



(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(43) Date of publication:
10.09.2014 Bulletin 2014/37

(51) Int Cl.:
E05B 73/00 (2006.01)

(21) Application number: **14158002.7**

(22) Date of filing: **06.03.2014**

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AL AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR HR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC MK MT NL NO PL PT RO RS SE SI SK SM TR
Designated Extension States:
BA ME

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(30) Priority: **06.03.2013 IT MI20130332**

(54) **Anti-theft container of changeable volume**

(57) An anti-theft container of changeable volume (1) is described, comprising two portions (5, 6) of a case (2) separably insertable an upper portion (5) into the other lower portion (6), comprising said upper portion (5) of said case (2) which has vertical upper walls (50) being tapered and sliding in friction into contact with vertical

tapered lower walls (60) changing the volume of said case (2) in extension till at least a pair of block elements (9) and in compression till a lower open base (62) of said lower portion (6) of the case (2) suitable for being separably engaged to be closed by a closure element (3) comprising a device for anti-theft locking (4).

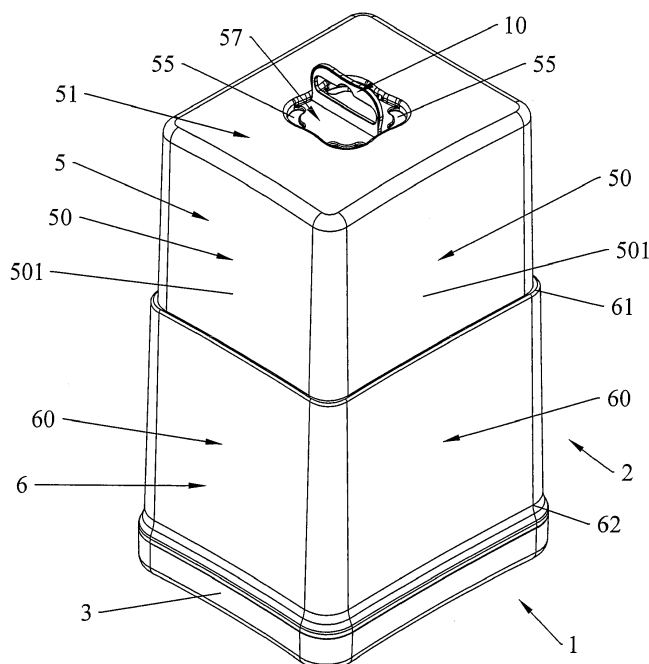


FIG.1

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to an anti-theft container of changeable volume.

[0002] In shops and supermarkets where customers can directly handle a product for sale without any immediate control by a shopkeeper, anti-theft containers of different sizes depending on the size of the product for sale are used.

[0003] The product for sale is manually inserted in the anti-theft container by the shopkeeper.

[0004] There are also anti-theft containers such as that described in the patent document WO 2011/135594 A1 with a changeable volume depending on the size of the product for sale.

[0005] Said anti-theft container of changeable volume provides two portions of a case separably insertable into each other with an anti-theft block device arranged between said two portions.

[0006] Said anti-theft container of changeable volume has the drawback of being extremely fragile, as it is provided with interlocking serrated elements that can break easily when handled by the shopkeeper or due to falling, thus disadvantageously being little useful to really serve as anti-theft container.

[0007] Moreover, said anti-theft container of changeable volume cannot be opened completely, making it impossible to insert products on sale when they have dimensions comparable to those of the anti-theft container itself, thus disadvantageously limiting the ability to make the best use of the whole volume of said anti-theft container.

[0008] A further drawback of the anti-theft container of changeable volume concerns the difficulty of inserting and removing the product sold by the shopkeeper, since two sectors of the container must be made to slide relative to each other keeping the anti-theft block of the container itself disengaged.

[0009] Yet another drawback of said container relates to the difficulty of construction and assembly due to too many fragile parts that make up said container of changeable volume, therefore resulting disadvantageous from a commercial point of view.

[0010] It is the object of the present invention to provide an anti-theft container of changeable volume easy to be constructed, simple to be used, sturdy and easily applicable to devices for anti-theft locking available on the market.

[0011] According to the invention, said objects are achieved by an anti-theft container of changeable volume comprising two portions of a case separably insertable an upper portion into the other lower portion, characterized in that said upper portion of said case has vertical upper walls being tapered and sliding in friction into contact with vertical tapered lower walls changing the volume of said case in extension till at least a pair of block elements and in compression till a lower open base of said lower portion of the case suitable for being separably

engaged to be closed by a closure element comprising a device for anti-theft locking.

[0012] These and other features of the present invention will become more apparent from the following detailed description of a practical embodiment thereof, made by way of a non-limiting example with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Figure 1 shows a perspective view of an anti-theft container of changeable volume according to the present invention;

Figure 2 shows a front view of the anti-theft container of changeable volume in a minimum volume configuration;

Figure 3 shows a top view of Figure 2;

Figure 4 shows a sectional view according to line IV-IV in Figure 3;

Figure 5 shows a sectional view according to line V-V in Figure 3;

Figure 6 shows a front view of the anti-theft container of changeable volume in an intermediate volume configuration;

Figure 7 shows a top view of Figure 6;

Figure 8 shows a sectional view according to line III-III in Figure 7;

Figure 9 shows a top view of the anti-theft container of changeable volume in a maximum volume configuration;

Figure 10 shows a sectional view according to line X-X in Figure 9;

Figure 11 shows a sectional view according to line XI-XI in Figure 9;

Figure 12 shows a top view of the anti-theft container of changeable volume in a forced configuration;

Figure 13 shows a sectional view according to line XIII-XIII in Figure 12;

Figure 14 shows a sectional view according to line XIV-XIV in Figure 3 of the anti-theft container of changeable volume in a minimum configuration with open case;

Figure 15 shows a top view of the anti-theft container of changeable volume with a hook in a first configuration;

Figure 16 shows a top view of the anti-theft container of changeable volume with a hook in a second configuration;

Figure 17 shows a sectional view according to line XVII-XVII in Figure 15 ;

Figure 18 shows a sectional view according to line XVIII-XVIII in Figure 16;

Figure 19 shows a perspective view of the anti-theft container of changeable volume with the hook bent in a retractable housing thereof;

Figure 20 shows a top view of an alternative of the anti-theft container of changeable volume;

Figure 21 shows a sectional view according to line XXI-XXI in Figure 20.

[0013] With reference to the above figures, an anti-theft container of changeable volume 1 is shown, which comprises a case 2 separably engageable with a closure element 3 comprising known devices for anti-theft locking 4 (not shown in the Figures).

[0014] Said case 2 is box-shaped and comprises two portions: an upper portion 5 and a lower portion 6 separably insertable by sliding one 5 into the other 6.

[0015] As shown in Figures 4-6, 8, 10-11, 13-14, 17-18, said upper portion 5 of the case 2 has upper vertical walls 50 tapering upwards. Moreover, the upper portion 5 has a closed upper base 51 with perimeter measure less than a lower base 52 of said upper portion 5 with a lower opening 53 adapted to contain a product for sale 7 (not shown in the Figures).

[0016] As shown in Figures 1, 3, 7, 9, 12, 15, 16, 19, said upper base 51 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2 has four holes 55 for air and two pairs of engagement elements 56 where it can be engaged in a display hook 10.

[0017] As shown in Figures 4-6, 8, 10-11, 13-14, 17-18, said lower portion 6 of the case 2 has lower vertical walls 60 tapering upwards. Moreover, the lower portion 6 has two open bases: an upper open base 61 and a lower open base 62.

[0018] Said upper open base 61 of the lower portion 6 of the case 2 has a perimeter measure smaller than the lower open base 62 of the lower portion 6 itself.

[0019] Said upper open base 61 of the lower portion 6 has a perimeter measure slightly smaller than the perimeter measure of the lower base 52 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2, adapted to allow the upper portion 5 of the case to be inserted through the lower open base 62 of the lower portion 6, from the bottom upwards expanding the volume of the case 2.

[0020] The volume of the case 2 expands till the outer perimeter of said lower base 52 of the upper portion 5 coincides with the inner perimeter of said upper open base 61 and the lower walls 60, resisting to deformations, impart an increasing pressure on the upper walls 50 towards the inside of the case 2, a pressure adapted to keep the lower base 52 of the upper portion 5 in place with respect to the upper open base 61 of the lower portion 6, as shown in Figures 9-11.

[0021] As shown in Figures 4 and 8, stop members 8 prevent the upper portion 5 from being removed from the lower portion 6 of the case 2 from the top downwards by compressing the volume of the case 2, when the device for anti-theft locking 4 is disengaged and case 2 of the anti-theft container 1 is opened, as shown in Figure 14.

[0022] Each of said stop members 8 is on an inner face 602 of the lower wall 60 in correspondence with the lower open base 62 of the lower portion 6 of the case 2. Said stop member 8 is adapted to rest the lower base 52 of the upper portion 5 of the case.

[0023] The upper walls 50 of the upper portion 5 slide in friction in contact with the lower walls 60 of the lower portion 6 of the case 2. In particular, whole surfaces of

outer faces 501 of the upper walls 50 advantageously slide in friction against whole surfaces of the inner faces 602 of the lower walls 60 of the lower portion 6 of the case 2 as shown in Figures 4 and 8.

5 **[0024]** As shown in Figure 14, said lower portion 6 of the case 2 is engageable with said closure element 3 via a hinge 33 between a lower open base 62 of said lower portion 6 of the case 2 and a respective upper edge of said closure element 3. Said hinge 33 is adapted to make
10 the case 2 change from a closed position to an open position and vice versa.

[0025] As shown in Figures 5, 11 and 13, in each of the corners of said upper portion 5 and said lower portion 6 of the case 2 there is a couple of block elements 9.
15 First block elements 91 are provided on the corners between the two outer faces 501 of respective two consecutive said upper walls 50 at the lower base 52. Second block elements 92 are provided on the corners between the two inner faces 602 of respective two consecutive
20 said lower walls 60 at the upper open base 61.

[0026] Said first block elements 91 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2 are adapted to be engaged against said second block elements 92 of the lower portion 6 of the case to advantageously prevent the two portions 5, 6 of
25 the case 2 from being separated by a shoplifter only by imparting such a force as to deform the case 2.

[0027] In fact, under normal conditions of use by the customer or shopkeeper, where the case 2 is not deformed, it is not possible that the first block elements 91 are engaged against said second block elements 92.
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[0028] Only if the case 2 is deformed by an extreme forcing by the shoplifter, said block elements 9 oppose a last resistance to shoplifting.

[0029] The angular position of said block elements 9 is advantageously determined since the case 2 is less deformable at the corners compared to the upper walls 50 or walls 60 which may be deformed due to forcing by the shoplifter.
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[0030] Moreover, said these pairs of block elements 9 are advantageously arranged on the corners of the case rather than on the vertical walls 50, 60 in order to maximize the friction between the whole surface of the outer face 501 of the upper wall 50 and the whole surface of the inner face 602 of the lower wall 60 of the case so that
40 the case 2 can have a certain resistance to the change in volume such as to remain in place unless forces are applied which are adapted to compress or extend the two portions 5 and 6 of case 2 itself.

[0031] The resistance to changes in volume of the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1 is further and synergically increased from both the vertically upwards tapering of the upper walls 50 and of the lower walls 60, and by the fact that the perimeter measure of said lower base 52 is greater than the perimeter measure of said
45 upper open base 61, advantageously contributing to increasing the friction between the outer faces 501 of the upper walls 50 and the inner faces 602 of the lower walls 60 and at the same time increasing the inward pressure

of the inner faces 602 of the lower walls 60 against the outer faces 501 of walls 50.

[0032] Moreover, said pairs of block elements 9 are advantageously arranged inside the case 2 between the upper portion 5 and the lower portion 6 so as not to be reachable from the outside and advantageously oppose a strong resistance to shoplifting attempts by shoplifters.

[0033] The case 2 may be made of transparent material which is resistant to shocks such as polycarbonate or plastic or fiberglass or plexiglas or other plastic or shatterproof glass compounds to ensure that the product for sale 7 is clearly visible and the case 2 can effectively serve as anti-theft container 1.

[0034] The thickness of the material of the case 2 must be resistant to deformation by manual pressures or pressures or cuts with hand tools such as pliers or hammers or scissors or knives.

[0035] The upper portion 5 consists of a single piece comprising the first four block elements 91, as well as the lower portion 6 consists of a single piece comprising the four second elements of block 92 and the four stop elements 8, so as to be sturdier and more resistant to attempts at shoplifting by shoplifters. Said single pieces of the upper portions 5 and of the lower portions 6 may for example be molded or molten.

[0036] The case 2 is parallelepiped in shape to advantageously be more solid and resistant to deformations or falls.

[0037] The case 2 may be exposed for the sale of the product using the special said hook 10 which can be engaged on the central portion of the upper base 51 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2 in two different configurations. A first configuration shown in Figure 15 and 17 and a second configuration shown in Figure 16 and 18.

[0038] Said hook 10 has a pair of fastening pins 11, each of said pins 11 arranged at the lower ends of the hook 10. Said pair of fastening pins 11 of the hook 10 is adapted to be engaged in one of the two pairs of engagement elements 56 of the upper base 51 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2, as shown in Figures 15-18. The two pairs of engagement elements 56 are arranged according to two orthogonal axes V and W shown in Figure 16. Said axes V and W are perpendicular to walls 50 and 60 of the case 2.

[0039] The fastening pins 11, engaged either in one of the two pairs of orthogonal engagement elements 56, allow the hook 10 to rotate and be bent in one direction or in the other direction, in a retractable housing 57 complementary in shape with the hook 10, as shown in Figure 19.

[0040] As shown in Figures 1, 3, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, said retractable housing 57 is suitably hollowed on the central portion of the upper base 51 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2 and said retractable housing 57 has a depth compatible with the thickness of the hook 10 itself to be adapted to retract the hook 10 when bent in one direction or in the other, by rotating said hook 10 on the pair of fastening pins 11. By retracting of the hook 10

it is meant that once the hook 10 is bent in said retractable housing 57, the upper base 51 does not show evident protuberances on the outer surface thereof.

[0041] The two configurations of the hook 10 shown in Figures 15 and 17 and in Figures 16 and 18, advantageously allow the display of the product for sale 7 contained in the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1 in all directions useful to be clearly visible by the customer, i.e. in those directions in which the product for sale 7 is visible from one of the four pairs of faces 50 and 60 of the case 2.

[0042] The hook 10 is easily removable from the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1 simply by exerting a pressure outside axes V or W which slightly deforms the hook 10 so as to disengage the pair of fastening pins 11 from one of the two pairs of engagement elements 56 of the case 2.

[0043] The hook 10 with simple and quick disengagement from the case 2 allows to advantageously display the anti-theft container 1 in such a way that the product for sale 7 therein shows to the public the face deemed most suitable by the shopkeeper without the shopkeeper himself having to waste time, disengage the anti-theft container 1, open case 2 and adjust the face of the product for sale 7 according to his business needs.

[0044] Moreover, such hook 10 advantageously allows the industrialization of the operations of inserting the product for sale 7 in the anti-theft container 1, then letting the shopkeeper the possibility to simply and quickly disengage hook 10 from a pair of engagement elements 56 for re-engaging it in the pair of engagement elements 56 so as to display the anti-theft container 1 with the product for sale 7 in the preferred direction for commercial sale.

[0045] As regards the operation of the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1, there are three configurations of normal use and a forced configuration of the case 2. Said three configurations of normal use are divided into: a minimum volume configuration of the case 2, an intermediate volume configuration of the case 2 and a maximum volume configuration of the case 2.

[0046] As shown in Figures 2-5, in the minimum volume configuration of the case 2 of the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1, the upper portion 5 rests on the lower portion 6 of the case 2. The outer faces 501 of the tapered upper walls 50 are in contact with the inner faces 602 of the tapered lower walls 60. The volume of the case 2 is minimal, since the lower base 52 rests on the stop members 8 of the lower portion 6 of the case 2.

[0047] The four holes 55 of the upper base 51 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2 advantageously allow the passage of air from within the case 2 outside the case 2 itself.

[0048] Hook 10 is rotated about the fastening pins 11 inside the engagement elements 56, hook 10 resting in the retractable housing 57 thereof of the upper base 51 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2, as shown in Figure 19.

[0049] Said retractable housing 57 retracts hook 10, advantageously allowing the stacking of a plurality of anti-

theft containers of changeable volume 1 arranging them on top of one another.

[0050] To change from a minimum volume configuration to an intermediate volume configuration of the case 2 of the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1, as shown in Figures 6-8, the upper portion 5 is made to slide with respect to the lower portion 6 of the case so as to expand the volume of the case 2 itself.

[0051] The upper portion 5 of the case on the lower portion 6 slides the outer faces 501 of the tapered upper walls 50 in friction against the inner faces 602 of the tapered lower walls 60 till a desired volume of the case 2.

[0052] The inner faces 602 of the tapered lower walls 60 exert a gradually increasing pressure on the outer faces 501 of the tapered upper walls 50 as the upper portion 5 is lifted, expanding the volume of the case 2.

[0053] The increase in the pressure between faces 501 and 602 gradually increases the friction between walls 50 and 60 of the two portions 5 and 6 of the case 2.

[0054] The four holes 55 of the upper base 51 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2 advantageously allow the passage of air from the exterior of the case 2 to the interior of the same 2 during the extension of the volume of the case 2 itself.

[0055] In the intermediate volume configuration of the case 2, the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1 may be displayed on a sales counter (not shown in the Figures).

[0056] The shopkeeper rests the closure support element 3 on the sales counter and the case 2 remains in position as shown in Figures 6-8, due to the synergic action of the friction exerted between the outer faces 501 of the upper walls 50 of the upper portion 5 of the case and the inner faces 602 of the lower walls 60 and to the upward vertical tapering of the upper walls 50 and lower walls 60.

[0057] In said intermediate volume configuration, the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1 may also be hooked to a display (not shown in the Figures).

[0058] The hook 10 is rotated along the axis identified by the pair of fastening pins 11 inserted in one of two pairs of engagement elements 56 until the full lifting of hook 10, as shown in Figures 17 or 18.

[0059] The weight of the product for sale 7 exerts such a force that the outer faces 501 of the upper walls 50 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2 slide in friction on the inner faces 602 of the lower walls 60 of the lower portion 6 until the friction force therebetween 501 and 602 balance the weight of the product for sale 7.

[0060] To change from an intermediate volume configuration to a maximum volume configuration of the case 2 of the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1, as shown in Figures 9-11, the case 2 can expand its volume until the friction between the two faces 501 and 602 and the pressure between the same 501 and 602 stops the movement of the lower base 52 of the upper portion 5 at a certain distance with respect to said upper open base 61 of the lower portion 6 of the case.

[0061] In said position, the outer perimeter of the lower base 52 coincides with the inner perimeter of the upper open base 61 and the lower walls 60 resist deformations, preventing said lower base 52 from passing through said upper open base 61 with smaller perimeter measure than said lower base 52.

[0062] In said maximum volume configuration, the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1 may be hooked to the display.

[0063] The hook 10 is rotated along the axis identified by the pair of fastening pins 11 inserted in one of two pairs of engagement elements 56 until the full lifting of hook 10, as shown in Figures 17 or 18.

[0064] The product for sale 7 is heavy enough not to allow the friction force between the upper walls 50 and lower walls 60 to support it. The upper walls 50 slide on the lower walls 60 until the friction and pressure between faces 501 and 602 of walls 50 and 60 overcomes the motion of the upper portion 5 with respect to portion 6 and the lower walls 60 resist deformation.

[0065] To return to a minimum volume configuration of said anti-theft container of changeable volume 1, the upper portion 5 is pushed against the lower portion 6 of the case 2 by sliding the outer faces 501 of the tapered upper walls 50 in friction against the inner faces 602 of the tapered lower walls 60, reducing the volume of the case 2 until the lower base 52 rests on the stop members 8 of the lower portion 6 of the case 2.

[0066] The four holes 55 of the upper base 51 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2 advantageously allow the passage of air from the interior of the case 2 to the exterior of the same 2 during the compression of the volume of the case 2 itself.

[0067] Hook 10 is rotated on the fastening pins 11 inside the engagement elements 56 till the retractable housing 57 thereof of the upper base 51 of the upper portion 5 of the case 2.

[0068] To change from one of said three configurations of normal use to the forced configuration of the case 2, as shown in Figures 12 and 13, a force must be imparted such as to deform the case 2 by trying to separate the upper portion 5 from the lower portion 6 of the case 2 itself.

[0069] Once the case 2 has been deformed, it can no longer return to one of the configurations of normal use of the case 2.

[0070] In said forced configuration of the case 2, the lower base 52 of the upper portion 5 passes through the upper open base 61 of the lower portion 6 deforming walls 50, 60 of the case 2.

[0071] In said forced configuration of the case 2 the upper portion 5 slides with respect to the lower portion 6 of the case 2 until the first block elements 91 are engaged by the respective second block elements 92 of said pairs of block elements 9, opposing a last resistance to breaking of the shoplifting attempt.

[0072] Said pairs of block elements 9 overcome breaking attempts by shoplifters.

[0073] An alternative anti-theft container of changeable volume 1 is shown in Figures 20 and 21. Said container 1, rather than having the four stop members 8 mounted on the lower portion 6, has four stop members 8 mounted on the outer faces 501 of the upper walls 50 near the upper base 51. Said stop members 8 rest on the lower walls 60 at the upper open base 61, in order to advantageously prevent the upper portion 5 of the case 6 from sliding out of the lower portion 6 once the device for anti-theft locking 4 is disengaged and the case 2 is opened.

[0074] An advantage of the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1 allows it to be reused for different types of products for sale 7 of different shapes and sizes, being able to effectively protect said product for sale 7 from shoplifting attempts by shoplifters.

[0075] Advantageously, the anti-theft container of changeable volume 1 allows to effectively protect the product for sale 7 from shoplifting attempts by shoplifters due to its solidity and to the fact that said pairs of block elements 9 are arranged inside and on corners of the case 2 and the two upper portions 5 and 6 below are not separable by shoplifters.

[0076] A further advantage consists in the fact that said anti-theft containers of changeable volume 1 can be stacked in a simple and quick manner.

[0077] Yet a further advantage consists in that the anti-theft containers of changeable volume 1 can be either hooked to displays or placed on sales counters.

[0078] Advantageously, the anti-theft containers of changeable volume 1 according to the invention described can be applied to most of devices for anti-theft locking 4 available on the market.

Claims

1. Anti-theft container of changeable volume (1) comprising two portions (5, 6) of a case (2) separably insertable an upper portion (5) into the other lower portion (6), **characterized in that** said upper portion (5) of said case (2) has vertical upper walls (50) being tapered and sliding in friction into contact with vertical tapered lower walls (60) changing the volume of said case (2) in extension till at least a pair of block elements (9) and in compression till a lower open base (62) of said lower portion (6) of the case (2) suitable for being separably engaged to be closed by a closure element (3) comprising a device for anti-theft locking (4).
2. Anti-theft container (1) according to claim 1, **characterized in that** said upper portion (5) of the case (2) comprises said vertical upper walls (50) being upwards tapered and comprises a closed upper base (51) with a perimeter measure smaller than a lower base (52) with a lower opening (53) suitable for containing a product for sale (7) and that said lower por-

tion (6) of the case (2) comprises said vertical lower walls (60) being upwards tapered and it (6) comprises an open upper base (61) with perimeter measure less than said lower open base (62) and said open upper base (61) has a perimeter measure sufficiently lower than said lower base (52) of the upper portion (5) to slide in friction said upper portion (5) into contact with said lower portion (6) of the case (2).

3. Anti-theft container (1) according to claims 1 or 2, **characterized in that** said pair of block elements (9) comprises at least a first block element (91) placed on the corner between two outer faces (501) of the respective two of said upper walls (50) being consecutive and it (9) comprises at least a second block element (92) placed on the corner between two internal faces (602) of respective two of said lower walls (60) being consecutive.
4. Anti-theft container (1) according to claims 1-3, **characterized in that** said upper portion (5) rests on said lower portion (6) on at least a stop member (8) placed on said lower open base (62) of said lower portion (6), said stop member (8) suitable for supporting said upper walls (50) in correspondence with said lower base (52) in a configuration of minimum volume of the case (2).
5. Anti-theft container (1) according to claims 1-3, **characterized in that** said upper portion (5) rests on said lower portion (6), said upper portion (5) comprising at least a stop member (8) placed on said upper wall (50) in correspondence of said upper base (51), said stop member (8) being suitable for resting on said lower walls (60) in correspondence of the open upper base (61) in a configuration of minimum volume of the case (2).
6. Anti-theft container (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** both of said upper portion (5) and lower portion (6) of said case (2) are respectively formed by a single piece comprising at least one said pair of block elements (9) and at least one said stop member (8).
7. Anti-theft container (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** a hook (10) is engageable in the upper base (51) of said case (2) by a couple of fastening pins (11) placed at the lower extremities of said hook (10) and that said couple of fastening pins (11) is engageable indifferently in one of at least two couples of engagement elements (56) of said upper base (51) of said case (2), where said couples of engagement elements (56) are disposed along two axes (V, W), the axis (V) being orthogonal with the other axis (W) and each of said two axes (V, W) being perpendicular to said walls (50, 60) of said case (2).

8. Anti-theft container (1) according to claim 7, **characterized in that** said fastening pins (11) of the hook (10) are suitable for rotating, being pivoted in one of said couples of engagement elements (56), about one of said axes (V, W) till a retracted position inside a retractable housing (57) being hollowed in said upper base (51) of the case (2).

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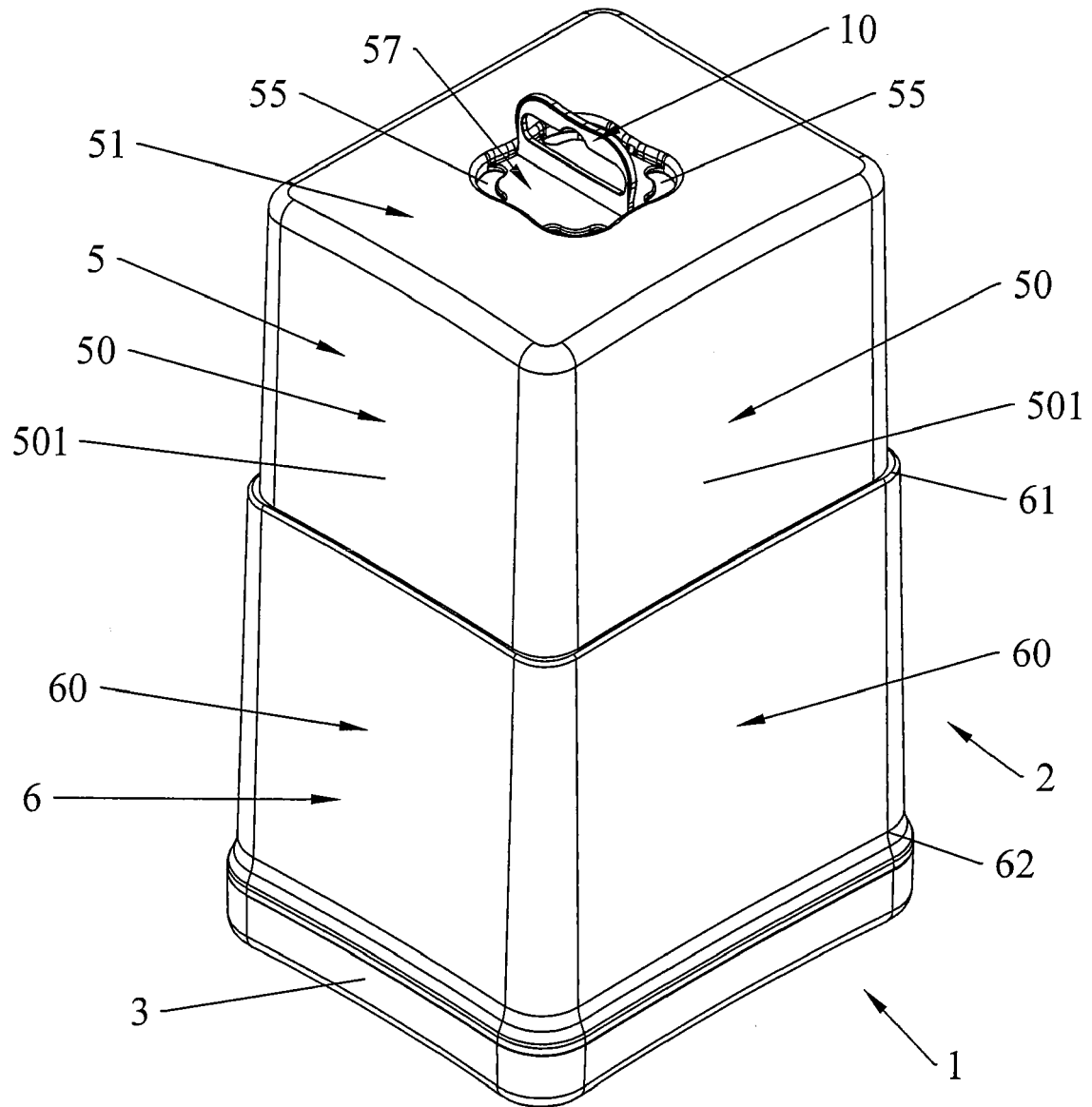


FIG.1

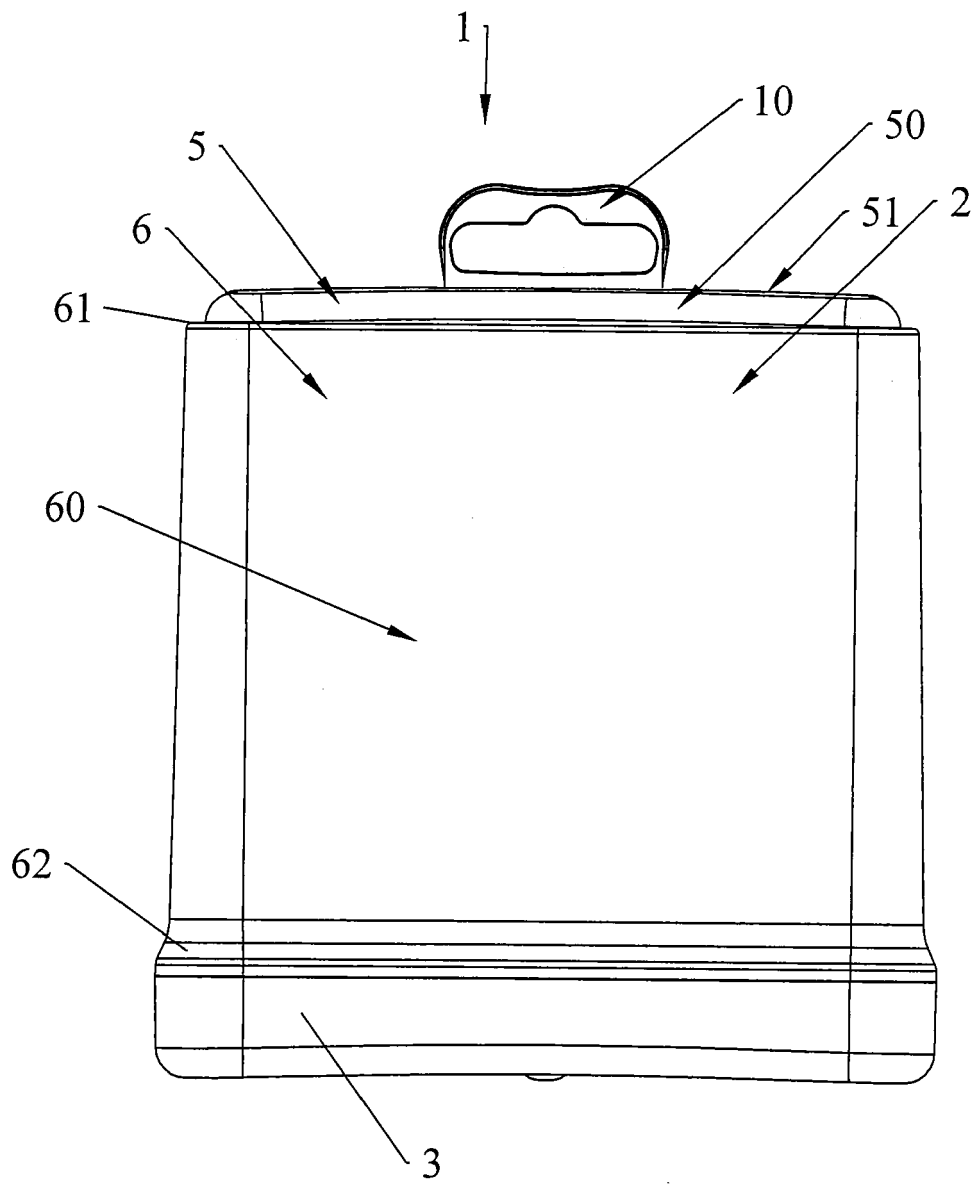


FIG.2

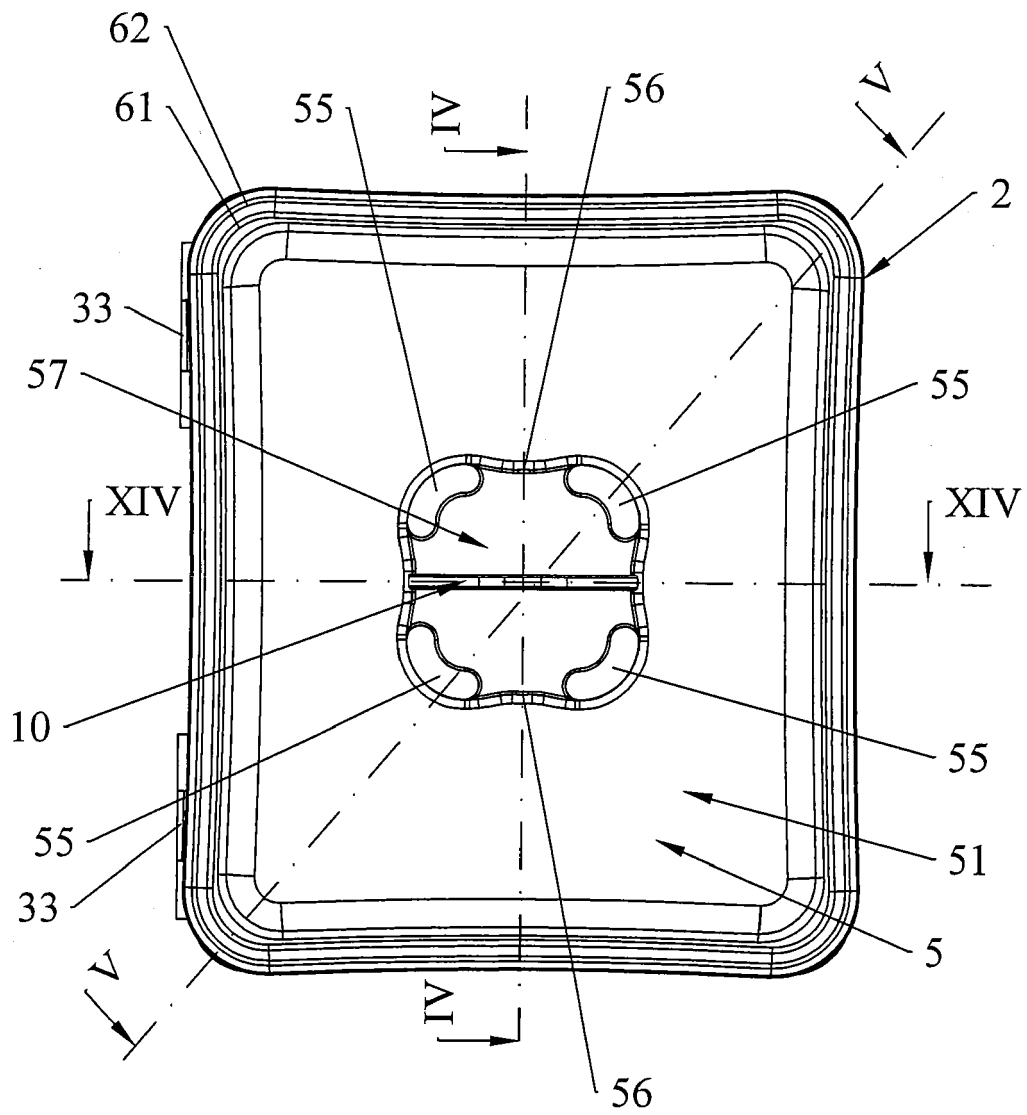
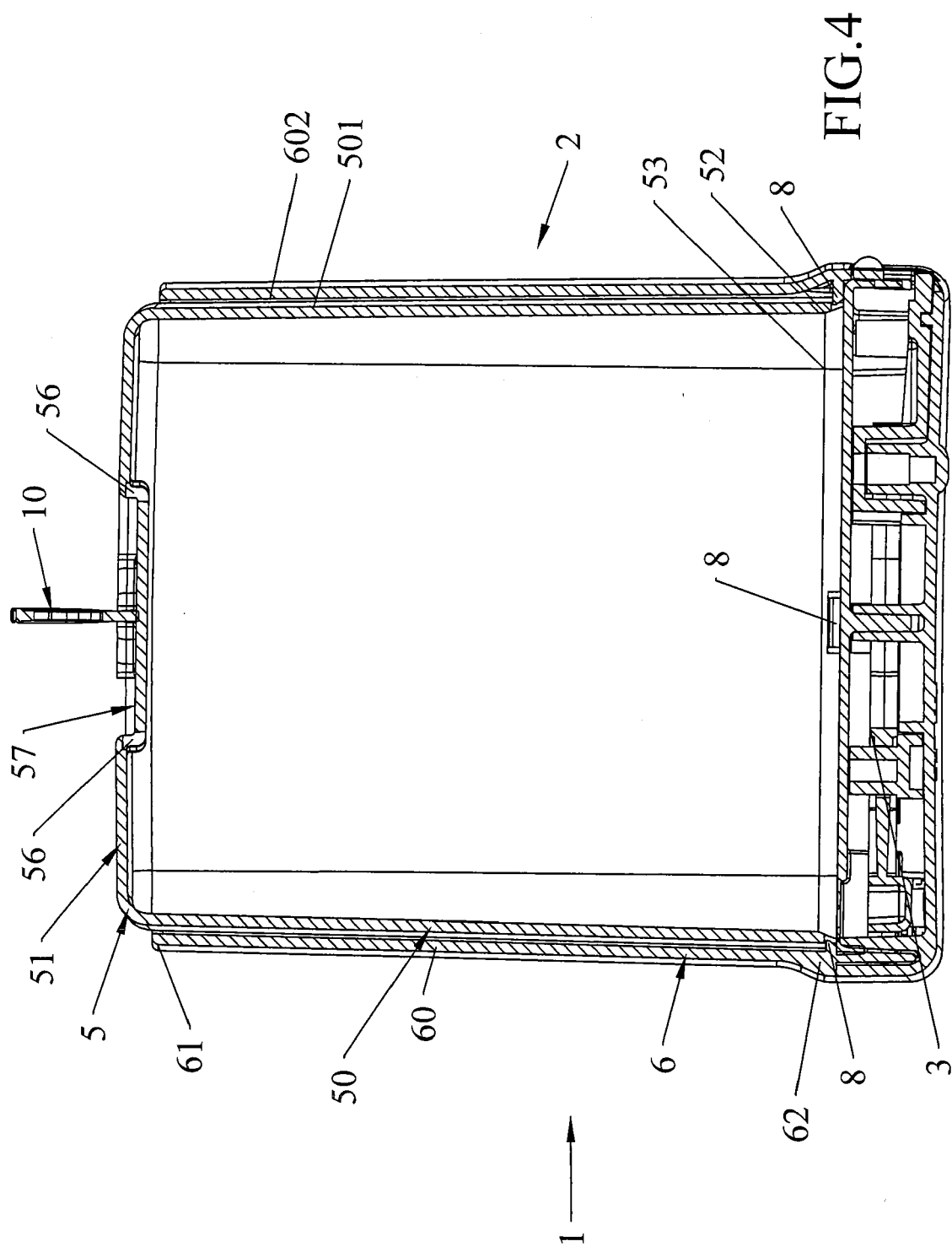


FIG.3



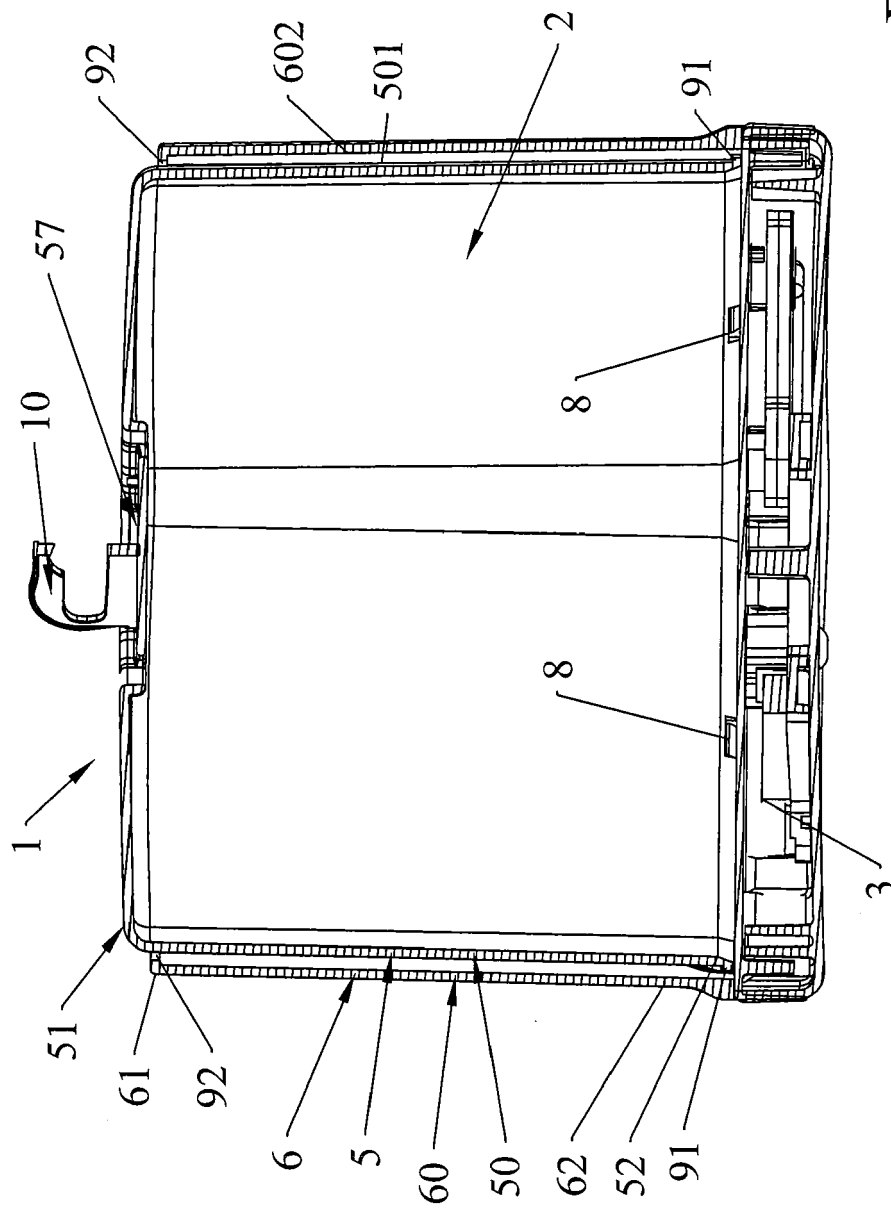


FIG. 5

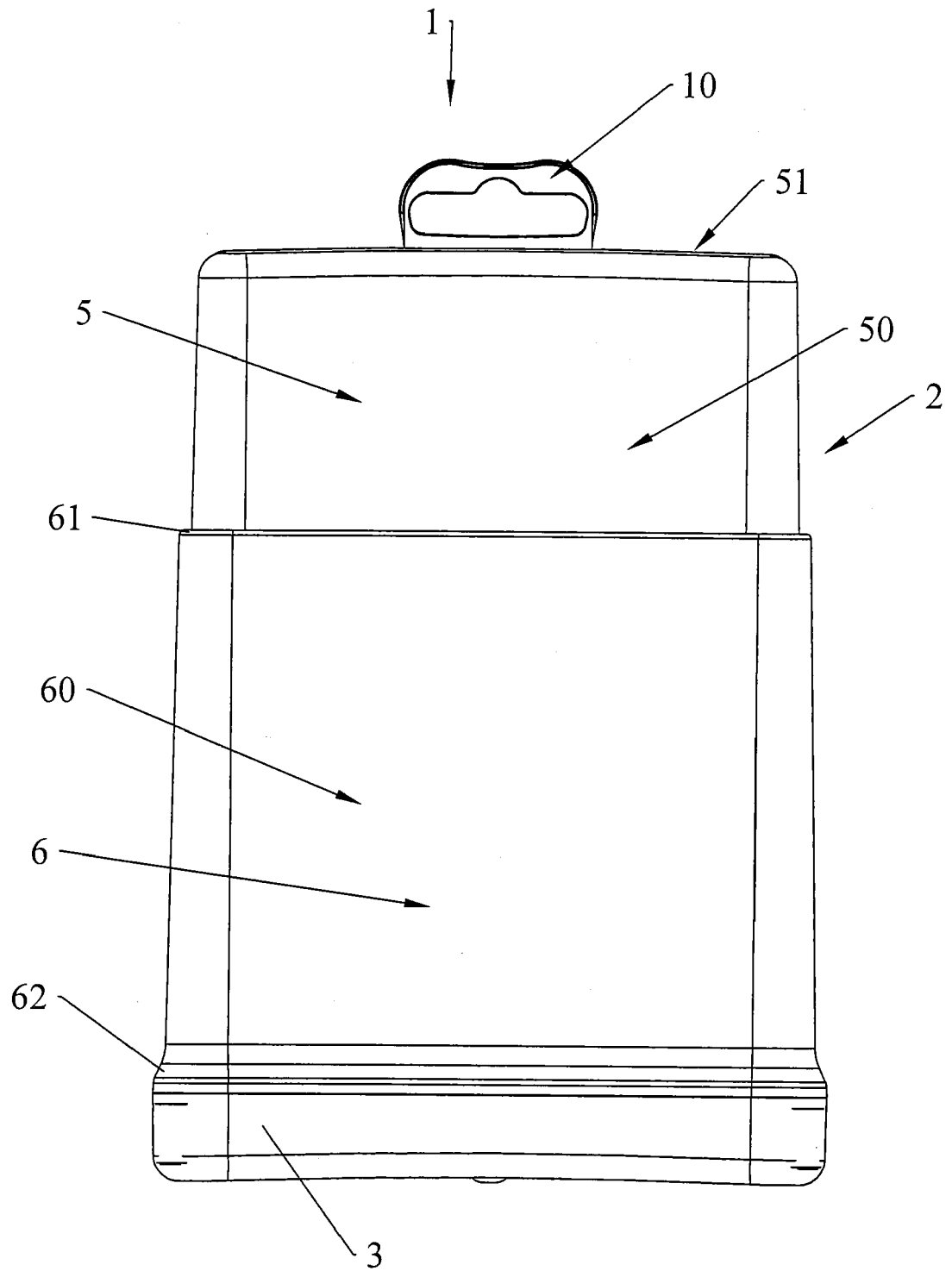


FIG.6

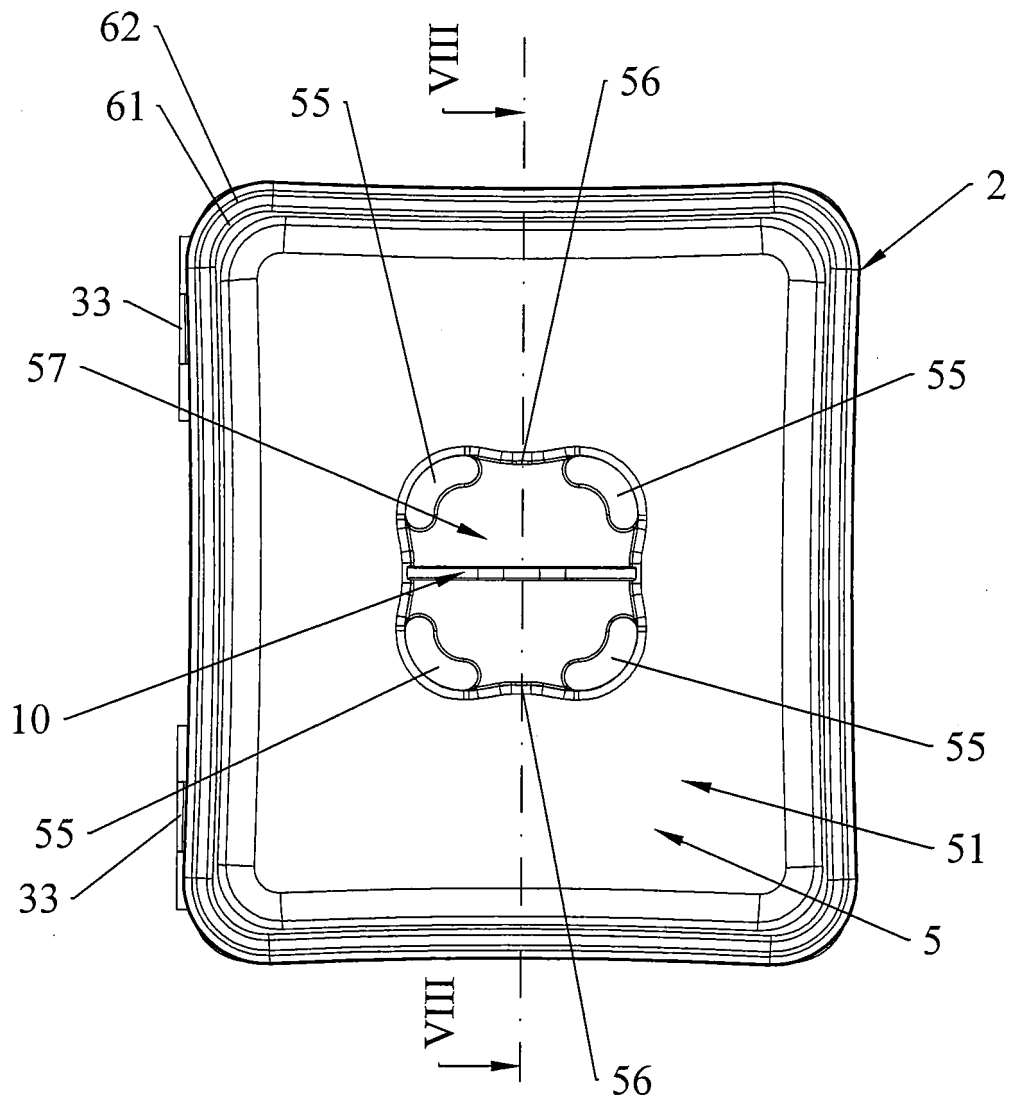


FIG.7

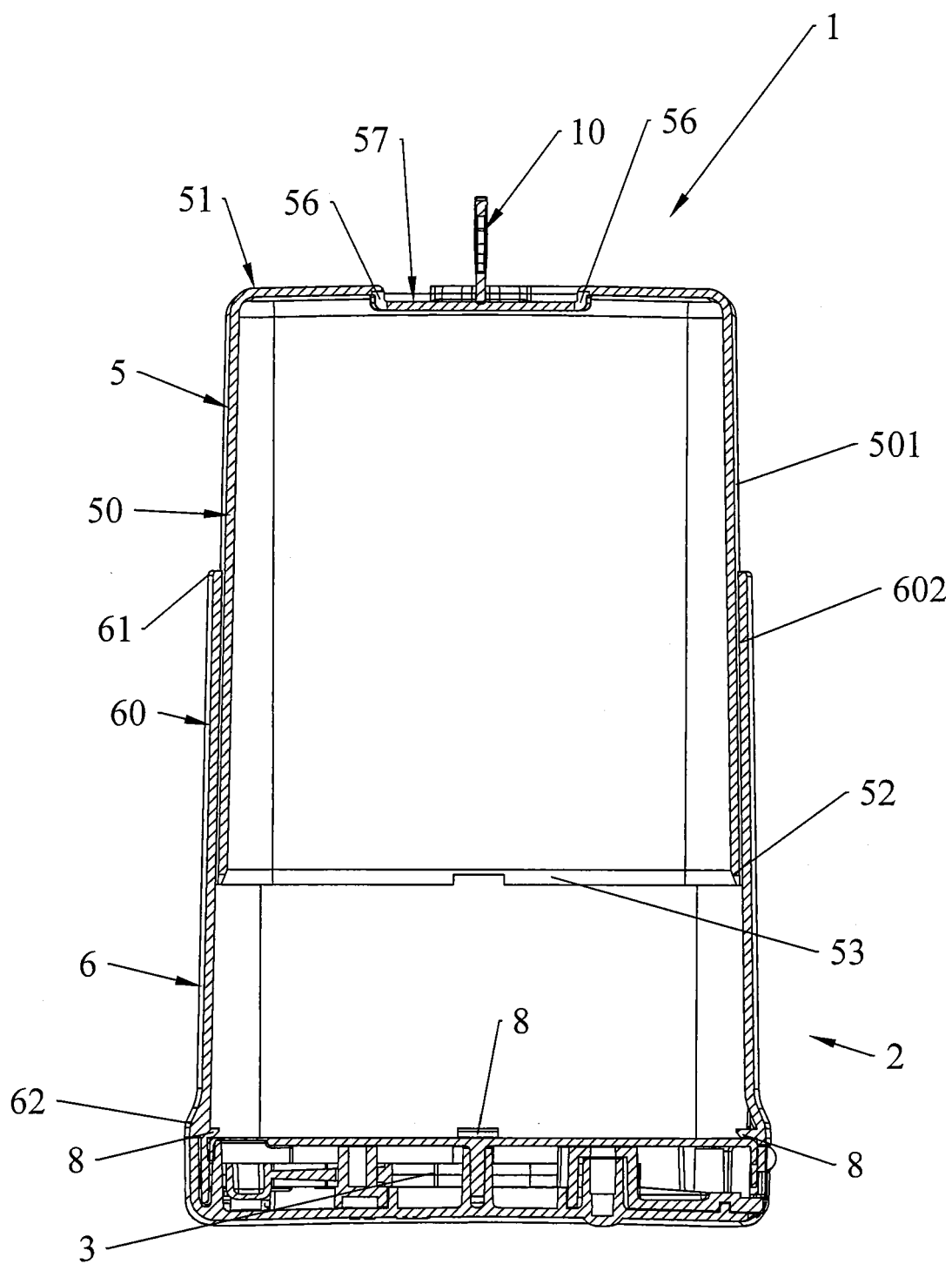


FIG.8

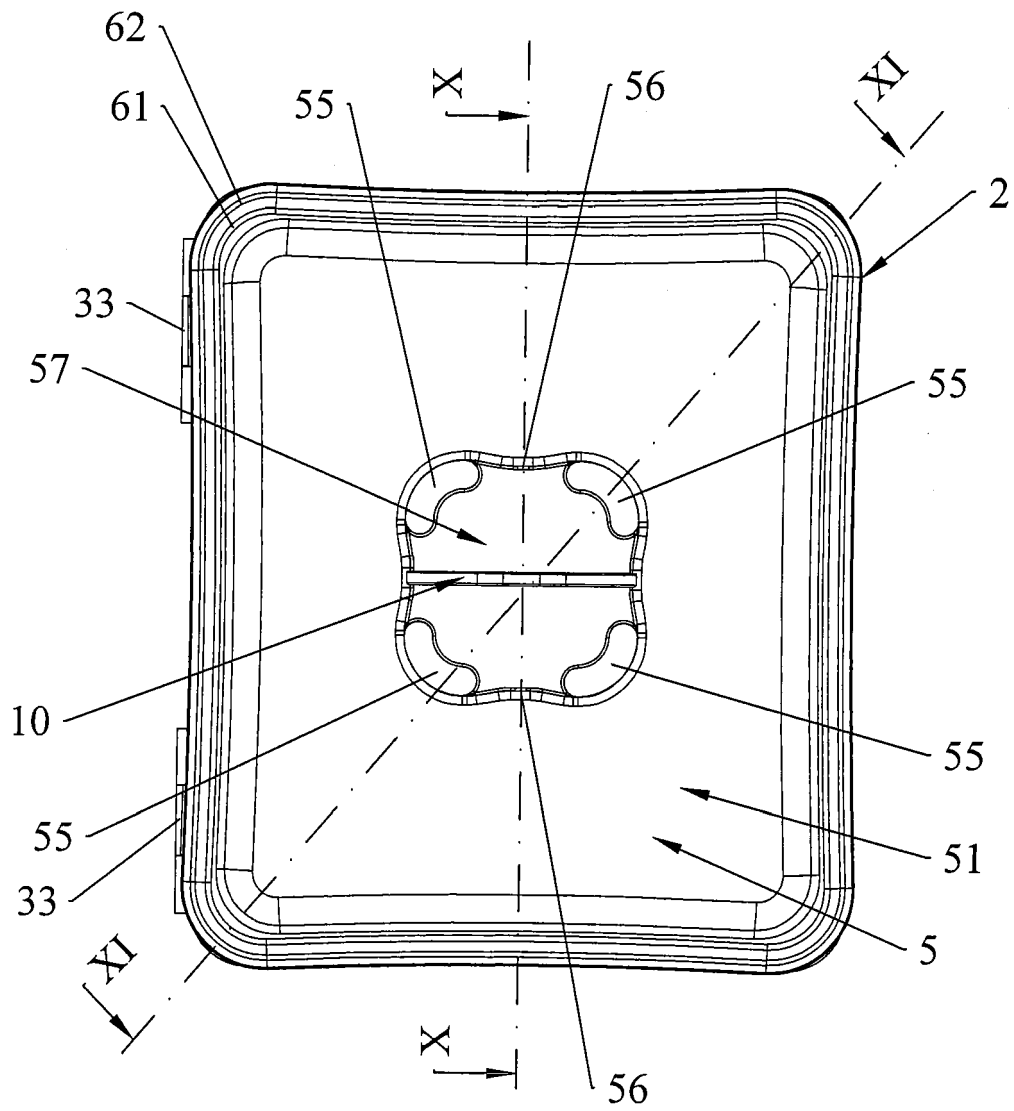


FIG.9

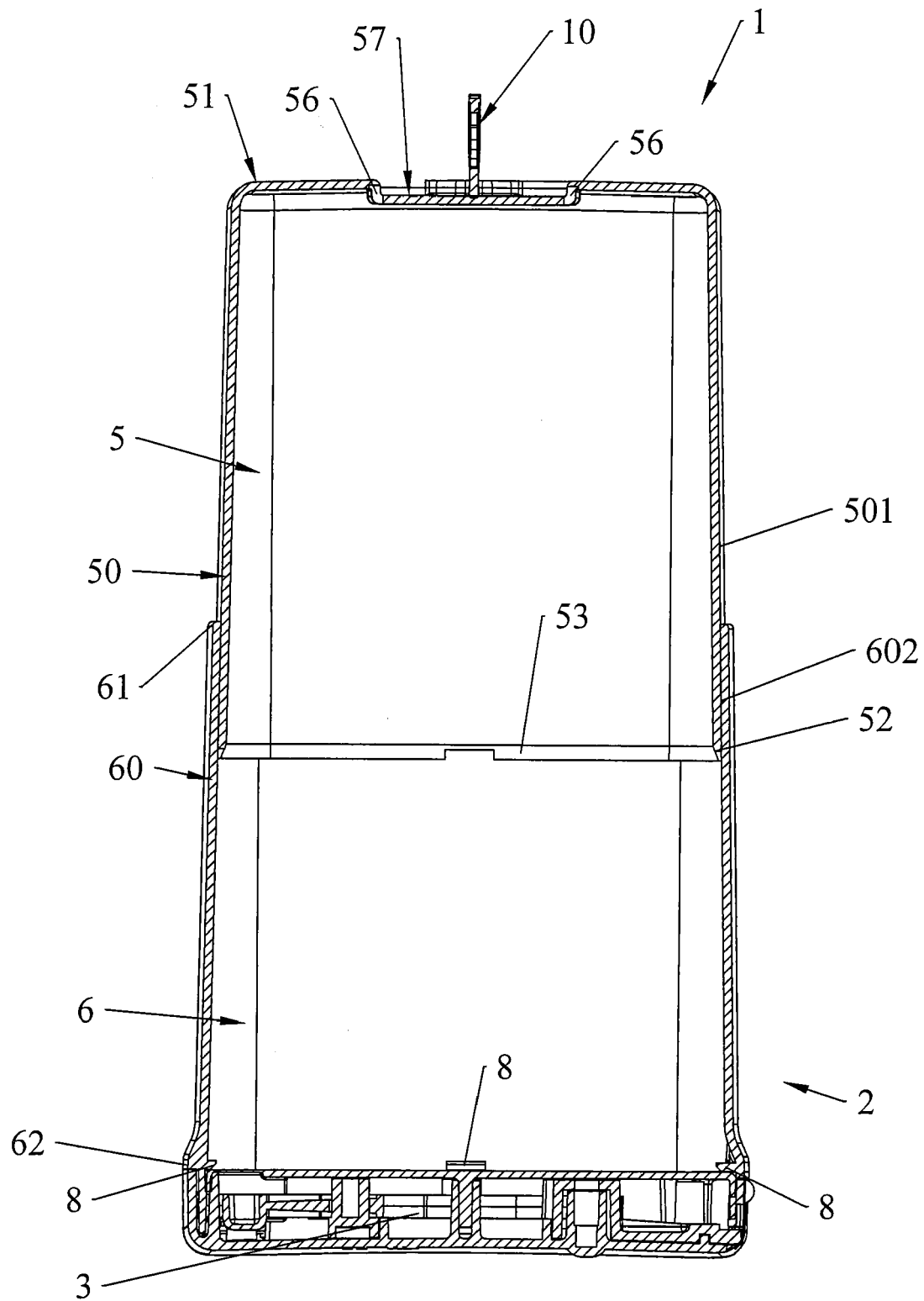


FIG.10

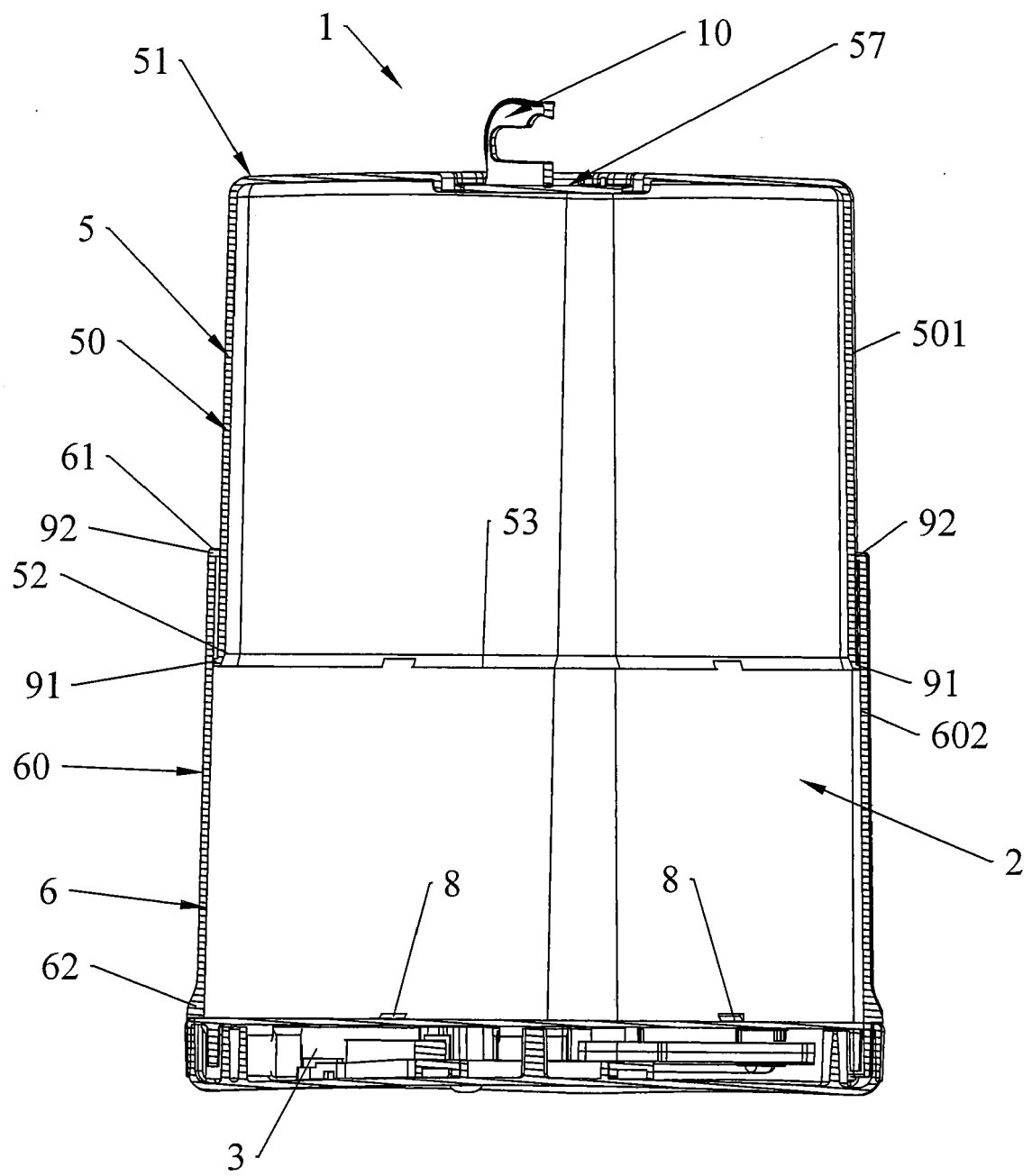


FIG.11

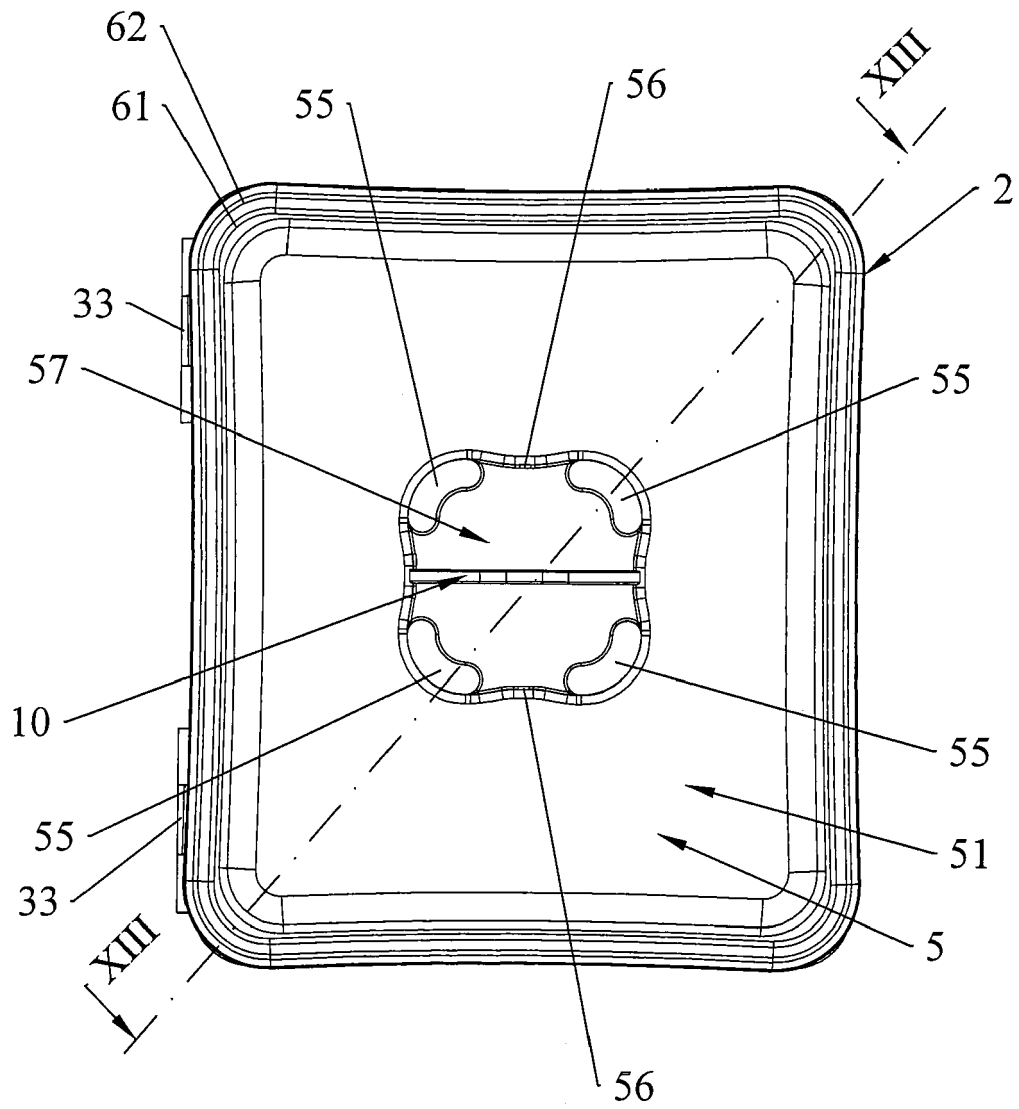


FIG.12

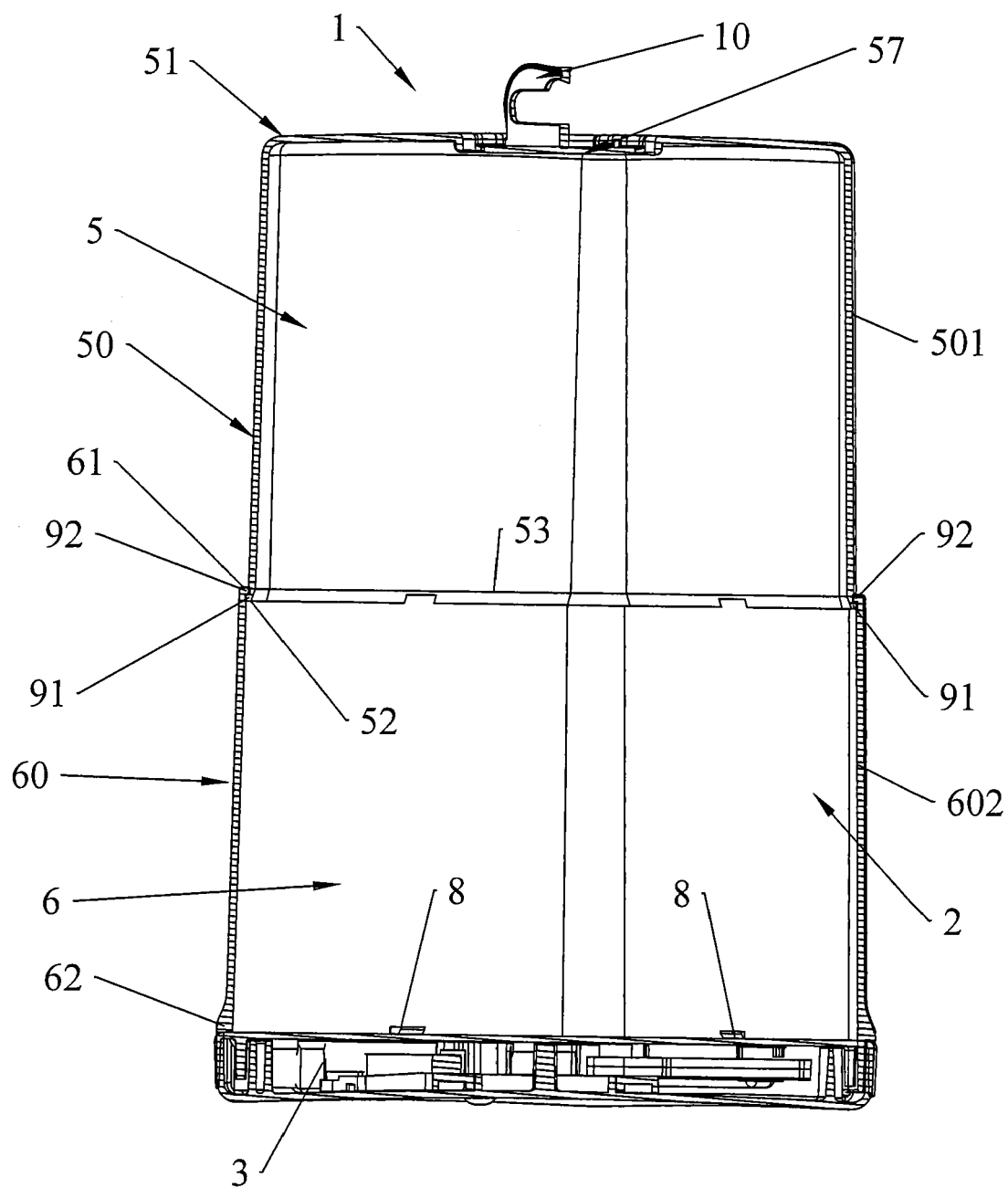


FIG.13

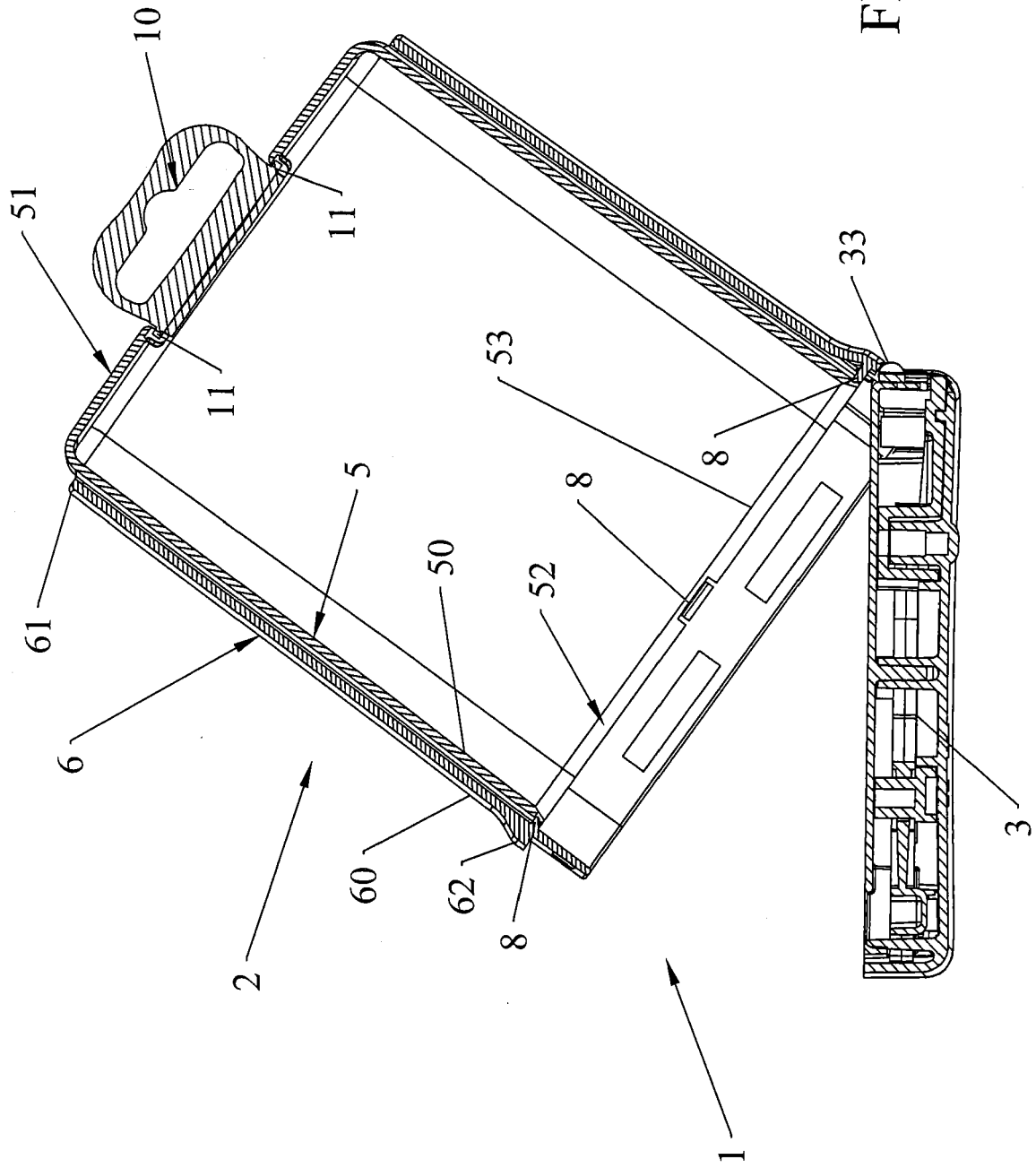


FIG.14

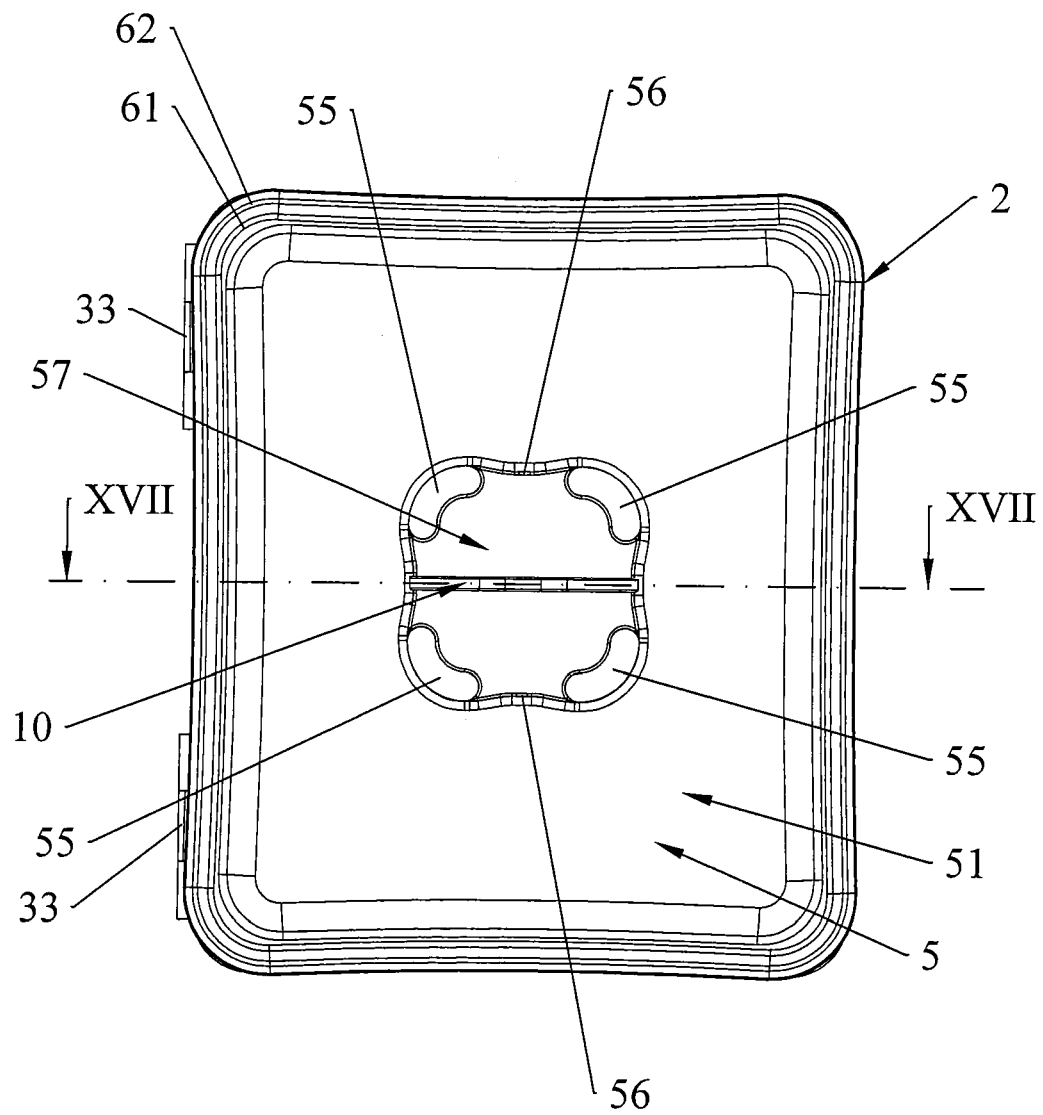


FIG.15

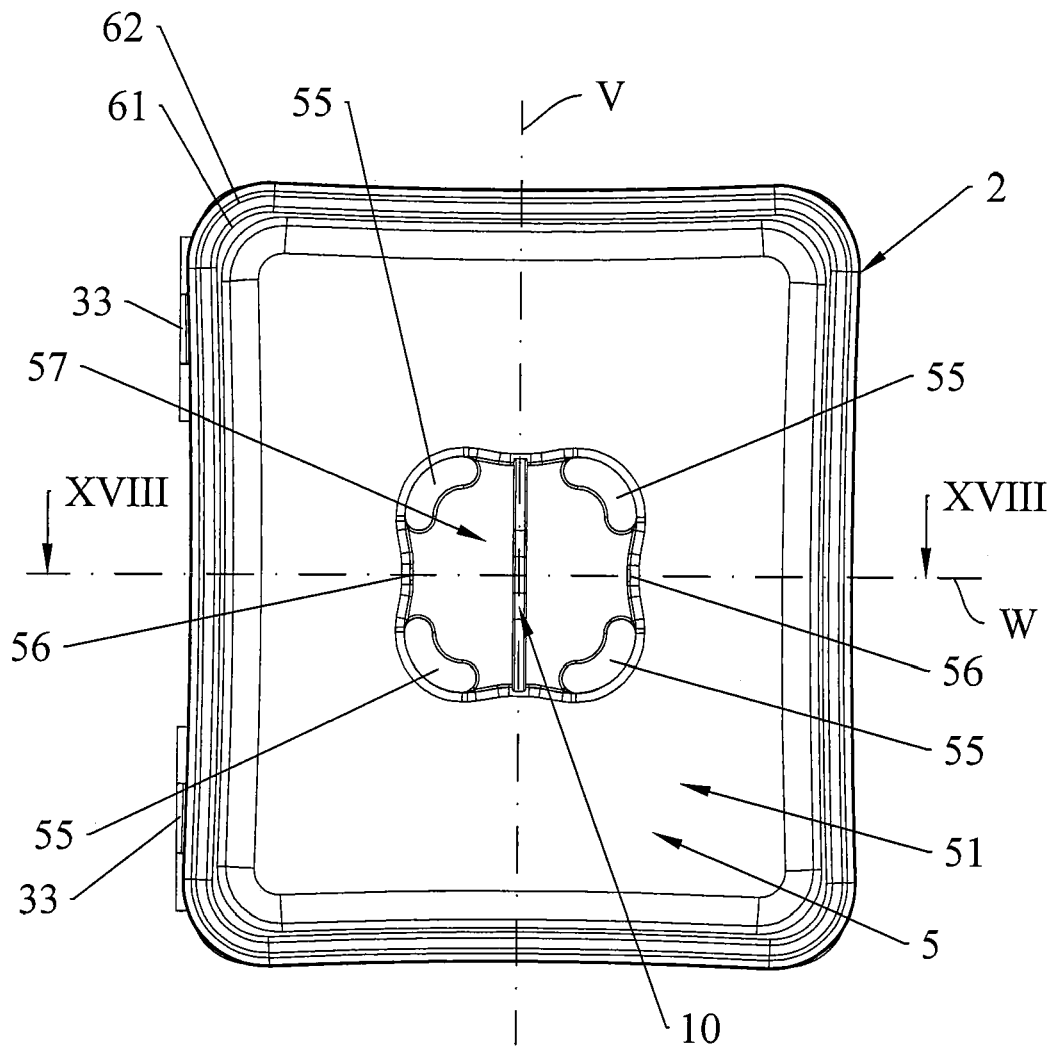


FIG.16

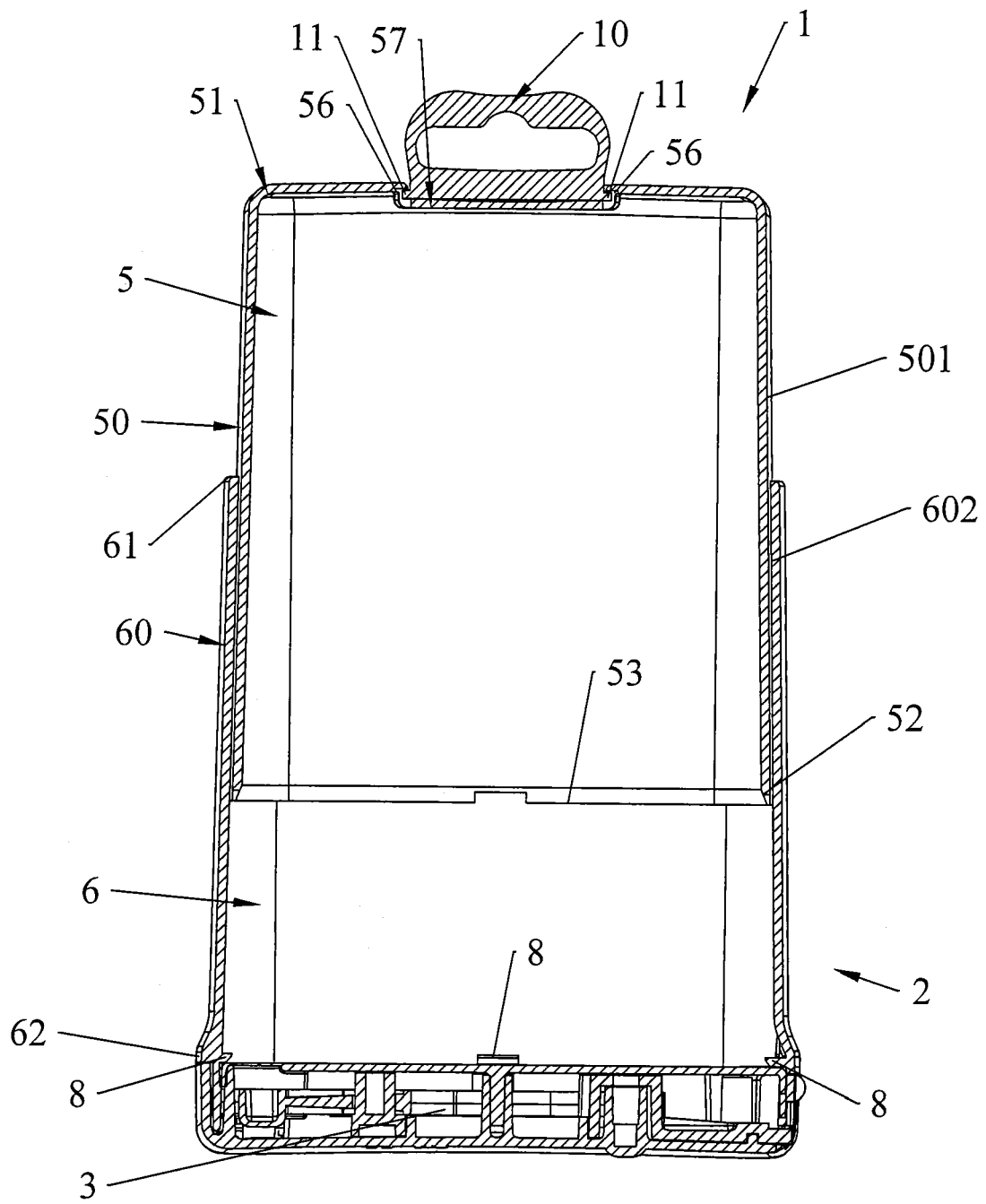


FIG.17

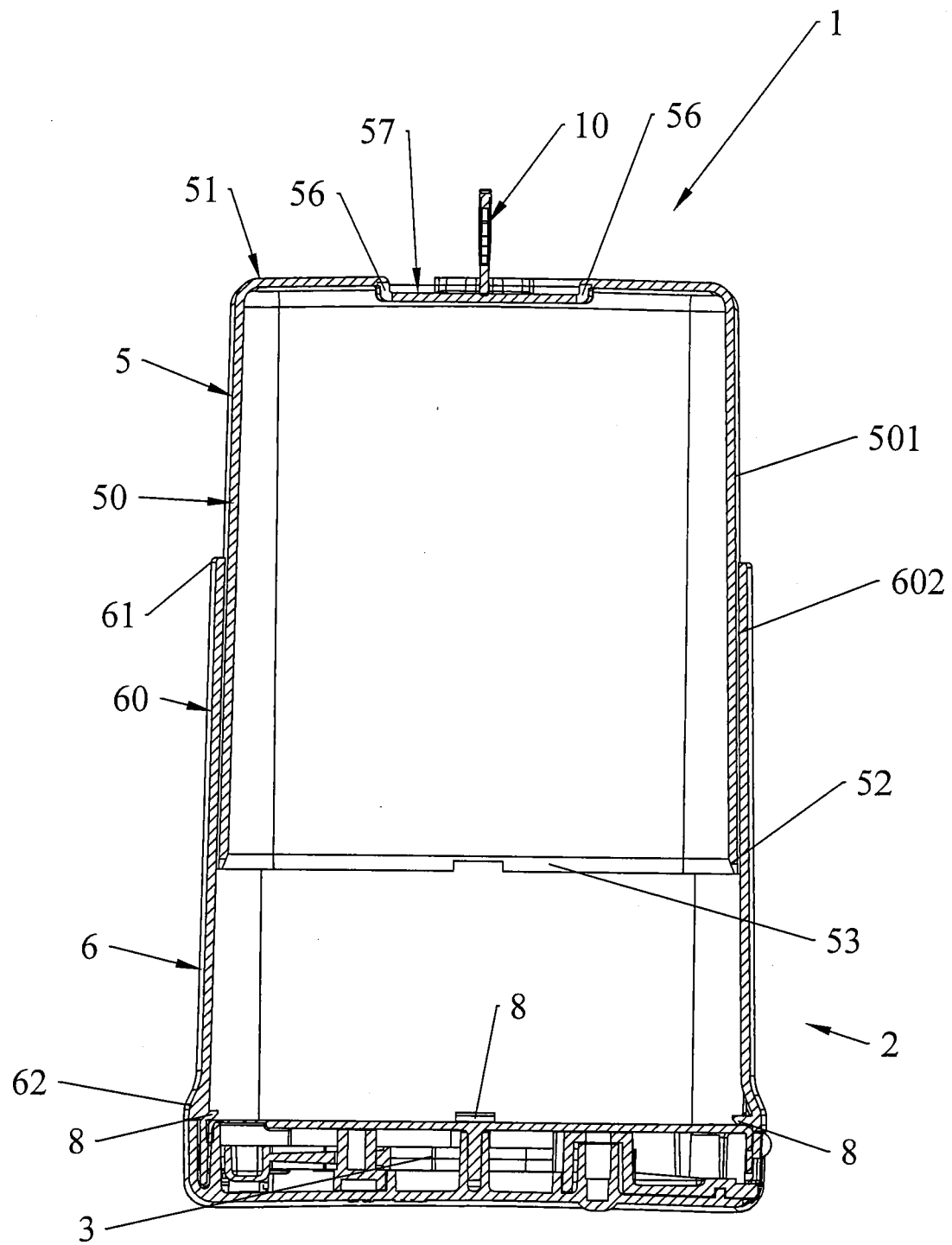


FIG.18

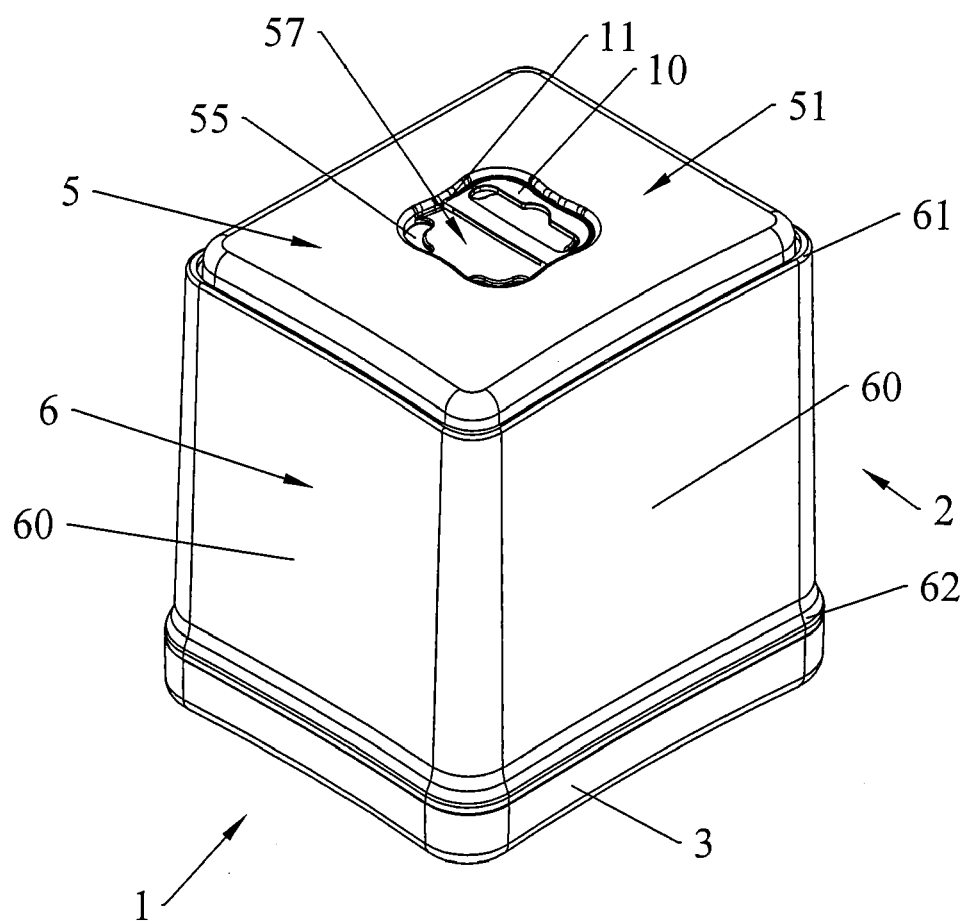


FIG.19

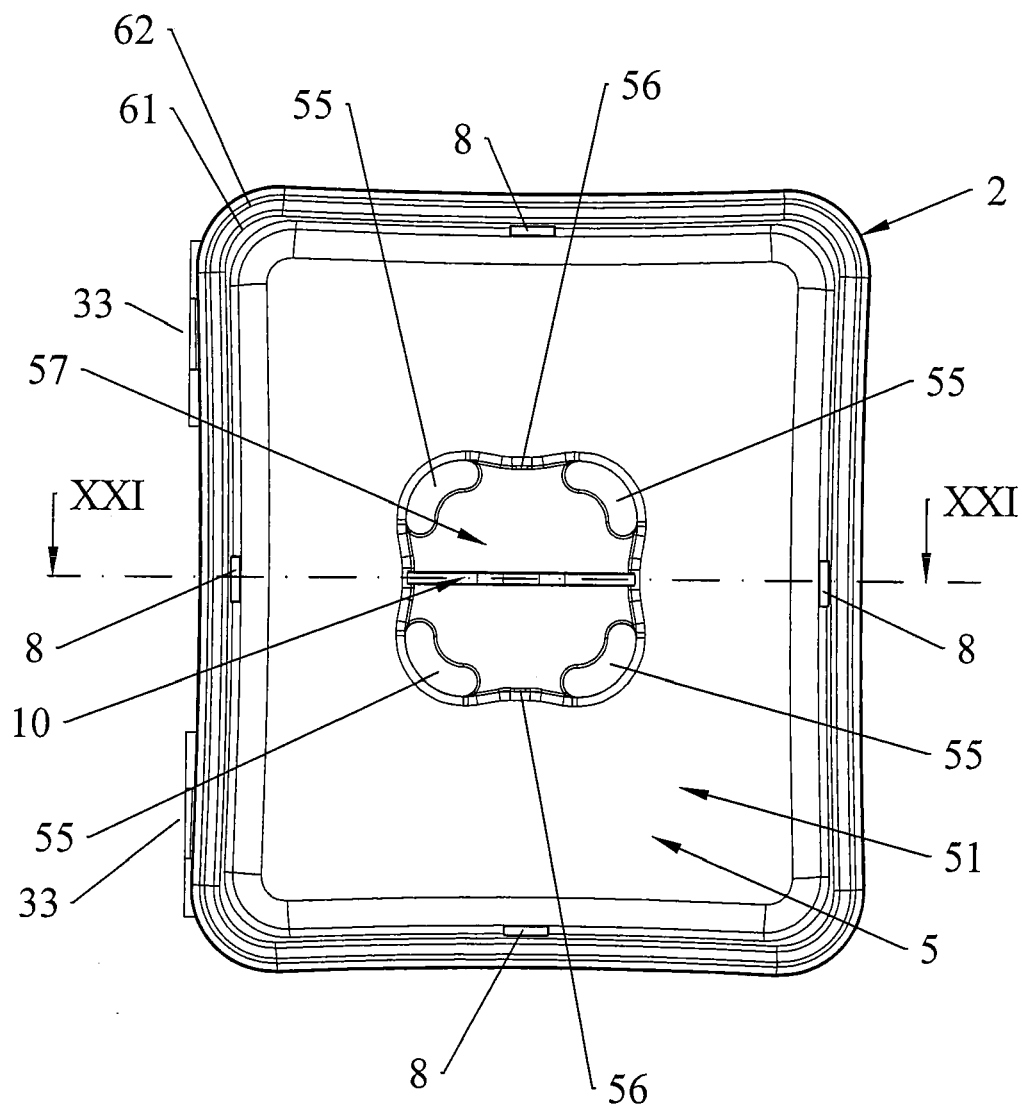


FIG.20

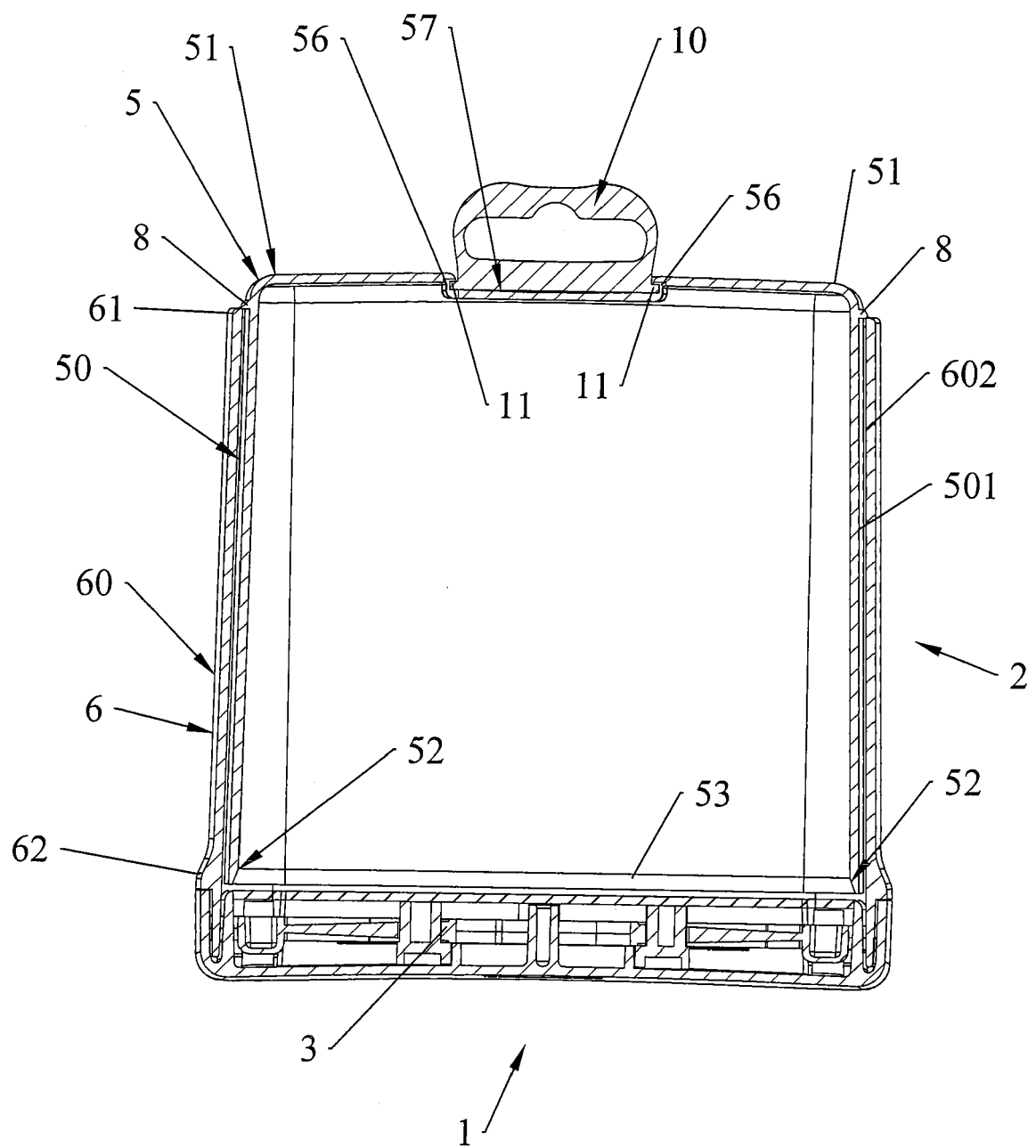


FIG. 21



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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