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(54) Title: PACKAGING CONTAINING IMPROVED DISPENSING AND CARRYING ELEMENTS

(57) Abstract: A package containing disposable absorbent articles wherein the package incorporates improved dispensing and carrying elements which aids in consumer use of the package.

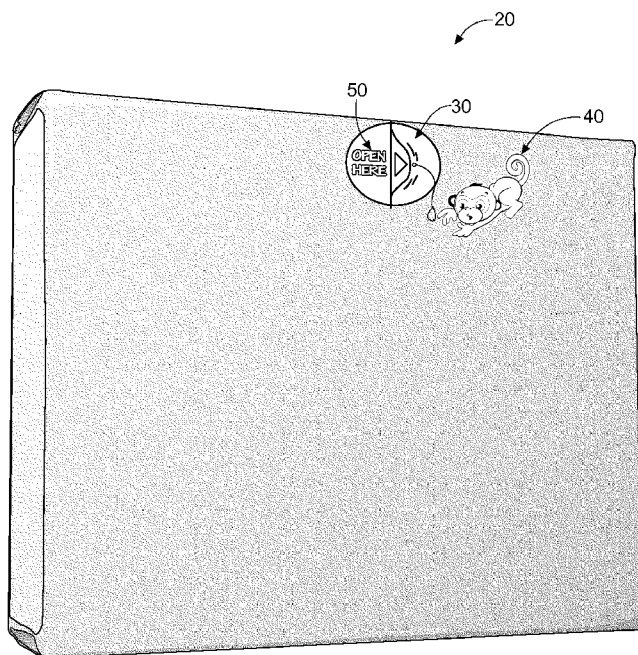


Fig. 1



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PACKAGING CONTAINING IMPROVED DISPENSING AND CARRYING ELEMENTS

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present disclosure generally relates to a package containing disposable absorbent articles. More specifically, the present invention relates to a package containing disposable absorbent articles wherein the package incorporates improved dispensing and carrying elements which aids in consumer use of the package.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The field of disposable absorbent articles includes a wide variety of consumer products which includes diapers, bibs, wipes, sanitary napkins, tampons, etc. Within each category, i.e. diapers, wipes, etc., the number of different product offerings is typically large. For example, in the diapers category product offerings may include pull-on diapers, taped diapers, training pants, newborn diapers, etc.

Packaging for each of these disposable absorbent articles typically includes the brand name of the disposable absorbent article plus some iconography or design which allows the consumer to readily recognize a particular brand. Additionally, packaging for these disposable absorbent articles may include a description on the number of absorbent articles within the package and a description of how to use the disposable absorbent article.

Packaging handles and product dispensing are basic consumer needs that are not adequately met to date. Many disposable diaper packages have handles for carrying, but oftentimes the handles are inconspicuous and go unnoticed by consumers. Further, many disposable diaper packages have a precut feature to assist the consumer in opening the package. However, oftentimes the communication of the precut feature is poor and sometimes confusing or misleading. Some precuts in the market today do not have instructions or signals, and consumers waste time looking for it. Other precuts in the market today may be signalized with non-catching graphics, like a small arrow or a simple "open here" graphic, that are difficult to perceive by the consumer.

Therefore, it is advantageous to provide a package incorporating improved dispensing and carrying elements which aids in consumer use of the package.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The package of the present invention may incorporate improved dispensing and/or carrying elements which aids in consumer use of the package.

In one embodiment of the invention, the package may comprise a precut in combination
5 with a character graphic. The package may comprise a precut in combination with a character graphic and an alpha-numeric graphic.

In another embodiment of the invention, the package may comprise a handle in combination with a character graphic. The package may comprise a handle in combination with a character graphic and an alpha-numeric graphic.

10 In another embodiment of the invention, the package may comprise both a precut in combination with a character graphic and a handle in combination with a character graphic. The package may comprise an alpha-number graphic in combination with the precut, the handle, or both.

15 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 is an isometric view showing an embodiment of a package constructed in accordance with the present invention.

Figure 2 a plan view of an embodiment of a package graphic constructed in accordance with the present invention.

20 Figure 3 is a plan view showing an embodiment of a package constructed in accordance with the present invention.

Figure 4 is a plan view of an embodiment of a package graphic constructed in accordance with the present invention.

25 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

DEFINITIONS:

“Character graphic” refers to a graphic comprising an anthropomorphic image. The graphic may be any suitable visual image or images. For example, the graphic may include pictorial symbols and/or images, such as, but not limited to, photographs, drawings,
30 embossments, or any other suitable materials utilized to create pictorial symbols and/or images. The pictorial symbols and /or images may include an image of a child, an anthropomorphic image of an animal or object, images of cartoons including well known cartoon characters, images of well known brand logos or the like, and/or images characters specifically created to be associated

with the implement of commerce, symbols, indications or motion or movement, and the like, and combinations thereof. Suitable examples of graphics are discussed in U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0129743A1, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0125923A1, and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0125877A1. As used herein, the term “character graphic” does not include alpha-numeric characters unless otherwise specified.

“Comprise,” “comprising,” and “comprises” are open ended terms, each specifies the presence of what follows, e.g., a component, but does not preclude the presence of other features, e.g., elements, steps, components known in the art, or disclosed herein.

“Consisting essentially of” is used herein to limit the scope of subject matter, such as that in a claim, to the specified materials or steps and those that do not materially affect the basic and novel characteristics of the subject matter.

A “disposable absorbent article” refers to an article device that normally absorbs and/or retains fluids. In certain instances, the phrase refers to articles that are placed against or in proximity to the body of the wearer to absorb and contain the excreta and/or exudates discharged from the body, and includes such personal care articles as baby diapers, baby training pants, adult incontinence articles, feminine hygiene articles, baby swim diapers, wound dressings, and the like. In certain instances, a disposable absorbent article may be worn by infants and other incontinent persons about the lower torso. In other instances, a disposable absorbent article may include wipes, bibs, sanitary napkins, tampons, tissue, paper towels, and the like.

As used herein the term “product” shall refer to a package containing disposable absorbent articles.

DESCRIPTION:

Ease of opening and carrying are package features that deliver a desired package experience for caregivers. A character graphic in combination with a precut and/or a handle can help increase awareness and communication of those features to help caregivers understand how to open and transport the package. Use of a character graphic on the handle and/or precut teaches and exploits a package feature and functionality, while increasing awareness and communication of those features.

The packages of the present invention incorporate improved dispensing and carrying elements which aids in consumer use of the package. The package may comprise a precut in combination with a character graphic and/or a handle in combination with a character graphic. The package may comprise an alpha-number graphic in combination with the precut, the handle, or both.

The packages of the present invention, in some embodiments, include flexible packages and rigid paper or plastic containers. The present invention is applicable to packages comprising content. For example, in some embodiments, the present invention pertains to packages comprising a plurality of disposable absorbent articles.

5 Figure 1 depicts a package 20 of the present invention. The package may comprise a precut 30 to aid the consumer in opening the package, in combination with a character graphic 40 and may also comprise an alpha-number graphic 50. Figure 2 is an example of a character graphic 40 that may be used in combination with the precut 30. An alpha-numeric graphic 50 may also be included.

10 Figure 3 depicts a package 20 of the present invention. The package may comprise a handle 60 with a character graphic 40. Figure 4 is an example of a character graphic 40 that may be used in combination with the handle 60. An alpha-numeric graphic 50 may also be included.

The package of the present invention comprising a precut in combination with a character graphic may assist in communicating the easy to open benefit provided by the precut; thus, the character graphic may comprise a teaching logo. Further, having a character graphic in combination with the precut may make the precut more noticeable to the consumer, while teaching the consumer how to open the package. Including an alpha-numeric graphic, such as “open here” in combination with the precut and character graphic make may the process of opening the package easier and more effective. Thus, ease of opening via a precut in combination with a communication tool drives better consumer understanding of the feature functionality. Consumers find the precut communication an aid in opening the diaper package.

20 The package of the present invention comprising a handle in combination with a character graphic may make the handle more noticeable and teach the consumer how to carry the package. A handle comprising a character graphic may make the handle easier to find and use and improve the carrying process for the consumer. Thus, the handle in combination with a character graphic may improve the carrying process by assisting the consumer in effectively finding and using the handle and consequently transporting the bag. As shown in Figure 4, the character graphic on the handle may demonstrate the carrying process, by depicting a graphic carrying a package.

30 Additionally, embodiments are contemplated where a package or a portion thereof comprises a gender specific color. For example, a package may comprise a color which is a shade of pink. As another example, a package may comprise a color which is a shade of blue. In yet another example, a package may comprise a color which is gender neutral, such as shades of purple or shades of green. Further examples are discussed in U.S. Patent Publication No.

2005/0129743A1, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0125923A1, and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2005/0125877A1.

Eighteen caregiver panelists were interviewed and shown three products comprising a precut including (A) a package comprising a precut in combination with a character graphic of the present invention; (B) a control package of a precut with arrows rather than a character graphic; and (C) a control package with only a precut. The caregivers interviewed were asked to open all three packages and then rank the packages for easiest to open.

	Precut with Character Graphic (A)	Precut with Arrows (B)	Precut Only (C)
# panelists	17	0	1
%	94bc*	0	6

* Significantly different at 95% confidence level

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Thus, the package comprising a precut in combination with a character graphic is rated to be significantly easier to open than the other products.

After opening all three products, the caregiver panelists indicated that the package including the character graphic was the easiest to determine where the precut was and how to open the package. The character graphic is eye-catching and communicates how and where to open the bag. The character graphic communicates how to open the bag and facilitates the opening process. The character graphic allows for faster visualization of where to open the bag and faster opening because the precut is eye-catching. The opening process was easier because the package was not torn.

Seventeen caregiver panelists were then shown four products comprising a handle including (A) a package comprising a handle in combination with a character graphic of the present invention; (B) a control package with a clear handle; (C) a control package with a clear handle; and (D) a control package with a clear handle. The caregivers interviewed were asked to open all three packages and then rank the packages for easiest to open. The caregivers interviewed were asked to select the package that they like the most thinking only of the handle feature. All panelists interviewed selected (A) the package comprising a handle in combination with a character graphic.

After selecting the preferred package with the handle in combination with a character graphic, each panelist was asked to evaluate only the preferred package for the attributes of how

easy it was to notice the handle of the package selected and how comfortable it was to carry the package.

How easy was it to notice the handle of the package selected?

Base 17 panelists	Extremely Easy	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Slightly Easy	Not at all Easy
# panelists	15	2			
%	88	12			
% top two boxes	100				

5

How comfortable was it to carry this package?

Base 17 panelists	Extremely comfortable	Very comfortable	Somewhat comfortable	Slightly comfortable	Not at all comfortable
# panelists	9	8			
%	53	47			
% top two boxes	100				

Thus, the package comprising a handle in combination with a character graphic is rated to be both easy to notice and comfortable to carry.

10

After considering the package comprising a handle in combination with a character graphic, the caregiver panelists indicated that the handle having a character graphic is the easiest and fastest to notice. The character graphic on the handle allows the consumer to identify that the package has a carrying feature because it is eye-catching when compared to current handles that are clear and not noticeable at shelf. The character graphic indicates that the bag has a handle and shows how to carry the bag; clear handles are not noticeable.

15

The dimensions and values disclosed herein are not to be understood as being strictly limited to the exact numerical values recited. Instead, unless otherwise specified, each such dimension is intended to mean both the recited value and a functionally equivalent range

surrounding that value. For example, a dimension disclosed as “40 mm” is intended to mean “about 40 mm”.

All documents cited in the Detailed Description of the Invention are, in relevant part, incorporated herein by reference; the citation of any document is not to be construed as an admission that it is prior art with respect to the present invention. To the extent that any meaning or definition of a term in this written document conflicts with any meaning or definition of the term in a document incorporated by reference, the meaning or definition assigned to the term in this written document shall govern.

While particular embodiments of the present invention have been illustrated and described, it would be obvious to those skilled in the art that various other changes and modifications can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. It is therefore intended to cover in the appended claims all such changes and modifications that are within the scope of this invention.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A package containing a plurality of disposable absorbent articles, the package comprising:
a precut; and
a character graphic in combination with the precut.
2. The package according to Claim 1 further comprising an alpha-numeric graphic in combination with the precut.
3. The package according to Claim 1 further comprising:
5 a handle;
and a character graphic in combination with the handle.
4. The package according to Claim 3 comprising an alpha-numeric graphic in combination with the handle.
5. The package according to Claim 3 comprising an alpha-numeric graphic in combination with the precut.
6. The package according to Claim 3 comprising an alpha-numeric graphic in combination with both the handle and the precut.

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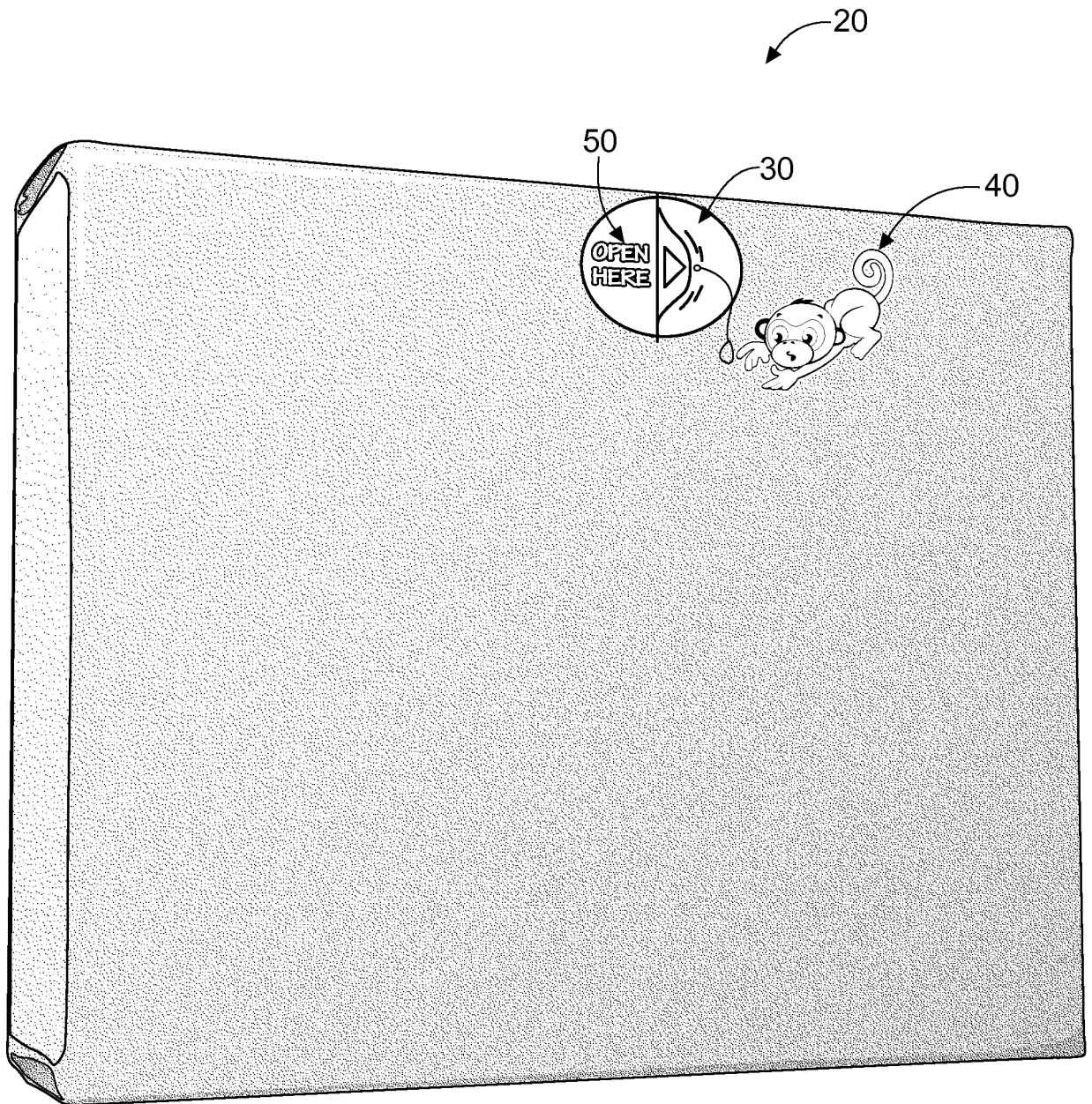


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

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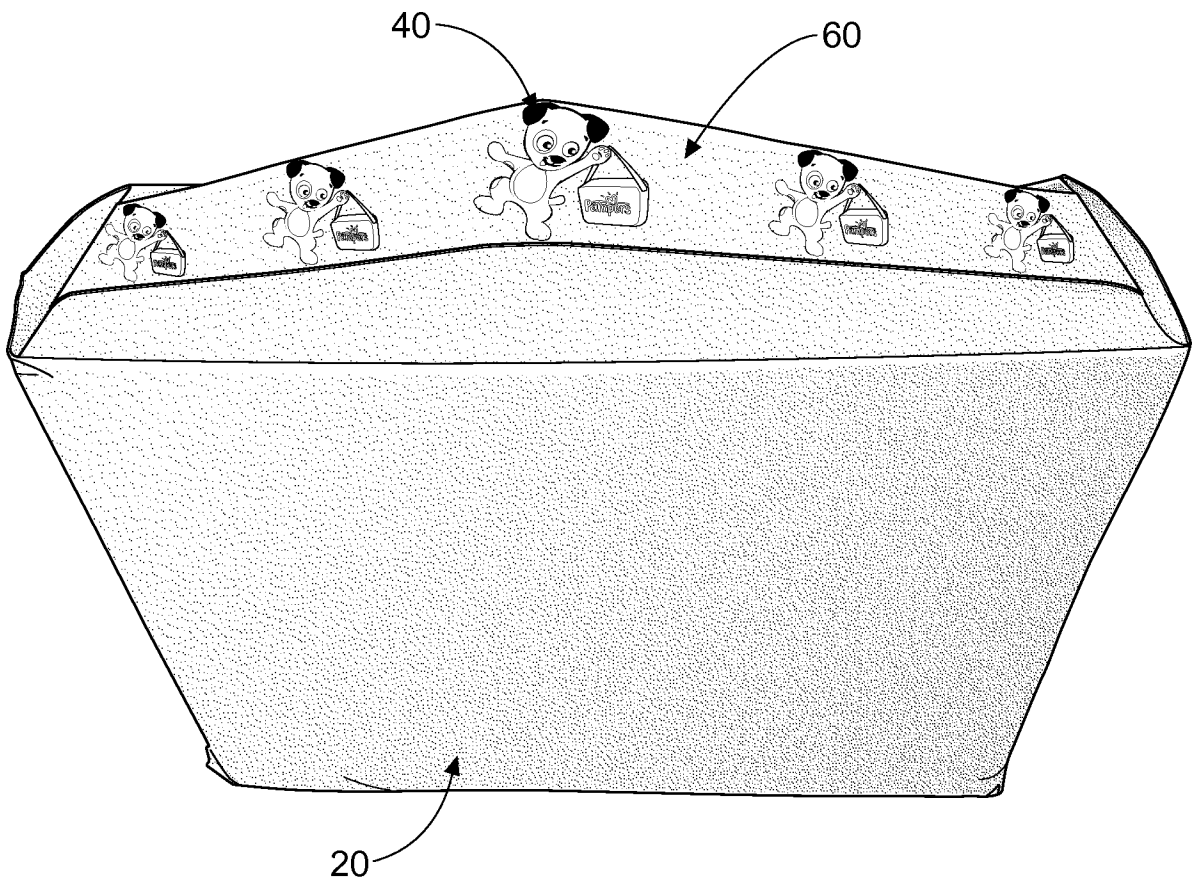


Fig. 3

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Fig. 4

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No PCT/US2011/026565

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER INV. B65D75/56 B65D75/58 B65D85/16 ADD.				
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC				
B. FIELDS SEARCHED				
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) B65D				
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched				
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used) EPO-Internal				
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT				
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.		
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X	EP 2 017 192 A1 (SCA HYGIENE PROD AB [SE]) 21 January 2009 (2009-01-21) paragraphs [0005], [0010], [0011], [0033], [0052]; figure 1 -----	1-6		
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Y	US 4 555 804 A (CANNING HOWARD [CA] ET AL) 26 November 1985 (1985-11-26) column 3, lines 7-11; figure 1 -----	3-6		
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A	----- -/--	1,2		
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.</td> </tr> </table>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.			
* Special categories of cited documents :				
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art. "&" document member of the same patent family			
Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report			
18 May 2011	27/05/2011			
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Authorized officer Jervelund, Niels			

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/US2011/026565

C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 2007/138391 A1 (PROCTER & GAMBLE [US]; THIELMAN SARAH LOUISE [US]; WESTERMEYER JENNIFE) 6 December 2007 (2007-12-06) page 8, line 8 - page 10, line 22 -----	1,2

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Information on patent family members

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