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(54) **Object-holding case**

(57) Case comprising a flat base (2) having an articulation zone (22) that divides it into a first (21) and second (20) portion, a first box-shaped body (5) fixed to the first (21) portion on three sides, leaving the side facing the articulation zone free, a second box-shaped

body (4) fixed to the second portion (20) on three sides, leaving the side facing the first body free, said second body extending to partially cover the first body, said flat base being able to take up an extended configuration in which the case is closed, and a folded configuration in which the case is open.

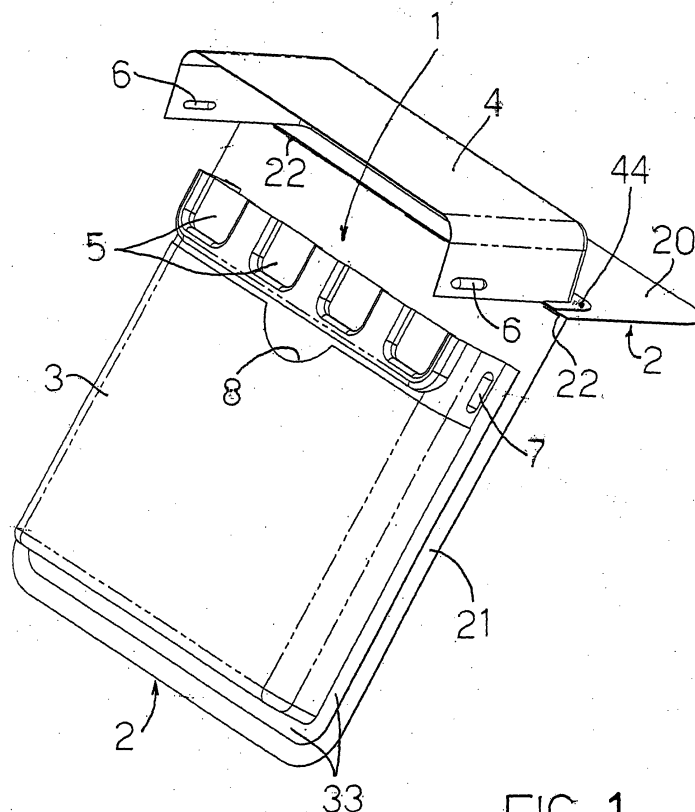


FIG. 1

EP 1 500 346 A1

Description

[0001] The present finding refers to a case, or box, for containing generally small objects, in general objects of elongated shape like, for example, writing implements.

[0002] A purpose of the finding is that of providing a case, or box, that is structured so as to be able to be used as a display item for such objects by the retailer, and as a tabletop object-holder by the buyer thereof.

[0003] A further purpose is that of realising a case that is practical, easy and quick to open and close and to access its contents.

[0004] Another purpose of the finding is that of realising a case that is light and handy, and capable of holding its contents in an organised way.

[0005] Yet another purpose is that of providing an object-holding case that can be obtained in short time periods and at a low cost.

[0006] Said purposes are accomplished thanks to the characterising elements indicated in the claims.

[0007] In a totally general way, the case (or box) under consideration consists of a generally flat casing defining an object-holding space, divided into two portions that are articulated according to a generatrix belonging to a face of said casing, in such a way as to take up an extended configuration and a folded configuration in which said space is respectively closed and open. Preferably, said casing comprises a flat shaped body that is generally tub-shaped, where said tub is separated into two parts, and is closed by a generally sheeted element, or base, which carries said book-type articulation.

[0008] The quoted articulation is realised in a single piece with said sheeted element, and preferably has the shape of a predetermined folding line.

[0009] Preferably, said two parts constituting said tub overlap each other for a portion at their separation zone, where they preferably have mutual engagement means arranged to stabilise said extended configuration of the casing.

[0010] The characteristics and constructive merits of the finding shall become clear from the following detailed description, made with reference to the figures of the attached tables of drawings, where:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view that shows the case open and empty.

FIG. 2 shows the case closed seen from the front.

FIG. 3 is the left-hand side view of FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 is a perspective view that shows the case open in the configuration of use of its contents.

[0011] From the quoted figures it should be noted that the case consists of a casing of generally thin thickness that provides an object-holding space indicated with 1 in FIGS. 1 and 4.

[0012] In the case shown (see FIG. 4) said objects consist of felt-tip pens, or highlighters, 10.

[0013] Said casing is obtained by joining together a

sheeted element 2 and two generally flat box-shaped bodies 3 and 4.

[0014] The sheeted element 2 has a right-angled shape with rounded corners, in the figures rectangular-shaped, and is obtained starting from a flat sheet of generally flexible material, which may or may not be transparent.

[0015] For the purposes of the finding a sheet of paper has proven advantageous, but of course there is nothing to prevent the use of other sheeted materials, like sheets of cardboard, sheets of plastic (e.g. PVC) and aluminium foil.

[0016] The same element 2 is divided into two parts 20 and 21 of different size joined by a predetermined folding line 22 that runs parallel to its shorter sides.

[0017] Moreover, the shortest part 20 of said element 2 has a slotted opening 23 at the edge (FIG. 2).

[0018] As far as the generally flat box-shaped bodies 3 and 4 are concerned, they are right-angle shaped in plan and are individually obtained by thermoforming starting from a generally thin sheet or strip of flexible and generally rigid synthetic material.

[0019] For the purposes of the finding a plastic material like PVC has proven suitable, but another analogous synthetic material can, of course, be used.

[0020] The thickness of said starting sheets or strips shall, of course, be suitable for the use of the case, and in general it shall be of the same order of magnitude as that of the sheeted element 2, which is usually in the order of a few tens of a millimetre.

[0021] Preferably, at least one of the starting sheets for obtaining said bodies 3 and 4 is transparent, to at least partially visualise the objects 10.

[0022] The bodies 3 and 4 are individually shaped like a bowl without a wall, and said two bowl shapes, when they are coplanar as shown in FIGS. 2 and 3, realise a sort of tub that is closed by the sheeted element 2.

[0023] In particular, the quoted bodies 3 and 4 are intended to be joined to the respective parts 21 and 20 of the element 2, for example through gluing or another equivalent technique, like welding.

[0024] For such a purpose the end rims of the three side walls of the body 3 are turned back square towards the outside, to provide an attachment foot 33, whereas the body 4 has an attachment foot 44 that engages all of its intermediate side wall and just a short portion of the other two (FIGS. 1 and 2).

[0025] In particular, the foot 44 is fixed to the part 20 of the element 2 in the immediate vicinity of the predetermined folding line 22.

[0026] Moreover, the two bodies 3 and 4 are joined to the element 2 in such a way that when they are coplanar, their laterally open zones overlap each other.

[0027] In particular, the laterally open zone of the body 4 overlaps that of the body 3, where with its base wall it covers the cuts 5 formed on the base wall of the body 3.

[0028] These cuts 5 act as fastening seats for the clips for the felt-tip pens, or highlighters, 10 as shown in FIG.

4.

[0029] Moreover, engagement means are associated with said laterally open zones of said bodies 3 and 4 suitable for stabilising the extended configuration of the case according to FIGS. 2 and 3.

[0030] Said means comprise two impressions 6 that are formed inside the sides of the laterally open zone of the body 4, and are intended to snap engage with two matching projections 7 formed outside of the sides of the laterally open zone of the body 3 (FIGS. 1-4).

[0031] Finally, close to the cuts a central recess 8 is foreseen, which has the function of receiving the end of a finger at the moment of opening the case.

[0032] The use of the finding is clear.

[0033] When the case is closed like in FIGS. 2 and 3, it can be used as a display item for the sale of the objects 10.

[0034] In general, it is hung on a support hook through the opening 23.

[0035] To remove one or more objects 10 it is only necessary to fold the case as shown in FIG. 1, and then reclose it.

[0036] On the other hand, when the case is in the possession of a user, it can be exploited as a tabletop object-holder.

[0037] In such a case it can be rested upon a support surface in the folded configuration according to FIG. 4, where said configuration shall be stabilised for partial withdrawal of an object 10 from the object-holding space 1.

4. Case according to claim 1, **characterised in that**, beyond the free edge of the second box-shaped body intended to overlap the first box-shaped body, said first box-shaped body has a cut for the manual fastening of said free edge and the unlocking of said snap engagement.

5. Case according to claim 1, **characterised in that** the articulation zone is realised in a single piece with said flat base.

6. Case according to claim 5, **characterised in that** the articulation zone is a predetermined folding line.

7. Case according to claim 1, **characterised in that** said flat base has a band generally parallel to said articulation zone that overlaps the corresponding edge of the tub, and carries an opening for hanging the case.

Claims

1. Object-holding case, **characterised in that** it comprises a flat base having an articulation zone that divides it into a first and second portion, a first box-shaped body fixed to the first portion on three sides, leaving the side facing the articulation zone free, a second box-shaped body fixed to the second portion on three sides, leaving the side facing the first body free, said second body extending to partially cover the first body, said flat base being able to take up an extended configuration in which the case is closed, and a folded configuration in which the case is open.
2. Case according to claim 1, **characterised in that** at said partial overlapping means are foreseen suitable for stabilising said extended configuration.
3. Case according to claim 2, **characterised in that** said means comprise at least one projection and at least one matching impression that are formed on the mutually overlapping portions of the two box-shaped bodies, and are suitable for snap engaging according to a slightly forced coupling.

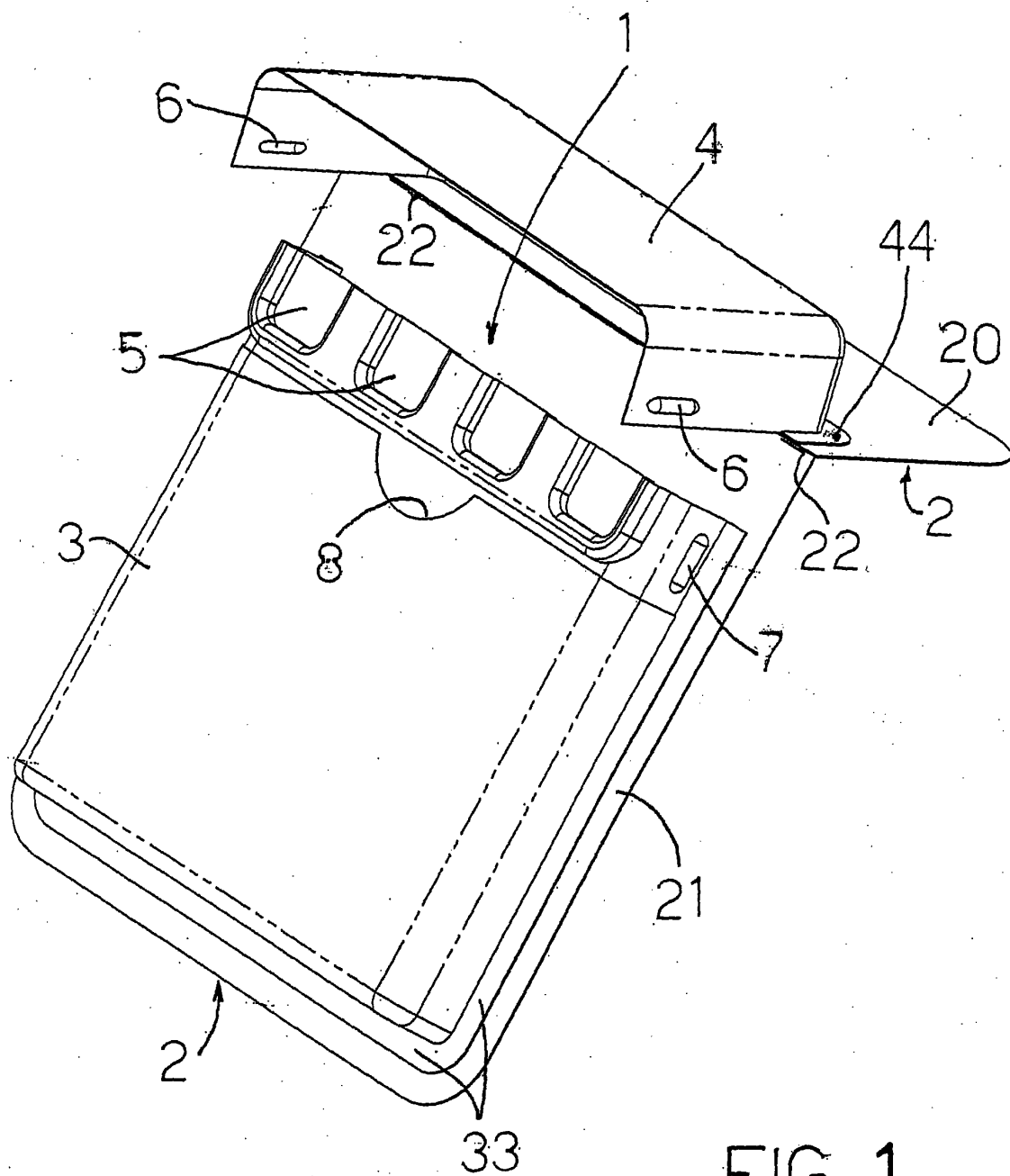


FIG. 1

FIG. 3

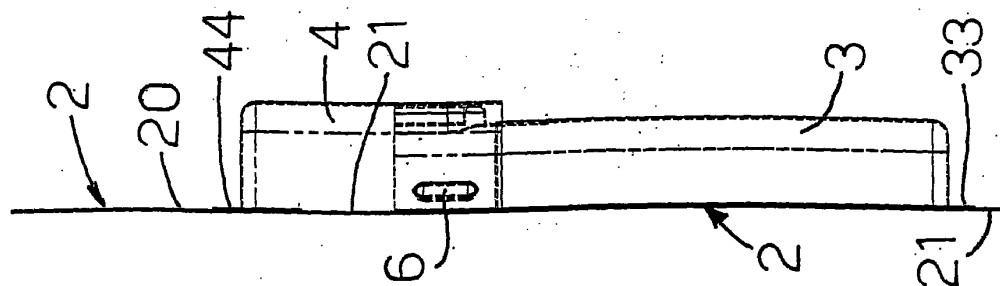
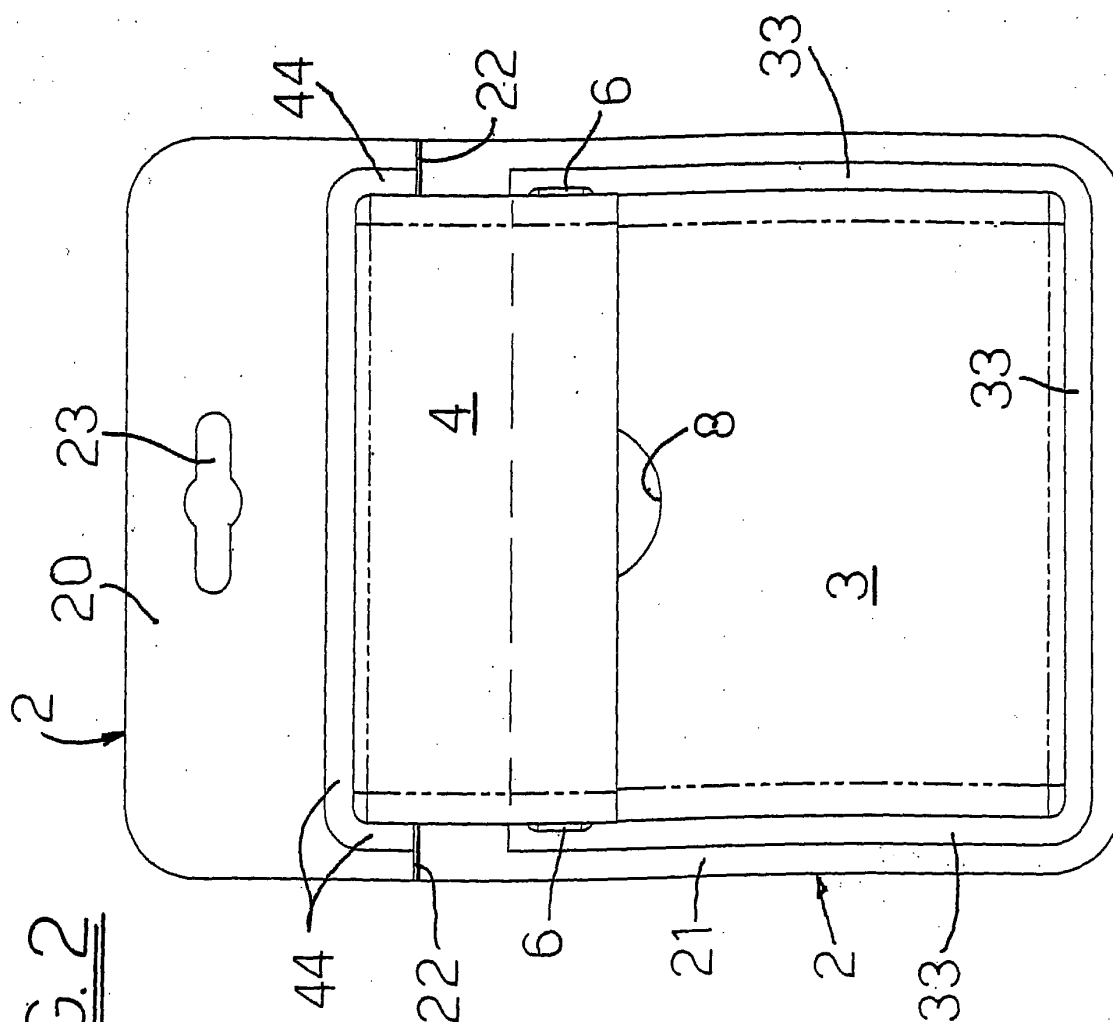


FIG. 2



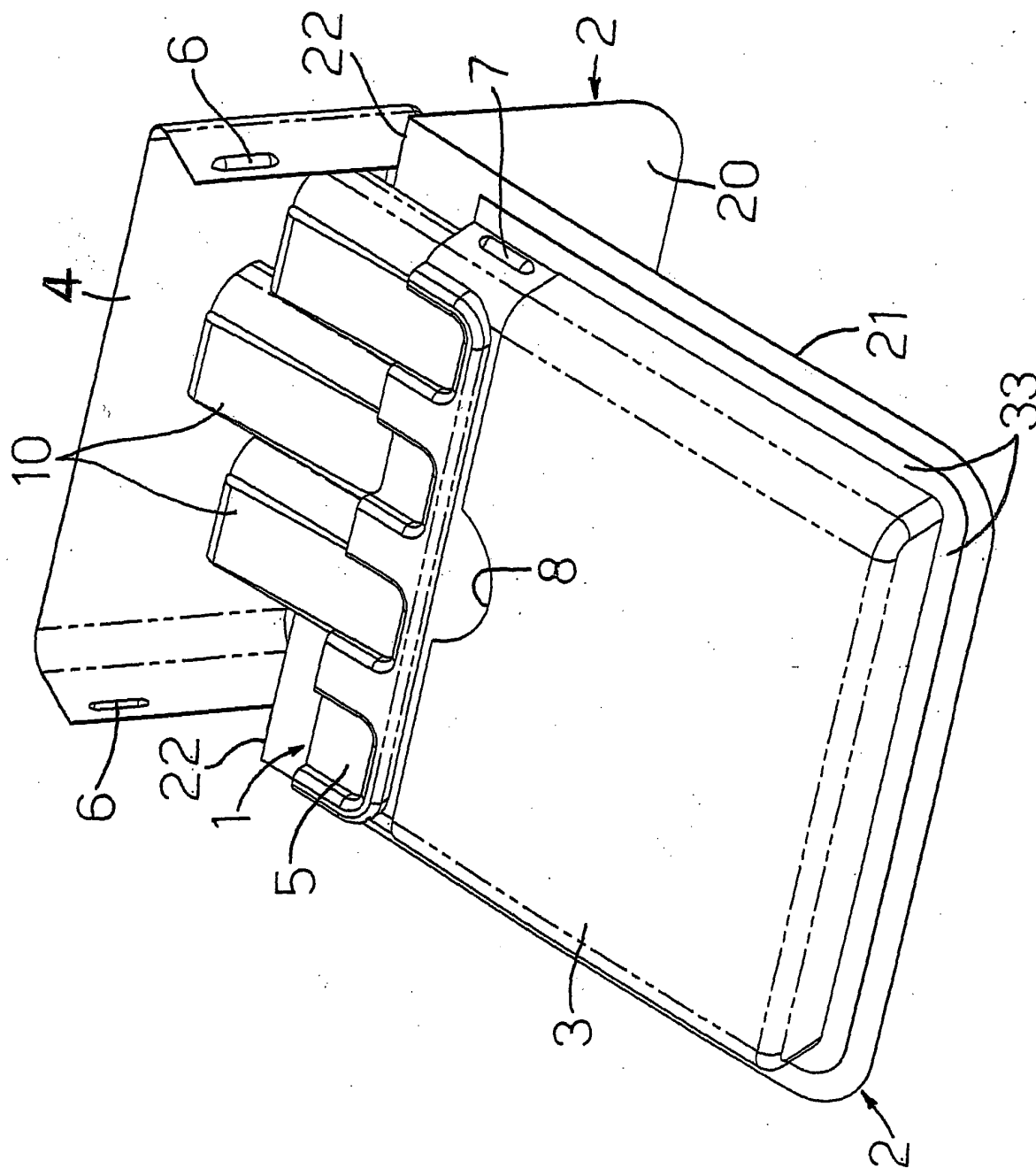


FIG. 4



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 04 07 6967

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 26 October 2004	Examiner Lang, D
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The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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