch by means of a puncturing member. Alternatively, the container may comprise a special liquid outlet, for example an outlet tube, located at a second end portion of the bag opposite to said first end portion, where the pocket is defined, so that the liquid outlet extends downwardly from the lower end of the container, when it is suspended in a holder or dispenser. Such liquid outlet may be formed separately and subsequently be applied to the container, or the outlet may be formed as an integral part of the container.

[0009] The outer surface of the pocket or third layer may be provided with advertising and/or informative matter, for example information about the contents of the container and/or about the manufacturer. The advertising and/or informative matter may be printed directly on the outer surface of the pocket. Alternatively, it may be applied to a label, which is adhered to the outer surface of the pocket, or the label having the advertising and/or informative matter applied thereto may form said third layer, which means that it is glued or otherwise attached to the outer surface of the first container layer only along its outer edge portions. It should be understood that the third layer forming the pocket may be flexible and made from for example plastic film or paper, or relatively stiff and made from for example cardboard or

a plastic plate. Furthermore, the said pocket may be defined by an outer wall, which in itself defines a pocket for receiving a sheet or label containing said advertising and/or informative matter.

[0010] According to a second aspect the present invention further provides a holder for a container as that described above and comprising a housing having a pair of spaced walls for receiving the container therebetween, one of said spaced walls having an upper free end adapted to be received in the pocket of the container. Thus, when placed in the housing the container is positioned between the spaced walls thereof so that substantially only the outer surface of the pocket or third layer carrying the advertising and/or informative matter is exposed and visible to a user. Quite often two or more holders or dispensers of the same type are positioned adjacent to one another for suspending containers containing for example detergent, liquid soap, and hand lotion, respectively. In such case a bag or pouch containing liquid soap, for example, may be placed in the lotion dispenser by a mistake. By using the holder and bag according to the invention such inadvertent change would do no harm, because the information on the visible outer surface of the pocket would clearly indicate the content of the respective container.

[0011] The said spaced walls may be front and rear walls, the upper free end of the front wall being adapted to be received in the pocket of the container.

[0012] The bottom parts of the spaced walls of the housing may be interconnected by a bottom wall so as to define a substantially U-shaped cross-section. This embodiment allows a very easy replacement of an empty container with a new one, which is filled.

[0013] According to a third aspect the present invention provides a combination of a bag or pouch according to the invention and described above and a holder therefore, said holder comprising a protruding supporting member received in said pocket. The holder and the supporting thereof may have any suitable shape. As an example, the supporting member may be a plate- or frame-like member having a size and shape so as to retain the pocket in a laterally extended position.

[0014] The holder may comprise a housing having a pair of spaced front and rear walls receiving the container therebetween, and an upper free end of the front wall may then be received in said pocket. Furthermore, the bottom parts of the front and rear walls may be interconnected by a bottom wall so as to define a substantially U-shaped cross-section.

[0015] As mentioned above, the container may comprise a liquid outlet, which extends outwardly from a plane defined by the supporting portion of the holder, and the liquid outlet may extend outwardly through an opening defined in the front wall at the lower end thereof.

[0016] The invention will now be further described with reference to the drawings, wherein

ment of the container according to the invention in the form of a bag or pouch mounted in a preferred embodiment of the holder according to the invention, and

Figs. 2-4 side, front, and top views, respectively, of the bag and the holder shown in Fig. 1.

[0017] The drawings illustrate a pouch or bag 10 of the type made from flexible sheet material, such as a plastic bag, arranged in a dispenser or holder 11. The bag 10 has a front wall 12 and a rear wall 13, which are interconnected along their circumference. An outlet tube 14 containing a valve, not shown, extends from the lower end of the front wall 12 of the bag 10.

[0018] A third wall or a piece of sheet material 15 covers the upper end portion of the front wall 12 and is connected thereto along outer edge portions 16 so as to define a pocket 17 between the front wall 12 and the sheet material 15. The pocket 17 is open along its lower end 18.

[0019] The bag or pouch 10 may be arranged in a holder 11 having a front wall 20, a rear wall 21 and a bottom wall 22, which interconnects the lower ends of the front and rear walls, respectively, so that the holder 11 is substantially U-shaped in side view, Fig. 2. The bag or pouch 10 may be mounted in the holder 11 simply by inserting the filled bag between the holder walls 20 and 21 and by inserting the upper end of the holder front wall 20 into the pocket 17 formed on the front wall 12 of the bag whereby the bag or pouch 10 is suspended in the space defined between the holder walls 20 and 21 as best shown in Figs. 1 and 2. The outlet tube 14 may project outwardly through an opening formed in the bottom wall 22 or front wall 20 of the holder 11. A mounting plate 23 having holes 24 therein for receiving screw heads is fixed to the outer surface of the rear wall 21 of the holder so that the holder 11 may be removably mounted on a wall or the like. The front wall 20 of the holder may be reinforced by means of a pair of vertically extending beads or corrugations 25 as shown in Fig. 1.

[0020] As apparent from the front view shown in Fig. 3 the only clearly visible parts of a bag or pouch 10 mounted in the holder 11 are the outer surface of the sheet material 15 forming the pocket 17 and the outlet tube 14, respectively. As shown in Figs. 1 and 3, illustrative, advertising and/or informative matter may be applied to or printed on the outer surface of the piece of sheet material 15. As an example, the illustration and/or information may be printed on a label, which is then fastened to the sheet material 15.

[0021] The holder 11 may be made from any suitable material, such as sheet metal or injection moulded plastic material.

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a preferred embodi-

Claims

1. A container for containing a liquid or pasty material and comprising first and second opposite walls (12, 13), and suspension means (17) for suspending the container (10),
characterised in that the suspension means comprises an open pocket (17) or channel defined by said first wall (12) on the outer side surface thereof for receiving a support member (20) so as to support the container in a suspended condition.
2. A container according to claim 1 in the form of a bag or pouch, wherein said opposite walls are made from flexible sheet material.
3. A container according to claim 1, wherein the opposite walls (12,13) are made from first and second layers of sheet material sealingly interconnected along at least part of the circumference of said layers.
4. A container according to claim 3, wherein said first and second layers are layers of plastic film interconnected, for example by heat sealing.
5. A container according to claim 3 or 4, wherein a third layer of sheet material (15) covering at least part of the outer surface of said first layer (12) is connected to said first layer so as to form said open pocket (17).
6. A container according to claim 5, wherein said third layer (15) is connected along a seam or line extending adjacent to the circumference or edge portions of said first and second layers (12, 13).
7. A container according to claim 5 or 6, wherein said third layer (15) covers a first end portion, only, of said first layer (12) and is connected to said end portion along the outer edge portions thereof.
8. A container according to claim 7, further comprising a liquid outlet (14) located at a second end portion opposite to said first end portion.
9. A container according to any of the claims 1-8, wherein the outer surface of said pocket or third layer (15) is provided with advertising and/or informative matter.
10. A container according to claim 9, wherein the advertising and/or informative matter is contained on a label adhered to the outer surface of the pocket.
11. A container according to claim 9, wherein said pocket is defined by an outer wall, which in itself defines a pocket for receiving a sheet or label containing said advertising and/or informative matter.
12. A holder for a container according to any of the claims 1-11 and comprising a housing having a pair of spaced walls (20, 21) for receiving the container (10) therebetween, one of said spaced walls (20) having an upper free end adapted to be received in the pocket (17) of the container (10).
13. A holder according to claim 12, wherein said spaced walls are front and rear walls, the upper free end of the front wall being adapted to be received in the pocket (17) of the container (10).
14. A holder according to claim 12 or 13, wherein the bottom parts of the spaced walls (20, 21) are interconnected by a bottom wall (22) so as to define a substantially U-shaped cross-section.
15. A combination of a container (10) according to any of the claims 1-11 and a holder (11) therefor, said holder comprising a protruding supporting member (20) received in said pocket (17).
16. A combination according to claim 15, wherein the supporting member is a plate- or frame-like member (20) having a size and shape so as to retain the pocket (17) in a laterally extended position.
17. A combination according to claim 15 or 16, wherein the holder (11) comprises a housing having a pair of spaced front and rear walls (20, 21) receiving the container (10) therebetween, an upper free end of the front wall (20) being received in said pocket (17).
18. A combination according to claim 17, wherein the bottom parts of the front and rear walls (20, 21) are interconnected by a bottom wall (22) so as to define a substantially U-shaped cross-section.
19. A combination according to any of the claims 15-18, wherein the container (10) comprises a liquid outlet (14), which extends outwardly from a plane, defined by the supporting portion of the holder.
20. A combination according to any of the claims 17-19, wherein the liquid outlet (14) extends outwardly through an opening defined in the front wall (20) at the lower end thereof.

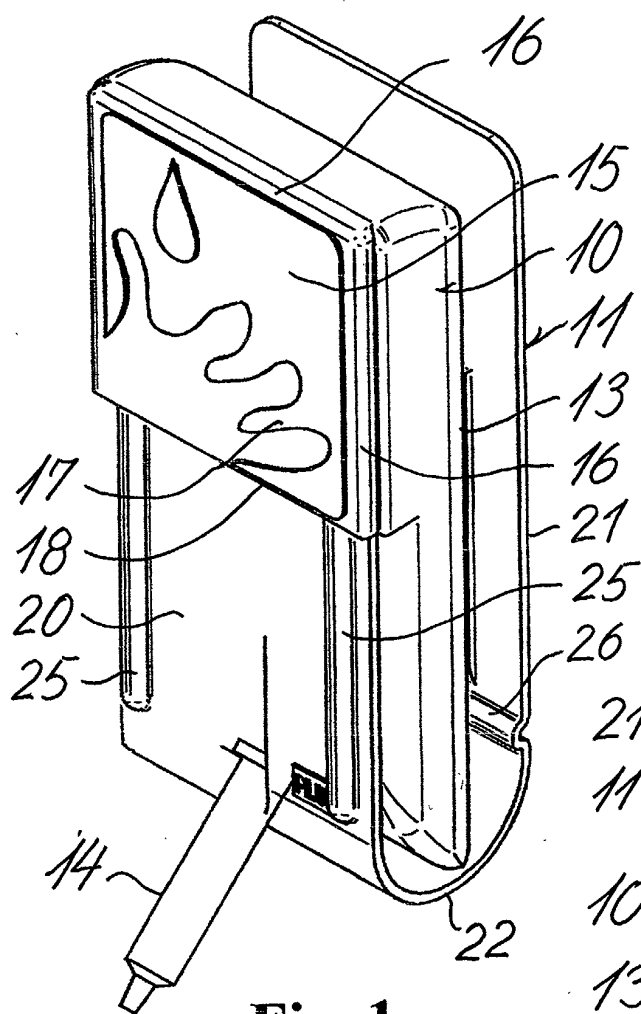


Fig. 1

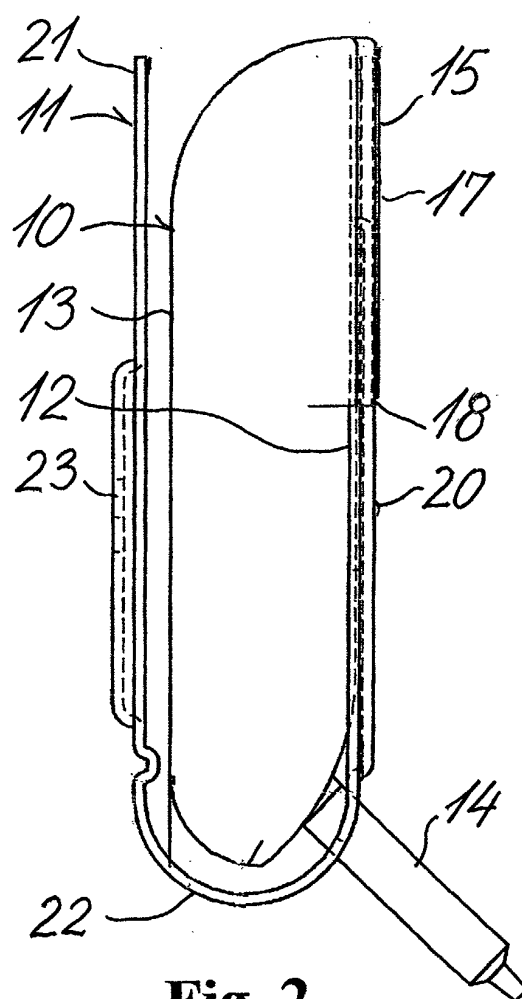


Fig. 2

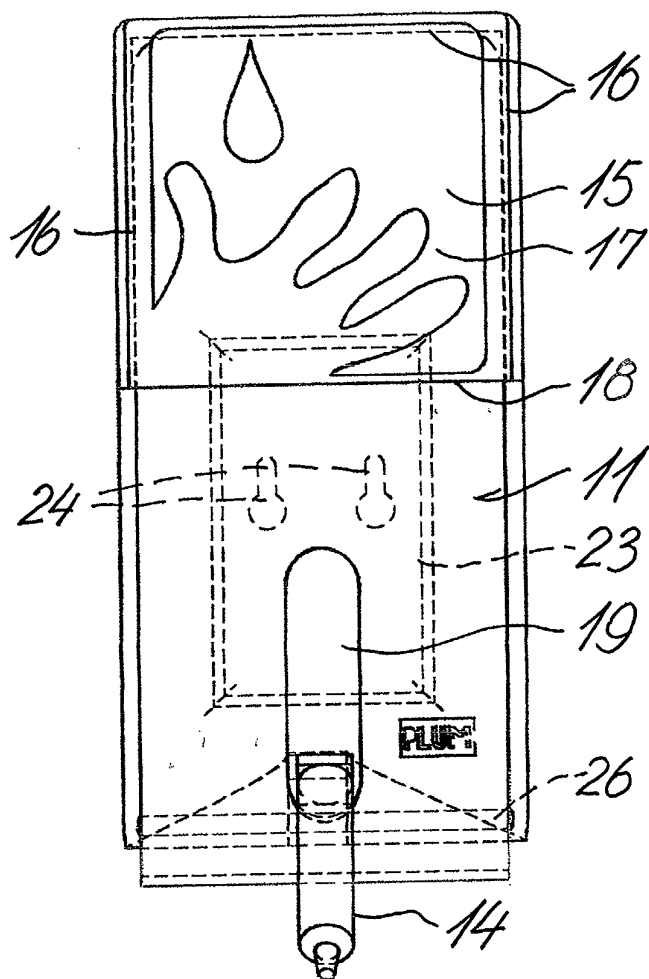


Fig. 3

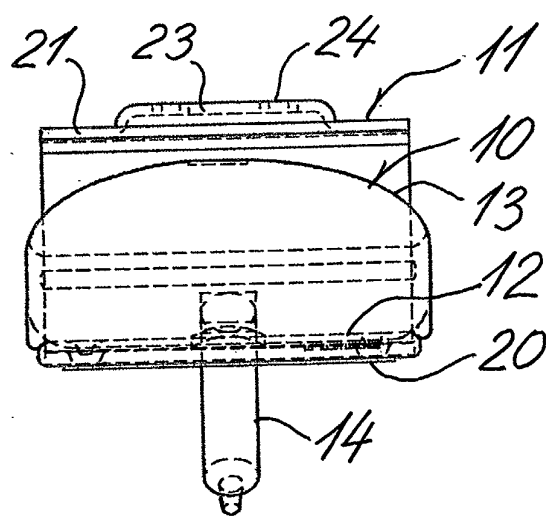


Fig. 4



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 01 61 0133

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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE		1 March 2002	Delzor, F
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EPO FORM 1503 03/02 (P04001)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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EP 01 61 0133

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