

SILICON CONDENSER MICROPHONE AND MANUFACTURING METHOD

Related Application

[0001] This Application is continuation-in-part of commonly assigned, co-pending US Application Serial No. 09/886,854, filed June 21, 2001 which claims the benefit of Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/253,543 filed November 28, 2000. These applications are hereby incorporated by reference herein in their entireties for all purposes.

Technical Field

[0002] This patent relates generally to a housing for a transducer. More particularly, this patent relates to a silicon condenser microphone including a housing for shielding a transducer.

Background of the Invention

[0003] There have been a number of disclosures related to building microphone elements on the surface of a silicon die. Certain of these disclosures have come in connection with the hearing aid field for the purpose of reducing the size of the hearing aid unit. While these disclosures have reduced the size of the hearing aid, they have not disclosed how to protect the transducer from outside interferences. For instance, transducers of this type are fragile and susceptible to physical damage. Furthermore, they must be protected from light and electromagnetic interferences. Moreover, they require an acoustic pressure reference to function properly. For these reasons, the silicon die must be shielded.

[0004] Some shielding practices have been used to house these devices. For instance, insulated metal cans or discs have been provided. Additionally, DIPs and small outline integrated circuit (SOIC) packages have been utilized. However, the drawbacks associated with manufacturing these housings, such as lead time, cost, and tooling, make these options undesirable.

Summary of the Invention

[0004a] In a first aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of manufacturing a microphone comprising: providing a first panel comprising a plurality of bottom layer portions for a corresponding plurality of microphones; disposing a transducer on each of the plurality of bottom layer portions; securing a second panel comprising a plurality of

top layer portions for the plurality of microphones to the first panel, the top layer portion enclosing the transducer within a cavity defined by the top layer portion and the bottom layer portion; and separating the plurality of microphones; wherein each bottom layer comprises an acoustic port having an aperture to receive an acoustic signal, and disposing the transducer comprises disposing the transducer adjacent the acoustic port.

[0004b] In a second aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of manufacturing a microphone comprising: providing a first panel comprising a plurality of bottom layer portions for a corresponding plurality of microphones; disposing a transducer on each of the plurality of bottom layer portions; securing a second panel comprising a plurality of top layer portions for the plurality of microphones to the first panel, the top layer portion enclosing the transducer within a cavity defined by the top layer portion and the bottom layer portion; and separating the plurality of microphones; wherein each of the bottom layers or each of the top layers comprise an acoustic port having an aperture to receive an acoustic signal, the method comprising providing an environmental barrier covering the acoustic port.

[0004c] In a third aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of manufacturing a microphone comprising: providing a first panel comprising a plurality of bottom layer portions for a corresponding plurality of microphones; disposing a transducer on each of the plurality of bottom layer portions; securing a second panel comprising a plurality of top layer portions for the plurality of microphones to the first panel, the top layer portion enclosing the transducer within a cavity defined by the top layer portion and the bottom layer portion; and separating the plurality of microphones; wherein separating the plurality of microphones comprises separating the plurality of microphones into microphone pairs.

[0004d] In a fourth aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of manufacturing a microphone comprising: providing a first panel comprising a plurality of bottom layer portions for a corresponding plurality of microphones; disposing a transducer on each of the plurality of bottom layer portions; securing a second panel comprising a plurality of top layer portions for the plurality of microphones to the first panel, the top layer portion enclosing the transducer within a cavity defined by the top layer portion and the bottom layer portion; and separating the plurality of microphones; wherein each of the bottom layer portions or each of the top layer portions comprise an acoustic port having an aperture to receive an acoustic signal, and disposing the transducer comprises disposing the transducer adjacent the acoustic port formed in the bottom layer portion or the top layer portion.

[0004e] In a fifth aspect of the invention, there is provided a method of manufacturing a microphone comprising: providing a first panel comprising a plurality of bottom layer portions for a corresponding plurality of microphones; disposing a transducer on each of the plurality of bottom layer portions; securing a second panel comprising a plurality of top layer portions for the plurality of microphones to the first panel, the top layer portion enclosing the transducer within a cavity defined by the top layer portion and the bottom layer portion; separating the plurality of microphones; and the first panel and the second panel comprising laminate structures, the laminate structures comprising conductive layer portions and non-conductive layer portions forming a capacitor within the top layer portions and the bottom layer portions.

[0005] Example embodiments may provide a silicon condenser microphone package that allows acoustic energy to contact a transducer disposed within a housing. The housing provides the necessary pressure reference while at the same time protects the transducer from

light, electromagnetic interference, and physical damage. In accordance with an embodiment of the invention, a silicon condenser microphone includes a transducer and a substrate and a cover forming the housing. The substrate may have an upper surface with a recess formed therein allowing the transducer to be attached to the upper surface and to overlap at least a portion of the recess thus forming a back volume. The cover is placed over the transducer and includes an aperture adapted for allowing sound waves to reach the transducer.

[0006] Other advantages of the example embodiments will be apparent from the following specification taken in conjunction with the following drawings.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0007] Figure 1 is a cross-sectional view of a first embodiment of a silicon condenser microphone of the present invention;

[0008] Figure 2 is a cross-sectional view of a second embodiment of a silicon condenser microphone of the present invention;

[0009] Figure 3 is a cross-sectional view of a third embodiment of a silicon condenser microphone of the present invention;

[0010] Figure 4 is a cross-sectional view of the third embodiment of the present invention affixed to an end user circuit board;

[0011] Figure 5 is a cross-sectional view of the third embodiment of the present invention affixed to an end user circuit board in an alternate fashion; and

[0012] Figure 6 is a plan view of a substrate to which a silicon condenser microphone is fixed;

[0013] Figure 7 is a longitudinal cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention;

[0014] Figure 8 is a lateral cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention;

[0015] Figure 9 is a longitudinal cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention;

[0016] Figure 10 is a lateral cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention;

[0017] Figure 11 is a cross-sectional view of a top portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0018] Figure 12 is a cross-sectional view of a top portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0019] Figure 13 is a cross-sectional view of a top portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0020] Figure 14a is a cross-sectional view of a laminated bottom portion of a housing for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0021] Figure 14b is a plan view of a layer of the laminated bottom portion of Figure 14a;

[0022] Figure 14c is a plan view of a layer of the laminated bottom portion of Figure 14a;

[0023] Figure 14d is a plan view of a layer of the laminated bottom portion of Figure 14a;

[0024] Figure 15 is a cross-sectional view of a bottom portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0025] Figure 16 is a cross-sectional view of a bottom portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0026] Figure 17 is a cross-sectional view of a bottom portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0027] Figure 18 is a cross-sectional view of a bottom portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0028] Figure 19 is a plan view of a side portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0029] Figure 20 is a cross-sectional view of a side portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0030] Figure 21 is a cross-sectional view of a side portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0031] Figure 22 is a cross-sectional view of a side portion for a microphone package of the present invention;

[0032] Figure 23 is a cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention;

[0033] Figure 24 is a cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention;

[0034] Figure 25 is a cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention;

[0035] Figure 26 is a cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention;

[0036] Figure 27 is a cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention with a retaining ring;

[0037] Figure 28 is a cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention with a retaining wing;

[0038] Figure 29 is a cross-sectional view of a microphone package of the present invention with a retaining ring;

[0039] Figure 30 is a plan view of a panel of a plurality of microphone packages; and

[0040] Figure 31 is a plan view of a microphone pair.

Detailed Description

[0041] While the invention is susceptible of embodiments in many different forms, there is shown in the drawings and will herein be described in detail several possible embodiments of the invention with the understanding that the present disclosure is to be considered as an exemplification of the principles of the invention and is not intended to limit the broad aspect of the invention to the embodiments illustrated.

[0042] The present invention is directed to microphone packages. The benefits of the microphone packages disclosed herein over microphone packaging utilizing plastic body/lead frames include the ability to process packages in panel form allowing more units to be formed per operation and at much lower cost. The typical lead frame for a similarly functioning package would contain between 40 and 100 devices connected together. The present disclosure would have approximately 14,000 devices connected together (as a panel). Also, the embodiments disclosed herein require minimal "hard-tooling" This allows the process to adjust to custom layout requirements without having to redesign mold, lead frame, and trim/form tooling.

[0043] Moreover, many of the described embodiments have a better match of thermal coefficients of expansion with the end user's PCB, typically made of FR-4, since the microphone package is also made primarily of FR-4. These embodiments of the invention may also eliminate the need for wire bonding that is required in plastic body/lead frame packages. The footprint is typically smaller than that would be required for a plastic body/lead frame design since the leads may be formed by plating a through-hole in a circuit board to form the pathway to the solder pad. In a typical plastic body/lead frame design, a gull wing configuration would be used in which the leads widen the overall foot print.

[0044] Now, referring to Figures 1-3, three embodiments of a silicon condenser microphone package 10 of the present invention are illustrated. Included within silicon microphone package 10 is a transducer 12, e.g. a silicon condenser microphone as disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 5,870,482 which is hereby incorporated by reference and an amplifier 16. The package itself includes a substrate 14, a back volume or air cavity 18, which provides a pressure reference for the transducer 12, and a cover 20. The substrate 14 may be formed of FR-4 material allowing processing in circuit board panel form, thus taking advantage of economies of scale in manufacturing. Figure 6 is a plan view of the substrate 14 showing the back volume 18 surrounded a plurality of terminal pads.

[0045] The back volume 18 may be formed by a number of methods, including controlled depth drilling of an upper surface 19 of the substrate 14 to form a recess over which the transducer 12 is mounted (Figure 1); drilling and routing of several individual sheets of FR-4 and laminating the individual sheets to form the back volume 18, which may or may not have internal support posts (Figure 2); or drilling completely through the substrate 14 and providing a sealing ring 22 on the bottom of the device that will seal the back volume 18 during surface mounting to a user's "board" 28 (Figures 3-5). In this example, the combination of the substrate and the user's board 28 creates the back volume 18. The back volume 18 is covered by the transducer 12 (e.g., a MEMS device) which may be "bumpbonded" and mounted face down. The boundary is sealed such that the back volume 18 is operably "air-tight".

[0046] The cover 20 is attached for protection and processability. The cover 20 contains an aperture 24 which may contain a sintered metal insert 26 to prevent water, particles and/or light from entering the package and damaging the internal components inside; i.e. semiconductor chips. The aperture 24 is adapted for allowing sound waves to reach the transducer 12. The sintered metal insert 26 will also have certain acoustic properties, e.g.,

acoustic damping or resistance. The sintered metal insert 26 may therefore be selected such that its acoustic properties enhance the functional capability of the transducer 12 and/or the overall performance of the silicon microphone 10.

[0047] Referring to Figures 4 and 5, the final form of the product is a silicon condenser microphone package 10 which would most likely be attached to an end user's PCB 28 via a solder reflow process. Figure 5 illustrates a method of enlarging the back volume 18 by including a chamber 32 within the end user's circuit board 28.

[0048] Another embodiment of a silicon condenser microphone package 40 of the present invention is illustrated in Figures 7-10. In this embodiment, a housing 42 is formed from layers of materials, such as those used in providing circuit boards. Accordingly, the housing 42 generally comprises alternating layers of conductive and non-conductive materials 44, 46. The non-conductive layers 46 are typically FR-4 board. The conductive layers 44 are typically copper. This multi-layer housing construction advantageously permits the inclusion of circuitry, power and ground planes, solder pads, ground pads, capacitance layers and plated through holes pads within the structure of the housing itself. The conductive layers provide EMI shielding while also allowing configuration as capacitors and/or inductors to filter input/output signals and/or the input power supply.

[0049] In the embodiment illustrated, the housing 42 includes a top portion 48 and a bottom portion 50 spaced by a side portion 52. The housing 42 further includes an aperture or acoustic port 54 for receiving an acoustic signal and an inner chamber 56 which is adapted for housing a transducer unit 58, typically a silicon die microphone or a ball grid array package (BGA). The top, bottom, and side portions 48, 50, 52 are electrically connected, for example with a conductive adhesive 60. The conductive adhesive may be provided conveniently in the form of suitably configured sheets of dry adhesive disposed between the top, bottom and side portions 48, 50 and 52. The sheet of dry adhesive may be activated by pressure, heat or other suitable means after the portions are brought together during assembly. Each portion may comprise alternating conductive and non-conductive layers of 44, 46.

[0050] The chamber 56 may include an inner lining 61. The inner lining 61 is primarily formed by conductive material. It should be understood that the inner lining may include portions of non-conductive material, as the conductive material may not fully cover the non-conductive material. The inner lining 61 protects the transducer 58 against electromagnetic interference and the like, much like a faraday cage. The inner lining 61 may also be provided

by suitable electrically coupling together of the various conductive layers within the top, bottom and side portions 48, 50 and 52 of the housing.

[0051] In the various embodiments illustrated in Figures 7-10 and 23-26, the portions of the housing 42 that include the aperture or acoustic port 54 further include a layer of material that forms an environmental barrier 62 over or within the aperture 54. This environmental barrier 62 is typically a polymeric material formed to a film, such as a polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) or a sintered metal. The environmental barrier 62 is supplied for protecting the chamber 56 of the housing 42, and, consequently, the transducer unit 58 within the housing 42, from environmental elements such as sunlight, moisture, oil, dirt, and/or dust. The environmental barrier 62 will also have inherent acoustic properties, e.g., acoustic damping/resistance. Therefore the environmental barrier 62 is chosen such that its acoustic properties cooperate with the transducer unit 58 to enhance the performance of the microphone. This is particularly true in connection with the embodiments illustrated in Figures 24 and 25, which may be configured to operate as directional microphones.

[0052] The environmental barrier layer 62 is generally sealed between layers of the portion, top 48 or bottom 50 in which the acoustic port 54 is formed. For example, the environmental barrier may be secured between layers of conductive material 44 thereby permitting the layers of conductive material 44 to act as a capacitor (with electrodes defined by the metal) that can be used to filter input and output signals or the input power. The environmental barrier layer 62 may further serve as a dielectric protective layer when in contact with the conductive layers 44 in the event that the conductive layers also contain thin film passive devices such as resistors and capacitors.

[0053] In addition to protecting the chamber 56 from environmental elements, the barrier layer 62 allows subsequent wet processing, board washing of the external portions of the housing 42, and electrical connection to ground from the walls via thru hole plating. The environmental barrier layer 62 also allows the order of manufacturing steps in the fabrication of the printed circuit board-based package to be modified. This advantage can be used to accommodate different termination styles. For example, a double sided package can be fabricated having a pair of apertures 54 (see Figure 25), both including an environmental barrier layer 62. The package would look and act the same whether it is mounted face up or face down, or the package could be mounted to provide directional microphone characteristics. Moreover, the environmental barrier layer 62 may also be selected so that its acoustic properties enhance the directional performance of the microphone.

[0054] Referring to Figures 7, 8, and 11-13, the transducer unit 58 is generally not mounted to the top portion 48 of the housing. This definition is independent of the final mounting orientation to an end user's circuit board. It is possible for the top portion 48 to be mounted face down depending on the orientation of the transducer 58 as well as the choice for the bottom portion 50. The conductive layers 44 of the top portion 48 may be patterned to form circuitry, ground planes, solder pads, ground pads, capacitors and plated through hole pads. Referring to Figures 11-13, there may be additional alternating conductive layers 44, non-conductive layers 46, and environmental protective membranes 62 as the package requires. Alternatively, some layers may be deliberately excluded as well. The first non-conductive layer 46 may be patterned so as to selectively expose certain features on the first conductive layer 44.

[0055] Figure 11 illustrates an alternative top portion 48 for a microphone package. In this embodiment, a connection between the layers can be formed to provide a conduit to ground. The top portion of Figure 11 includes ground planes and/or pattern circuitry 64 and the environmental barrier 62. The ground planes and or pattern circuitry 64 are connected by pins 65.

[0056] Figure 12 illustrates another embodiment of a top portion 48. In addition to the connection between layers, ground planes/pattern circuitry 64, and the environmental barrier 62, this embodiment includes conductive bumps 66 (e.g. Pb/Sn or Ni/Au) patterned on the bottom side to allow secondary electrical contact to the transducer 58. Here, conductive circuitry would be patterned such that electrical connection between the bumps 66 and a plated through hole termination is made.

[0057] Figure 13 illustrates yet another embodiment of the top portion 48. In this embodiment, the top portion 48 does not include an aperture or acoustic port 54.

[0058] Referring to Figures 7, 8 and 14-18, the bottom portion 50 is the component of the package to which the transducer 58 is primarily mounted. This definition is independent of the final mounting orientation to the end user's circuit board. It is possible for the bottom portion 50 to be mounted facing upwardly depending on the mounting orientation of the transducer 58 as well as the choice for the top portion 48 construction. Like the top portion 48, the conductive layers 44 of the bottom portion 50 may be patterned to form circuitry, ground planes, solder pads, ground pads, capacitors and plated through hole pads. As shown in Figures 14-18, there may be additional alternating conductive layers 44, non-conductive

layers 46, and environmental protective membranes 62 as the package requires.

Alternatively, some layers may be deliberately excluded as well. The first non-conductive layer 46 may be patterned so as to selectively expose certain features on the first conductive layer 44.

[0059] Referring to Figures 14a through 14d, the bottom portion 50 comprises a laminated, multi-layered board including layers of conductive material 44 deposited on layers of non-conductive material 46. Referring to Figure 14b, the first layer of conductive material is used to attach wire bonds or flip chip bonds. This layer includes etched portions to define lead pads, bond pads, and ground pads. The pads would have holes drilled through them to allow the formation of plated through-holes.

[0060] As shown in Figure 14c, a dry film 68 of non-conductive material covers the conductive material. This illustration shows the exposed bonding pads as well as an exposed ground pad. The exposed ground pad would come in electrical contact with the conductive epoxy and form the connection to ground of the side portion 52 and the base portion 50.

[0061] Referring to Figure 14d, ground layers can be embedded within the base portion 50. The hatched area represents a typical ground plane 64. The ground planes do not overlap the power or output pads, but will overlap the transducer 58.

[0062] Referring to Figure 15, an embodiment of the bottom portion 50 is illustrated. The bottom portion 50 of this embodiment includes a solder mask layer 68 and alternating layers of conductive and non-conductive material 44, 46. The bottom portion further comprises solder pads 70 for electrical connection to an end user's board.

[0063] Figures 16 and 17 illustrate embodiments of the bottom portion 50 with enlarged back volumes 18. These embodiments illustrate formation of the back volume 18 using the conductive/non-conductive layering.

[0064] Figure 18 shows yet another embodiment of the bottom portion 50. In this embodiment, the back portion 50 includes the acoustic port 54 and the environmental barrier 62.

[0065] Referring to Figure 7-10 and 19-22, the side portion 52 is the component of the package that joins the bottom portion 50 and the top portion 48. The side portion 52 may include a single layer of a non-conductive material 46 sandwiched between two layers of conductive material 44. The side portion 52 forms the internal height of the chamber 56 that

houses the transducer 58. The side portion 52 is generally formed by one or more layers of circuit board material, each having a routed window 72 (see Figure 19).

[0066] Referring to Figures 19-22, the side portion 52 includes inner sidewalls 74. The inner sidewalls 74 are generally plated with a conductive material, typically copper, as shown in Figures 20 and 21. The sidewalls 74 are formed by the outer perimeter of the routed window 72 and coated/metallized with a conductive material.

[0067] Alternatively, the sidewalls 74 may be formed by many alternating layers of non-conductive material 46 and conductive material 44, each having a routed window 72 (see Figure 19). In this case, the outer perimeter of the window 72 may not require coverage with a conductive material because the layers of conductive material 44 would provide effective shielding.

[0068] Figures 23-26 illustrate various embodiments of the microphone package 40. These embodiments utilize top, bottom, and side portions 48, 50, and 52 which are described above. It is contemplated that each of the top, bottom, and side portion 48, 50, 52 embodiments described above can be utilized in any combination without departing from the invention disclosed and described herein.

[0069] In Figure 23, connection to an end user's board is made through the bottom portion 50. The package mounting orientation is bottom portion 50 down. Connection from the transducer 58 to the plated through holes is made by wire bonding. The transducer back volume 18 is formed by the back hole (mounted down) of the silicon microphone only. Bond pads, wire bonds and traces to the terminals are not shown. A person of ordinary skill in the art of PCB design will understand that the traces reside on the first conductor layer 44. The wire bonds from the transducer 58 are connected to exposed pads. The pads are connected to the solder pads via plated through holes and traces on the surface.

[0070] In Figure 24, connection to the end user's board is also made through the bottom portion 50. Again, the package mounting orientation is bottom portion 50 down. Connection from the transducer 58 to the plated through holes are made by wire bonding. The back volume 18 is formed by a combination of the back hole of the transducer 58 (mounted down) and the bottom portion 50.

[0071] In Figure 25, connection to the end user's board is also made through the bottom portion 50. Again, the package mounting orientation is bottom portion 50 down. Connection from the transducer 58 to the plated through holes are made by wire bonding. With acoustic ports

54 on both sides of the package, there is no back volume. This method is suitable to a directional microphone.

[0072] In Figure 26, connection to the end user's board is made through the top portion 48 or the bottom portion 50. The package mounting orientation is either top portion 48 down or bottom portion 50 down. Connection from the transducer 58 to the plated through holes is made by flip chipping or wire bonding and trace routing. The back volume 18 is formed by using the air cavity created by laminating the bottom portion 50 and the top portion 48 together. Some portion of the package fabrication is performed after the transducer 58 has been attached. In particular, the through hole formation, plating, and solder pad definition would be done after the transducer 58 is attached. The protective membrane 62 is hydrophobic and prevents corrosive plating chemistry from entering the chamber 56.

[0073] Referring to Figures 27-29, the portion to which the transducer unit 58 is mounted may include a retaining ring 84. The retaining ring 84 prevents wicking of an epoxy 86 into the transducer 58 and from flowing into the acoustic port or aperture 54. Accordingly, the shape of the retaining ring 84 will typically match the shape of the transducer 58 foot print. The retaining ring 84 comprises a conductive material (e.g., 3 mil. thick copper) imaged on a non-conductive layer material.

[0074] Referring to Figure 27, the retaining ring 84 is imaged onto a nonconductive layer. An epoxy is applied outside the perimeter of the retaining ring 84, and the transducer 58 is added so that it overlaps the epoxy 86 and the retaining ring 84. This reduces epoxy 86 wicking up the sides of the transducer's 58 etched port (in the case of a silicon die microphone).

[0075] Alternatively, referring to Figure 28, the retaining ring 84 can be located so that the transducer 58 does not contact the retaining ring 84. In this embodiment, the retaining ring 84 is slightly smaller than the foot print of the transducer 58 so that the epoxy 86 has a restricted path and is, thus, less likely to wick. In Figure 29, the retaining ring 84 is fabricated so that it contacts the etched port of the transducer 58. The following tables provide an illustrative example of a typical circuit board processing technique for fabrication of the housing of this embodiment.

Table 1: Materials

Material	Type	Component	Note
1	0.5/0.5 oz. DST Cu 5 core FR-4	Bottom Portion (Conductive Layers Non-Conductive Layer 1)	
2	0.5/0.5 oz. DST Cu 5 core FR-4	Bottom Portion (Conductive Layers 3 and 4; Non-Conductive Layer 2)	
3	106 pre-preg		For Laminating Material 1 and Material 2
4	0.5/0.5 oz. DST Cu 40 Core FR-4	Side Portion	Metallized Afterward
5	Bare/0.5 oz Cu 2 core FR-4 (2 pieces)	Top Portion (Each Piece Includes 1 Conductive and 1 Non-Conductive Layer)	
6	Expanded PTFE	Environmental Barrier	

Table 2: Processing of Materials (Base Portion Material 1)

Step	Type	Description	Note
1	Dry Film Conductive Layers		
2	Expose	Mask Material 1 (Upper Conductive Layer)	Forms Ground Plane on Lower Conductive Layer
3	Develop		
4	Etch Cu		No Etching on Upper Conductive Layer
5	Strip Dry Film		

Table 3: Processing of Materials (Bottom Portion Material 2)

Step	Type	Description	Note
1	Dry Film Conductive Layers		
2	Expose	Mask Material 2 (Upper Conductive Layer)	Forms Ground Plane on Upper Conductive Layer
3	Develop		
4	Etch Cu		No Etching on Lower Conductive Layer
5	Strip Dry Film		

Table 4: Processing of Materials 1, 2, and 3 (Form Bottom Portion)

Step	Type	Description	Note
1	Laminate	Materials 1 and 2 Laminated Using Material 3	
2	Drill Thru Holes	Drill Bit = 0.025 in.	
3	Direct Metallization/Flash Copper	Plates Thru Holes	
4	Dry Film (L1 and L4)		
	Expose	Mask Laminated Materials 1 and 2 (Upper and Lower Conductive Layers)	Forms Traces and Solder Pads
6	Develop		
7	Electrolytic Cu	1.0 mil	
8	Electrolytic Sn	As Required	
9	Strip Dry Film		
10	Etch Cu		
11	Etch Cu		
12	Insert Finishing Option Here	NG Option (See Table Below)	NG Option for Proof of Principle
13	Dry Film (cover lay) on Upper Conductive Layer Only	2.5 mil	Minimum Thickness on Upper Conductive Layer

14	Expose	Mask Laminated Materials 1 and 2 (upper and lower)	This mask defines an area on the upper conductive layer that will receive a dry film solder mask (cover lay). The bottom layer will not have dry film applied to it. The plated through holes will be bridged over by the coating on the top.
15	Develop		
16	Cure		Full Cure
17	Route Panels	Route Bit = As Required	Forms 4" x 4" pieces. Conforms to finished dims

[0076] Table 5 describes the formation of the side portion 52. This process involves routing a matrix of openings in FR-4 board. However, punching is thought to be the cost effective method for manufacturing. The punching may done by punching through the entire core, or, alternatively, punching several layers of no-flow pre-preg and thin core c-stage which are then laminated to form the wall of proper thickness.

[0077] After routing the matrix, the board will have to be electroless or DM plated. Finally, the boards will have to be routed to match the bottom portion. This step can be done first or last. It may make the piece more workable to perform the final routing as a first step.

Table 5: Processing of Material 4 (Side Portion)

Step	Type	Description	Note
1	Route/Punch Matric of Openings	Route Bit= 0.031 in.	Forms Side Portion
2	Direct Metallization/Flash Cu	0.25 mil minimum	Forms Sidewalls on Side Portion
3	Route Panels		

[0078] Table 6 describes the processing of the top portion. The formation of the top portion 48 involves imaging a dry film cover lay or liquid solder mask on the bottom (i.e. conductive layer forming the inner layer. The exposed layer of the top portion 48 will not have a copper coating. It can be processed this way through etching or purchased this way as a one sided laminate.

[0079] A matrix of holes is drilled into the lid board. Drilling may occur after the imaging step. If so, then a suitable solder mask must be chosen that can survive the drilling process.

Table 6: Processing of Top Portion

Step	Type	Description	Note
1	Dry Film	Conductive Layer	
2	Expose	Mask Bare Layer	Form Conduction Ring
3	Develop		
4	Cure		
5	Drill Matrix of Holes	Drill Bit 0.025 in.	Acoustic Ports
6	Laminate	PTFE (Environmental Barrier) Between 2 Pieces of Material 5	Forms Top Portion

Table 7: Processing of Laminated Materials 1 and 2 with Material 4

Step	Type	Description	Note
1	Screen Conductive Adhesive on Material 4		
2	Laminate	Bottom Portion with Side Portion	Forms Bottom Portion with Side Portion (spacer)
3	Add Transducer Assembly	Silicon Die Microphone and Integrated Circuit	

Table 8: Processing of Laminated Materials 1, 2, and 4 with Material 5

Step	Type	Description	Note
1	Screen Conductive Adhesive on Top Portion		
2	Laminate	Bottom Portion and Side Portion with Top Portion	Forms Housing
3	Dice		

Table 9: Finishing Option NG (Nickel/Gold)

Step	Type	Description	Note
1	Immersion Ni (40-50 μ -in)		
2	Immersion Au (25-30 μ -in)		

Table 10: Finishing Option NGT (Nickel/Gold/Tin)

Step	Type
1	Mask L2 (using thick dry film or high tack dicing tape)
2	Immersion Ni (40-50 μ -in)
3	Immersion Au (25-30 μ -in)
4	Remove Mask on L2
5	Mask L1 (using thick dry film or high tack dicing tape) bridge over cavity created by wall
6	Immersion Sn (100-250 μ -in)
7	Remove Mask on L1

Table 11: Finishing Option ST (Silver/Tin)

Step	Type
1	Mask L2 (using thick dry film or high tack dicing tape)
2	Immersion Ag (40-50 μ -in)
3	Remove Mask on L2
4	Mask L1 (using thick dry film or high tack dicing tape) bridge over cavity created by wall
5	Immersion Sn (100-250 μ -in)
6	Remove Mask on L1

[0080] Figure 30 is a plan view illustrating a panel 90 for forming a plurality of microphone packages 92. The microphone packages 92 are distributed on the panel 90 in a 14 x 24 array, or 336 microphone packages total. Fewer or more microphone packages may be disposed on the panel 90, or on smaller or larger panels. As described herein in connection with the various embodiments of the invention, the microphone packages include a number of layers, such as top, bottom and side portions of the housing, environmental barriers, adhesive layers for joining the portions, and the like. To assure alignment of the portions as they are brought together, each portion may be formed to include a plurality of alignment apertures 94. To simultaneously manufacture several hundred or even several thousand microphones, a bottom layer, such as described herein, is provided. A transducer, amplifier and components are secured at appropriate locations on the bottom layer corresponding to each of the microphones to be manufactured. An adhesive layer, such as a sheet of dry adhesive is positioned over the bottom layer, and a sidewall portion layer is positioned over the adhesive layer. An additional dry adhesive layer is positioned, followed by an environmental barrier layer, another dry adhesive layer and the top layer. The dry adhesive layers are activated, such as by the application of heat and/or pressure. The panel is then separated into individual microphone assemblies using known panel cutting and separating techniques.

[0081] The microphone, microphone package and method of assembly herein described further allow the manufacture of multiple microphone assembly, such as microphone pairs. In the simplest form, during separation two microphones may be left joined together, such as the microphone pair 96 shown in Figure 31. Each microphone 98 and 100 of the microphone

pair 96 is thus a separate, individually operable microphone in a single package sharing a common sidewall 102. Alternatively, as described herein, conductive traces may be formed in the various layers of either the top or bottom portion thus allowing multiple microphones to be electrically coupled.

[0082] While specific embodiments have been illustrated and described, numerous modifications come to mind without significantly departing from the spirit of the invention, and the scope of protection is only limited by the scope of the accompanying Claims.

We claim:

1. A method of manufacturing a microphone comprising:
 - providing a first panel comprising a plurality of bottom layer portions for a corresponding plurality of microphones;
 - disposing a transducer on each of the plurality of bottom layer portions;
 - securing a second panel comprising a plurality of top layer portions for the plurality of microphones to the first panel, the top layer portion enclosing the transducer within a cavity defined by the top layer portion and the bottom layer portion; and
 - separating the plurality of microphones;
 - wherein each bottom layer comprises an acoustic port having an aperture to receive an acoustic signal, and disposing the transducer comprises disposing the transducer adjacent the acoustic port.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein each bottom layer portion and each top layer portion comprise a conductive layer, the method comprising electrically coupling the conductive layers.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein securing the second panel comprises providing a dry adhesive layer between the first panel and the second panel and activating the dry adhesive layer to secure the first panel to the second panel.
4. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a third panel, the third panel defining a plurality of side wall portions for each of the corresponding plurality of microphones and securing the second panel to the first panel comprises securing the second panel to the first panel via the third panel.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein each bottom layer portion and each top layer portion comprise a conductive layer, the method comprising electrically coupling the conductive layers.
6. The method of claim 4, wherein securing the second panel comprises providing a first dry adhesive layer between the first panel and the third panel and a second dry adhesive layer between the third panel and the second panel and

activating the first and second dry adhesive layers to secure the first panel to the second panel via the third panel.

7. A method of manufacturing a microphone comprising:

providing a first panel comprising a plurality of bottom layer portions for a corresponding plurality of microphones;

disposing a transducer on each of the plurality of bottom layer portions;
securing a second panel comprising a plurality of top layer portions for the plurality of microphones to the first panel, the top layer portion enclosing the transducer within a cavity defined by the top layer portion and the bottom layer portion; and

separating the plurality of microphones;

wherein each of the bottom layers or each of the top layers comprise an acoustic port having an aperture to receive an acoustic signal, the method comprising providing an environmental barrier covering the acoustic port.

8. The method of claim 7, the first panel and the second panel comprising laminate structures, each environmental barrier being disposed within the laminate structure of a corresponding bottom layer portion or top layer portion.

9. The method of claim 7, the environmental barrier having acoustic properties.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein each bottom layer portion and each top layer portion comprise a conductive layer, the method comprising electrically coupling the conductive layers.

11. The method of claim 7, wherein securing the second panel comprises providing a dry adhesive layer between the first panel and the second panel and activating the dry adhesive layer to secure the first panel to the second panel.

12. A method of manufacturing a microphone comprising:

providing a first panel comprising a plurality of bottom layer portions for a corresponding plurality of microphones;

disposing a transducer on each of the plurality of bottom layer portions;
securing a second panel comprising a plurality of top layer portions for the plurality of microphones to the first panel, the top layer portion enclosing the transducer within a cavity defined by the top layer portion and the bottom layer portion; and

separating the plurality of microphones;

wherein separating the plurality of microphones comprises separating the plurality of microphones into microphone pairs.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein each bottom layer portion and each top layer portion comprise a conductive layer, the method comprising electrically coupling the conductive layers.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein securing the second panel comprises providing a dry adhesive layer between the first panel and the second panel and activating the dry adhesive layer to secure the first panel to the second panel.

15. A method of manufacturing a microphone comprising:

providing a first panel comprising a plurality of bottom layer portions for a corresponding plurality of microphones;

disposing a transducer on each of the plurality of bottom layer portions; securing a second panel comprising a plurality of top layer portions for the plurality of microphones to the first panel, the top layer portion enclosing the transducer within a cavity defined by the top layer portion and the bottom layer portion; and

separating the plurality of microphones; wherein each of the bottom layer portions or each of the top layer portions comprise an acoustic port having an aperture to receive an acoustic signal, and disposing the transducer comprises disposing the transducer adjacent the acoustic port formed in the bottom layer portion or the top layer portion.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein each bottom layer portion and each top layer portion comprise a conductive layer, the method comprising electrically coupling the conductive layers.

17. The method of claim 15, wherein securing the second panel comprises providing a dry adhesive layer between the first panel and the second panel and activating the dry adhesive layer to secure the first panel to the second panel.

18. A method of manufacturing a microphone comprising:

providing a first panel comprising a plurality of bottom layer portions for a corresponding plurality of microphones;

disposing a transducer on each of the plurality of bottom layer portions;

securing a second panel comprising a plurality of top layer portions for the plurality of microphones to the first panel, the top layer portion enclosing the transducer within a cavity defined by the top layer portion and the bottom layer portion;

separating the plurality of microphones; and

the first panel and the second panel comprising laminate structures, the laminate structures comprising conductive layer portions and non-conductive layer portions forming a capacitor within the top layer portions and the bottom layer portions.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein each bottom layer portion and each top layer portion comprise a conductive layer, the method comprising electrically coupling the conductive layers.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein securing the second panel comprises providing a dry adhesive layer between the first panel and the second panel and activating the dry adhesive layer to secure the first panel to the second panel.