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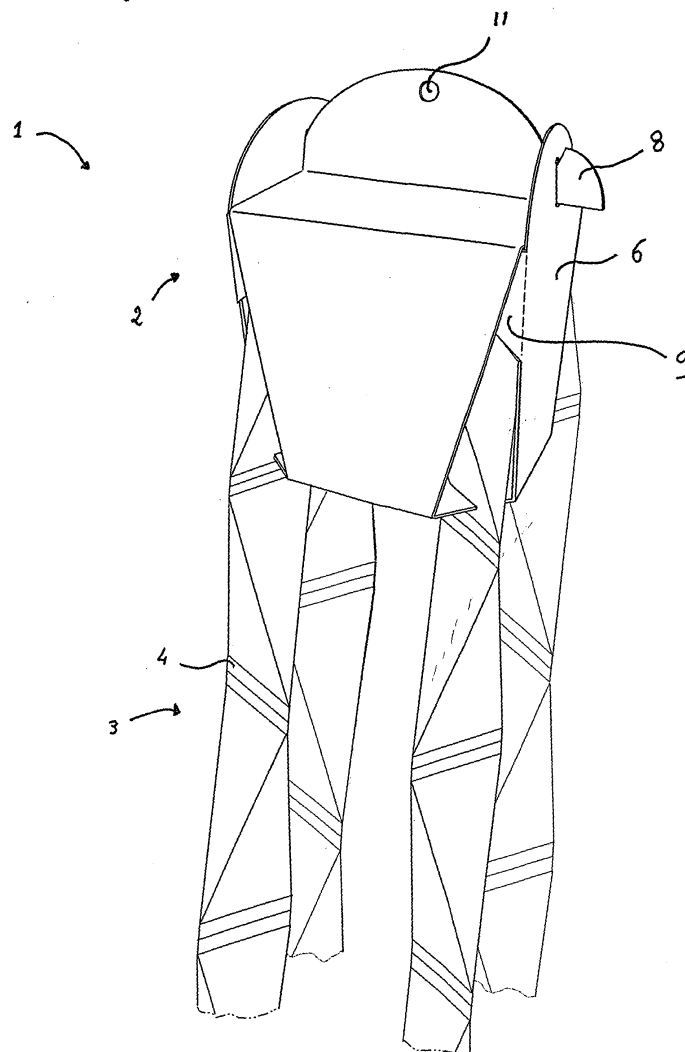
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(54) **Device for displaying chains of packages**

(57) A display device (1) to hang chains of packages, which offers easy removal and replenishment of ar-

ticles, comprising a flat carrier (2) with at least two slots suitable to suspend chains of packages (3) which are connected by the flat end.

Figure 1



Description

Background of the invention:

[0001] The present invention provides a new way of hanging and displaying various types of packages that are formed in a chain during merchandising or storage at home.

[0002] Providing a display device for point of sale that offers excellent visibility and high level of convenience is a constant preoccupation for manufacturers. Moreover, these two features are very important for point of sale such as public markets.

[0003] However, the shapes of the products could be problematic because a tetrahedron for example, will take a lot of space in a bulk and it is very difficult to hang it. Another drawback is that the bulk must be disposed on a shelf and so consumers cannot easily identify the nature of the product. Also, the bulk display is not pleasing to the eye and may give the consumer a negative image of the product.

[0004] The main objective of the invention is to provide a display device for displaying chained, packages, which give a clear product differentiation. Beside providing excellent visibility on shelf display, the system will allow consumers to make purchase either in a single unit or several units in a short chain by simply tearing and separating the packages apart.

[0005] Another objective of the invention is to allow the product to be easily removed and refilled by the consumer or retailer.

[0006] Another objective of the invention is to provide a device, which is cost effective, i.e. inexpensive to produce.

[0007] Another objective of the device is that it should be easily formed and implemented by the retailers.

[0008] Another objective of the device is to provide a firm support for the chained packages during display even if the shape is different. For example, the chained packages can be either in tetrahedron, 3 side-seal, 4 side-seal or pillow bag packaging format.

Summary of the invention:

[0009] The invention concerns a display device to hang chains of packages, which offers easy removal and replenishment of articles, comprising a flat carrier with at least two slots suitable to suspend chains of packages which are connected by the flat end.

[0010] As a result of these features, each display channel allows the engagement of the first package of the chain by inserting the first flat end between two packs into the slot, the chain being hanged firmly on the display device.

[0011] The chains can be located at the comers along the vertical edge or at the middle of flat surface of the carrier.

[0012] According to one preferred embodiment of the

invention, the display device can hang the packages by combination of the slot with flexible walls wherein said walls act as front guides to prevent the package from falling forward during the costumer separating the packages.

[0013] Moreover the flexible walls have at their upper end a self-locking system so the display device can easily be formed. The device can be hanged with a hook during merchandising so it is very pleasing and eye-catching at the point of purchase. Advertising can be printed on the flexible walls to provide greater marketing communication to attract the consumer.

[0014] According to one preferred embodiment of the invention, the display device can be formed of semi-rigid or rigid material such as paperboard, plastic, flexible metal or whatever material with these features. Rigidity is also ensured by the geometry of the device, which supports the total weight of the products to be hanged.

[0015] With flexible walls, the display device is forming a "closed area" so the opening should be big enough to allow the removal & replenishment of the first package of a chain.

Opening is defined by the space between two adjacent flexible walls. It can have different shapes adapted to packages to be hanged.

Brief description of the drawing:

[0016] Other features and advantages of the present invention will appear in the following description of a preferred embodiment of the display device in which the flat carrier comprises at least three sides, each side is fitted by a slot suitable to suspend a chain of packages.

[0017] This embodiment is given by way of non-limiting example with reference to the annexed drawings, in which:

- Figure 1 is a perspective view of a typical example of the display device with tetrahedron products chains;
- Figure 2 is a view of the display device in its blank form;
- Figure 3 is a general view of a typical example of the display device without any chains of product.

Detailed description:

[0018]

Figure 1 shows a general perspective view of a display device, designated by the general reference number (1). It is formed by a flat carrier and 4 flexible walls, designated by the general reference number (2), with a chain of tetrahedron products hanged at each angle of the device, designated by the general reference number (3). Said device being intended to be installed in a point of sale for merchandising purpose.

Typically, the products in chain are connected by their flat ends (4). This kind of tetrahedral package is well known in the art and is used in many fields in particular in the food industry. They are suitable for containing any type of product such as liquid, paste, solid particulates, dehydrated powder or granules, etc.

The flexible walls (6) are formed to guide and support the chains. These walls, after having been formed, have a self-locking system by means of flaps (8,9).

This self-locking system has a hole (11), which can serve to hang the device at for example a hook.

Figure (2) shows a view of the blank of the invention. It is still the display device with flexible walls referenced by number (2). This view shows precisely the slaps, which serve to form the "cube". In this example, the display device is composed by four sides so it has four slots (5) that are located in the flat carrier (7). The combination of these two parts of the blank is the base of the invention. The flat end between two packages (4) is to be engaged into the slot (5), which supports the weight of the chain.

However, the display device may work without these walls (6), the walls are described here as an example to show how it can improve the aesthetics effect during merchandising.

On the drawing there are two holes, (10), which are the openings for the flaps (8).

Figure 3 shows a general view of the display device, designated by the general reference number (2), without the packages.

It has been formed and it is possible to see the openings and slots in which the product is engaged for replenishment.

The flaps (9) are folded up under the flexible walls in order to strengthen the device.

[0019] In the embodiment described, the device (2) has the shape of a cube with four openings having triangle shape. However, this is just an example, the device could also design with three sides and so there will be three slots for hanging three chains. One can also imagine a device with an octagon or a dodecagon shape, for example.

In addition, the openings may be triangle or of any other appropriate shape as long it allows the package to be inserted and hang firmly.

[0020] The foregoing description will enable those skilled in the art to recognize additional improvements, modifications and/or applications which nonetheless fall within the scope of the invention defined by the annexed claims.

offers easy removal and replenishment of articles, comprising a flat carrier with at least two slots suitable to suspend chains of packages which are connected by the flat end.

2. A display device according to claim 1, suitable to hang the packages by combination of the slot with flexible walls wherein, said walls act as front guides.
3. A display device according to any of claim 1 and 2, wherein the flexible walls have an opening to allow the replenishment.
4. A display device according to any of the preceding claims wherein the flexible walls have at their upper end a self locking system
5. A display device according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the packages have the shape of: tetrahedron, 3 side-seal, 4 side-seal or pillow bag.
6. A display device according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the packages, which are hanged, are connected by their flat ends to form a chain
7. A display device according to any of the preceding claims, which is formed of paperboard, plastic or flexible metal or whatever adapted material.
8. A display device according to any of the preceding claims, wherein advertising can be printed on the flexible walls.
9. A method according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the display device is used during merchandising or for the home storage.
10. A display device according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the flat carrier comprises at least three sides, each side is fitted by a slot suitable to suspend a chain of packages.

Claims

1. A display device to hang chains of packages, which

Figure 1

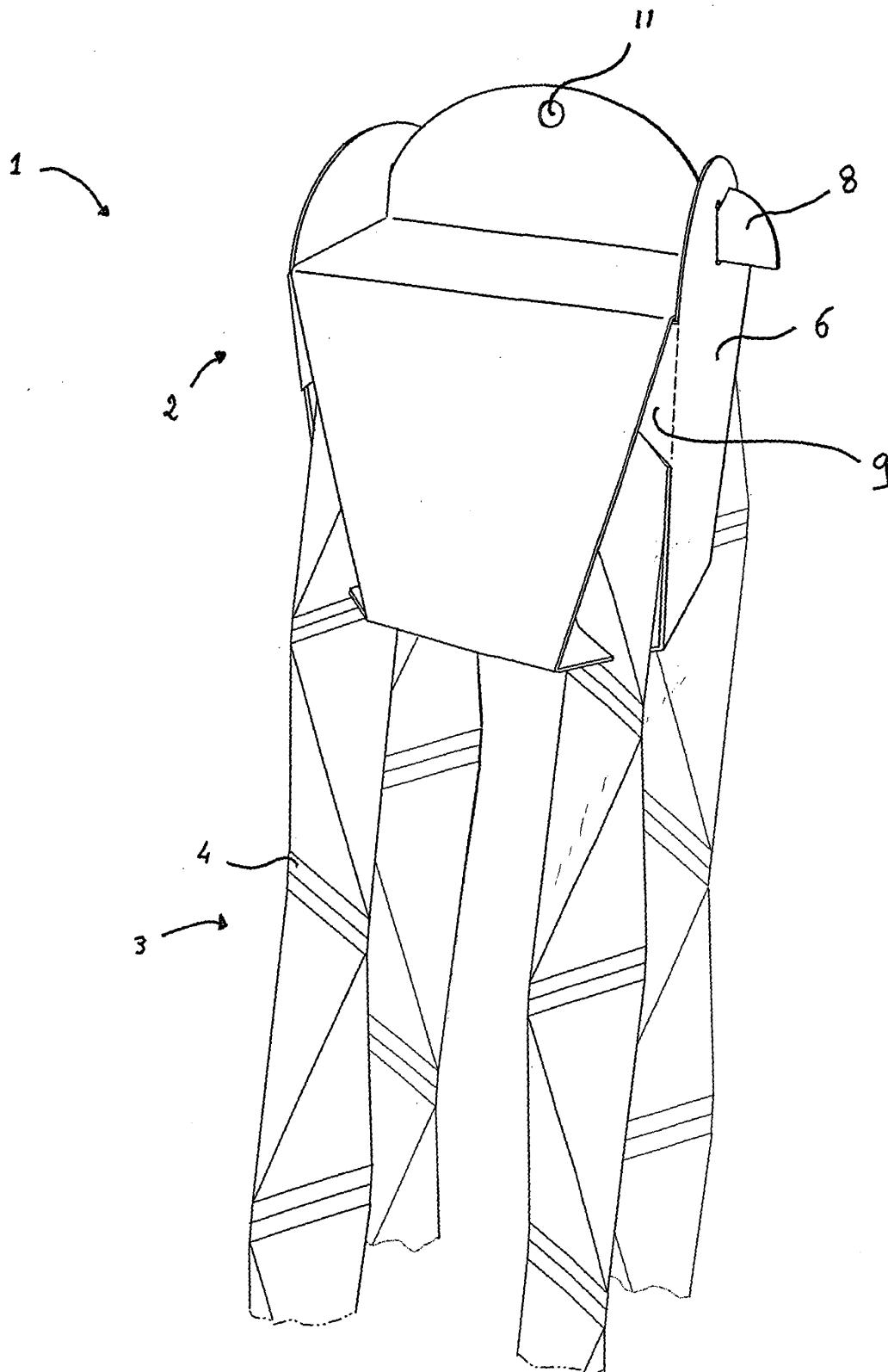


Figure 2

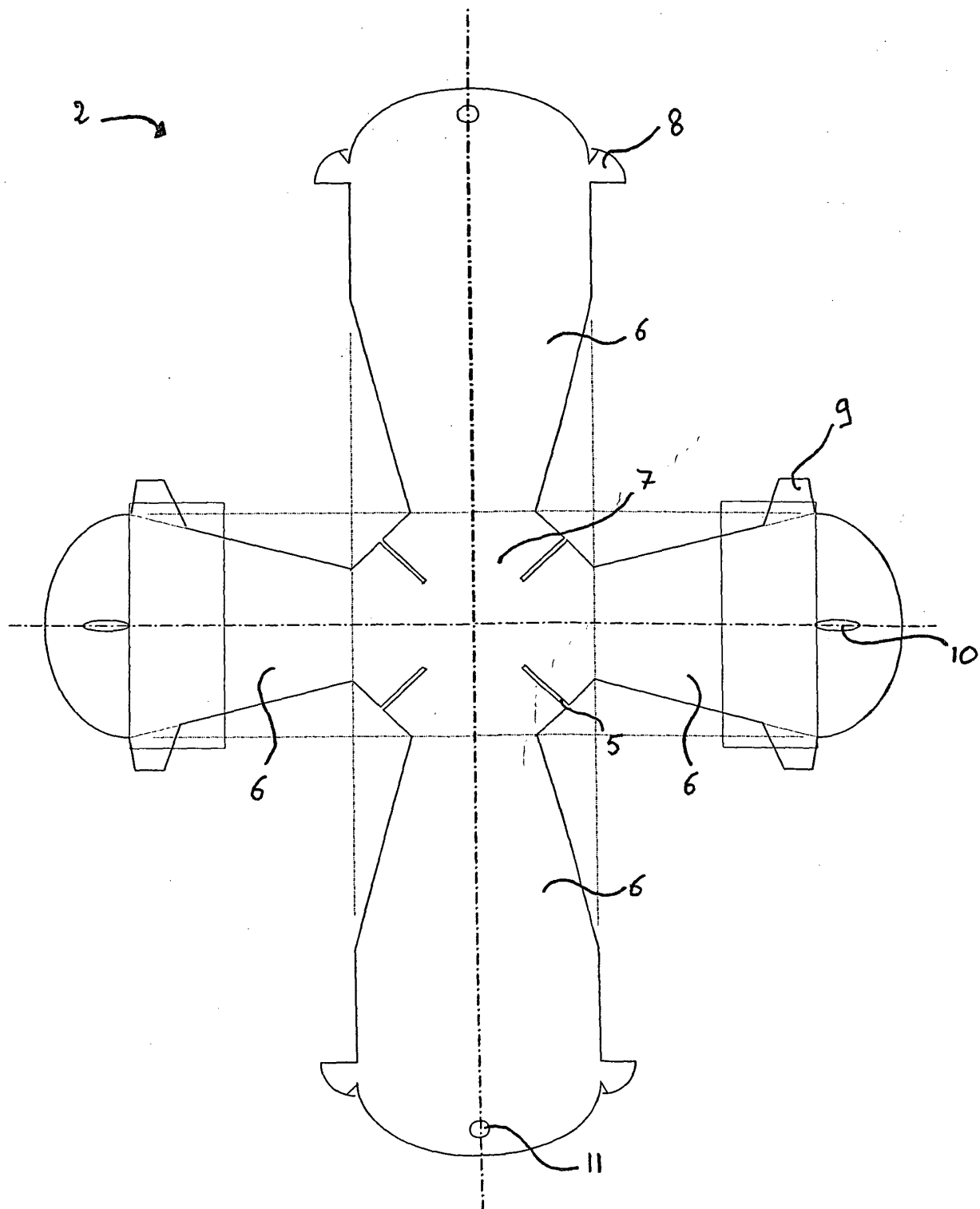
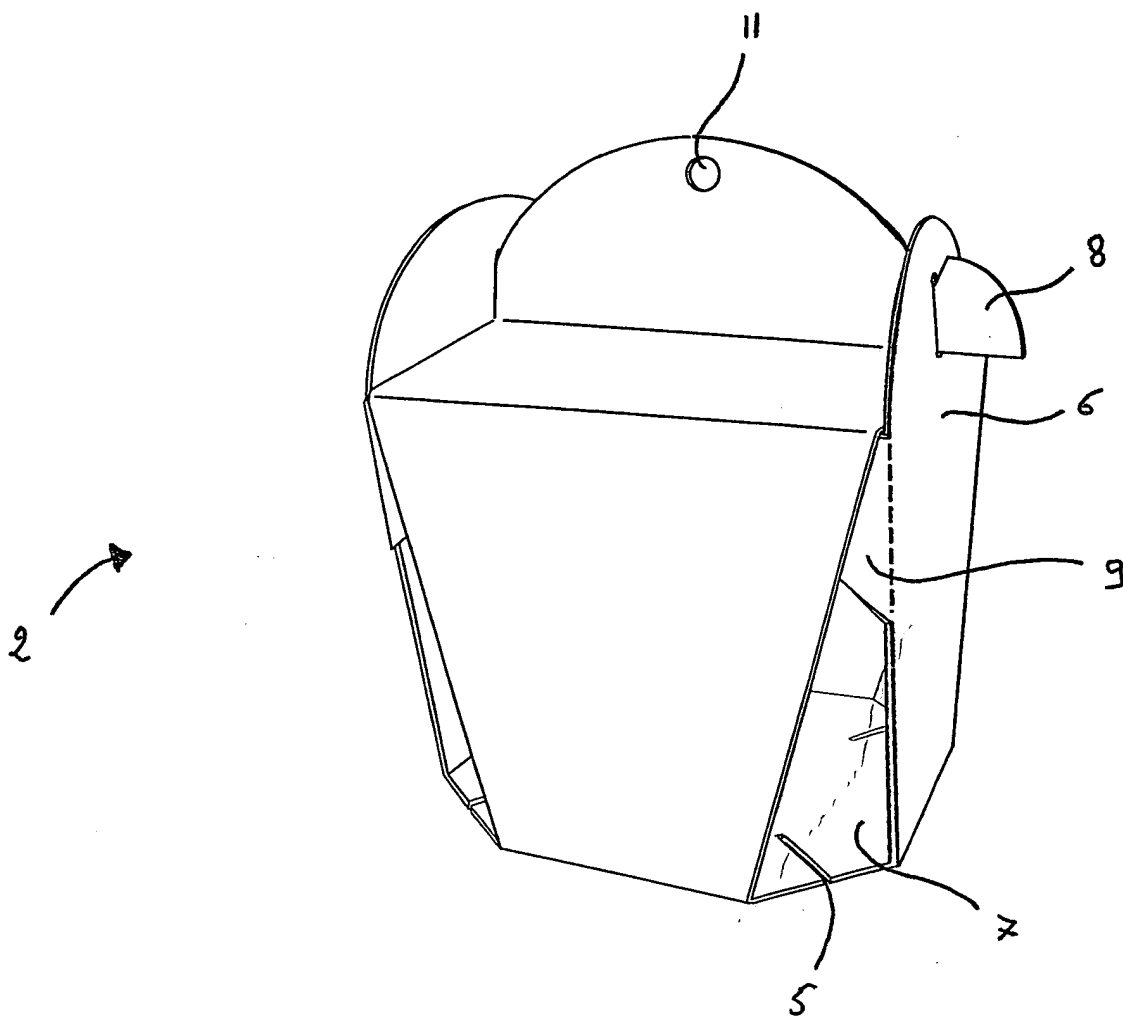


Figure 3





European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 03 01 8540

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.7)
X	WO 02 094678 A (LU WEI JUN ;KONDO MASAHIRO (JP); PROCTER & GAMBLE (US)) 28 November 2002 (2002-11-28) * page 2, line 14 - line 22 * * page 4, line 25 - line 34 * * page 5, line 15 - line 16 * * page 9, line 33 - page 10, line 6; figure 1 *	1,5-7,9	B65D75/56
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A	FR 1 446 349 A (BISCUITERIE ALSACIENNE) 10 October 1966 (1966-10-10) * figures 1-3 *		
A	EP 0 637 428 A (C Q M) 8 February 1995 (1995-02-08) * claim 1; figure 1 *		
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			B65D A47F
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE		23 January 2004	Mans-Kamerbeek, M
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 03/02 (P04001)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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EP 03 01 8540

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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