Description

"Method and apparatus for recording signals on a record carrier, measurement method and measurement device for use in the recording method and the recording apparatus, and record carrier."

The invention relates to a method of recording signals on a record carrier of a rewritable type, information patterns of optically detectable marks being formed on the record carrier in substantially parallel tracks of a specific track pitch, the tracks being scanned by a radiation beam to form the marks.

The invention further relates to a recording apparatus for recording signals in parallel tracks of a specific track pitch on a record carrier of a rewritable type, which recording apparatus comprises scanning means for scanning the tracks by means of a radiation beam to form an information pattern of optically detectable marks in the tracks, which pattern corresponds to said signals.

The invention further relates to a measurement method and measurement device for use in the recording method and the recording apparatus.

Finally the invention also relates to a record carrier provided with substantially parallel adjacent tracks of substantially constant track pitch, which tracks exhibit an information pattern of optically detectable marks.

Such a recording method, recording apparatus and record carrier are known inter alia from "Philips Technical Review", Vol. 42, No. 2, pp. 28-47. This magazine describes a magneto-optical recording apparatus. A problem in magneto-optical recording is that the read reliability of the recorded signal is susceptible to variations in the recording conditions, such as for example the recording velocity and the intensity of the scanning beam. It is an object of the invention to provide a recording method and recording apparatus of the type defined in the opening paragraphs, in which the read reliability of the recorded signal improved.

As regards the method this object is achieved by a method which is characterized in that the dimensions of the recorded marks in the track width direction substantially correspond to the track pitch.

With respect to the apparatus this object is achieved by an apparatus which is characterized in that the recording apparatus is adapted to record marks whose dimensions in a track width direction substantially correspond to the track pitch.

The invention is based on the recognition of the fact that the read reliability largely depends on the dimensions of the recorded marks, an optimum read reliability being obtained when the dimensions of the marks in a direction perpendicular to the track direction are egual to the track pitch. Preferably, the dimensions of the marks are adjusted by adjusting the write intensity because these dimensions greatly depend on the write intensity used in recording, so that the write intensity is very suitable for adjusting these dimensions.

An embodiment of the method, in which the write intensity can be optimized simply, is characterized in that the method comprises a measurement method in which in a specific track portion a first test signal is recorded with a maximum write intensity of the radiation beam subsequently in the specific track portion and in track portions situated at opposite sides of said specific track portion a second test signal, which can be distinguished from the first test signal, is recorded with different write intensities between a minimum intensity and the maximum intensity, which second test signal, after it has been recorded, is read from the specific track portion to check whether the second test signal being read contains signal components corresponding to the first test signal, and in which on the basis of the results of said check an optimum write intensity is selected which is situated in the boundary region between the intensity range for which signal components corresponding to the first test signal are present in the second test signal being read and the intensity range for which said signal components are substantially absent in the test signal being read, the write intensity being adjusted to the optimum write-intensity value after the measurement method has been carried out.

An embodiment of the apparatus, in which the write intensity is optimized automatically, is characterized in that the apparatus comprises a measurement device comprising a read means for reading the recorded signals with the aid of a read beam, test-signal-generating means for generating a first test signal and a second test signal which can be distinguished from the first test signal, control means for causing the first test signal to be recorded in a specific track portion when a specific maximum value of the write intensity is reached, for subsequently causing the second test signals to be recorded in the specific track portion and in track portions situated at opposite sides of said specific track portion, with a number of different write-intensity values situated between a minimum intensity and the maximum intensity and for causing the second test signals recorded with different write-intensity values to be read from the specific track portion, detection means for detecting signal components corresponding to the first test signal in the second test signals being read, selection means for deriving from the detected signal components an optimum write intensity which is situated substantially at the boundary between the intensity range for which signal components corresponding to the first test signal appear in the second test signals being read and the intensity range for which said signal components are substantially absent in the sec-

ond test signals being read, the recording apparatus further comprising means for adjusting the write intensity to said optimum value after the optimum write intensity has been determined.

The above embodiments of the method and the apparatus advantageously utilize the fact that at the instant at which the dimensions of the marks correspond to the track pitch the signal components of the first test signal disappear from the read signal.

The embodiments with automatic write-intensity adjustment are particularly suitable for use in recording apparatuses in which the dimensions of the marks strongly depend on the write intensity, such as for example in magneto-optical recording appartuses. However, the invention is not limited to magneto-optical recording but may also be applied to other recording principles, such as for example recording on rewritable record carriers of the "phase-change" type, employing a record carrier whose structure can be changed from amorphous to crystalline and vice versa upon scanning with a radiation beam, depending on the irradiation method.

Further embodiments and advantages thereof will now be described in more detail with reference to Figs. 1 to 11, in which

Fig. 1 shows a record carrier,

Fig. 2 shows a magneto-optical apparatus,

Fig. 3 shows a write signal and the corresponding information pattern,

Fig. 4 shows a number of information patterns in adjacent track portions,

Fig. 5 gives the read reliability as a function of the write intensity,

Fig. 6 gives the domain width as a function of the write intensity in the case of magneto-optical recording,

Fig. 7 shows a number of information patterns to illustrate the invention,

Fig. 8 shows a number of measurement results to illustrate the invention,

Fig. 9 shows an example of a control circuit for use in the recording apparatus in accordance with the invention,

Fig. 10 is a flow chart of a program for the microcomputer which forms part of the circuit, and

Fig. 11, in order to illustrate the invention, shows an area on the record carrier which is suitable for recording the test signals.

Fig. 1 shows an embodiment of a record carrier 1 of a rewritable type, Fig. 1a being a plan view and Fig. 1b showing a small part in a sectional view taken on the line b-b. The record carrier has a pattern of tracks, which define substantially concentric information areas intended for recording information in the form of information patterns of optically detectable marks. The track pattern may comprise, for example, a continuous spiral servo track 4 defining the centres of the information areas. However, these concentric information areas may also be defined by, for example, a structure of servo patterns as described in Netherlands Patent Application NL-A 8702905 (PHN 12.339). For the purpose of recording the record carrier 1 comprises a recording layer 6 provided on a transparent substrate 5 and coated with a protective layer 7. The information layer 6 is composed of a material suitable for magneto-optical recording. However, it is to be noted that the information layer 6 may alternatively consist of other materials such as, for example, a "phase-change" material, whose structure can be changed from amorphous to crystalline and vice versa by suitable irradiation methods.

Fig. 2 shows an embodiment of a magneto-optical recording apparatus 10 for recording information on the record carrier 1. The recording apparatus 10 comprises a turntable 11 and a drive motor 12 to rotate the record carrier 1 about an axis 13. An optical write/read head 14 of a customary type suitably for magneto-optical recording and reading is arranged opposite the rotating record carrier 1 and directs a radiation beam 15 towards the recording layer 6. The recording apparatus 10 comprises customary tracking means, not shown, for keeping the beam 15 directed at the servo track 4, focusing means for keeping the radiation beam 15 in focus on the recording layer 6, and customary addressing means for locating a specific address, for example as described in European Patent Application EP-A 0265904 and Netherlands Patent Application NL-A 8800151 (PHN 12.063 and PHN 12.398). Opposite the read/write head 14, at the other side of the record carrier 1, a magnetic field modulator 16 is arranged to generate a magnetic-field H which is oriented substantially perpendicularly to the recording layer 6 in the area of the recording layer 6 which is exposed to the radiation beam 15. The magnetic-field modulator 16 is rigidly connected to the read/write head 14 via a member 17. The write/read head 14 and the magnetic-field modulator 16 are radially movable relative to the record carrier by means of an actuating system 18, the member 17 ensuring that the magnetic-field modulator 16 remains always positioned directly opposite the read/write head. The magnetic-field modulator 16 is of a type for which the direction of the generated magnetic field can be modulated in conformity with a bivalent write signal Vm. Such a magnetic field modulator is described comprehensivelyin inter alia Netherlands Patent Application no. 8702451 (PHN 12.294), herewith incorporated by reference.

The apparatus 10 further comprises a control circuit 19 for controlling the write/read head 14 and the actuating system 18 and for controlling the generation of the write signal Vm. When information is recorded the servo track 4 is scanned with the radiation beam 15 whose intensity is set to a write intensity which is adequate to heat the part of the recording layer 6 which is scanned by the radiation beam to a tem-

perature near the Curie temperature of the material of the recording layer 16. At the same time the write signal Vm, and hence the generated magnetic field H, is modulated in conformity with the information to be recorded, so that a pattern of marks in the form of magnetic domains in conformity with the write signal Vm is obtained in the part of the servo track 4 being scanned. The domains thus formed can be detected optically, as will be described in detail hereinafter.

By way of illustration Fig. 3 shows the write signal Vm, the corresponding magnetic field H and the resulting pattern of magnetic domains having different directions of magnetization as a function of time. The domains of different directions of magnetization bear different reference numerals, namely 30 and 31. The centre of the servo track in which the pattern is recorded is represented diagrammatically by a line 4'. The pattern of magnetic domains 30, 31 can be read with the read/write head 14, which for this purpose scans the pattern with a beam of linearly polarized light. Upon reflection of the radiation beam the direction of polarization of the beam is rotated in a direction which is dictated by the direction of magnetization of the part of the recording layer 6 being scanned. This results in a modulation pattern of variations of the direction of polarization corresponding to the pattern of magnetic domains 30, 31 being scanned. This modulation is detected in a customary manner in the read/write head 14, for example by means of a Wollaston prism, photoelectric transducers, and an amplifier which converts the output signals of the photoelectric transducers into a read signal Vl which is representative of the pattern being read, as is described inter alia in Netherlands Patent Application NL-A 8602304 (PHQ 86.017).

One of the principal aspects of recording is the reliability with which the recorded information can be read. A known parameter to express the read reliability for recorded CD signals is referred to as the "block error rate" (BLER). The parameter BLER specifies the number of EFM blocks per unit of time in which one or more errors have been detected during reading.

Fig. 4 shows patterns of domains 30 and 31 formed in a plurality of adjacent track portions of the servo track 4. Again the centres of the servo tracks bear the reference numeral 4'. The track pitch, i.e. the distance between the centres 4' of the servo tracks, bears the reference letter q. The dimensions of the domains in a direction perpendicular to the track direction is indicated by means of the letter p. Hereinafter the domain dimensions in this direction will be referred to briefly as the "domain width".

Fig. 5 gives the BLER value as a function of the domain width p. It is found that within a range from pmin to pmax the BLER value substantially assumes a constant minimum value, while outside this range the BLER value increases rapidly. The domain width p, which is egual to the track pitch q, is found to be situated in the centre of the range between pmin and pmax. In accordance with the invention the domain width p during recording is selected to be egual to the track pitch q. In that case the read reliability is least susceptible to domain-width variations, which are inevitable on account of the various tolerances in the recording system. Hereinafter the domain width p corresponding to the track pitch q will be referred to as the optimum domain width po. The domain width can be adjusted simply by adapting the write-energy intensity of the radiation beam 15.

Fig. 6 gives the domain width p as a function of the write intensity E when the track 4 is scanned with a specific scanning velocity during recording. The write-intensity values corresponding to the domain width pmin, po and pmax are Emin, Eo and Emax respectively. Thus, the optimum domain width can be adjusted by adjusting the write intensity to the corresponding value Eo. For a specific record carrier it is possible, for example, to determine the value of the optimum write intensity in advance. Before the information is recorded on this record carrier it is then possible, in principle, to adjust the write intensity of the recording apparatus to this value.

However, this presents the following problems:

1) There is a substantial spread in radiation sensity of recording layers, even if they are made of the same magnetooptical material. This is caused by the generally adopted method of depositing the recording layer, such as for example sputtering.

2) The influence of the scanning velocity on the optimum write intensity Eo is considerable. This poses a problem in particular if the recording velocity for different recording apparatus may vary substantially, as for example in recording apparatuses for CD signals, in which the permissible recording velocity is between 1.2 m/s and 1.4 m/s.

3) In practice, accurately determining a absolute radiation power is very problematic. The spread between power meters is of the order of magnitude of 10%. Moreover, different adjustment conditions may give rise to additional errors.

4) Finally, the shape of the scanning spot formed on the recording layer 6 by the radiation beam and the wavelength of the radiation also influence the optimum write intensity.

The above means that the variation of the optimum write intensity is so large that it is impossible to guarantee that when the write power has been adjusted to the predetermined power the domain width will be situated within the write-intensity range given in Fig. 5, in which the BLER value is small.

A method and a recording apparatus in accordance with the invention, enabling the optimum write intensity to be adjusted reliably and simply, will now be described below. First of all the method in accor-

dance with the invent ion will be described with reference to Fig. 7, in which the reference numerals 4a', 4b' and 4c' denote the centres of three adjacent track portions of the track 4. In the first step of the method a predetermined first Pattern of magnetic domains 30 and 31, for example a periodic pattern of the frequency f1, is recorded with a maximum write intensity E1 in the centre track, as is illustrated in Fig. 7a. The write intensity E1 is selected so as to ensure that the corresponding domain width p1 is larger than the track pitch. Subsequently, a second pattern of magnetic domains 30 and 31, which can be distinguished from the first pattern, is recorded in all the three track portions with a minimum write intensity E2 for which the associated domain width p2 is bound to be smaller than the track pitch. Fig. 7b shows the result of this recording, in which the second pattern is a periodic pattern of a frequency f2 lower than the frequency f1 of the first pattern. In the recording thus obtained the first pattern, which was originally recorded in the centre track, is partly overwritten by the second pattern.

After recording of the second pattern in the three tracks the centraetrack is read. Since the originally recorded first pattern is still partly present (as is indicated by the reference numeral 70) the read signal, will contain signal components corresponding to the first pattern in addition to the signal components corresponding to the second pattern. The presence of the signal components corresponding to the first pattern is detected. Subsequently, the write intensity is increased and the second pattern is recorded again in the three tracks with this increased write intensity. Since as a result of the increased write intensity the width of the recorded domains is larger than in the preceding recording of the second pattern, the originally recorded first pattern will be overwritten to a larger extent. When the centre track is read the signal component in the read signal corresponding to the first pattern will have decreased. The method of increasing the write intensity, of recording the second pattern with the increased write intensity, and of reading the centre track is repeated continually. The read-signal component corresponding to the first pattern will then decrease continually until the write intensity reaches a value for which the corresponding domain width has become so large that the originally recorded first pattern is overwritten completely. This is the case when the domain width p is equal to the track pitch q. In that case the spacing between the two patterns recorded in the adjacent tracks has decreased to zero. By way of illustration Fig. 7c shows the second patterns for the situation in which the domain width p is equal to the track pitch q. As is shown in Fig. 7c, the originally recorded first pattern has disappeared completely for this track width. Thus, the optimum write intensity Eo can be obtained by recording the second pattern with increasing intensity and at the same time detecting the write intensity for which the signal component produced by the originally recorded first pattern disappears from the read signal produced by the centre track.

By way of illustration the curve 80 in Fig. 8 gives the variation of the read-signal component Ulf corresponding to the originally recorded first pattern as a function of the write intensity E. Moreover, this Figure gives the BLER values determined for the various write intensities. The curve 81 represents the variation of the BLER values. As is apparent from Fig. 8 the write intensity E for which the signal component Ulf disappears is situated substantially in the centre of the write intensity range in which the BLER value is minimal.

Fig. 9 shows an example of the control circuit 19 of the recording apparatus 10, by means of which the optimum write intensity can be determined. The control circuit comprises a frequency-dividing circuit 90, which in a customary manner derives two periodic signals Vt1 and Vt2 of different frequency fc1 and fc2 from a periodic signal of a frequency fosc. The two periodic signals Vt1 and Vt2 supplied by the dividing circuit 90 are applied respectively to a first input and a second input of a selection circuit 91 having three inputs. The signal Vi to be recorded is applied to the third input of the selection circuit 91. The selection circuit 91 is of a type which depending upon a control signal Vsel selects one of the three input signals and transfers the selected input signal to its output. The signal on the output of the selection circuit is applied to the magnetic-field modulator 16 as the write signal Vm. The control circuit 19 further comprises a selective band-pass filter 92, which is tuned to the frequency fc1 of the signal Vt1. An input 98 of a selective band-pass filter 92 is coupled to the write/read head 14 for recording the read signal V1. An output signal of the selective filter 92 is applied to a peak detector 93 to determine the peak value of the applied signal, which has been filtered by means of the filter 92. A signal Uc1 which is representative of said peak value is digitized by means of an analog-to-digital converter 94. The digitized peak value is applied to a microcomputer 95. Furthermore, the microcomputer 95 is coupled to the selection circuit 91 via a signal line 96 to supply the control signal Vsel to the selection circuit 96.

Moreover, the microcomputer 95 is coupled to the read/write head 14 to apply a control signal VE for adjusting the intensity of the beam 15. The microcomputer 95 further comprises control outputs and inputs (not shown) for controlling the search for location of addressed track portions, as is described, for example, in Netherlands Patent Application NL-A 880015 (PHN 12.398), which is incorporated herewith by reference. The microcomputer 95 is loaded with a program for determining the optimum write intensity Eo.

A suitable program will be described in detail with reference to Figs. 10 and 11. Fig. 10 shows the flow

chart of the program and Fig. 11 shows the track portion of the servo track 4 in which the patterns for determining the optimum write intensity Eo can be recorded. This track portion comprises three contiguous turns of the spiral servo track 4. The address information is recorded in the turns, for example as a preformed modulation of the servo track 4, as is described in for example, the afore-mentioned Netherlands Patent Application NL-A 8800151 (PHN 12.399). The start addresses of the three turns are designated TR1, TR2 and TR3 respectively. Halfway the turn shaving the start address TR2 an address TR2' is recorded. The end of the third turn is indicated by the address TR4. The program, whose flow chart is given in Fig. 10 begins with a first step in which the intensity of the write beam E is set to a read intensity E1, which is low enough to preclude variations of the magnetization in the recording layer 6. Subsequently, the track portion indicated by the address TR2 is located in the step S2. In the step S3 the selection circuit 92 is controlled in such a way that the test signal Vt1 of the frequency fc1 is selected as the write signal Vm. In the step S4 the beam intensity is set to the maximum write intensity E1, after which recording of the signal Vt1 in the form of a pattern of wide domains in the track portion indicated by the address TR2 begins. During recording the addresses are read from the track being scanned in the step S5. In the step S6 it is ascertained by means of the information being read whether the beginning of the track portion indicated by the address TR3 is reached. If this is not the case the step S5 is repeated. If said track portion is reached the intensity of the beam 15 is again set to the read intensity E1 during the step S7. Subsequently, in the step S8, a value ES which is representative of the write intensity is equalized to the value which is representative of the minimum write intensity E2. After this, in the step S9, the track portion indicated by the start address TR1 is located. In the step S10 the selection circuit 91 is controlled in such a way that the test signal Vt2 of the frequency fc2 is applied to the magnetic-field modulator 16 as the write signal Vs. Subsequently, the intensity of the beam 15 is adjusted to the intensity specified by the value Es, after which recording of the test signal Vt2 in the form of narrow domains begins. During recording, while the steps S12 and S13 are carried out, it is checked whether the track portion having the start address TR4 is reached. If this is not the case, recording is continued. If said track portion is reached the step S14 is carried out, in which the intensity of the radiation beam is again set to the read intensity E1. Subsequently, in the step S15, the track portion indicated by the start address TR2' is located and this track portion is read for a specific time interval. At the end of the interval ΔT the digitized value of Uc1 is read while the step S17 is performed. In the step S18 the value of Uc1 thus read is compared with a very small reference value Umin, which is for example 40 dB below the signal value corresponding to a non-overwritten test signal Vt1. If the value of Uc1 exceeds said value Umin the value of Es is incremented by an adaptation value ΔE in the step S19 and subsequently the program proceeds with the step S9. However, if the value of Uc1 is smaller than the reference value Umin this means that the first test signal has been overwritten completely and consequently the intensity value Es corresponds to the optimum value Eo. After this the intensity of the beam 15 is again set to the read intensity El (S20) and the program is terminated. If subsequently the signal Vi is to be recorded the microcomputer 75 controls the selection circuit 91 n such a way that the signal Vc is applied to the magnetic-field modulator 16 as the write signal and the write intensity of the beam 15 is adjusted to the optimum value Eo equal to the most recently corrected value of Es.

In the present embodiment the second signal Vt2 is each time recorded over the whole length of the three turns of the track 4, designated by the start addresses TR1, TR2 and TR3, after an increase in write intensity. However, it is alternatively possible to divide the three turns into a number of addressable sectors. Subsequently, the test signal Vt2 is recorded within a sector in each of the three track portions for which the write intensity of the various sectors can be different, and, moreover, the write intensities used for the various sectors are stored in a memory. After this, the sectors of the centre turn can be read the read-signal components corresponding to the test signal Vt1 can be determined and for the various sectors. The value of the optimum write intensity Eo can then be derived from these measurement results and the stored write intensities.

In the present magneto-optical recording apparatus a constant-intensity beam is directed towards the record carrier during recording. However, it is to be noted that the invention may also be utilized in magneto-optical recording apparatuses in which the radiation energy is applied in the form of periodic radiation pulses of constant intensity, as is described for example in Netherlands Patent Application NL-A 8703011 or NL-A 8801205 (PHQ 87.044 or PHN 12.550).

Neither is the invention limited to magneto-optical recording apparatuses in which the information is recorded by means of a modulated magnet field. The invention can also be applied to magneto-optical recording systems in which the information is recorded by first scanning the recording layer with a radiation beam of constant intensity during which , the scanned portion of the recording layer is exposed to a constant magnetic field, so that a track of uniform magnetization is obtained (erasing), and by subsequently reversing the direction of the magnetic-field and scanning the track of uniform magnetization with a radiation beam whose intensity is modulated in conformity

with the signal to be recorded, as is described for example in the above-mentioned "Philips' Technical Review". In this case the test signal Vt2 is suitably not a periodic signal but a d.c. signal and the test signal Vt1 is a periodic signal.

Moreover, it is to be noted that although the invention is very suitable for use in magneto-optical recording it is not limited to this recording method. For example, the invention may also be applied to what is referred to as "erasable phase-change recording", in which by exposure of the recording layer to a radiation beam the structure of the recording layer can be changed from amorphous to crystalline or from crystalline to amorphous depending on the scanning method used. It is then possible to first record a periodic test signal Vt1, which is subsequently overwritten by a d.c. test signal Vt2 with a number of different write intensities.

Finally, it is to be noted that the invention is not limited to the use in conjunction with disc-shaped record carriers having a concentric track pattern. The invention may also be used in conjunction with record carriers on which the information is recorded in straight tracks.

Claims

1. A method of recording signals on a record carrier (1) of a rewritable type, information patterns of optically detectable marks (30, 31) being formed on the record carrier in substantially parallel tracks (4) of a specific track pitch (q), the tracks being scanned by a radiation beam (15) to form the marks, characterized in that the dimensions (p) of the recorded marks (30,31) in the track width direction substantially correspond to the track pitch (q).

2. A method as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that the optically detectable marks (30,31) are magnetic domains obtained by locally heating a recording layer of the record carrier with the aid of a radiation beam (15), said layer (6) being suitable for magneto-optical recording, the heated portion of the recording layer being exposed to a magnetic field (H) which is directed substantially perpendicularly to the recording layer (6).

3. A method as claimed in Claim 2, characterized in that the magnetic field (H) is modulated in conformity with a signal (Vm) to be recorded.

4. A method as claimed in Claim 2 or 3, characterized in that the dimensions of the optically detectable marks are adjusted to obtain dimensions corresponding to the track pitch by adjusting the intensity of the radiation beam (15).

5. A method as claimed in Claim 4, characterized in that the method comprises a measurement method in which in a specific track portion (46') a first test signal (Vt_1) is recorded with a maximum write intensity of the radiation beam subsequently in the specific track portion and in track portions (4a', 4c') situated at opposite sides of said specific track portion (46') a second test signal (Vt_2), which can be distinguished from the first test signal, is recorded with different write intensities between a minimum intensity and the maximum intensity, upon which second test signal (Vt_2), after it has been recorded, is read from the specific track portion (46') to check whether the second test signal (Vt_2) being read contains signal components corresponding to the first test signal (Vt_1), and in which on the basis of the results of said check an optimum write intensity is selected which is situated in the boundary region between the intensity range for which signal components corresponding to the first test signal (Vt_1) are present in the second test signal (Vt_2) being read and the intensity range for which said signal components are substantially absent in the test signal being read, the write intensity being adjusted to the optimum write-intensity value after the measurement method has been carried out.

6. A method as claimed in Claim 5, characterized in that the first (Vt_1) and the second test signal (Vt_2) are periodic signals.

7. A measurement method as defined by all technical measurement features of any of the claims 5 or 6.

8. A recording apparatus for recording signals in parallel tracks (4) of a specific track pitch (q) on a record carrier (1) of a rewritable type, which recording apparatus comprises scanning means (14) for scanning the tracks by means of a radiation beam (15) to form an information pattern of optically detectable marks (30, 31) in the tracks (4), which patterns correspond to the signals, characterized in that the recording apparatus is adapted to form marks (30,31) whose dimensions (p) in a track width direction substantially correspond to the track pitch (q).

9. A recording apparatus as claimed in Claim 8, characterized in that the apparatus comprises adjustment means (95) for adjusting the write intensity to a value for which said dimensions (p) of the marks (30, 31) correspond to the track pitch (q).

10. A recording apparatus as claimed in Claim 9, characterized in that the apparatus comprises a

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with the signal to be recorded, as is described for example in the above-mentioned "Philips' Technical Review". In this case the test signal Vt2 is suitably not a periodic signal but a d.c. signal and the test signal Vt1 is a periodic signal.

Moreover, it is to be noted that although the invention is very suitable for use in magneto-optical recording it is not limited to this recording method. For example, the invention may also be applied to what is referred to as "erasable phase-change recording", in which by exposure of the recording layer to a radiation beam the structure of the recording layer can be changed from amorphous to crystalline or from crystalline to amorphous depending on the scanning method used. It is then possible to first record a periodic test signal Vt1, which is subsequently overwritten by a d.c. test signal Vt2 with a number of different write intensities.

Finally, it is to be noted that the invention is not limited to the use in conjunction with disc-shaped record carriers having a concentric track pattern. The invention may also be used in conjunction with record carriers on which the information is recorded in straight tracks.

Claims

1. A method of recording signals on a record carrier (1) of a rewritable type, information patterns of optically detectable marks (30, 31) being formed on the record carrier in substantially parallel tracks (4) of a specific track pitch (q), the tracks being scanned by a radiation beam (15) to form the marks, characterized in that the dimensions (p) of the recorded marks (30,31) in the track width direction substantially correspond to the track pitch (q).

2. A method as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that the optically detectable marks (30,31) are magnetic domains obtained by locally heating a recording layer of the record carrier with the aid of a radiation beam (15), said layer (6) being suitable for magneto-optical recording, the heated portion of the recording layer being exposed to a magnetic field (H) which is directed substantially perpendicularly to the recording layer (6).

3. A method as claimed in Claim 2, characterized in that the magnetic field (H) is modulated in conformity with a signal (Vm) to be recorded.

4. A method as claimed in Claim 2 or 3, characterized in that the dimensions of the optically detectable marks are adjusted to obtain dimensions corresponding to the track pitch by adjusting the intensity of the radiation beam (15).

5. A method as claimed in Claim 4, characterized in that the method comprises a measurement method in which in a specific track portion (46') a first test signal (Vt_1) is recorded with a maximum write intensity of the radiation beam subsequently in the specific track portion and in track portions (4a', 4c') situated at opposite sides of said specific track portion (46') a second test signal (Vt_2), which can be distinguished from the first test signal, is recorded with different write intensities between a minimum intensity and the maximum intensity, upon which second test signal (Vt_2), after it has been recorded, is read from the specific track portion (46') to check whether the second test signal (Vt_2) being read contains signal components corresponding to the first test signal (Vt_1), and in which on the basis of the results of said check an optimum write intensity is selected which is situated in the boundary region between the intensity range for which signal components corresponding to the first test signal (Vt_1) are present in the second test signal (Vt_2) being read and the intensity range for which said signal components are substantially absent in the test signal being read, the write intensity being adjusted to the optimum write-intensity value after the measurement method has been carried out.

6. A method as claimed in Claim 5, characterized in that the first (Vt_1) and the second test signal (Vt_2) are periodic signals.

7. A measurement method as defined by all technical measurement features of any of the claims 5 or 6.

8. A recording apparatus for recording signals in parallel tracks (4) of a specific track pitch (q) on a record carrier (1) of a rewritable type, which recording apparatus comprises scanning means (14) for scanning the tracks by means of a radiation beam (15) to form an information pattern of optically detectable marks (30, 31) in the tracks (4), which patterns correspond to the signals, characterized in that the recording apparatus is adapted to form marks (30,31) whose dimensions (p) in a track width direction substantially correspond to the track pitch (q).

9. A recording apparatus as claimed in Claim 8, characterized in that the apparatus comprises adjustment means (95) for adjusting the write intensity to a value for which said dimensions (p) of the marks (30, 31) correspond to the track pitch (q).

10. A recording apparatus as claimed in Claim 9, characterized in that the apparatus comprises a

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measurement device comprising read means (14) for reading the recorded signals with the aid of a read beam (15), test-signal-generating means (90) for generating a first test signal (Vt_1) and a second test signal (Vt_2) which can be distinguished from the first test signal (Vt_1), control means (19) for causing the first test signal (Vt_1) to be recorded in a specific track portion (46') when a specific maximum value of the write intensity is reached, for subsequently causing the second test signals (Vt_2) to be recorded in the specific track portion (46') and in track portions (4a', 4c') situated at opposite sides of said specific track portion (46') with a number of different write-intensity values situated between a minimum intensity and the maximum intensity, and for causing the second test signals (Vt_2) recorded with different write-intensity values to be read from the specific track portion (46'), detection means (92, 93, 94) for detecting signal components corresponding to the first test signal (Vt_1) in the second test signals (Vt_2) being read, selection means (95) for deriving from the detected signal components an optimum write intensity which is situated substantially at the boundary between the intensity range for which signal components corresponding to the first test signal (Vt_1) appear in the second test signals (Vt_2) being read and the intensity range for which said signal components are substantially absent in the second test signals being read, the recording apparatus further comprising means for adjusting the write intensity to said optimum value after the optimum write intensity has been determined.

11. A recording apparatus as claimed in Claim 10 characterized in that the first (Vt_1) and the second test signal (Vt_2) are periodic signals of different frequency.

12. A recording apparatus as claimed in any one of the Claims 8 to 11, characterized in that the recording apparatus is a magneto-optical apparatus comprising a coil (16) for generating a magnetic field (H) in the portion of the track (4) being scanned by the write beam (15).

13. A measurement device as defined by all the technical measurement device features of claim 10.

14. A record carrier formed with substantially parallel adjacent tracks (4) of substantially constant track pitch (q), which tracks exhibit an information pattern of optically detectable marks (30,31), characterized in that the dimensions (p) of the marks in a track width direction are substantially equal to the track pitch (q).

15. A record carrier as claimed in Claim 14, characterized in that the record carrier is of a magneto-optical type, the marks (30, 31) comprising magnetic domains having a direction of magnetization substantially perpendicular to a recording plane of the record carrier (1).

Patentansprüche

1. Verfahren zur Aufzeichnung von Signalen auf einem Aufzeichnungsträger (1) vom beschreibbaren Typ, wobei in nahezu parallelen Spuren (4) von bestimmtem Spurmittenabstand (q) auf dem Aufzeichnungsträger Informationsmuster aus optisch detektierbaren Marken (30, 31) gebildet werden, wobei die Spuren zum Bilden der Marken von einem Strahlenbündel (15) abgetastet werden, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die Abmessungen (p) der aufgezeichneten Marken (30, 31) in der Richtung der Spurbreite nahezu dem Spurmittenabstand (q) entsprechen.

2. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die optisch detektierbaren Marken (30, 31) durch lokales Erwärmen einer Aufzeichnungsschicht des Aufzeichnungsträgers mittels eines Strahlenbündels (15) erhaltene magnetische Domänen sind, wobei die genannte Schicht (6) für magnetooptisches Aufzeichnen geeignet ist und wobei der erwärmte Abschnitt der Aufzeichnungsschicht einem Magnetfeld (H) ausgesetzt wird, das nahezu senkrecht zur Aufzeichnungsschicht (6) steht.

3. Verfahren nach Anspruch 2, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Magnetfeld (H) einem aufzuzeichnenden Signal (Vm) entsprechend moduliert wird.

4. Verfahren nach Anspruch 2 oder 3, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die Abmessungen der optisch detektierbaren Marken durch Einstellen der Intensität des Strahlenbündels (15) auf dem Spurmittenabstand entsprechende Abmessungen eingestellt werden.

5. Verfahren nach Anspruch 4, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Verfahren ein Meßverfahren umfaßt, bei dem in einem bestimmten Spurabschnitt (4b') bei einer maximalen Schreibintensität des Strahlenbündels ein erstes Testsignal (Vt1) aufgezeichnet wird, anschließend in dem bestimmten Spurabschnitt und in einander gegenüberliegenden Seiten des bestimmten Spurabschnitts (4b') gelegenen Spurabschnitten (4a', 4c') bei verschiedenen, zwischen einer Minimalintensität und der Maximalintensität liegenden

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Schreibintensitäten ein von dem ersten Testsignal unterscheidbares zweites Testsignal (Vt2) aufgezeichnet wird, woraufhin dieses zweite Testsignal (Vt2), nachdem es aufgezeichnet worden ist, aus dem bestimmten Spurabschnitt (4b') ausgelesen wird, um zu prüfen, ob das ausgelesene zweite Testsignal (Vt2) dem ersten Testsignal (Vt1) entsprechende Signalkomponenten enthält, und bei dem anhand der Ergebnisse der genannten Prüfung eine optimale Schreibintensität gewählt wird, die im Grenzgebiet zwischen dem Intensitätsbereich, für den in dem ausgelesenen zweiten Testsignal (Vt2) dem ersten Testsignal (Vt1) entsprechende Signalkomponenten vorhanden sind, und dem Intensitätsbereich, in dem die genannten Signalkomponenten in dem ausgelesenen Testsignal nahezu abwesend sind, liegt, wobei die Schreibintensität nach Ausführung des Meßverfahrens auf den optimalen Schreibintensitätswert eingestellt wird.

6. Verfahren nach Anspruch 5, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das erste (Vt1) und das zweite Testsignal (Vt2) periodische Signale sind.

7. Meßverfahren, das durch alle technischen Merkmale der Messung nach einem der Ansprüche 5 oder 6 definiert wird.

8. Aufzeichnungsgerät zum Aufzeichnen von Signalen in nahezu parallelen Spuren (4) von bestimmtem Spurmittenabstand (q) auf einem Aufzeichnungsträger (1) vom beschreibbaren Typ, wobei das Aufzeichnungsgerät Abtastmittel (14) zum Abtasten der Spuren (4) mit Hilfe eines Strahlenbündels (15) umfaßt zum Bilden eines Informationsmusters aus optisch detektierbaren Marken (30, 31) in den Spuren (4), wobei die Muster den Signalen entsprechen, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Aufzeichnungsgerät zur Bildung von Marken (30, 31) eingerichtet ist, deren Abmessungen (p) in einer Richtung der Spurbreite nahezu dem Spurmittenabstand (q) entsprechen.

9. Aufzeichnungsgerät nach Anspruch 8, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Gerät Einstellmittel (15) zum Einstellen der Schreibintensität auf einen Wert hat, für den die genannten Abmessungen der Marken (30, 31) dem Spurmittenabstand (q) entsprechen.

10. Aufzeichnungsgerät nach Anspruch 9, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Gerät eine Meßeinrichtung mit Lesemitteln (14) umfaßt zum Auslesen der aufgezeichneten Signale mit Hilfe eines Lesestrahlenbündels (15), Testsignal-Erzeugungsmittel (90) zum Erzeugen eines ersten Testsignals (Vt1) und eines von dem ersten Testsignal (Vt1) unterscheidbaren, zweiten Testsignals (Vt2), Steuerungsmittel (19) zum Bewirken der Aufzeichnung des ersten Testsignals (Vt1) in einem bestimmten Spurabschnitt (4b'), wenn ein bestimmter Maximalwert der Schreibintensität erreicht ist, zum anschließenden Bewirken der Aufzeichnung der zweiten Testsignale (Vt2) in dem bestimmten Spurabschnitt (4b') und in einander gegenüberliegenden Seiten des bestimmten Spurabschnitts (4b') gelegenen Spurabschnitten (4a', 4c') bei einer Anzahl verschiedener, zwischen einer Minimalintensität und der Maximalintensität liegender Schreibintensitätswerte und zum Bewirken des Auslesens der mit den verschiedenen Schreibintensitätswerten aufgezeichneten zweiten Testsignale (Vt2) aus dem bestimmten Spurabschnitt (4b'), Detektionsmittel (92, 93, 94) zum Detektieren von dem ersten Testsignal (Vt1) entsprechenden Komponenten in den ausgelesenen zweiten Testsignalen (Vt2), Selektionsmittel (96) zum Ableiten einer nahezu an der Grenze zwischen dem Intensitätsbereich, für den in den ausgelesenen zweiten Testsignalen (Vt2) dem ersten Testsignal (Vt1) entsprechende Signalkomponenten vorkommen, und dem Intensitätsbereich, in dem die genannten Signalkomponenten in den ausgelesenen Testsignalen nahezu abwesend sind, liegenden optimalen Schreibintensität aus den detektierten Signalkomponenten, wobei das Aufzeichnungsgerät weiterhin Mittel umfaßt, um die Schreibintensität, nachdem die optimale Schreibintensität bestimmt worden ist, auf den genannten optimalen Wert einzustellen.

11. Aufzeichnungsgerät nach Anspruch 10, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das erste (Vt1) und das zweite Testsignal (Vt2) periodische Signale unterschiedlicher Frequenz sind.

12. Aufzeichnungsgerät nach einem der Ansprüche 8 bis 11, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß das Aufzeichnungsgerät ein magnetooptisches Gerät mit einer Spule (16) zum Erzeugen eines Magnetfeldes (H) in dem von dem Schreibstrahlenbündel (15) abgetasteten Abschnitt der Spur (4) ist.

13. Meßeinrichtung, die durch alle technischen Merkmale der Meßeinrichtung nach Anspruch 10 definiert wird.

14. Aufzeichnungsträger, der mit nahezu parallelen benachbarten Spuren (4) von nahezu konstantem Spurmittenabstand (q) versehen ist, wobei die Spuren ein Informationsmuster aus optisch detektierbaren Marken (30, 31) aufweisen, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die Abmessungen (p)

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der Marken in einer Richtung der Spurbreite nahezu gleich dem Spurmittenabstand (q) sind.

15. Aufzeichnungsträger nach Anspruch 14, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß der Aufzeichnungsträger vom magnetooptischen Typ ist, wobei die Marken (30, 31) magnetische Domänen mit einer Magnetisierungsrichtung umfassen, die nahezu senkrecht zu einer Aufzeichnungsebene des Aufzeichnungsträgers (1) steht.

Revendications

1. Procédé pour l'enregistrement de signaux sur un support d'enregistrement (1) d'un type permettant le ré-enregistrement, des configurations d'information de symboles pouvant être détectés par voie optique (30, 31) étant formées sur le support d'enregistrement dans des pistes pratiquement parallèles (4) présentant un pas de piste spécifique (2), les pistes étant balayées par un faisceau de rayonnement (15) pour former les symboles, caractérisé en ce que les dimensions (p) des symboles enregistrés (30, 31) dans la direction de la largeur de la piste correspondent pratiquement au pas de piste (2).

2. Procédé selon la revendication 1, caractérisé en ce que les symboles pouvant être détectés par voie optique (30, 31) sont des domaines magnétiques obtenus par chauffage local d'une couche d'enregistrement du support d'enregistrement à l'aide d'un faisceau de rayonnement (15), ladite couche (6) étant appropriée à l'enregistrement magnéto-optique, la partie chauffée de la couche d'enregistrement étant exposée à un champ magnétique (H) qui est dirigé pratiquement perpendiculairement à la couche d'enregistrement (6),

3. Procédé selon la revendication 2, caractérisé en ce que le champ magnétique (H) est modulé conformément à un signal (Vm) à enregistrer.

4. Procédé selon la revendication 2 ou 3, caractérisé en ce que les dimensions des symboles pouvant être détectés par voie optique sont établies pour obtenir des dimensions correspondant au pas de piste par réglage de l'intensité du faisceau de rayonnement (15).

5. Procédé selon la revendication 4, caractérisé en ce que le procédé comprend un procédé de mesure dans lequel, dans une première partie de piste spécifique (4b'), un premier signal d'essai (Vt1) est enregistré avec une intensité d'inscription maximale du faisceau de rayonnement subséquemment dans la partie de piste spécifique et dans des parties de piste (4a, 4c') situées des deux côtés de ladite partie de piste spécifique (4b'), un deuxième signal d'essai (Vt2), qui peut être distingué du premier signal d'essai, est enregistré avec des intensités d'inscription différentes entre une intensité minimale et l'intensité maximale, lequel deuxième signal d'essai (Vt2) est lu, après son enregistrement, de la partie de piste spécifique (4b') pour examiner si le deuxième signal d'essai lu (Vt2) contient des composantes de signal correspondant au premier signal d'essai (Vt1) et dans lequel, à base des résultats dudit examen, une intensité d'inscription optimale est sélectionnée qui est située dans la région limite entre la gamme d'intensités pour laquelle les composantes de signal correspondant au premier signal d'essai (Vt1) sont présentes dans le deuxième signal d'essai lu (Vt2) et la gamme d'intensités pour laquelle lesdites composantes de signal sont pratiquement absentes dans le signal d'essai lu, l'intensité d'inscription étant établie à la valeur d'intensité d'inscription optimale après la mise en oeuvre du procédé de mesure.

6. Procédé selon la revendication 5, caractérisé en ce que les premier (Vt1) et deuxième (Vt2) signaux d'essai sont des signaux périodiques.

7. Procédé de mesure comme défini par toutes les caractéristiques de mesure techniques de l'une des revendications 5 ou 6.

8. Appareil d'enregistrement pour l'enregistrement de signaux dans des pistes parallèles (4) à pas de piste spécifique (9) sur un support d'enregistrement (1) d'un type permettant le ré-enregistrement, lequel appareil d'enregistrement comprend des moyens de balayage (14) pour le balayage des pistes à l'aide de faisceau de rayonnement (15) pour former une configuration d'information de symboles pouvant être détectés par voie optique (29, 31) dans les pistes (4), lesquelles configurations correspondent aux signaux, caractérisé en ce que l'appareil d'enregistrement est conçu pour former des symboles (30, 31) dont les dimensions (p) dans une direction de largeur de piste correspondent pratiquement au pas de piste (q).

9. Appareil d'enregistrement selon la revendication 8, caractérisé en ce que l'appareil comprend des moyens de réglage (95) pour régler l'intensité d'inscription à une valeur pour laquelle lesdites dimensions (p) des symboles (30, 31) correspondent au pas de piste (q).

10. Appareil d'enregistrement selon la revendication 9, caractérisé en ce que l'appareil est muni d'un

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dispositif de mesure comprenant des moyens de lecture (14) pour la lecture des signaux enregistrés à l'aide d'un faisceau de lecture (15), des moyens engendrant des signaux d'essai (90) pour engendrer un premier signal d'essai (Vt1) et un deuxième signal d'essai (Vt2) qui peut être distingué du premier signal d'essai (Vt1), de moyens de commande (19) pour provoquer l'enregistrement du premier signal d'essai (Vt1) dans une partie de piste spécifique (4b') lorsqu'une valeur maximale spécifique de l'intensité d'inscription est atteinte, pour provoquer l'enregistrement des deuxièmes signaux d'essai (Vt2) dans la partie de piste spécifique (4b') et dans des parties de piste (4a', 4c') situées des deux côtés de ladite partie de piste spécifique (4b') avec un nombre de valeurs d'intensité d'inscription différentes situées entre une intensité minimale et l'intensité maximale, et pour provoquer la lecture des deuxièmes signaux d'essai (Vt2) enregistrés avec des valeurs d'intensité d'inscription différentes à partir de la partie de piste spécifique (4b'), de moyens de détection (92, 93 et 94) pour détecter des composantes de signal correspondant au premier signal d'essai (Vt1) dans les deuxièmes signaux d'essai lus (Vt2), de moyens de sélection (95) pour dériver des composantes de signal détectées une intensité d'inscription optimale qui est située pratiquement à la limite entre la gamme d'intensités pour laquelle des composantes de signal correspondant au premier signal d'essai (Vt1) apparaissent dans les deuxièmes signaux d'essai lus (Vt2) et la gamme d'intensités pour laquelle lesdites composantes de signal sont pratiquement absentes dans les deuxièmes signaux d'essai lus, l'appareil d'enregistrement étant en outre muni de moyens pour régler l'intensité d'inscription à ladite valeur optimale après la détermination de l'intensité d'inscription optimale.

11. Appareil d'enregistrement selon la revendication 10, caractérisé en ce que les premier (Vt1) et deuxième (Vt2) signaux d'essai sont des signaux périodiques de fréquence différente.

12. Appareil d'enregistrement selon l'une des revendications 8 à 11, caractérisé en ce que l'appareil d'enregistrement est un appareil magnéto-optique muni d'une bobine (16) pour engendrer un champ magnétique (H) dans la partie de la piste (4) balayée par le faisceau d'inscription (15).

13. Dispositif de mesure comme défini par les caractéristiques de dispositifs de mesure techniques.

14. Support d'enregistrement muni de pistes adjacentes pratiquement parallèles (4) présentant un pas de piste pratiquement constant (q), lesquelles pistes présentent une configuration d'information de symboles pouvant être détectés par voie optique (30, 31), caractérisé en ce que les dimensions (p) des symboles dans une direction de la largeur de piste sont pratiquement égales au pas de piste (q).

15. Support d'enregistrement selon la revendication 14, caractérisé en ce que le support d'enregistrement est d'un type magnéto-optique, les symboles (30, 31) comprenant des domaines magnétiques présentant une direction de magnétisation pratiquement perpendiculaire à un plan d'enregistrement du support d'enregistrement (1).