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(54) **Adhesive labels**

(57) Liner material 12 carries an adhesive label 14. The liner material includes a first, outer portion 26 and a second, inner portion 28 which are separated by a cut 30 and are individually releasable from the label 14. The

outer portion 26 can be removed in order to attach the self-adhesive label 14 to an article. The label 14 can subsequently be peeled from the article to reveal the inner portion 28, which may be printed to serve as a redeemable coupon or voucher, for example.

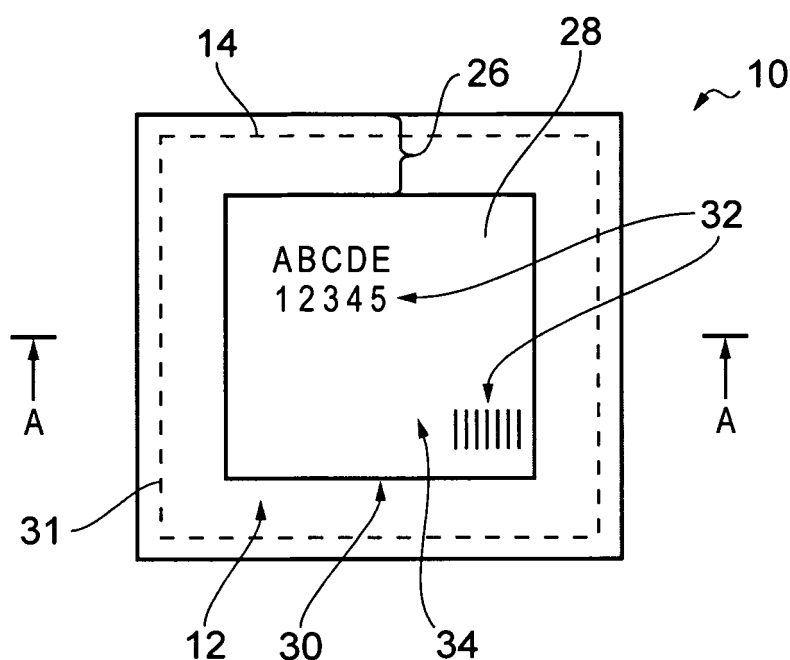


FIG. 1

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to adhesive labels and/or to an adhesive label web and/or to a method for manufacturing adhesive labels.

[0002] Adhesive labels are commonly affixed to the surfaces of objects, such as cans, tins and jars, containing food products. Such adhesive labels may present information about the contained food product or about how to use the food product.

[0003] Embodiments of the invention provide an adhesive label comprising:

liner material;
label material releasably attached to the liner material by an adhesive;

wherein the liner material includes first and second liner portions which are individually releasable from the label material.

[0004] Embodiments of the invention also provide a label web comprising:

a strip of liner material;
a plurality of sections of label material releasably attached to the strip of liner material by an adhesive, each section of label material defining, in combination with an associated region of the strip of liner material, an adhesive label;

wherein each associated region of the strip of liner material includes first and second liner portions which are individually releasable from the label material.

[0005] The first and second liner portions may be separable from each other. The second liner portion may be adapted to remain attached to the label material, by the adhesive, upon release of the first liner portion from the label material. The second liner portion may be adapted for subsequent release from the label material.

[0006] The liner material may include a cut which may separate the liner material into the first and second liner portions. The cut may be provided in the liner material such that the first liner portion is in the form of a peripheral liner portion surrounding and enclosing the second liner portion.

[0007] The second liner portion may include information thereon. The information may be printed information, which may include alphanumeric and/or graphic information.

[0008] The label material may be self-adhesive label material which may carry an adhesive to provide said releasable attachment to the liner material.

[0009] Embodiments of the invention also provide a method for manufacturing an adhesive label comprising liner material and label material, the method comprising:

releasably attaching the label material to the liner material using an adhesive;

dividing the liner material into first and second liner portions which are individually releasable from the label material.

[0010] The step of dividing the liner material into first and second liner portions may comprise cutting the liner material.

[0011] The step of cutting the liner material to form the first and second liner portions may comprise cutting the liner material after releasable attachment of the label material to the liner material using the adhesive.

[0012] The step of cutting the liner material to form first and second liner portions may comprise cutting the liner material. The liner material may thus be cut to form the first and second liner portions without cutting of the releasably attached label material.

[0013] Embodiments of the present invention will now be described by way of example only, and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Fig. 1 is a diagrammatic view of an adhesive label according to the invention, viewed from the side of liner material;

Fig. 2 is a diagrammatic cross-sectional view along the line A-A of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a view of the adhesive label of Fig. 2 with part of the liner material removed;

Fig. 4 is a view of the adhesive label of Fig. 3 affixed to the surface of an object;

Fig. 5 is a view of the adhesive label of Fig. 4 during its removal from the surface of the object;

Fig. 6 is a diagrammatic view of an apparatus for producing a web of adhesive labels; and

Fig. 7 is a diagrammatic view of a web of adhesive labels, viewed from the side of label material, produced using the apparatus of Fig. 6.

[0014] Figs. 1 and 2 show an adhesive label 10 comprising liner material or backing material 12 and label material 14 releasably attached to the liner material 12 by an adhesive 16. The liner material 12 may be a sheet of paper or other flexible material which is waxed, siliconised or otherwise surface treated to allow the label material 14 to be releasably attached, by the adhesive 16, to the liner material 12.

[0015] In the figures, the thickness of the label 10, and in particular the thickness of the backing material 12, the label material 14 and the adhesive 16 is greatly exaggerated for clarity purposes. In reality, the thickness of these separate layers will be much less and, indeed, the adhesive 16 on the label material 14 will not be discernable as a separate layer.

[0016] The label material 14 is a flexible self-adhesive label material and may have printed information on its non-adhesive surface 18 which is of the type normally presented by adhesive labels. Referring to Fig. 7, typically, a label web 20 may be provided comprising a strip 22 of the liner material 12 and a plurality of sections 24

of the label material 14 releasably attached to the strip 22 of liner material 22 by the adhesive 16.

[0017] The liner material 12 is divided into first and second liner portions 26, 28, which are separable from each other, by a cut 30. The first and second liner portions 26, 28 are thus individually releasable from the label material 14. The cut 30 is a kiss cut and thus extends through the liner material 12 but not through the underlying label material 14 attached to the liner material 12. As best seen in Fig. 1, the cut 30 is a continuous cut which is located inwardly of the periphery 31 (shown in Fig. 1 as a dashed line) of the label material 14. The first liner portion 26 is thus generally in the form of a peripheral liner portion which surrounds and encloses the centrally located second liner portion 28.

[0018] Information 32 is printed onto the exposed surface 34 of the liner material 12 on the second liner portion 28. This information 32 may be alphanumeric and/or graphic information. In particular, the printed information 32 may be such that the second liner portion 28 can be used as a redeemable voucher or coupon. Upon redemption at an appropriate redemption point, this may, for example, provide the redeemer with monetary benefit by providing them with money off a purchase of a particular item which may be identified by the information 32 printed onto the exposed surface 34. Typically, the printed information 32 may include a barcode to enable easy handling at the point of redemption.

[0019] The adhesive label 10 is used by initially releasing the first liner portion 26 from the label material 14. Due to the presence of the cut 30 in the liner material 12, the first and second liner portions 26, 28 separate and the second liner portion 28 remains releasably attached, by the adhesive 16, to the label material 14.

[0020] Release of the first liner portion 26 from the label material 14 exposes the adhesive 16 of the label material 14 that was covered by the first liner portion 26, as shown in Fig. 3. Exposure of the adhesive 16 underlying the first liner portion 26 now permits the adhesive label 10 to be affixed to a surface 33 of an object 35, as shown in Fig. 4. Although some distortion of the periphery of the adhesive label 10 is shown in Fig. 4, this is due solely to the exaggerated thickness of the various layers. In practice, no such distortion will be apparent and the label material 14 will follow perfectly the contour of the surface 33. For the avoidance of doubt, the surface 33 may have any contour. For example, where the object 35 is cylindrical, for example where the object 35 is a can or a jar for food produce, the surface 33 may have a curved contour.

[0021] When exposure of the second liner portion 28 is desired, the label material 14 is peeled from the surface 33 of the object 35 to which it is affixed in a conventional manner. Due to the flexibility of the label material 14 and the second liner portion 28, this peeling action, which is shown schematically in Fig. 5, tends to release the second liner portion 28 from the adhesive surface of the label material 14. When the label material 14 has been completely released from the surface 33, the second liner

portion 28 is also completely released and free of adhesive 16. In some circumstances, the second liner portion 28 may remain partly, or possibly even fully, attached to the label material 14 by the adhesive after the label material 14 has been fully peeled away from the surface 33. In this case, the label material 14 and second liner portion 28 may be appropriately manipulated by a user to separate them fully to release the second liner portion 28.

[0022] Where the information 32 printed on the second liner portion 28 is of the type commonly associated with redeemable vouchers or coupons, the second liner portion 28 may now be presented at an appropriate redemption point at a convenient time.

[0023] Due to the self-adhesive nature of the label material 14, if desired the label material 14 may be re-attached to the surface 33 of the object after it has been peeled off to release the second liner portion 28.

[0024] When the adhesive label 10 has been affixed to the object 35, the presence of the second liner portion 28 is not discernible and the information printed onto the surface 18 of the label material may typically indicate the presence of the second liner portion 28 to enable its subsequent redemption. For example, the printed information may include a phrase such as 'Peel Here - Coupon Inside'.

[0025] A web 20 of adhesive labels 10 may be manufactured as follows using label manufacturing apparatus 36 illustrated diagrammatically in Fig. 6.

[0026] Continuous strips 22, 38 of liner material 12 and self-adhesive label material 14 are fed from supply reels 40, 42 and are brought together to form a web 20 suitable for label manufacture. Processing of the label web 20 may thus be carried out using the apparatus 36 without the adhesive 16 of the self-adhesive label material 14 being exposed. Although a gap is shown in Fig. 6 after the strips 22, 38 have been brought together, this is for illustration purposes only and there will be no such gap in practice.

[0027] First and second cutting stations 44, 46 are provided for 'kiss cutting' the attached strips 38, 22 of label material 14 and liner material 12. 'Kiss cutting' is a well-known technique which enables one layer of a self-adhesive label to be cut without cutting of an adjacent layer.

[0028] Thus, in the first cutting station 44, the strip 38 of label material 14 may be kiss cut to define individual sections 24 of the label material 14. Surplus label material 14 surrounding the individually defined sections 24 of label material 14 may be removed from the liner material 12 in an appropriate manner, for example by winding the surplus material onto a mandrel or other rotating member, to leave the individual sections 24 of label material 14 attached to the underlying strip 22 of liner material 12.

[0029] In the second cutting station 46, the liner material 12 may be kiss cut to provide the cut 30 defining the first and second liner portions 26, 28. Kiss cutting of the liner material 12 is carried out at appropriate locations such that the liner material 12 underlying each section 24 of the label material 14 comprises first and second

liner portions 26, 28. Each section 24 of the label material 14 and its underlying liner material 12 thus define an adhesive label 10.

[0030] The apparatus 36 may include printing stations 48, 50, one of which may be adapted to print information onto the surface 18 of the label material 14 and the other of which may be adapted to print information 32 onto the exposed surface 34 of the liner material 12, and specifically onto the exposed surface 34 of the second liner portion 28.

[0031] The label web 20, comprising the individual sections 24 of label material 14 and liner material 12, is formed into a reel of adhesive labels 10 at a winding station 52. The label web 20 may be formed into individual adhesive labels 10, as described above, by cutting the strip 22 of liner material 12 at appropriate locations between each section 24 of label material 14 or individual sections 24 of label material 14 may be removed, one at a time, from the liner material 12 with the second liner portion 28 attached to each section 24 of label material 14 and thus leaving behind a continuous interconnected strip of first liner portions 26.

[0032] There is thus described an adhesive label 10 in which a liner material 12 includes first and second individually releasable liner portions 26, 28. The individual releasability of the first and second liner portions 26, 28 from the label material 14 means that the liner material 12, and specifically the second liner portion 28, can be used as a redeemable voucher or coupon. This avoids the need to provide the redeemable voucher or coupon as a separate piece of material, and thus facilitates manufacture of the label 10 and reduces the amount of material needed to manufacture it. Furthermore, since a portion of the liner material 12 is affixed to the surface 33 of an object 35 as part of the label 10 to provide the redeemable voucher or coupon, the amount of liner material 12 that must be removed at the point of application of the labels 10, and hence disposed of, is significantly reduced.

[0033] Although embodiments of the invention have been described in the preceding paragraphs with reference to various examples, it should be appreciated that many modifications to the examples given may be made without departing from the scope of the present invention. For example, the second liner portion 28 may have a use other than as a redeemable voucher or coupon. Information may be printed onto the strips 22, 38 of liner material 12 and label material 14 in any order and/or prior to kiss cutting of the respective strips 22, 38 at the cutting stations 44, 46. The order of the cutting stations 44, 46 may be reversed so that the strip 22 of liner material 12 is kiss cut before the strip 38 of label material 14. The individual sections 24 of label material 14 may be of any convenient shape, for example round, rectangular, etc. Alternatively or in addition, the liner material 12 may be kiss cut so that the second liner portion 28 is of any convenient shape.

[0034] Whilst endeavouring in the foregoing specification to draw attention to those features of the invention

believed to be of particular importance, it should be understood that the Applicant claims protection in respect of any patentable feature or combination of features hereinbefore referred to and/or shown in the drawings, whether or not particular emphasis has been placed thereon.

Claims

1. An adhesive label comprising:

liner material;
label material releasably attached to the liner material by an adhesive;

wherein the liner material includes first and second liner portions which are individually releasable from the label material.

2. A label web comprising:

a strip of liner material;
a plurality of sections of label material releasably attached to the strip of liner material by an adhesive, each section of label material defining, in combination with an associated region of the strip of liner material, an adhesive label;

wherein each associated region of the strip of liner material includes first and second liner portions which are individually releasable from the label material.

3. A label according to claim 1 or a web according to claim 2, wherein the first and second liner portions are separable from each other.

4. A label according to claim 1 or 3 or a web according to claim 2 or 3, wherein the second liner portion is adapted to remain attached to the label material, by the adhesive, upon release of the first liner portion from the label material.

5. A label or web according to claim 4, wherein the second liner portion is adapted for subsequent release from the label material.

6. A label according to claim 1 or any of claims 3 to 5, or a web according to any of claims 2 to 5, wherein the liner material includes a cut which separates the liner material into the first and second liner portions.

7. A label or web according to claim 6, wherein the cut is provided in the liner material such that the first liner portion is in the form of a peripheral liner portion surrounding and enclosing the second liner portion.

8. A label according to claim 1 or any of claims 3 to 7,

or a web according to any of claims 2 to 7, wherein the second liner portion includes information thereon.

9. A label or web according to claim 8, wherein the information is printed information, which may include alphanumeric and/or graphic information. 5
10. A label according to claim 1 or any of claims 3 to 9, or a web according to any of claims 2 to 9, wherein the label material is a self-adhesive label material which carries an adhesive to provide said releasable attachment to the liner material. 10
11. A method for manufacturing an adhesive label comprising liner material and label material, the method comprising: 15
- releasably attaching the label material to the liner material using an adhesive; 20
- dividing the liner material into first and second liner portions which are individually releasable from the label material.
12. A method according to claim 11, wherein the step of dividing the liner material into first and second liner portions comprises cutting the liner material. 25
13. A method according to claim 12, in which the step of cutting the liner material to form the first and second liner portions comprises cutting the liner material after releasable attachment of the label material to the liner material using the adhesive. 30
14. A method according to claim 12 or 13, in which the step of cutting the liner material to form first and second liner portions comprises kiss cutting the liner material. 35

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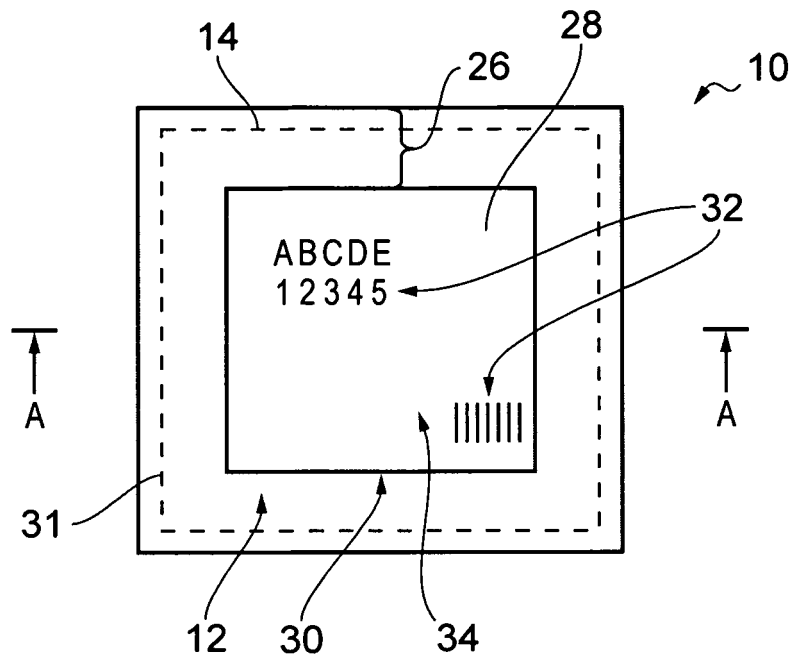


FIG. 1

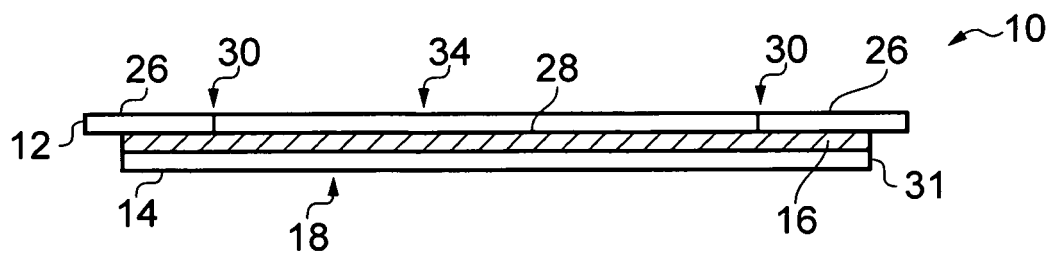


FIG. 2

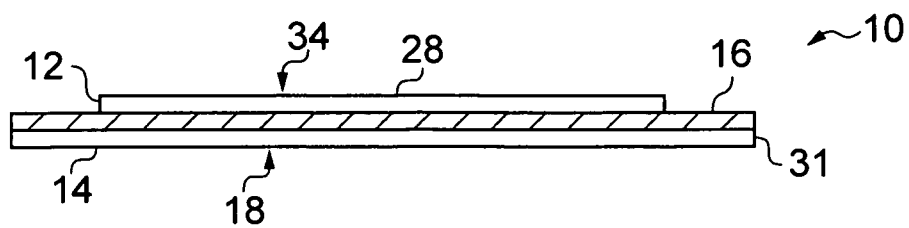


FIG. 3

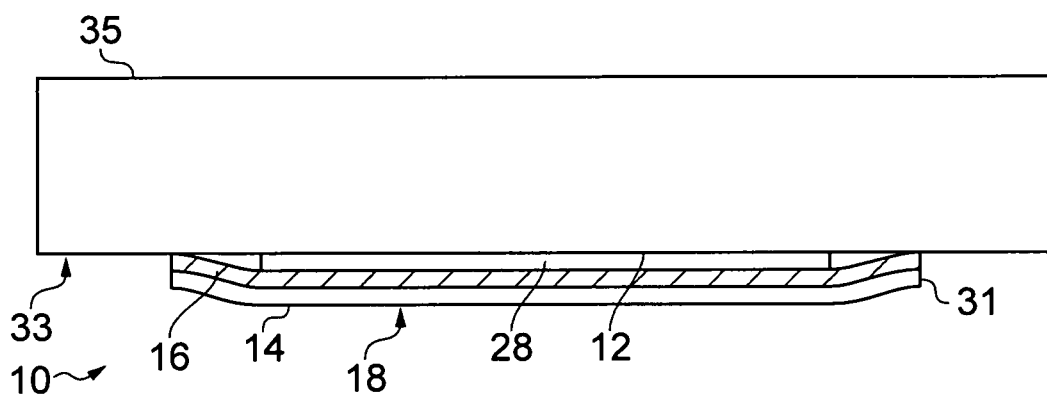


FIG. 4

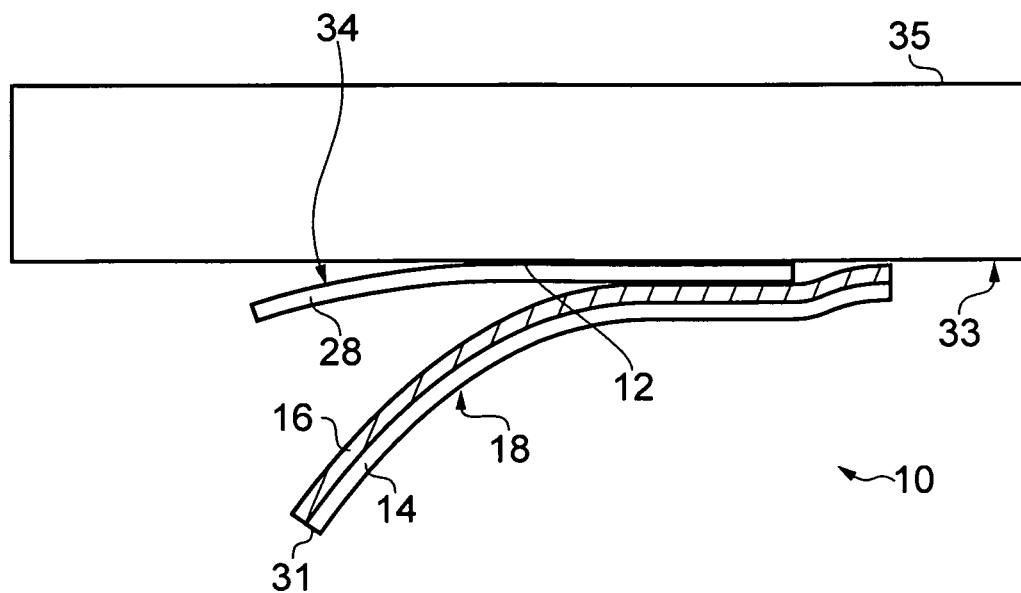


FIG. 5

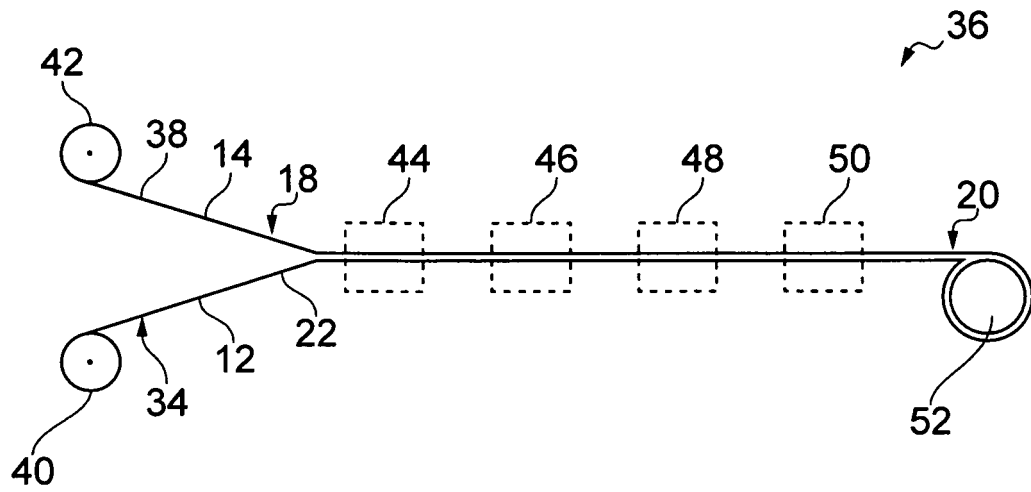


FIG. 6

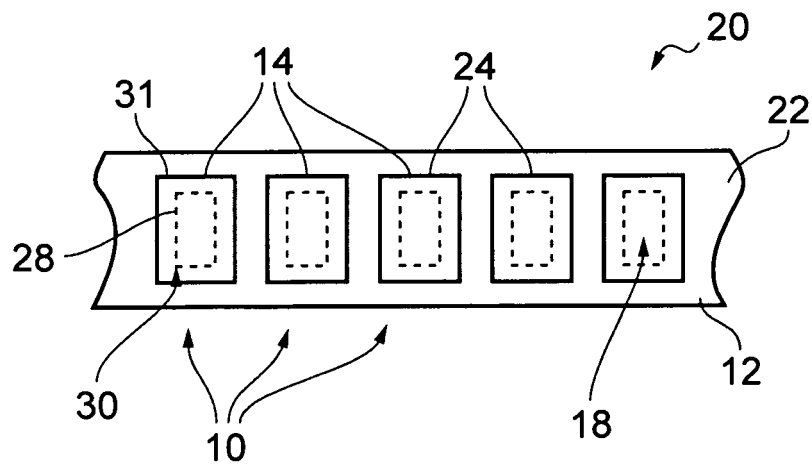


FIG. 7