

CONTAINER WITH HINGED LID

The present invention relates to a novel container for consumer goods. The present invention also relates to single laminar blanks used to manufacture containers
5 for consumer goods. The container finds particular application as a container for elongate smoking articles, such as cigarettes.

It is known to package elongate smoking articles and other consumer goods in containers formed from folded laminar blanks. The containers generally comprise a housing and a lid. For example, elongate smoking articles, such as cigarettes and
10 cigars, are commonly sold in hinge lid packs having a box for housing the smoking articles and a lid connected to the box about a hinge line extending across the back wall of the container. The lid is generally positioned at the top of the housing and hinged along the back wall of the container. The lid and housing are generally arranged such that the free edge of the lid and the free edge of the housing abut when the lid is in the
15 closed position. Such packs are typically constructed from one-piece laminar cardboard blanks. In use, the lid is pivoted about the hinge line to open the pack and so gain access to the smoking articles held in the box. It is known that such containers may sometimes suffer from problems such as the lid and the housing not aligning correctly due to distortion of the lid and a gap is visible on the front of the container between the
20 lid and the box part. This is sometimes referred to as "smiling" effect.

It would be desirable to provide a novel container. It would be particularly desirable if such a container could be assembled and filled efficiently using conventional methods and apparatus. It would also be desirable if the container was provided with a more rigid lid, and a more secure closing effect.

25 According to a first aspect of the present invention, there is provided a container for consumer goods. The container comprises a lid pivotable, about a hinge line extending across a back wall of the container, between a closed position and an open position. There is also provided a box, having an opening, comprising at least one slit, the at least one slit being located at respective edges of a front wall of the box,
30 extending from the opening. The lid is mounted on the box such that it coincides with the opening of the box whereby, in a closed position of the lid, the lid engages with the at least one slit of the box to retain the lid in a closed position.

By providing the box with at least one slit to engage with the lid, the container may be more securely closed using friction. Preferably, the at least one slit may

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comprise crenulated, corrugated or ridged edges, and thus the container may be yet more securely closed. The term "engage" as used herein connotes that, in the closed position, the front corner, or corners, of the lid lie within the at least one slit.

The box may comprise a front wall, a back wall, a bottom wall, a first side wall
5 and a second side wall. The lid may comprise a front wall, a back wall, a top wall, a first side wall and a second side wall.

The terms "front", "back", "upper", "lower", "side", "top", "bottom", "left", "right" and other terms used to describe relative positions of the components of containers according to the invention refer to the container in an upright position with the opening
10 through which the consumer goods are removed at the top end and the hinge at the back. The back wall of the container is the wall comprising the hinge line.

The term "longitudinal" refers to a direction from bottom to top or vice versa. The term "transverse" refers to a direction perpendicular to the longitudinal direction.

The container is preferably a rectangular parallelepiped comprising two wider
15 walls spaced apart by two narrower walls.

The term "hinge line" refers to a line about which the lid may be pivoted in order to open the container. A hinge line may be, for example, a fold line or a score line in the panel forming the back wall of the container.

Preferably, the box comprises two slits, each slit located at respective edges of a
20 front wall of the box, extending from the opening. More preferably, the two slits define a resilient flap extending from the front wall of the box, whereby, in a second closed position of the lid, the resilient flap acts on the lid to retain the lid in the second closed position. By providing a resilient flap, the container may be closed in a second closed position. The first closed position is defined as the closed position in which the lid lies
25 outside of the resilient flap, and engages with the at least one slit. The second closed position is defined as the closed position in which the lid lies inside of the resilient flap, and is held closed by the resilient flap acting on an exterior surface of the lid. Therefore, the lid front wall panel may overlap the resilient flap when the lid is in a closed position. In the first closed position, the lid and resilient flap may overlap such that the resilient
30 flap is not visible. In the second closed position, the lid and the resilient flap may overlap such that the resilient flap is visible.

The height of the resilient flap may be at least 50 percent of the height of the lid. The height of the resilient flap is measured from the base of a slit to the top free edge of the resilient flap. The height of the lid is measured from the free edge to the top of the

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lid. Preferably, the height of the resilient flap is at least 70 percent of the height of the lid, more preferably at least 80 percent of the height of the lid.

The resilient flap may comprise at least one strengthening element adapted to rigidify at least one free edge of the resilient flap. Rigidify as used herein is defined as making a panel of the container more rigid, and therefore more resistant to a bending force applied to that panel against bending in the at least one predetermined direction. Preferably, the at least one strengthening element is integral to the resilient flap. The strengthening element may be a flap that depends from the free edge of the resilient flap, and adapted to be folded towards the interior of the container and then attached to the interior surface of the resilient flap. Therefore, the resilient flap may be strengthened by doubling the thickness of material in the region that requires rigidifying.

Alternatively, the resilient flap may comprise two or more strengthening elements each in the form of a flap depending from a free edge. In one embodiment, the flaps are arranged such that a triangular shape is formed centrally in the lid front wall when the flaps are folded towards the interior of the container.

As will be appreciated, a large number of configurations of the flaps can be provided to result in a large variety of shapes forming the free edge of the resilient flap. For example, a trapezoidal free edge can be provided using three strengthening flaps, or an offset from centre triangular shape can be provided using two strengthening flaps.

Alternatively, a linear edge can be provided using only one strengthening element that is not perpendicular to the side wall of the container. In this case, one slit adapted to engage the lid is provided. Therefore, the lid is only engaged at one corner, the other corner merely abutting the free edge of the resilient flap.

The free edge of the resilient flap may have chamfered corners or rounded corners. Alternatively, the free edge may have any appropriate shape, such as hemispherical, crenulated, corrugated, ridged, or any non-uniform shape.

Preferably, the lid is adapted to interact with the resilient flap on opening, on closing or on opening and on closing such that an audible sound is generated.

Preferably, the lid comprises at least one strengthening element adapted to strengthen at least one free edge of the lid. The strengthening element may be a flap that depends from the free edge of the lid, and adapted to be folded towards the interior of the container and then attached to the interior surface of the lid. Therefore, the free edge of the lid may be strengthened by doubling the thickness of material used at the free edge of the lid. By providing such a strengthening element the "smiling" effect may

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be reduced. Further the container may be securely closed. Furthermore, the use of a flap depending from the free edge of the lid may improve the aesthetic of the container since a so-called "blunt edge", or "printed edge", is formed. The term "blunt edge", and "printed edge" as used in this description connotes an edge that is created by folding
5 rather than cutting, thus a rounded edge is formed.

The container may comprise an outer portion and an inner portion. Preferably, the lid forms at least a portion of the inner housing, and the box forms at least a portion of the outer housing. In this case, the inner housing is adapted to house the consumer goods. Preferably, the outer housing has side walls, adjacent the front and back walls,
10 adapted to extend beyond the side walls of the inner housing whereby, in a closed position of the lid, the outer housing side walls at least partially overlap the side walls of the lid. By providing side walls that at least partially overlap the lid walls when the lid is in a closed position, the container may protect the consumer goods within the container effectively. The top edge of the side walls may angle down from the edge of the side
15 wall adjacent the back wall to the edge of the side wall adjacent the front wall.

Preferably, the outer housing and the inner housing are integrally formed from a single laminar blank. More preferably, at least one wall of the lid is integral to the inner housing and the outer housing. Thus, the hinge line of the container is formed in the back wall panel of the outer housing and the back wall panel of the inner housing. This
20 may advantageously increase the strength of the hinge.

The container may be formed from any suitable materials including, but not limited to, cardboard, paperboard, plastic, metal, or combinations thereof. Preferably, the first housing and the second housing are each formed from one or more folded laminar cardboard blanks and preferably, the cardboard has a weight of between about
25 100 grams per square metre and about 350 grams per square metre.

As described above, containers according to the invention may be in the shape of a rectangular parallelepiped, with right-angled longitudinal and right-angled transverse edges. Alternatively, the container may comprise one or more rounded longitudinal edges, rounded transverse edges, bevelled longitudinal edges or bevelled transverse
30 edges, or combinations thereof. For example, the container according to the invention may comprise, without limitation:

- One or two longitudinal rounded or bevelled edges on the front wall, and/or one or two longitudinal rounded or bevelled edges on the back wall.

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- One or two transverse rounded or bevelled edges on the front wall, and/or one or two transverse rounded or bevelled edges on the back wall.

- One longitudinal rounded edge and one longitudinal bevelled edge on the front wall, and/or one transverse rounded edge and one transverse bevelled edge on the back wall.

- One or two transverse rounded or bevelled edges on the front wall and one or two longitudinal rounded or bevelled edges on the front wall.

- Two longitudinal rounded or bevelled edges on a first side wall or two transverse rounded or bevelled edges on the second side wall.

Where the container comprises one or more rounded edges and is made from one laminar blank, preferably the blank comprises three, four, five, six or seven scoring lines or creasing lines to form each rounded edge in the assembled container. The scoring lines or creasing lines may be either on the inside of the container or on the outside of the container. Preferably, the scoring lines or creasing lines are spaced from each other by between about 0.3 mm and 4 mm.

Preferably, the spacing of the creasing lines or scoring lines is a function of the thickness of the laminar blank. Preferably, the spacing between the creasing lines or scoring lines is between about 0.5 and about 4 times larger than the thickness of the laminar blank.

Where the container comprises one or more bevelled edge, preferably the bevelled edge has a width of between about 1 mm and about 10 mm, preferably between about 2 and about 6 mm. Alternatively, the container may comprise a double bevel formed by three parallel creasing or scoring lines that are spaced such that two distinct bevels are formed on the edge of the container.

Where the container comprises a bevelled edge and is made one laminar blank, the bevel may be formed by two parallel creasing lines or scoring lines in the laminar blank. The creasing lines or scoring lines may be arranged symmetrically to the edge between a first wall and a second wall. Alternatively, the creasing lines or scoring lines may be arranged asymmetrically to the edge between the first wall and the second wall, such that the bevel reaches further into the first wall of the container than into the second wall of the container.

Alternatively, the container may have a non-rectangular transversal cross section, for example polygonal such as triangular or hexagonal, semi-oval or semi-circular.

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Containers according to the invention find particular application as packs for elongate smoking articles such as, for example, cigarettes, cigars or cigarillos. It will be appreciated that through appropriate choices of the dimensions thereof, containers according to the invention may be designed for different numbers of conventional size, king size, super-king size, slim or super-slim cigarettes. Alternatively, other consumer goods may be housed inside the container, such as confectionary or dry foodstuff.

Through an appropriate choice of the dimensions thereof, containers according to the invention may be designed to hold different total numbers of smoking articles, or different arrangements of smoking articles. For example, through an appropriate choice of the dimensions thereof, containers according to the invention may be designed to hold a total of between ten and thirty smoking articles.

The smoking articles may be arranged in different collations, depending on the total number of smoking articles. For example, the smoking articles may be arranged in a single row of six, seven, eight, nine or ten. Alternatively, the smoking articles may be arranged in two or more rows. The two or more rows may contain the same number of smoking articles. For example, the smoking articles may be arranged in: two rows of five, six, seven, eight, nine or ten; three rows of five or seven; or four rows of four, five or six. Alternatively, the two or more rows may include at least two rows containing different number of smoking articles to each other. For example, the smoking articles may be arranged in: a row of five and a row of six (5-6); a row of six and a row of seven (6-7); a row of seven and a row of eight (7-8); a middle row of five and two outer rows of six (6-5-6); a middle row of five and two outer rows of seven (7-5-7); a middle row of six and two outer rows of five (5-6-5); a middle row of six and two outer rows of seven (7-6-7); a middle row of seven and two outer rows of six (6-7-6); a middle row of nine and two outer rows of eight (8-9-8); or a middle row of six with one outer row of five and one outer row of seven (5-6-7).

Containers according to the present invention may hold smoking articles of the same type or brand, or of different types or brands. In addition, both filterless smoking articles and smoking articles with various filter tips may be contained, as well as smoking articles of differing length (for example, between about 40 mm and about 180 mm), diameter (for example, between about 4 mm and about 9 mm). In addition, the smoking articles may differ in strength of taste, resistance to draw and total particulate matter delivery. Preferably, the dimensions of the container are adapted to the length of the smoking articles, and the collation of the smoking articles. Typically, the outer

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dimensions of the container are between about 0.5 mm to about 5 mm larger than the dimensions of the bundle or bundles of smoking articles housed inside the container.

The length, width and depth of containers according to the invention may be such that, in the closed lid position, the resultant overall dimensions of the container are
5 similar to the dimensions of a typical disposable hinge-lid pack of twenty cigarettes.

Preferably, containers according to the invention have a height of between about 60 mm and about 150 mm, more preferably a height of between about 70 mm and about 125 mm, wherein the height is measured from the bottom wall to the top wall of the container.

10 Preferably, containers according to the invention have a width of between about 12 mm and about 150 mm, more preferably a width of between about 70 mm and about 125 mm, wherein the width is measured from one side wall to the other side wall of the container.

Preferably, containers according to the invention have a depth of between about
15 6 mm and about 150 mm, more preferably a depth of between about 12 mm and about 25 mm wherein the depth is measured from the front wall to the back wall of the container (comprising the hinge between box and lid).

Preferably, the ratio of the height of the container to the depth of the container is in between about 0.3 to 1 and about 10 to 1, more preferably between about 2 to 1 and
20 about 8 to 1, most preferably between about 3 to 1 and 5 to 1

Preferably, the ratio of the width of the container to the depth of the container is in between about 0.3 to 1 and about 10 to 1, more preferably between about 2 to 1 and about 8 to 1, most preferably between about 2 to 1 and 3 to 1.

Preferably, the ratio of the height of the lid back wall to the height of the box back
25 wall of the outer sleeve is between about 0 to 1 (lid located at the top edge of the container) to about 1 to 1, more preferably, between about 1 to 5 and about 1 to 10, most preferably, between about 1 to 6 to about 1 to 8.

Preferably, the ratio of the height of the lid front wall of the outer sleeve to the height of the box front wall of the outer sleeve is between about 1 to 0 (lid covering the
30 entire front wall) to about 1 to 10, more preferably, between about 1 to 1 and about 1 to 5, most preferably, between about 1 to 2 and about 1 to 3.

Where the container comprises smoking articles, the container may further comprise waste-compartments (for example for ash or butts) or other consumer goods, for example matches, lighters, extinguishing means, breath-fresheners or electronics.

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The other consumer goods may be attached to the outside of the container, contained within the container along with the smoking articles, in a separate compartment of the container or combinations thereof.

5 The exterior surfaces of containers according to the invention may be printed, embossed, debossed or otherwise embellished with manufacturer or brand logos, trade marks, slogans and other consumer information, indicia and optical elements, such as for example, a Fresnel lens.

10 Where the container according to the present invention contains a bundle of cigarettes or other elongate smoking articles, the smoking articles are preferably wrapped in an inner liner of, for example, metal foil or metallised paper.

Once filled, containers according to the invention may be shrink wrapped or otherwise over wrapped with a transparent polymeric film of, for example, high or low density polyethylene, polypropylene, oriented polypropylene, polyvinylidene chloride, cellulose film, or combinations thereof in a conventional manner. Where containers
15 according to the invention are over wrapped, the over wrapper may include one or more a tear tapes. In addition, the over wrapper may be printed with images, consumer information or other data.

According to a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided a single laminar blank for forming a container as described herein. The laminar blank comprises
20 a first portion for forming the inner housing. The first portion includes one or more cuts and a hinge line extending across a back wall panel of the first portion to define the lid of the inner housing. The laminar blank also comprises a second portion for forming the outer housing. The second portion includes one or more cut outs for forming the opening in the outer housing. Furthermore, the second portion includes at least one cut
25 for forming the at least one slit of the outer housing.

By providing a single laminar blank the container may be manufactured more easily.

Preferably, the second portion further includes one or more cuts and a hinge line extending across a back wall panel of the second portion to define at least one wall
30 panel of the lid.

Preferably, the outer housing and the inner housing are connected along a longitudinal edge of a panel of the outer housing and a panel of the inner housing. In a first aspect, the outer and inner housings are connected along a longitudinal edge of a side panel of the outer housing and the front panel of the inner housing. In a second

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aspect, the outer and inner housings are connected along a longitudinal edge of the back panel of the outer housing, and a side panel of the inner housing.

The containers of the present invention are adapted to be assembled from the single laminar blank using conventional assembly methods and apparatus, as described
5 in more detail below. For example, the containers can be automatically assembled on a Bergami® type machine, of the type used to assemble packs of smoking articles.

According to the present invention there is also provided a method for assembling a container according to the invention from a single laminar blank, as described below.

The laminar blank is first partially assembled by folding it along the longitudinal
10 fold lines and gluing the outer housing portion, and inner housing portion at their respective side walls, so as to form an open ended sleeve with the inner housing within the outer housing. The resultant open ended sleeve can advantageously be flattened at this stage for efficient storage or transport.

In the same or a separate process to the partial assembly described above, the
15 consumer goods are then inserted into the inner housing through one of the open ends. Preferably, the consumer goods are inserted in to the bottom of the container. As the filled pack progresses through an automatic packing machine, the bottom panels are folded inward towards the consumer goods, preferably by approximately 90 degrees. Glue is applied to the outer surface of the inner bottom panel.

20 Following the application of the glue, the outer bottom panel is folded inwards towards the inner bottom panel so that the outer bottom panel is adhered to the inner bottom panel.

During assembly of the container, the panels of the blank forming the lid are also folded and glued.

25 The invention will be further described, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figures 1(a) to 1(d) show perspective views of a container according to one embodiment of the invention;

Figure 2 shows a laminar blank suitable for forming the container shown in
30 Figures 1;

Figures 3(a) to (d) show perspective views of a container according to a further embodiment of the invention; and

Figure 4 shows a laminar blank suitable for forming the container shown in Figure 2.

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The container 100 shown in Figure 1(a) is a rectangular parallelepiped and comprises a box 102 and a lid 104 mounted to the box 102, shown in a first closed position. The box comprises an outer portion and an inner portion. The lid is attached to the box 102 at a hinge line on the back wall of the container. The hinge line extends substantially horizontally across a back wall of the container at a small distance from the top of the container. The lid comprises a back wall panel that is integral to both the inner portion and the outer portion. A bundle of smoking articles (not shown) is housed in the inner housing of the container 100. The free edge of the lid is formed by folding a flap to the interior of the container, and thus a strengthened, blunt edge is formed. As can be seen, the lid 104 is located within the box 102, and the resilient flap 106 lies outside of the lid front wall panel. The triangular shape of the free edge of the resilient flap 106 is formed by folding two flaps towards the interior of the container, and thus a strengthened, blunt edge is formed. Preferably, the container is manufactured and supplied in this configuration. As can be seen the side wall of the container 107 extends past the free edge of the lid, such that when the lid is in the closed position, the free edge is not visible or accessible. In this embodiment, the free edge of the side wall is angled from the back wall of the container down to the front wall of the container. The top of the side wall is approximately adjacent the top of the container at the back wall, and is approximately adjacent to the top of the slit at the front wall. Other configurations of the side wall are of course possible.

Figure 1(b) shows the container 100 of Figure 1(a) with the lid 104 in the partially open position. As can be seen, the lid is acting against the resilient flap 106 in this partially open position. A slit 108 is provided at the edge of the front wall of the outer housing, and extends from the free edge of the outer housing. The slit allows the resilient flap to be deflected to allow the lid to move between the first closed position to an open position. An equivalent slit is provided in the opposite front corner of the container, but is not shown in Figures 1.

Figure 1(c) shows the container 100 of Figure 1(a) with the lid 104 in the partially closed position. The lid is now outside the resilient flap, as compared to the first closed position described above where the lid was inside the resilient flap. The lid is acting on the resilient flap to deflect it towards the interior of the container. In this partially closed position, the free edge of the lid is about to engage the slits in the front corners of the box. The resilient flap, as shown in Figures 1 (a) and 1(b) has a triangular shape with the peak of the triangle at approximately the centre of the front wall of the container. As

can be seen, the free edge of the resilient flap is angled down from the centre of the front wall towards the side walls to ensure that the lid can close easily without the resilient flap impeding the lid as it closes.

Figure 1(d) shows the container 100 in a second closed position. As can be
5 seen, the lid 104 lies outside of the resilient flap. The lid partially lies within the slits 108, and is held in the second closed position by friction between the surface of the lid and the edges of the slits 108. The first and second closed positions provide the container with two different looks. In both the first and second closed positions the lid lies within the side wall panels of the outer portion of the box.

10 The single laminar blank 200, as shown in Figure 2, comprises an outer portion 202, and an inner portion 204. The blank 200 is adapted to form the container 100 shown in Figures 1. The outer portion 202 forms the box 102, and comprises a front wall panel 206, and three side wall panels 208, 209 and 210, and a back wall panel 212. The two side wall panels 208 and 209 have top edges that are angled from the back of
15 the container to the front of the container. The angled top edges are provided to enable the lid to open and close more easily. The front wall panel 206 comprises a bottom wall panel 214 depending from the bottom edge of the front wall panel, and two flaps 215 depending from the top edge of the front wall panel. The flaps 215 are adapted to be folded towards the interior of the container to form a front wall that has a strengthened
20 free edge. The two slits 216 and 217 are provided at the fold line between the front wall panel 206 and the respective side wall panels 208 and 210. The back wall panel comprises a portion of the lid 104. The lid back wall panel 218 depends from the top edge of the back wall panel, and the lid top wall panel 220 depends from the lid back wall panel 218. As can be seen, the hinge line 222 has two cuts to allow the user to
25 more easily open the lid of the container.

The inner portion 204 forms an inner housing of the container 100, and comprises an inner front wall panel 224, an inner back wall panel 226, and two side wall panels 228 and 230. The front wall panel comprises a portion of the lid 104. The lid
30 front wall panel 232 is formed by cuts in the inner front wall panel 224. A flap 234 is formed that depends from the lid front wall panel 232. The flap 234 is adapted to be folded towards the interior of the container to strengthen the lid front wall. The flap 234 is attached to the interior surface of the lid front wall panel. The lid top wall panel 236 depends from the lid front wall panel 232. The lid side wall panels 238 and 240 are formed by a cut in the respective side wall panels 210 and 230. The lid back wall panel

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242 depends from the inner back wall panel 226 via the hinge line 222. An additional lid side wall panel 244 is provided, and is formed by a cut in the side wall panel 230. The bottom wall panel 246 depends from the bottom edge of the inner back wall panel 226.

5 The outer portion 202 is connected to the inner portion 204 along an edge defined by the side wall panel 230 of the outer portion and the front wall panel 224 of the inner portion.

10 The single laminar blank 200 is formed into the container 100 by first folding the side wall panels 228 and 230 by approximately 90 degrees to the inner front wall panel 226, and towards the interior of the container. The side wall 228 is then folded by approximately 90 degrees to the inner front wall panel 224, and towards the interior of the container. The side wall 210 of the outer portion is folded by approximately 90 degrees to the inner front wall 224. Then the side wall 230 is attached to the interior of the side wall 210. The flap 234 is folded by approximately 180 degrees towards the interior of the container, and then attached to the interior of the lid front panel 232.

15 The outer back wall panel 212 is folded by approximately 90 degrees to the side wall panel 210. The flaps 215 are folded by approximately 180 degrees towards the interior of the container and are then attached to the interior surface of the back wall panel 212. The side wall panel 209 is folded by approximately 90 degrees to the back wall panel 212, and then the side wall panel 208 is folded by approximately 90 degrees to the back wall panel 212. The side wall panel 208 is then attached to the exterior surface of the side wall panel 210. The lid is formed such that the front wall of the lid is inside the resilient flap.

20 This forms the housing, in the form of an open ended tube, for accepting the consumer goods. A BergamiTM type machine is then used to insert the consumer goods into the housing, and fold the top and bottom wall panels 214, 246, 220 and 236 together with the associated tabs, towards the interior of the container, and attach them together to form the completed container 100.

Where appropriate, the order in which the above forming procedures are undertaken can be changed.

30 Figures 3 show an alternative embodiment of a container. As can be seen, the container 300 is similar to the container 100, except that the hinge line is on a narrow wall of the container. The container 300 shown in Figure 3(a) is again a rectangular parallelepiped and comprises a box 302 and a lid 304 mounted to the box 302, shown in a first closed position. The box comprises an outer portion and an inner portion. The lid

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is attached to the box 302 at a hinge line on the back wall of the container. The back wall in this case is the relatively narrow wall. The hinge line extends substantially horizontally across the back wall of the container at a small distance from the top of the container. The lid comprises a back wall panel that is integral to both the inner portion and the outer portion. A bundle of smoking articles (not shown) is housed in the inner housing of the container 100. The free edge of the lid in this case does not have a strengthening flap. As can be seen, the lid 304 is located within the box 302, and the resilient flap 306 lies outside of the lid front wall panel.

Figure 3(b) shows the container 300 of Figure 3(a) with the lid 304 in the partially open position. As can be seen, the lid is acting against the resilient flap 306 in this partially open position. A slit 308 is provided at the edge of the front wall of the outer housing, and extends from the free edge of the outer housing. The slit allows the resilient flap to be deflected to allow the lid to move between the first closed position to an open position. An equivalent slit is provided in the opposite front corner of the container, but is not shown in Figure 3(b).

Figure 3(c) shows the container 300 of Figure 3(a) with the lid 304 in the partially closed position. The lid is now outside the resilient flap, as compared to the first closed position described above where the lid was inside the resilient flap. The lid is acting on the resilient flap to deflect it towards the interior of the container. In this partially closed position, the free edge of the lid is about to engage the slits 308 and 310 in the front corners of the box. The free corners of the resilient flap are chamfered to form a more aesthetically pleasing shape, and to allow the lid to engage with the slits more easily.

Figure 3(d) shows the container 100 in a second closed position. As can be seen, the lid 304 lies outside of the resilient flap. The lid partially lies within the slits 308 and 310, and is held in the second closed position by friction between the surface of the lid and the edges of the slits 308 and 310. The first and second closed positions provide the container with two different looks. In both the first and second closed positions the lid lies within the side wall panels of the outer portion of the box.

The single laminar blank 400, as shown in Figure 4, comprises an outer portion 402, and an inner portion 404. The blank 400 is adapted to form the container 300 shown in Figures 3. The outer portion 402 forms the box 302, and comprises a front wall panel 406, and two side wall panels 408 and 410, and a back wall panel 412. The two side wall panels 408 and 410 have top edges that are angled from the back of the container to the front of the container. The angled top edges are provided to enable the

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lid to open and close more easily. The side wall panels 408 and 410 comprise respective bottom wall panels 414 and 416 depending from the bottom edges of the side wall panels. The two slits 418 and 420 are provided at the fold line between the front wall panel 406 and the respective side wall panels 408 and 410. The back wall panel
5 comprises a portion of the lid 304. The lid back wall panel 422 depends from the top edge of the back wall panel 412.

The inner portion 404 forms an inner housing of the container 300, and comprises an inner front wall panel 424, an inner back wall panel 426, and two side wall panels 428 and 430. The front wall panel comprises a portion of the lid 304. The lid
10 front wall panel 432 is formed by cuts in the inner front wall panel 424. The lid side wall panels 434 and 436 are formed by a cut in the respective side wall panels 428 and 430. The lid back wall panel 438 depends from the inner back wall panel 426 via the hinge line. The lid top wall panels 440 and 442 depend from the respective lid side wall panels 434 and 436.

15 The outer portion 402 is connected to the inner portion 404 along an edge defined by the back wall panel 412 of the outer portion and the side wall panel 428 of the inner portion.

The single laminar blank 200 is formed into the container 100 by first folding the back wall panel 426 by approximately 90 degrees to the inner side wall panel 430, and
20 towards the interior of the container. The front wall panel 424 is then folded by approximately 90 degrees to the side wall panel 430, and towards the interior of the container. The back wall panel 412 of the outer portion is folded by approximately 90 degrees to the side wall panel 428, and then the front wall panel 412 is attached to the exterior of the back wall panel 426 in the region of the hatching.

25 The outer side wall panel 410 is folded by approximately 90 degrees to the back wall panel 412. The front wall panel 406 is folded by approximately 90 degrees to the side wall panel 412, and then the side wall panel 408 is folded by approximately 90 degrees to the front wall panel 212. The side wall panel 408 is then attached to the exterior surface of the side wall panel 428. The lid is formed such that the front wall of
30 the lid is inside the resilient flap.

This forms the housing, in the form of an open ended tube, for accepting the consumer goods. A BergamiTM type machine is then used to insert the consumer goods into the housing, and fold the top and bottom wall panels 440, 442, 414 and 416

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together with the associated tabs, towards the interior of the container, and attach them together in the region of the hatching to form the completed container 100.

In all figures, the dashed lines represent “fold” lines, and the solid lines represent “cut” lines.

CLAIMS

1. A container for consumer goods comprising:
a lid pivotable, about a hinge line extending across a back wall of the container,
5 between a closed position and an open position; and
a box, having an opening, comprising at least one slit, the or each slit located at
respective edges of a front wall of the box, extending from the opening;
wherein, the lid is mounted on the box such that it coincides with the opening of
the box whereby, in a closed position of the lid, the lid engages with the or each slit of
10 the box to retain the lid in a closed position.
2. A container according to Claim 1, wherein said box comprises two slits, each slit
located at respective edges of a front wall of the box, extending from the opening.
- 15 3. A container according to Claim 2, wherein said two slits define a resilient flap
extending from said front wall of the box, whereby, in a second closed position of the lid,
the resilient flap acts on the lid to retain the lid in the second closed position.
4. A container according to Claim 3, the resilient flap comprising at least one
20 strengthening element adapted to rigidify at least one free edge of the resilient flap.
5. A container according to Claim 4, the at least one strengthening element being
integral to the resilient flap.
- 25 6. A container according to any of Claims 3, 4 or 5, the free edge of the resilient flap
having chamfered corners or rounded corners.
7. A container according to any of Claims 3 to 6, the lid being adapted to interact
with the resilient flap on opening, on closing or on opening and on closing such that an
30 audible sound is generated.
8. A container according to any of the preceding claims, the lid comprising at least
one strengthening element adapted to strengthen at least one free edge of the lid.

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9. A container according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the lid forms at least a portion of an inner housing, and the box forms at least a portion of an outer housing, and wherein the inner housing is adapted to house the consumer goods.

5 10. A container according to Claim 9, the outer housing having side walls, adjacent said front and back walls, adapted to extend beyond the side walls of the inner housing whereby, in a closed position of the lid, the outer housing side walls at least partially overlap the side walls of the lid.

10 11. A container according to Claim 10, wherein the outer housing and the inner housing are integrally formed from a single laminar blank.

12. A container according to Claim 11, at least one wall of the lid being integral to the inner housing and the outer housing.

15 13. A container according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the container comprises a plurality of smoking articles.

14. A laminar blank for forming a container according to any of Claims 10 to 13 when
20 dependent on Claim 10, the blank comprising:

a first portion for forming the inner housing, wherein the first portion includes one or more cuts and a hinge line extending across a back wall panel of the first portion to define the lid of the inner housing; and

25 a second portion for forming the outer housing, wherein the second portion includes one or more cut outs for forming the opening in the outer housing;

wherein the second portion further includes at least one cut for forming the at least one slit of the outer housing.

15. A laminar blank according to Claim 14, the second portion further including one
30 or more cuts and a hinge line extending across a back wall panel of the second portion to define at least one wall panel of the lid.