A visiting card

The invention relates to a visiting card according to the preamble of the independent patent claim.

Visiting cards for a long time have been generally known and commonplace. They are printed and provided with with names, company descriptions and other visually recognisable information on paper or other base materials. Since the format is relatively small, only a very limited quantity of information may be printed thereon. This quantity of information is sufficient with a direct presentation to a business partner. With a later viewing of the visiting card one would mostly however be happy if one would have significantly more information in connection with the presenter or the company, in order to activate and supplement the powers of remembering.

It is the object of the invention to specify a visiting card which in a conventional manner may be printed with information and additionally permits a large quantity of information to be conveyed.

This object is achieved by the invention specified in the patent claims.

An additional advantage of the invention is that as information, for example complete company information, such as company program, catalogues, order forms, and for example even automatic Internet entrance into the Home-Page of the company may be present on the visiting card.

A further advantage of the invention lies in the fact that the visiting card according to the invention can be manufactured also in various formats.

The invention is hereinafter described in the context of the drawings. There are shown:

Figure 1 an example of a visiting card according to the invention in a view from below;

Figure 2 the visiting card inserted in the CD-ROM drive;

Figure 3 an example of a visiting card according to the invention in cross section.

The invention is now described in more detail in the context of the drawings.

The basic concept of the invention lies in the combination of a visiting card and a CD-ROM. On the one hand visiting cards consist mostly of paper, semi-cardboard or plastic. They have a certain format, roughly the same as is usual with credit cards and as is very widespread worldwide. On the other hand already CD's with music or with a catalogue or company information have been distributed by various companies. However one may not insert these into visiting card compartments since they are too large and round. This too applies to Mini-CD's.

The new visiting card now permits both. It is the case of a CD which in format corresponds to the visiting cards and despite this may be inserted and read in a normal CD drive. Thus the busines card becomes a visiting card CD.

As is known a usual CD drive comprises a central drive pin and a circular drive centering into which a CD is inserted. The drive centering centers the inserted CD and by way of the drive pin it is driven in the drive. During the operation the CD is situated in and on a small air cushion guided in the drive centering driven by the pin and the central rest. So that the normal CD and the Mini-CD may be used in the same drive, the centering for the CD's is designed in two stages adapted to the two different diameters. The drive and centering as is known are mechanically separated from one another so that the CD's are not mechanically loaded and damaged in the region of their drive opening.

Up to now certain CD's have already been manufactured in a shape deviating from the round disk for advertising puposes. However these comprise a shape with which the edge always at several locations corresponds to the normal circumference of the CD. If such CD's are inserted into the drive then the drive pin engages into the central drive recess of the CD and the CD bears with several points of its diameter within on the

centering edge of the drive centering. These CD's are described as a "shaped CD". Their shape is milled out of a usual round CD.

A CD with a size and shape of a visiting card is however too small in order to rest in the drive centering. In no way does it correspond to the format of the normal CD or the Mini-CD. The decisive problem is the centering in the usual CD drive. This is solved in that the visiting card as a CD-Rom is shaped in the visiting card format and is provided with suitable means for centering in the CD drive.

The visiting card 1 according to the invention is shown seen from below in the Figure 1. It has a format as is usual for visiting cards. It is manufactured as a usual CD from the same material and in the same manner. In the middle there is located a drive recess 11 which is surrounded by a resting region 15. To this there is connected the data region 14 which can be written with data and which can be read in the CD drive. Arranged on a circle are a number of centering cams 13, here preferably four. The centering cams are arranged such that when the visiting card is inserted in the CD drive, the centering cams 13 bear on the centering shoulder (see Figure 2) and hold the visiting card in a centered manner. The means for centering in the CD drive instead of a number of individual naps or cams may also alternatively comprise centering beads 13a arranged on both sides symmetrically to the drive recess 11. In Figure 2 this is only shown on one side. These each describe a sector of a circle, wherein the radius is selected such that the outer edges of the centering bead 13a come to bear on the centering shoulder 23 with minimal play.

In the Figure 2 a visiting card 1 according to the invention is inserted in a drive drawer 20 of a CD drive. It is shown in the section A-A according to Figure 1. It can be easily seen how the drive drawer 20 comprises a first centering shoulder 22 for usual CD's and a second centering shoulder 23 for Mini-CD's. The drive pin 21 and drive rest 21' of the drive recess 11 of the visiting card are only indicated, since they are not located in the section A-A. The visiting card 1 then with its centering means 13, 13a projecting downwardly bears on the centering edge 23 for Mini-CD's, of the drive. This guarantees a secure centering of the visiting card 1 in the drive. At the same time it of course bears on the drive rest 21' and the drive pin 21 projects through the drive recess 11. On rotation of the visiting card a minimal air cushion is formed between the visiting card and the drawer or the centering edge 23. Thus the visiting card on insertion into the drive is definitively and cleanly centered and on running it is not mechanically loaded.

The manufacture of the shape is then not effected by milling out the shape from a finished CD but by a punching procedure. Thus in a single working procedure the shape and the means for centering the visiting card CD may be manufactured. So that the shape is cleanly cut at the circumference and with this the centering cams may be formed, the punching procedure must take place slowly so that on producing the centering cams 13, there takes place a deformation but no piercing. With this the centering cams are slowly pressed downwards by small stamps in the punching tool and the material is plasticaly deformed. With this of course minimal indentations 13' arise on the printable upper side 12. During the punching procedure, on the one hand the shape is punched out and on the other hand in the region of the centering cams 13 to be formed the material is only deformed. This procedure makes possible the manufacture of the visiting cards as a visiting card CD in one working procedure and therefore very inexpensively and carefully. Of course it is also possible to adhese the centering cams onto the lower side 12 in a separate working procedure.

On the upper side the visiting card may be normally printed as previously with the name, address and further details. On the lower, the data side, it is the case of a usual CD, which can be written with data readable by computer. For example a company protocol, a company catalogue and similar information including multimedia may be recorded on. It is however also possible to store a complete computer program thereon. As an example an automatic access to a computer or a Home-Page of a company is mentioned.

The technology of the manufacture of the visiting card 1 and of the arrangement of the centering cams 13 then makes it possible to form the visiting card in almost any shape, since it is centered in the drive by the centering cams 13 and not by the outer circumference.

Patent claims

1. A visiting card of plastic with a printed upper side with directly visually readable information, characterised in that the lower side of the visiting card is provided with electronically processed data which can be optically or acoustically reproduced by a CD drive, wherein the card comprises means for its centered accommodation in a CD drive.

2. A visiting card according to claim 1, characterised in that the means for the centered accommodation in the CD drive consists of a number of centering cams (13) projecting downwardly from the lower side (12), wherein the centering cams (13) are arranged such that in a condition of the visiting card inserted into a CD drive they at least approximately bear on the centering shoulder (23) for Mini-CD's.

3. A visiting card according to claim 1, characterised in that the means for the centered accommodation in the CD drive consists of a number of centering beads (13a) projecting downwardly from the lower side (12), wherein the centering beads (13a) are arranged such that in a condition of the visiting card inserted into a CD drive they at least approximately bear on the centering shoulder (23) for Mini-CD's.

4. A visiting card according to claim 2 or 3, characterised in that the centering cams (13) or the centering beads (13a) are produced by plastic deformation.

5. A visiting card according to claim 2 or 3, characterised in that the centering cams (13) or centering beads (13a) are adhesed onto the lower side (12).

6. A visiting card according to one of the claims 1 to 5, characterised in that it has any shape at the circumference.

7. A visiting card according to claim 6, characterised in that the shape may be produced by a punching procedure from a CD.

8. A visiting card according to claim 7, characterised in that the centering cams (13) or the centering beads (13a) and the shape can be produced in the same punching procedure.

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