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(54) **PACKAGING FOR OPTICAL DISCS**

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(76) Inventors: **Jay Coile**, Amarillo, TX (US);
Michael Lee England, Amarillo,
TX (US); **Jeff King**, Canyon, TX
(US); **Bill Lardie**, Amarillo, TX
(US)

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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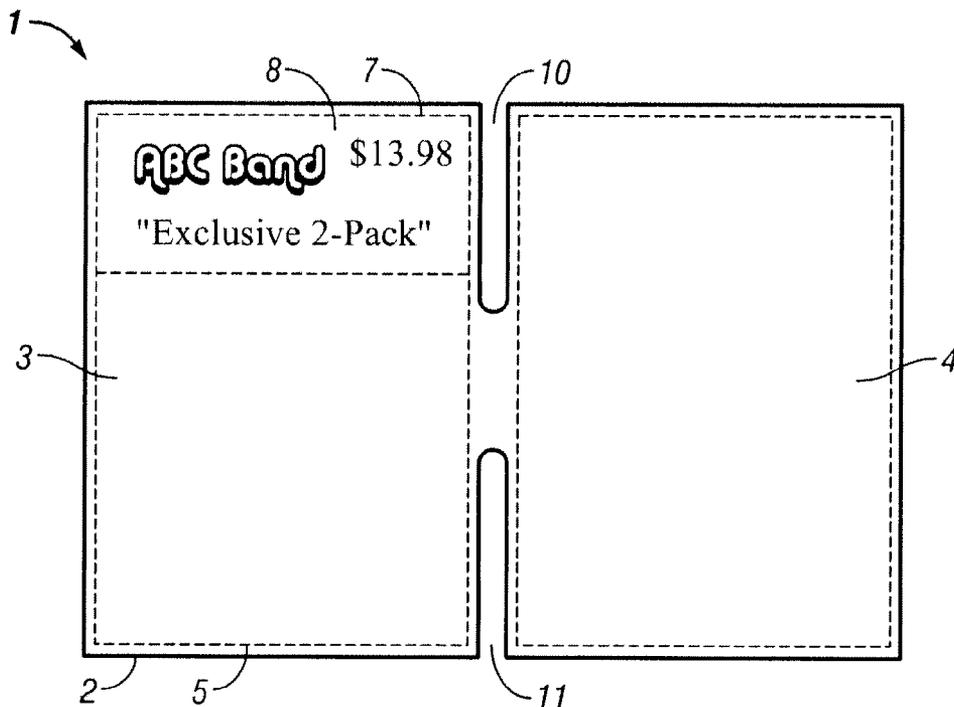
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Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 12/538,660, filed on Aug. 10, 2009, which is a continuation of application No. 11/749,458, filed on May 16, 2007, now abandoned.

(60) Provisional application No. 60/801,674, filed on May 16, 2006.

A package for holding a plurality of jewel cases for optical discs is provided, comprising a shell member having a first compartment and a second compartment, a cover sealably attachable to the shell member, and one or more mask areas on the shell member. Each of the mask areas are sized and positioned to obscure bar code indicia on the individual jewel cases contained within the shell member. In a preferred embodiment, the package is transparent, and it may contain a CD jewel case and a DVD jewel case. A third compartment contains an informational insert with a bar code or other point-of-sale indicia so that the package can be sold as a single unit.



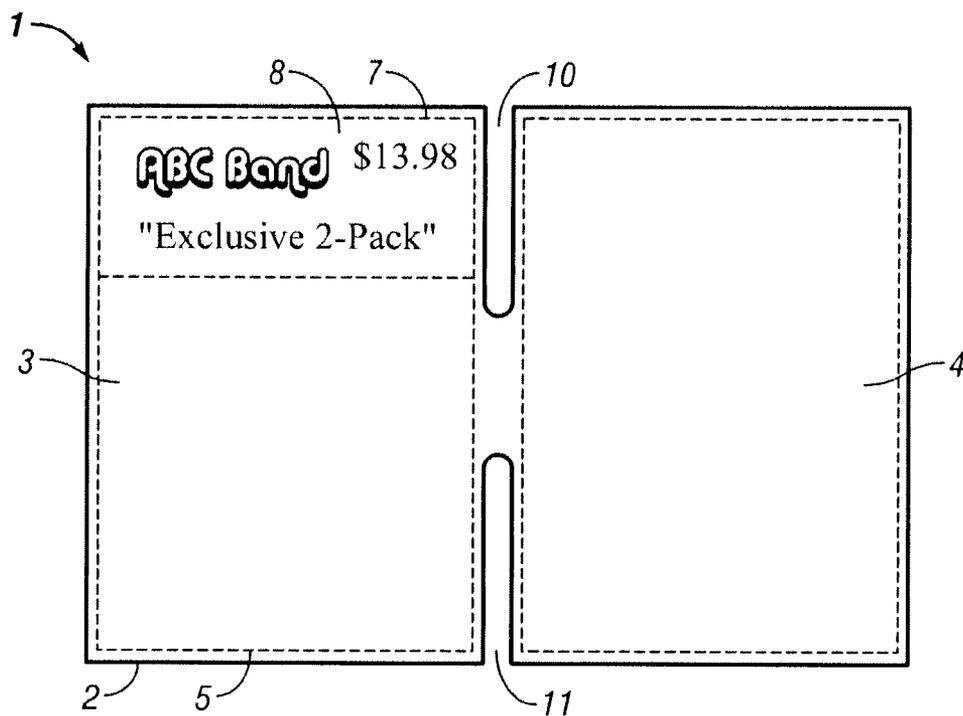


FIG. 1

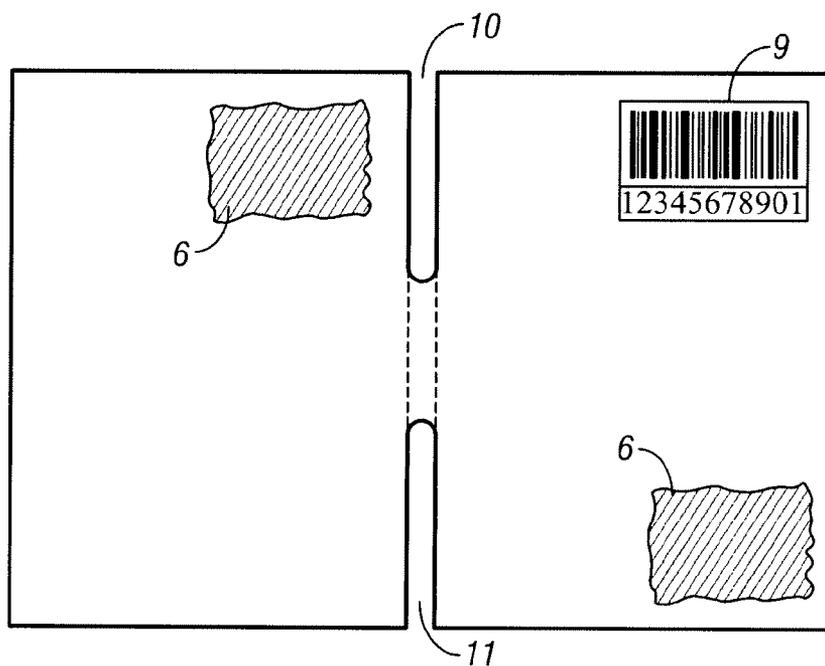


FIG. 2

PACKAGING FOR OPTICAL DISCS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] The instant application is a continuation of U.S. Non-Provisional Application Ser. No. 12/538,660 filed May 9, 2011, still pending, which is a continuation of U.S. Non-Provisional Application Ser. No. 11/749,458 filed May 16, 2007, now abandoned, which claims the benefit of prior U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/801,674, filed May 16, 2006.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] I. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates generally to devices and methods used to package optical discs, such as compact discs (CD's), digital versatile discs (DVD's), and other disc-shaped media, and more particularly to such devices which hold a standard-size CD jewel case and a standard-size DVD jewel case for sale as a single unit.

[0004] II. Background and Prior Art

[0005] Packaging and storage devices for media are generally known. Disc-shaped media, such as CD's, DVD's or CD-ROM's, encounter special problems in handling, packaging and storage due to their delicate, flat recorded surfaces. Such disc media is generally sold in plastic cases which are sometimes referred to as "jewel boxes" or "jewel cases." Such cases are generally rectangular and have a mounting hub for holding the disc media by its center aperture. Such cases are usually kept after purchase of the disc media and utilized for re-packaging of the disc media between usage.

[0006] It is often desirable to market and sell music CD and DVD products as a single package, particularly when the products are from a single artist. For example, a music CD and a music video DVD may be sold to consumers who desire both media for their enjoyment. However, there is no simple and effective means to package these different products in a single unit for retail sale. Moreover, if such products were placed within a single package, such package may prevent the consumer from viewing the individual CD or DVD cases as they may have been sold separately in the past. Furthermore, if such individual CD and DVD cases were contained within a transparent case, the individual UPC data on each case may inadvertently be scanned at the point of sale. Therefore, a need exists for a packaging system which allows the co-marketing and sale of CD/CD and CD/DVD jewel cases within a single unit having its own UPC data which cannot be confused with prior LJPC data for the individual cases.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] Therefore, one object of the present invention is to provide a package for the sale of two or more optical discs as a single unit.

[0008] It is also an object of the present invention to provide a package for containing a CD-size jewel case and a DVD-size jewel case within a single unit.

[0009] A further object of the present invention is to provide a package for multiple CD and/or DVD jewel cases which includes mask areas for obscuring the UPC or other identifying indicia on the individual jewel cases.

[0010] Another object of the present invention is to provide a package for multiple CD and/or DVD jewel cases which includes a compartment or area containing an informational insert or label, along with UPC data for the entire package.

[0011] Accordingly, a package for holding a plurality of jewel cases for optical discs is provided, comprising a shell member having a first compartment and a second compartment, a cover sealably attachable to the shell member, and one or more mask areas on the shell member. Each of the mask areas are sized and positioned to obscure bar code indicia on the individual jewel cases contained within the shell member. In a preferred embodiment, the package is transparent, and it may contain a CD jewel case and a DVD jewel case. A third compartment contains an informational insert with a bar code or other point-of-sale indicia so that the package can be sold as a single unit.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] FIG. 1 depicts a front view of a preferred embodiment of a package for holding optical disc jewel cases.

[0013] FIG. 2 depicts a rear view of the package of FIG. 1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0014] Turning now to FIG. 1, a package for holding a plurality of jewel cases for optical discs is shown. In a preferred configuration, the package 1 generally comprises a shell member 2 having a first compartment 3 and a second compartment 4, and a cover 5 sealably attachable to the shell member 2. As is well known in the industry, prerecorded CD and DVD products are typically sold in standard-size jewel cases which contain at least one Universal Product Code (UPC). The UPC comprises an alphanumeric sequence adjacent to a scannable bar code so that the product can be scanned at the point of sale. Because the present invention is directed to a package that is intended to be sold as a single unit, it is necessary to prevent the scanning of the individual UPC codes for each of the contained jewel cases, such that separate UPC data for the single unit can be scanned. Therefore, one or more mask areas 6 are located on the shell member 2, best shown in FIG. 2, wherein each of the mask areas 6 are sized and positioned to obscure UPC bar code indicia on the individual jewel cases.

[0015] In a preferred embodiment, the first compartment 3 is shaped to contain a CD jewel case and the second compartment 4 is shaped to contain a DVD jewel case. Alternatively, the first and second compartments 3, 4 may each be shaped to contain a CD jewel case, or they may each be shaped to contain a DVD jewel case.

[0016] The cover 5 or the shell member 2, or both, may be constructed from common plastic sheet used extensively in the industry. In most applications, it will be desirable for the shell member 2 and the cover 5 to be transparent such that the individual jewel cases may be readily viewable by consumers. The shell member 2 preferably comprises a third compartment 7 adjacent to the first or second compartment 3, 4, wherein the third compartment 7 is sized to contain or accommodate an informational insert or label 8 having a unique UPC bar code 9 or other information about the single package 1. The package 1 also includes at least one or more slots 10, 11 formed into the shell member 2 and cover between the first and second compartments 3, 4 for engagement with a retail shelving system, such as conventional rack components or wires.

[0017] The mask areas 6 on the shell member 2 may simply comprise an opaque region, such as a colored area which is effective in preventing the bar codes or other UPC data on the

individual jewel cases from being scanned at the point of sale. Alternatively, the mask areas 6 may each comprise a textured region formed into the shell member 2 at the time that the shell member 2 is manufactured. Such textured regions should be sufficient to reflect, refract, or otherwise obscure the scanning of the individual jewel cases.

[0018] In a preferred configuration, the present invention should be manufactured in a generally rectangular shape, such that a taller DVD jewel case positioned next to a shorter CD jewel cases provides a convenient region for the single-package informational area 8. One of the key advantages of the present invention is that it allows co-marketing and sale of a prerecorded music CD with a prerecorded music DVD in their originally marketed cases. Thus, the distribution of a single-unit package 1 having both CD and DVD products will not require any changes to the existing packaging of the individual products.

[0019] Although exemplary embodiments of the present invention have been shown and described, many changes, modifications, and substitutions may be made by one having ordinary skill in the art without necessarily departing from the spirit and scope of the invention.

I claim:

- 1. A package for holding a plurality of jewel cases for optical discs, comprising:
 - (a) a shell member having a first compartment and a second compartment; (b) a cover sealably attachable to said shell member; and (c) one or more mask areas on said shell member, wherein each of said mask areas further comprise a roughened textured region formed into the shell member and are sized and positioned to at least partially obscure bar code indicia on said jewel cases.
- 2. The package of claim 1, wherein said first compartment is shaped to contain a CD jewel case and said second compartment is shaped to contain a DVD jewel case.
- 3. The package of claim 1, wherein said first and second compartments are each shaped to contain a CD jewel case.
- 4. The package of claim 1, wherein said cover is transparent.

5. The package of claim 1, wherein said shell member is transparent.

6. The package of claim 1, wherein said mask area comprises an opaque region.

7. The package of claim 1, wherein said shell member comprises a third compartment adjacent to said first or second compartment, wherein said third compartment is sized to contain an informational insert.

8. The package of claim 1, further comprising at least one slot formed into said shell member between said first and second compartments for engagement with a retail shelving system.

9. A package for holding a plurality of jewel cases for optical discs, comprising:

- (a) a shell member having a first compartment and a second compartment, wherein said first compartment is shaped to contain a CD jewel case and said second compartment is shaped to contain a DVD jewel case; and (b) a cover sealably attachable to said shell member; wherein said shell member further includes a third compartment adjacent to said first or second compartment, said third compartment being sized to contain an informational insert; and wherein said shell member further includes one or more mask areas, wherein each of said mask areas further comprise a roughened textured region formed into the shell member and are sized and positioned to at least partially obscure bar code indicia on said jewel cases.

10. The package of claim 9, wherein said cover is transparent.

11. The package of claim 9, wherein said shell member is transparent.

12. The package of claim 9, wherein said mask area comprises an opaque region.

13. The package of claim 9, wherein said mask area comprises a textured region.

14. The package of claim 9, further comprising at least one slot formed into said shell member between said first and second compartments for engagement with a retail shelving system.

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