

Description

The present invention relates to a method of producing labels and in particular to a method of producing a succession of self-adhesive labels on a length of release material. The present invention also relates to a self-adhesive label.

In the packaging field there is a great demand for high quality pre-printed labels for labelling containers of various types. In order to facilitate the packaging and labelling of containers at a fast rate it is generally required that the labels to be attached to the containers be made available in a form in which they are easy to handle and easy to transfer onto the containers for which they are intended. In one convenient arrangement the labels are self-adhesive labels which are carried in series on a web of release material which is wound into a reel. The Applicant's earlier GB-A-2199010 discloses a method and apparatus for producing labels in which self-adhesive labels are carried directly on a release material.

It is an aim of the present invention to provide an improved method of producing labels which is a development of the Applicant's earlier method.

Accordingly the present invention provides a method of producing a succession of self-adhesive labels on a length of release material, which method comprises the steps of:-(a) applying a layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive to a surface of a length of release material; (b) applying a succession of individual labels to the layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive so as to adhere the labels to the release material; (c) applying to the succession of individual labels on the release material a web of self-adhesive laminar material whereby the laminar material (14) is adhered by the self-adhesive surface thereof over the succession of individual labels; (d) cutting through the laminar material, the individual labels and the pressure-sensitive adhesive as far as the release material thereby to form the self-adhesive labels; and (e) removing from the release material waste portions of the laminar material, of the individual labels and of the pressure-sensitive adhesive which surround the self-adhesive labels; characterised in that said individual labels comprise folded sheets having an upper panel and a lower panel and that in step (d) the cutting step is carried out so that the upper panel of the folded sheet with the laminar material adhered thereto can be pulled away from the lower panel thereby to open the self-adhesive label.

The present invention also provides a self-adhesive label comprising an individual label having a self-adhesive rear surface and which is carried on a backing of release material, and a self-adhesive laminar material which is adhered by the self-adhesive surface thereof to the upper surface

of the individual label; characterised in that said individual label comprises an upper panel and a lower panel, the lower panel having a self-adhesive rear surface, and in that the laminar material connects the upper panel to the lower panel so as to maintain the self-adhesive label in a closed configuration and being configured such that the upper panel can be pulled away from the lower panel to open the self-adhesive label.

The present invention also provides a self-adhesive label comprising an individual label having a self-adhesive rear surface which is carried on a backing of a release material and a self-adhesive laminar material which is adhered by the self-adhesive surface thereof to the upper surface of the individual label; characterised in that the said individual label comprises an upper panel and a lower panel, the upper panel having at least one hole therethrough adjacent an edge of the upper panel, the lower panel having a self-adhesive rear surface being separate from the upper panel, the lower and upper panels having been formed from a single folded sheet and having been separated by cutting away of a common folded edge therebetween, and in that the laminar material extends over the said at least one hole thereby to form at least one self-adhesive exposed portion of the laminar material which is adhered to the lower panel.

The present invention further provides a self-adhesive label comprising an individual label, a self-adhesive laminar material which covers the individual label and a layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive which coats the rear surface of the individual label; characterised in that said individual label comprises a folded sheet having an upper panel, a lower panel, a folded edge connecting the upper and lower panels, a part of the upper panel extending past an edge of the lower panel whereby the rear surface of the folded sheet comprises the rearwardly-directed surfaces of the lower panel and the said part of the upper panel, in that the self-adhesive laminar material which covers the upper panel extends past the folded edge to form an end portion thereof and in that the layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive, which coats the rear surface of the folded sheet coats the rearwardly directed surface of the end portion of the laminar material.

Embodiments of the present invention will now be described by way or example only with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Figure 1 is a diagrammatic elevation of an apparatus for producing self-adhesive labels in accordance with the present invention;

Figure 2 is a diagrammatic elevation of a folded sheet for incorporation into a self-adhesive label in accordance with a first embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 3 is a diagrammatic elevation of a folded sheet for incorporation into a self-adhesive label in accordance with a second embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of the folded sheet of Figure 2 when adhered to a length of release material by a layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive;

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the folded sheet assembly of Figure 4 after application thereof of a self-adhesive laminar material and after die-cutting to produce a self-adhesive label in accordance with the first embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 6 shows the self-adhesive label of Figure 5 when adhered to a container and after the label has been opened to reveal previously hidden surfaces;

Figure 7 is a perspective view of a self-adhesive label in accordance with a further embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 8 is a diagrammatic elevation of a folded sheet for incorporation into a self-adhesive label in accordance with a third embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 9 is a perspective view of the folded sheet of Figure 8 when adhered to a length of release material by a layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive;

Figure 10 is a perspective view of the folded sheet assembly of Figure 9 after application thereof of a self-adhesive laminar material and after die-cutting to produce a self-adhesive label in accordance with the third embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 11 shows the self-adhesive label of Figure 10 when adhered to a container and after the label has been opened to reveal previously hidden surfaces;

Figure 12 is a perspective view of a self-adhesive label in accordance with a fourth embodiment of the present invention when carried on a length of release material; and

Figure 13 is a perspective view of a self-adhesive label in accordance with a fifth embodiment of the present invention when carried on a length of release material.

Referring to Figure 1, there is shown an apparatus for producing labels in accordance with the method of the present invention. A web of release material 2 is fed out from a reel 4 thereof past an adhesive applicator 6 which is adapted to deposit a layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive (not shown) over the upper surface of the release material 2. The release material 2 typically comprises waxed or siliconized paper. The adhesive may be extruded in a hot melt form and may be extruded either as a continuous uniform layer or in the form

of a row of extruded beads. The adhesive-coated release material 2 then passes to a folded sheet applying station 8 at which a succession of individual folded sheets 10 are applied to the layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive so as to adhere the folded sheets 10 to the release material 2. The folded sheets 10 are described in greater detail below. The succession of folded sheets 10 carried on the release material 2 is then passed to a laminar material applying station 12 at which a self-adhesive laminar material 14, which is fed out from a reel 13 thereof, is applied to the succession of folded sheets 10 on the release material 2. The self-adhesive laminar material 14 comprises a layer of plastics material, preferably transparent polyester or polyethylene, coated on one side with a pressure-sensitive adhesive. The laminar material 14 is adhered by the downwardly-directed self-adhesive surface thereof over the succession of folded sheets 10. The laminar material - coated assembly then passes to a die-cutting station 15 at which the self-adhesive labels 16, which will be described in greater detail below, are formed by cutting through the laminar material 14, the folded sheets 10, and the pressure-sensitive adhesive as far as the release material 2. The die-cutting is carried out by a pair of die-cutting rollers 17. At the die-cutting station 15, a waste web remnant 18, consisting of waste portions of the laminar material 14, of the folded sheets 10 and of the pressure-sensitive adhesive which surround the self-adhesive labels 16, is removed from the release material 2 and wound up into a reel 20 for subsequent disposal. The succession of self-adhesive labels 16 on the release material 2 is then wound up into a reel 22 which subsequently can be mounted in an automatic labelling machine (not shown) for automatic application of the labels to containers to be labelled.

Figure 2 shows a first embodiment of a folded sheet 10. The folded sheet 10 comprises a rectangular longitudinal strip which is divided into a series of panels by a plurality of transverse fold lines. An upper panel 22 constitutes one end panel of the strip and a lower panel 24 is connected thereto by a folded edge 26 of the folded sheet 10. A number of additional panels 28 are folded between the upper panel 22 and the lower panel 24. It will be seen that the upper panel 22 completely covers and extends past the lower panel 24 so as to have a rearwardly-directed surface 30 which is adjacent the rearwardly-directed surface 32 of the lower panel 24. Accordingly, the rear surface of the folded sheet comprises the rearwardly directed surfaces 30 and 32. As will be described hereinbelow, the upper panel 22 is provided with a row of holes (not shown) extending therethrough, which row is adjacent to the folded edge 26. The holes expose

corresponding parts of the lower panel 24.

Figure 3 shows a second embodiment of a folded sheet 10' which is an inverted form of the folded sheet 10 of the first embodiment illustrated in Figure 2. Thus the lower panel 34 has a rearwardly directed surface 36 which defines the entire rearwardly directed surface of the folded sheet 10'. The upper panel 38 is connected to the lower panel 34 by a folded edge 40. A number of additional panels 42 are disposed between the upper panel 38 and the lower panel 34. The upper surface of the folded sheet 10' consists of the upper surface 44 of the upper panel 38 and the upper surface 46 of that portion of the lower panel 34 which is not covered by the upper panel 38 or the additional panels 42. The upper panel 38 is, in a manner similar to that of the upper panel 22 of the first embodiment shown in Figure 2, provided with a row of holes (not shown) extending therethrough adjacent the folded edge 40, which holes expose respective parts of the lower panel 34.

Each of the folded sheets 10, 10' of Figures 2 and 3 is printed with information relating to the container to be labelled. Preferably, each sheet is lithographically printed but alternative printing methods include letterpress, flexographic or laser printing. Typically, each folded sheet 10, 10' is composed of paper.

The following Figures 4 to 6 illustrate the manufacture and use of a self-adhesive label 16 employing a folded sheet 10 in accordance with the first embodiment thereof shown in Figure 2 but it will readily be understood by the man skilled in the art how to manufacture self-adhesive labels incorporating the folded sheets 10' shown in Figure 3.

Figure 4 shows a folded sheet 10 which is adhered to the release material 2 by a layer 48 of pressure-sensitive adhesive, the assembly being prior to the laminar material applying station 12. It will be seen that a row of holes 50 extending through the upper panel 22 exposes corresponding parts 52 of the lower panel 24 thereunder. The row of holes 50 is adjacent the folded edge 26 between the upper and lower panels 22, 24. The rearwardly-directed surface 30, 32 of the folded sheet 10 is adhered by the layer 48 of pressure-sensitive adhesive to the release material 2.

The assembly shown in Figure 4 is then passed to the laminar material applying station 12 and then to the die-cutting station 15 and Figure 5 shows the resultant assembly after the application of the laminar material 14 and die-cutting of the combined assembly to form the self-adhesive labels 16 on the release material 2. From Figure 5 it will be seen that the laminar material 14 extends over the whole of the upper surface of the printed sheet 10 and is adhered thereto by the self-adhesive surface thereof. In particular, the laminar ma-

terial 14 extends over the holes 50 thereby to form corresponding self-adhesive exposed portions 54 of the laminar material 14 which are adhered by the respective self-adhesive surfaces to the corresponding parts 52 of the lower panel 24. During the die-cutting step, the folded sheet 10 has been cut around its periphery so that the resultant self-adhesive label 16 is accurately positioned and aligned on the web of release material 2. This accuracy is important when the label 16 is subsequently to be applied to a container to be labelled by an automatic high speed labelling apparatus. In particular, in the cutting step the folded edge 26 between the upper and lower panels 22, 24 is cut away to form a free outer edge 56 of the upper panel 22. It will be understood that the self-adhesive label 16 is maintained in its closed configuration by the adhesion of the exposed portions 54 of the laminar material 14 to the lower panel 24.

Figure 6 shows the label 16 of Figure 5 when adhered to a container 58. As is shown in Figure 6, when it is desired to open the label 16 and access the concealed panels 28, a user pulls the free outer edge 56 of the upper panel 22 away from the lower panel 24 thereby to release the exposed portions 54 of the self-adhesive laminar material 14 from the lower panel 24. A hinged portion 60 of the upper panel 22, which is not directly adhered to the container 58, is then folded back to reveal the previously hidden inner surface 62 thereof and the additional panels 28 of the label 16 can then be unfolded as shown in Figure 6. If desired, one or more weakened tear lines may be provided on the additional panels 28 so that one or more of those panels 28 can be torn off from the label 16 which is adhered to the container. When a user has finished reading the information on the label 16, he can re-close the label 16 by folding the hinged portion 60 of the upper panel 22 back over the lower panel 24 and re-adhere the exposed portions 54 of self-adhesive laminar material to the lower panel 24.

Figure 7 shows a self-adhesive label 70 in accordance with a further embodiment of the present invention. The self-adhesive label 70 comprises a folded sheet 72 which is similar in construction to the folded sheet 10' shown in Figure 3. The folded sheet 72 comprises a rectangular longitudinal strip which is divided into a series of panels by a plurality of transverse fold lines. A lower panel 74 has a rearwardly directed surface 76 which defines the entire rearwardly directed surface of the folded sheet 72. The upper panel 78 is connected to the lower panel 74 by a folded edge 80 and additional panel 82 is disposed between the upper panel 78 and the lower panel 74. The folded sheet 72 is lithographically printed. The rearwardly directed surface 76 of the folded sheet 72 is adhered to a web of release material 84 by a

layer 86 of pressure-sensitive adhesive. The folded sheet 72 is entirely covered by a self-adhesive laminar material 88 which is adhered by the self-adhesive surface thereof to the upper surface of the folded sheet 72. A longitudinal end 90 of the laminar material 88 extends past the folded edge 80 and is adhered to the release material 84 by a combination of the self-adhesive surface thereof and the layer 86 of adhesive. Thus the applied folded sheet is shorter than the laminar material. Typically, the adhered end 90 of the laminar material has a width of about 5 mm. A line of perforations 92 extends across the laminar material 88 in the vicinity of the upper panel 78 of the folded sheet 72.

When it is desired to access the concealed surfaces of the folded sheet 72, the perforation line 92 is torn thereby to permit the upper panel 78 and the additional panel 82 attached thereto to be hinged away from the lower panel 74.

The label of Figure 7 may be made by substantially the same method as that described with reference to Figure 1. As will be clear, the folded sheet is not provided with a row of holes as in the embodiment of Figures 4 to 6 and the folded edge 80 is not cut away from the folded sheet 72. Instead, the leading edge of the resultant self-adhesive label 70 consists of a portion 90 of the laminar material 88 which is adhered to the release material 84 by the layer of adhesive 86. At the die-cutting station 15, the die-cutting rollers are adapted to cut not only the self-adhesive labels but also if desired the die-cutting rollers 17 may cut the perforation line 92 in the laminar material either in the same or in a separate die-cutting step. The die-cutting rollers may be adapted to cut the perforation line 92 additionally through the upper panel 78 of the folded sheet 72. The applied folded sheet may have the configuration shown in Figure 2 when the folded sheet is also provided with the perforation line.

Figure 8 shows a lithographically-printed folded sheet 100 which is employed in the manufacture of a self-adhesive label in accordance with the third embodiment of the present invention. The folded sheet 100 comprises a rectangular longitudinal strip which is divided into an upper panel 102 and a lower panel 104 which is connected to the upper panel 102 by a folded edge 106 of the folded sheet 100. Although not illustrated, a number of additional panels may be disposed between the upper panel 102 and the lower panel 104. When present, the additional panels are connected to one or both of the upper and lower panels 102, 104. The upper panel 102 completely covers and extends past the lower panel 104 so as to have a rearwardly-directed surface 108 which is adjacent to the rearwardly-directed surface 110 of the lower panel 104.

Accordingly, the rear surface of the folded sheet 100 comprises the rearwardly-directed surfaces 108 and 110. The upper surface 112 of the upper panel 102 is lithographically printed as are the opposed inner surfaces 114, 116 of the upper and lower panels 102, 104. The self-adhesive label of the present invention is manufactured by employing the apparatus illustrated in Figure 1, the description of which will not be repeated. Figure 9 shows a folded sheet 100 which has been adhered to a length of release material 118 by a layer 120 of pressure-sensitive adhesive, prior to the laminar material applying station 12. The rearwardly-directed surfaces 108, 110 of the folded sheet 100 are adhered by the layer 120 of pressure-sensitive adhesive to the release material 118.

The assembly shown in Figure 9 is then passed to the laminar material applying station 12 and then to the die-cutting station 15 and Figure 10 shows the resultant assembly after the application of the laminar material and die-cutting of the combined assembly to form the self-adhesive labels on the release material. The laminar material comprises a transparent plastics material, such as polyester or polyethylene. From Figure 10 it will be seen that a cut portion of the laminar material 112 constitutes the upper surface of the resultant self-adhesive label 124. During the die-cutting step, the folded sheet 100 has had the longitudinal edges thereof cut away and also the free outer edge of the extending part of the upper panel 102 has also been cut away. The laminar material 122 is coincident with the cut longitudinal edges 126, 128 of the folded sheet 100 and is also coincident with the cut transverse edge 130 of the folded sheet 100. The laminar material 122 extends beyond the folded edge 106 of the folded sheet 100 to form an end flap 132 thereof which is adhered by a combination of its self-adhesive surface and the layer 120 of pressure-sensitive adhesive to the release material 118. The self-adhesive label 124 is maintained in its closed configuration by the adhesion of the rearwardly-directed surface 108 of the upper panel 102 to the release material 118.

Figure 11 shows the label 124 of Figure 10 when adhered to a container 134. The rearwardly-directed surface of the label 124 consists of that portion of the layer of adhesive 120 which is adhered to the rearwardly directed surfaces 108, 110 of the upper and lower sheets 102, 104 and the rearwardly directed surface of the flap 132 of the laminar material 122. When the label 124 is removed from the release material 118, the portion of the layer of adhesive 120 is stripped off therewith and that portion of the layer of adhesive 120 adheres the label 124 to the container 134. When it is desired to open the label 124 and access the concealed surfaces of the upper and lower panels

102, 104, a user pulls the free outer edge 136 of the upper panel 102 away from the lower panel 104. The free outer edge 136 and the part of the layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive 120 which is adhered directly to the rearwardly directed surface 108 of the upper panel 102 are stripped off from the container as a result of preferential adhesion of the adhesive to the rearwardly-directed surface 108 of the upper panel. The portion 138 of the adhesive layer 120 remains adhered to the upper panel 102 as is shown in Figure 11. When a user has finished reading the information on the label 124, he can re-close the label 124 by folding the upper panel 102 back over the lower panel 104 and by re-adhering the adhesive part 138 to the container 134.

In the embodiment of Figures 8 to 11, the folded edge 106 is protected from being accidentally caught and pulled away from the container to which it is adhered by the laminar material 122 which extends over the folded edge 106 to form the flap 132. Thus the resultant label 124 is reliably and securely adhered over its whole surface to the container 134. As is shown in Figures 10 and 11, in the die-cutting step the corners of the label are preferably cut rounded. This is carried out not only for aesthetic purposes but also to assist a user in opening the resultant label and also to reduce the chances of the corners of the label being bent or caught by extraneous objects.

If desired, the layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive 120 may be applied to the release material as a non-continuous layer whereby a corner of the rearwardly directed surface 108 of the outer edge 136 of the upper panel 102 is not coated with adhesive - this assists a user being able to pull the upper panel 102 away from the lower panel 104 in order to open the label.

Figure 12 shows a label 150 in accordance with a fourth embodiment of the present invention when carried on a length of release material 152. This embodiment is different from that illustrated in Figure 8 to 11 in that the self-adhesive laminar material 154 extends substantially past the folded edge 156 of the folded sheet 158 thereby to define a label portion 160 which is adjacent the folded sheet 158. The self-adhesive laminar material is of transparent plastics such as polyester or polyethylene and has an image 162 printed on the rearwardly-directed surface 164 thereof, which image is disposed in the portion of the label adjacent to the folded sheet. In the manufacture of the labels, the laminar material 14 shown in Figure 1 would consist of a length of transparent plastics material having a succession of images 162 printed on its lower surface 164. The laminar material 14 would be adhered over the assembly of folded sheets/pressure-sensitive adhesive/release material with the image 162 on the transparent laminar

material being in registration adjacent a respective folded sheet 158. In the die-cutting step, the die-cutting would be carried out so that each label 150 includes a respective printed image 162 on the transparent laminar material 154 and a respective folded sheet 158 adjacent thereto.

Figure 13 shows a label 250 in accordance with a fifth embodiment of the present invention when carried on the length of release material 252, the label 250 being a modification of the label of Figure 12. This embodiment is different from that illustrated in Figure 12 in that prior to the application of pressure-sensitive adhesive 264 to the release material, the release material is provided thereover with a succession of support webs, each of which comprises a layer of paper or other material which is coated on its rear surface with a pressure-sensitive adhesive and is carried on the release material. These support webs have been produced by die-cutting pressure-sensitive stock, comprising the paper or other material releasably adhered on the release paper, with the waste remnant having been removed. Thus in the apparatus of Figure 1 the reel 4 comprises the release material 2 with a succession of self-adhesive support webs thereon. Referring to Figure 13 again, the self-adhesive label 250 has a lower self-adhesive support web 270 e.g. of paper which is coated on its rear surface with a layer 272 of pressure-sensitive adhesive and is releasably adhered to the release material 252. The support web 270 is co-extensive with all of the self-adhesive label 250 apart from the free outer edge 274 of the folded sheet 258 which is intended to be releasably adhered to the release material 152. Accordingly, the free outer edge 274 is directly adhered to the release material 252 by the layer 264 of pressure-sensitive adhesive which has been applied over the release material/support web combination by the adhesive applicator 6 shown in Figure 1.

In the manufacture of the label of Figure 13, the folded sheets have been applied in succession over the succession of support webs 270 but also ensuring that the portion (i.e. the free outer edge) of the folded sheets which is intended to be releasably adhered to the release material is not disposed over a part of the support web but rather is disposed over the release material. Initially, the support web which is carried on the release material is larger than that which is present in the resultant label. During the die-cutting step, the extra peripheral part of the support web is cut simultaneously with the cutting of the laminar material 254 the applied sheet 258 and the pressure-sensitive adhesive 264 and the combined waste web remnant is then removed. Thus in each resultant label the support web 270, together with the rear layer of adhesive 272, is coextensive with the

majority of the label 250. The advantage of this configuration is that the support web provides extra strength and rigidity to the resultant self-adhesive labels.

In the illustrated embodiments, the self-adhesive laminar material is coated with a pressure-sensitive adhesive. However, in alternative embodiments, the laminar material is not uniformly coated with pressure-sensitive adhesive, but rather is provided with uncoated patches which, for example, coincide with part or all of the applied folded sheets. In further alternative embodiments, the self-adhesion is provided not by a layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive but by a heat-sealable material such as a hot-melt adhesive, lacquer or plastics material which is subsequently heat sealed.

Claims

1. A method of producing a succession of self-adhesive labels (16) on a length of release material (2), which method comprises the steps of:-

(a) applying a layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive (48) to a surface of a length of release material (2);

(b) applying a succession of individual labels (10) to the layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive (48) so as to adhere the labels (10) to the release material (2);

(c) applying to the succession of individual labels (10) on the release material (2) a web of self-adhesive laminar material (14) whereby the laminar material (14) is adhered by the self-adhesive surface thereof over the succession of individual labels (10);

(d) cutting through the laminar material (14), the individual labels (10) and the pressure-sensitive adhesive (48) as far as the release material (2) thereby to form the self-adhesive labels (16); and

(e) removing from the release material (2) waste portions of the laminar material (14), of the individual labels (10) and of the pressure-sensitive adhesive (48) which surround the self-adhesive labels (16);

characterised in that said individual labels (10) comprise folded sheets having an upper panel (22) and a lower panel (24) and that in step (d) the cutting step is carried out so that the upper panel (22) of the folded sheet with the laminar material (14) adhered thereto can be pulled away from the lower panel (24) thereby to open the self-adhesive label (16).

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein each folded sheet has a folded edge (26) between the upper panel (22) and the lower panel (24),

the upper panel (22) having at least one hole (50) therethrough adjacent the folded edge (26) which exposes a respective at least one part (52) of the lower panel (24), the self-adhesive laminar material (14) extends over the said at least one hole (50) of each folded sheet thereby to form at least one self-adhesive exposed portion (54) of the laminar material (14) which is adhered to the lower panel (24) and the cutting step is carried out whereby each said folded edge (26) is cut away from the respective self-adhesive label (16).

3. A method according to claim 2 wherein in applying step (b) the folded sheets are fed onto the layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive (48) which is carried on the release material (2) at a label applying station (8) under which the length of release material (2) is conveyed, and wherein the leading edge of each folded sheet is comprised of the said folded edge (26).

4. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the folded sheet further comprises at least one additional folded panel (28) which is connected to the lower panel (24).

5. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the folded sheet further comprises at least one additional folded panel (28) which is connected to the upper panel (22).

6. A method according to claim 1, wherein in cutting step (d) a weakened tear line (92) is cut through the laminar material (88) which can be torn thereby to permit the upper panel (78) to be pulled away from the lower panel (74).

7. A method according to claim 1 wherein each folded sheet (72) has a folded edge (80) between the upper panel (78) and the lower panel (74) whereby in the resultant self-adhesive label (70) the upper panel (78) with the laminar material (88) applied thereto can be pulled away from the lower panel (74) by unfolding the label (70) about the folded edge (80).

8. A method according to claim 7 wherein in the cutting step, the laminar material (88) and the pressure-sensitive adhesive (86) are cut along a line generally along and spaced from the folded edge (86) thereby to form a flap (90) of the laminar material (88) which is adjacent to the folded edge (80) and is adhered to the release material (84).

9. A method according to claim 7 wherein the laminar material (154) comprises a transparent

majority of the label 250. The advantage of this configuration is that the support web provides extra strength and rigidity to the resultant self-adhesive labels.

In the illustrated embodiments, the self-adhesive laminar material is coated with a pressure-sensitive adhesive. However, in alternative embodiments, the laminar material is not uniformly coated with pressure-sensitive adhesive, but rather is provided with uncoated patches which, for example, coincide with part or all of the applied folded sheets. In further alternative embodiments, the self-adhesion is provided not by a layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive but by a heat-sealable material such as a hot-melt adhesive, lacquer or plastics material which is subsequently heat sealed.

Claims

1. A method of producing a succession of self-adhesive labels (16) on a length of release material (2), which method comprises the steps of:-

(a) applying a layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive (48) to a surface of a length of release material (2);

(b) applying a succession of individual labels (10) to the layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive (48) so as to adhere the labels (10) to the release material (2);

(c) applying to the succession of individual labels (10) on the release material (2) a web of self-adhesive laminar material (14) whereby the laminar material (14) is adhered by the self-adhesive surface thereof over the succession of individual labels (10);

(d) cutting through the laminar material (14), the individual labels (10) and the pressure-sensitive adhesive (48) as far as the release material (2) thereby to form the self-adhesive labels (16); and

(e) removing from the release material (2) waste portions of the laminar material (14), of the individual labels (10) and of the pressure-sensitive adhesive (48) which surround the self-adhesive labels (16);

characterised in that said individual labels (10) comprise folded sheets having an upper panel (22) and a lower panel (24) and that in step (d) the cutting step is carried out so that the upper panel (22) of the folded sheet with the laminar material (14) adhered thereto can be pulled away from the lower panel (24) thereby to open the self-adhesive label (16).

2. A method according to claim 1 wherein each folded sheet has a folded edge (26) between the upper panel (22) and the lower panel (24),

the upper panel (22) having at least one hole (50) therethrough adjacent the folded edge (26) which exposes a respective at least one part (52) of the lower panel (24), the self-adhesive laminar material (14) extends over the said at least one hole (50) of each folded sheet thereby to form at least one self-adhesive exposed portion (54) of the laminar material (14) which is adhered to the lower panel (24) and the cutting step is carried out whereby each said folded edge (26) is cut away from the respective self-adhesive label (16).

3. A method according to claim 2 wherein in applying step (b) the folded sheets are fed onto the layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive (48) which is carried on the release material (2) at a label applying station (8) under which the length of release material (2) is conveyed, and wherein the leading edge of each folded sheet is comprised of the said folded edge (26).

4. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the folded sheet further comprises at least one additional folded panel (28) which is connected to the lower panel (24).

5. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 3 wherein the folded sheet further comprises at least one additional folded panel (28) which is connected to the upper panel (22).

6. A method according to claim 1, wherein in cutting step (d) a weakened tear line (92) is cut through the laminar material (88) which can be torn thereby to permit the upper panel (78) to be pulled away from the lower panel (74).

7. A method according to claim 1 wherein each folded sheet (72) has a folded edge (80) between the upper panel (78) and the lower panel (74) whereby in the resultant self-adhesive label (70) the upper panel (78) with the laminar material (88) applied thereto can be pulled away from the lower panel (74) by unfolding the label (70) about the folded edge (80).

8. A method according to claim 7 wherein in the cutting step, the laminar material (88) and the pressure-sensitive adhesive (86) are cut along a line generally along and spaced from the folded edge (86) thereby to form a flap (90) of the laminar material (88) which is adjacent to the folded edge (80) and is adhered to the release material (84).

9. A method according to claim 7 wherein the laminar material (154) comprises a transparent



plastics material which is provided with a succession of printed images (162) thereon, in step (c) the laminar material (154) is applied whereby each image is in registry with a respective folded sheet (158) and in step (d) the laminar material (154) is cut so as to provide a label portion (160), which includes at least a part of the respective image, adjacent a respective folded sheet (158).

10. A method according to claim 8 or claim 9 wherein in the cutting step the edges of the folded sheet (158) apart from the said folded edge (156) are cut away.

11. A self-adhesive label (16) comprising an individual label (10) having a self-adhesive rear surface and which is carried on a backing of release material (2), and a self-adhesive laminar material (14) which is adhered by the self-adhesive surface thereof to the upper surface of the individual label (10); characterised in that said individual label (10) comprises an upper panel (22) and a lower panel (24), the lower panel (24) having a self-adhesive rear surface, and in that the laminar material (14) connects the upper panel (22) to the lower panel (24) so as to maintain the self-adhesive label (16) in a closed configuration and being configured such that the upper panel (22) can be pulled away from the lower panel (24) to open the self-adhesive label (16).

12. A self-adhesive label according to claim 11 wherein the laminar material (88) has a perforation line (92) extending thereacross which can be torn thereby to permit access to the lower panel (74).

13. A self-adhesive label according to claim 12 wherein the upper (78) and lower (74) panels are connected by a folded edge (80).

14. A self-adhesive label (16) comprising an individual label (10) having a self-adhesive rear surface which is carried on a backing of a release material (2) and a self-adhesive laminar material (14) which is adhered by the self-adhesive surface thereof to the upper surface of the individual label (10); characterised in that the said individual label (10) comprises an upper panel (22) and a lower panel (24), the upper panel (22) having at least one hole therethrough (50) adjacent an edge (26) of the upper panel (22), the lower panel (24) having a self-adhesive rear surface being separate from the upper panel (22), the lower (24) and upper panels (24) having been formed from a single

folded sheet (10) and having been separated by cutting away of a common folded edge (26) therebetween, and in that the laminar material (14) extends over the said at least one hole (50) thereby to form at least one self-adhesive exposed portion (54) of the laminar material (14) which is adhered to the lower panel (24).

15. A self-adhesive label according to claim 14, wherein the upper panel (22) covers and extends beyond the lower panel (24) and the upper panel (22) has a self-adhesive rear surface which is adjacent the self-adhesive rear surface of the lower panel (24) and is carried on the backing of release material (2).

16. A self-adhesive label according to claim 15, further comprising at least one additional panel (28) which is connected to the lower panel (24) and is disposed between the upper (22) and lower (24) panels.

17. A self-adhesive label according to claim 14, wherein a part of the lower panel (34) extends beyond the upper panel (38) and the laminar material (88) is adhered by the self-adhesive surface thereof to the extending part of the lower panel (34) adjacent the upper surface of the upper panel (38).

18. A self-adhesive label according to claim 17 further comprising at least one additional panel (42) which is connected to the upper panel (38) and is disposed between the upper (38) and lower (34) panels.

19. A self-adhesive label (124) comprising an individual label (100), a self-adhesive laminar material (122) which covers the individual label (100) and a layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive (120) which coats the rear surface of the individual label (100); characterised in that said individual label (100) comprises a folded sheet having an upper panel (102), a lower panel (104), a folded edge (106) connecting the upper (102) and lower (104) panels, a part of the upper panel (102) extending past an edge of the lower panel (104) whereby the rear surface of the folded sheet comprises the rearwardly-directed surfaces of the lower panel (104) and the said part of the upper panel (102), in that the self-adhesive laminar material (122) which covers the upper panel (102) extends past the folded edge to form an end portion thereof and in that the layer of pressure-sensitive adhesive (120), which coats the rear surface of the folded sheet (100) coats the rearwardly directed surface of the end portion of the laminar ma-



terial (122).

20. A self-adhesive label according to claim 19 wherein the laminar material (160) is of transparent plastics and the end portion of the laminar material (160) carries an image which has been printed thereon.

Patentansprüche

1. Verfahren zum Herstellen einer Folge von selbstklebenden Etiketten (16) auf einem Stück Abziehmaterial (2), wobei das Verfahren folgende Schritte aufweist:

- (a) Aufbringen einer Schicht von druckempfindlichem Klebstoff (48) auf eine Fläche eines Stücks von Abziehmaterial (2);
- (b) Aufbringen einer Folge von einzelnen Etiketten (10) auf die Schicht von druckempfindlichem Klebstoff (48), um die Etiketten (10) auf das Abziehmaterial (2) zu kleben;
- (c) Aufbringen auf die Folge von einzelnen Etiketten (10) auf dem Abziehmaterial (2) einer Bahn von selbstklebendem Schichtmaterial (14), wodurch das Schichtmaterial (14) durch die selbstklebende Oberfläche desselben über die Folge von einzelnen Etiketten (10) geklebt wird;
- (d) Durchschneiden des Schichtmaterials (14), der einzelnen Etiketten (10) und des druckempfindlichen Klebstoffs (48) bis zum Abziehmaterial (2) und dadurch Ausbilden der selbstklebenden Etiketten (16); und
- (e) Entfernen von Abfallabschnitten des Schichtmaterials (14), der einzelnen Etiketten (10) und des druckempfindlichen Klebstoffs (48), welche die selbstklebenden Etiketten (16) umgeben, von dem Abziehmaterial (2);

dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die einzelnen Etiketten (10) aus Faltblättern mit einem oberen Abschnitt (22) und einem unteren Abschnitt (24) bestehen und daß im Schritt (d) der Schneidschritt derart ausgeführt wird, daß der obere Abschnitt (22) des Faltblattes mit dem daran angeklebten Schichtmaterial (14) von dem unteren Abschnitt (24) weggezogen werden kann, um dadurch das selbstklebende Etikett (16) zu öffnen.

2. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, bei welchem jedes Faltblatt eine Falzkante (26) zwischen dem oberen Abschnitt (22) und dem unteren Abschnitt (24) aufweist, der obere Abschnitt (22) wenigstens ein denselben durchsetzendes Loch (50) nahe der Falzkante (26) aufweist, welches jeweils wenigstens einen Teil (52) des

unteren Abschnitts (24) freilegt, das selbstklebende Schichtmaterial (14) sich über das wenigstens eine Loch (50) jedes Faltblattes erstreckt, um dadurch wenigstens einen selbstklebenden freiliegenden Abschnitt (54) des Schichtmaterials (14) zu bilden, der am unteren Abschnitt (24) angeklebt wird, und der Schneidschritt durchgeführt wird, wodurch jede Falzkante (26) vom jeweiligen selbstklebenden Etikett (16) weggeschnitten wird.

3. Verfahren nach Anspruch 2, bei welchem beim Aufbringschritt (b) die Faltblätter auf die Schicht von druckempfindlichem Klebstoff (48), der auf dem Abziehmaterial (2) getragen wird, in einer Etikettaufbringstation (8) aufgebracht werden, unter der das Stück Abziehmaterial (2) transportiert wird, und bei welchem die Vorderkante jedes Faltblattes aus der Falzkante (26) besteht.

4. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 3, bei welchem das Faltblatt ferner wenigstens einen weiteren Faltabschnitt (28) aufweist, der mit dem unteren Abschnitt (24) verbunden ist.

5. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 1 bis 3, bei welchem das Faltblatt ferner wenigstens einen zusätzlichen Faltabschnitt (28) aufweist, der mit dem oberen Abschnitt (22) verbunden ist.

6. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, bei welchem beim Schneidschritt (d) eine geschwächte Aufreißlinie (92) durch das Schichtmaterial (88) geschnitten wird, die aufgerissen werden kann, um dadurch das Abziehen des oberen Abschnitts (78) vom unteren Abschnitt (74) zu ermöglichen.

7. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, bei welchem jedes Faltblatt (72) eine Falzkante (80) zwischen dem oberen Abschnitt (78) und dem unteren Abschnitt (74) aufweist, wodurch in dem sich ergebenden selbstklebenden Etikett (70) die obere Platte (78) mit dem daran angebrachten Schichtmaterial (88) von dem unteren Abschnitt (74) durch Auffalten des Etiketts (70) um die Falzkante (80) weggezogen werden kann.

8. Verfahren nach Anspruch 7, bei welchem im Schneidschritt das Schichtmaterial (88) und der druckempfindliche Klebstoff (86) längs einer Linie geschnitten werden, die allgemein längs und im Abstand von der Falzkante (86) verläuft, um dadurch eine Klappe (90) des Schichtmaterials (88) zu bilden, die neben der



Falzkante (80) liegt und am Abziehmaterial (84) angeklebt ist.

9. Verfahren nach Anspruch 7, bei welchem das Schichtmaterial (154) aus einem transparenten Kunststoff besteht, der mit einer Folge von auf diesen aufgetragenen Druckbildern (162) versehen ist, im Schritt (c) das Schichtmaterial (154) aufgebracht wird, wodurch jedes Bild mit einem entsprechenden Falblatt (158) ausgerichtet wird, und im Schritt (d) das Schichtmaterial (154) so geschnitten wird, daß ein Etikettabschnitt (160) gebildet wird, der wenigstens einen Teil des jeweiligen Bildes neben einem jeweiligen Falblatt (158) umfaßt.

10. Verfahren nach Anspruch 8 oder 9, bei welchem im Schneidschritt die von der Falzkante (156) abgelegenen Kanten des Falblattes (158) weggeschnitten werden.

11. Selbstklebendes Etikett (16), das aus einem einzelnen Etikett (10), welches eine selbstklebende Rückfläche aufweist und auf einer Unterlage von Abziehmaterial (2) getragen ist, und einem selbstklebenden Schichtmaterial (14) besteht, das durch seine selbstklebende Fläche an der oberen Fläche des einzelnen Etiketts (10) angeklebt ist; dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das einzelne Etikett (10) einen oberen Abschnitt (22) und einen unteren Abschnitt (24) aufweist, wobei der untere Abschnitt (24) eine selbstklebende Rückfläche aufweist, und daß das Schichtmaterial (14) den oberen Abschnitt (22) mit dem unteren Abschnitt (24) derart verbindet, daß das selbstklebende Etikett (16) in einer geschlossenen Form gehalten wird und so ausgebildet ist, daß der obere Abschnitt (22) vom unteren Abschnitt (24) zum Öffnen des selbstklebenden Etiketts (16) weggezogen werden kann.

12. Selbstklebendes Etikett nach Anspruch 11, bei welchem das Schichtmaterial (88) eine Perforationslinie (92) aufweist, die sich zu diesem erstreckt und aufgerissen werden kann, um dadurch Zugang zum unteren Abschnitt (74) zu ermöglichen.

13. Selbstklebendes Etikett nach Anspruch 12, bei welchem der obere Abschnitt (78) und der untere Abschnitt (74) durch eine Falzkante (80) miteinander verbunden sind.

14. Selbstklebendes Etikett (16), welches aus einem einzelnen Etikett (10), das eine selbstklebende Rückfläche aufweist, welche auf einer Unterlage aus einem Abziehmaterial (2) getra-

gen wird, und einem selbstklebenden Schichtmaterial (14) besteht, das durch seine selbstklebende Fläche auf die obere Fläche des einzelnen Etiketts (10) geklebt ist; dadurch, gekennzeichnet, daß das einzelne Etikett (10) einen oberen Abschnitt (22) und einen unteren Abschnitt (24) aufweist, wobei der obere Abschnitt (22) wenigstens ein denselben durchsetzendes Loch (50) nahe einer Kante (26) des oberen Abschnitts (22) aufweist, der untere Abschnitt (24) eine von dem oberen Abschnitt (22) getrennte selbstklebende Rückfläche aufweist, der untere Abschnitt (24) und der obere Abschnitt (22) aus einem einzigen Falblatt (10) gebildet sind und durch Wegschneiden einer gemeinsamen Falzkante (26) zwischen denselben getrennt worden sind, und daß das Schichtmaterial (14) sich über das wenigstens eine Loch (50) erstreckt, um dadurch wenigstens einen selbstklebenden freiliegenden Teil (54) des Schichtmaterials (14) zu bilden, der am unteren Abschnitt (24) angeklebt ist.

15. Selbstklebendes Etikett nach Anspruch 14, bei welchem der obere Abschnitt (22) den unteren Abschnitt (24) abdeckt und sich über diesen hinaus erstreckt und der obere Abschnitt (22) eine selbstklebende Rückfläche aufweist, die nahe der selbstklebenden Rückfläche des unteren Abschnitts (24) liegt und auf der Unterlage von Abziehmaterial (2) getragen ist.

16. Selbstklebendes Etikett nach Anspruch 15, mit wenigstens einem weiteren Abschnitt (28), der mit dem unteren Abschnitt (24) verbunden und zwischen dem oberen Abschnitt (22) und dem unteren Abschnitt (24) angeordnet ist.

17. Selbstklebendes Etikett nach Anspruch 14, bei welchem ein Teil des unteren Abschnitts (24) sich über den oberen Abschnitt (38) hinaus erstreckt und das Schichtmaterial (88) durch seine selbstklebende Fläche an dem sich erstreckenden Teil des unteren Abschnitts (14) nahe der oberen Fläche des oberen Abschnitts (38) angeklebt ist.

18. Selbstklebendes Etikett nach Anspruch 17, mit wenigstens einem weiteren Abschnitt (42), der mit dem oberen Abschnitt (38) verbunden und zwischen dem oberen Abschnitt (38) und dem unteren Abschnitt (34) angeordnet ist.

19. Selbstklebendes Etikett (124), welches aus einem einzelnen Etikett (100), einem selbstklebenden Schichtmaterial (122), das das einzelne Etikett (100) abdeckt, und einer Schicht aus druckempfindlichem Klebstoff (120) besteht,



welcher die Rückfläche des einzelnen Etiketts (100) abdeckt; dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das einzelne Etikett (100) ein Falblatt mit einem oberen Abschnitt (102), einem unteren Abschnitt (104) und einer den oberen Abschnitt (102) und den unteren Abschnitt (104) verbindenden Falzkante (106) aufweist, wobei ein Teil des oberen Abschnitts (102) sich über eine Kante des unteren Abschnitts (104) hinaus erstreckt, wodurch die Rückfläche des Falblattes aus den rückwärts gerichteten Flächen des unteren Abschnitts (104) und des erwähnten Teils des oberen Abschnitts (102) besteht, daß das selbstklebende Schichtmaterial (122), das den oberen Abschnitt (102) überdeckt sich über die Falzkante hinaus erstreckt, um einen Endabschnitt desselben zu bilden, und daß die Schicht des druckempfindlichen Klebstoffs (120), welcher die Rückfläche des Falblattes (100) überdeckt, die rückwärts gerichtete Fläche des Endabschnitts des Schichtmaterials (122) überdeckt.

20. Selbstklebende Etikett nach Anspruch 19, bei welchem das Schichtmaterial (160) aus transparentem Kunststoff besteht und der Endabschnitt des Schichtmaterials (160) ein auf diesen gedrucktes Bild trägt.

Revendications

1. Procédé pour produire une suite d'étiquettes autocollantes (16) sur une longueur de matériau de séparation (2), lequel procédé comprend les étapes consistant à:

(a) appliquer un film adhésif sensible à la pression (48) à la surface d'une longueur de matériau de séparation (2) ;

(b) appliquer une suite d'étiquettes individuelles (10) au film adhésif sensible à la pression (48) de façon à faire adhérer les étiquettes (10) au matériau de séparation (2) ;

(c) appliquer à la suite d'étiquettes individuelles (10) du matériau de séparation (2) un pan de matériau lamellaire autocollant (14), si bien que le matériau lamellaire (14) adhère grâce à sa surface autocollante par dessus la suite d'étiquettes individuelles (10) ;

(d) découper à travers la longueur du matériau lamellaire (14), les étiquettes individuelles (10) et le film adhésif sensible à la pression (48) jusqu'au matériau de séparation (2) de façon à former ainsi les étiquettes autocollantes (16); et

(e) retirer du matériau de séparation (2) les parties de déchets du matériau lamellaire

(14), des étiquettes individuelles (10) et du film adhésif sensible à la pression (48) qui entourent les étiquettes autocollantes (16) ;

caractérisé en ce que lesdites étiquettes individuelles (10) comprennent des feuilles pliées ayant un panneau supérieur (22) et un panneau inférieur (24) et en ce qu'au cours de l'étape (d) l'étape de découpage est exécutée de sorte que le panneau supérieur (22) de la feuille pliée et le matériau lamellaire (14) auquel il adhère peuvent être tirés en s'écartant du panneau inférieur (24), ouvrant ainsi l'étiquette autocollante (16).

2. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel chaque feuille pliée possède un bord plié (26) entre le panneau supérieur (22) et le panneau inférieur (24), le panneau supérieur (22) ayant au moins un orifice (50) passant à travers et adjacent au bord plié (26) qui expose au moins une partie respective (52) du panneau inférieur (24), le matériau lamellaire autocollant (14) s'étend par dessus ledit au moins un orifice (50) de chaque feuille pliée de façon à former ainsi au moins une partie exposée autocollante (54) du matériau lamellaire (14) qui adhère au panneau inférieur (24), et l'étape de découpage est exécutée, si bien que chaque bord plié (26) est découpé de l'étiquette autocollante respective (16).

3. Procédé selon la revendication 2, dans lequel, au cours de l'étape (b), les feuilles pliées sont acheminées sur le film adhésif sensible à la pression (48) qui est porté sur le matériau de séparation (2) à une station d'application d'étiquettes (8) sous laquelle la longueur de matériau de séparation (2) est transportée, et dans lequel le bord avant de chaque feuille pliée est constitué dudit bord plié (26).

4. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 3, dans lequel la feuille pliée comprend en outre au moins un panneau plié supplémentaire (28) qui est connecté au panneau inférieur (24).

5. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 3, dans lequel la feuille pliée comprend en outre au moins un panneau plié supplémentaire (28) qui est connecté au panneau supérieur (22).

6. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel, au cours de l'étape de découpage (d), une ligne de déchirage affaiblie (92) est découpée à travers le matériau lamellaire (88) qui peut être ainsi déchiré pour permettre au panneau



supérieur (78) d'être tiré à l'écart du panneau inférieur (74).

7. Procédé selon la revendication 1, dans lequel chaque feuille pliée (72) possède un bord plié (80) entre le panneau supérieur (78) et le panneau inférieur (74), si bien que, dans l'étiquette autocollante résultante (70), le panneau supérieur (78) sur lequel est appliqué le matériau lamellaire (88) peut être tiré à l'écart du panneau inférieur (74) en dépliant l'étiquette (70) au niveau du bord plié (80).

8. Procédé selon la revendication 7, dans lequel, au cours de l'étape de découpage, le matériau lamellaire (88) et le film adhésif sensible à la pression (86) sont découpés le long d'une ligne se trouvant généralement le long et écartée du bord plié (86) afin de former ainsi une patte (90) de matériau lamellaire (88) qui est adjacente au bord plié (80) et qui adhère au matériau de séparation (84).

9. Procédé selon la revendication 7, dans lequel le matériau lamellaire (154) comprend un matériau en plastique transparent qui est pourvu sur lui-même d'une suite d'images imprimées (162), au cours de l'étape (c) le matériau lamellaire (154) est appliqué, si bien que chaque image est en correspondance avec une feuille pliée respective (158) et, au cours de l'étape (d), le matériau lamellaire (154) est découpé de façon à réaliser une partie d'étiquette (160) qui comprend au moins une partie de l'image respective, adjacente à une feuille pliée respective (158).

10. Procédé selon la revendication 8 ou 9, dans lequel, au cours de l'étape de découpage, les bords de la feuille pliée (158) à l'écart dudit bord plié (156) sont découpés.

11. Etiquette autocollante (16) comprenant une étiquette individuelle (10) ayant une surface arrière autocollante et qui est portée sur un support de matériau de séparation (2), et un matériau lamellaire autocollant (14) qui adhère, grâce à sa surface autocollante, à la surface supérieure de l'étiquette individuelle (10); caractérisée en ce que ladite étiquette individuelle (10) comprend un panneau supérieur (22) et un panneau inférieur (24), le panneau inférieur (24) ayant une surface arrière autocollante, et en ce que le matériau lamellaire (14) connecte le panneau supérieur (22) au panneau inférieur (24) de façon à maintenir l'étiquette autocollante (16) en configuration fermée et qu'elle soit configurée de façon telle que le panneau supé-

rieur (22) puisse être tiré à l'écart du panneau inférieur (24) afin d'ouvrir l'étiquette autocollante (16).

12. Etiquette autocollante selon la revendication 11, dans laquelle le matériau lamellaire (88) possède une ligne de perforation (92) s'étendant au travers de ce dernier, qui peut être ainsi déchirée pour permettre ainsi l'accès au panneau inférieur (74).

13. Etiquette autocollante selon la revendication 12, dans laquelle les panneaux supérieur (78) et inférieur (74) sont connectés par un bord plié (80).

14. Etiquette autocollante (16), comprenant une étiquette individuelle (10) ayant une surface arrière autocollante qui est portée sur un support de matériau de séparation (2), et un matériau lamellaire autocollant (14) qui adhère, grâce à sa surface autocollante, à la surface supérieure de l'étiquette individuelle (10); caractérisée en ce que ladite étiquette individuelle (10) comprend un panneau supérieur (22) et un panneau inférieur (24), le panneau supérieur (22) ayant au moins un orifice (50) passant à travers et adjacent à un bord (26) du panneau supérieur (22), le panneau inférieur (24) ayant une surface arrière autocollante qui est séparée du panneau supérieur (22), les panneaux inférieur (24) et supérieur (22) ayant été formés à partir d'une feuille pliée unique (10) et ayant été séparés en découpant un bord plié commun (26) entre les deux, et en ce que le matériau lamellaire (14) s'étend par dessus ledit au moins un orifice (50), formant ainsi au moins une partie exposée autocollante de matériau lamellaire (14) qui adhère au panneau inférieur (24).

15. Etiquette autocollante selon la revendication 14, dans laquelle le panneau supérieur (22) recouvre et s'étend au-delà du panneau inférieur (24), le panneau supérieur (22) ayant une surface arrière autocollante qui est adjacente à la surface arrière autocollante du panneau inférieur (24) et qui est portée sur le support de matériau de séparation (2).

16. Etiquette autocollante selon la revendication 15, comprenant en outre au moins un panneau supplémentaire (28) qui est connecté au panneau inférieur (24) et qui est disposé entre les panneaux supérieur (22) et inférieur (24).

17. Etiquette autocollante selon la revendication 14, dans laquelle une partie du panneau infé-



rieur (34) s'étend au-delà du panneau supérieur (38), le matériau lamellaire (88) adhérent, grâce à sa surface autocollante à la partie d'extension du panneau inférieur (34), de façon adjacente à la surface supérieure du panneau supérieur (38). 5

18. Etiquette autocollante selon la revendication 17, comprenant en outre au moins un panneau supplémentaire (42) qui est connecté au panneau supérieur (38) et est disposé entre les panneaux supérieur (38) et inférieur (34). 10

19. Etiquette autocollante (124), comprenant une étiquette individuelle (100), un matériau lamellaire autocollant (122) qui recouvre l'étiquette individuelle (100) et un film adhésif sensible à la pression (120) qui revêt la surface arrière de l'étiquette individuelle (100); caractérisée en ce que l'étiquette individuelle (100) comprend une feuille pliée ayant un panneau supérieur (102), un panneau inférieur (104), un bord plié (106) connectant les panneaux supérieur (102) et inférieur (104), une partie du panneau supérieur (102) s'étendant au-delà d'un bord du panneau inférieur (104), si bien que la surface arrière de la feuille pliée comprend les surfaces orientées vers l'arrière du panneau inférieur (104) et ladite partie du panneau supérieur (102), en ce que le matériau lamellaire autocollant (122) qui recouvre le panneau supérieur (102) s'étend au-delà du bord plié afin de former une partie d'extrémité de ce dernier et en ce que film adhésif sensible à la pression (120), qui revêt la surface arrière de la feuille pliée (100), revêt la surface orientée vers l'arrière de la partie d'extrémité du matériau lamellaire (122). 15 20 25 30 35

20. Etiquette autocollante selon la revendication 19, dans laquelle le matériau lamellaire (160) est en plastique transparent et la partie d'extrémité du matériau lamellaire (160) porte une image qui a été imprimée sur cette dernière. 40 45

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