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(54) **TWO WAY MAILER**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention is directed to a two way mailer. More specifically, the present invention is directed to a single sheet two-way mailer which can be folded in one way and held together with adhesive to form an outgoing mailer and then opened and folded in a second way and held together with adhesive to form a return mailer.

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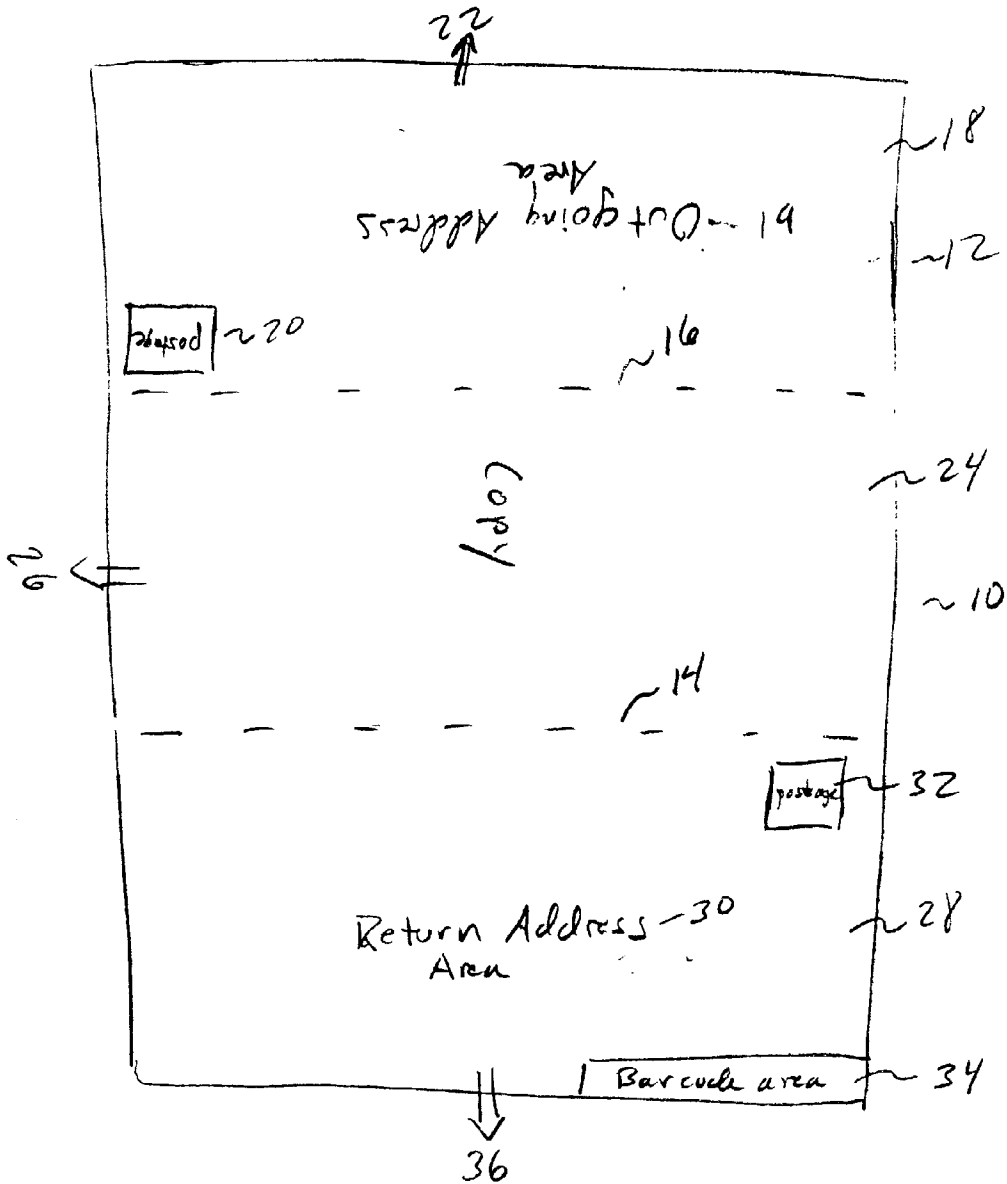


Fig. 1

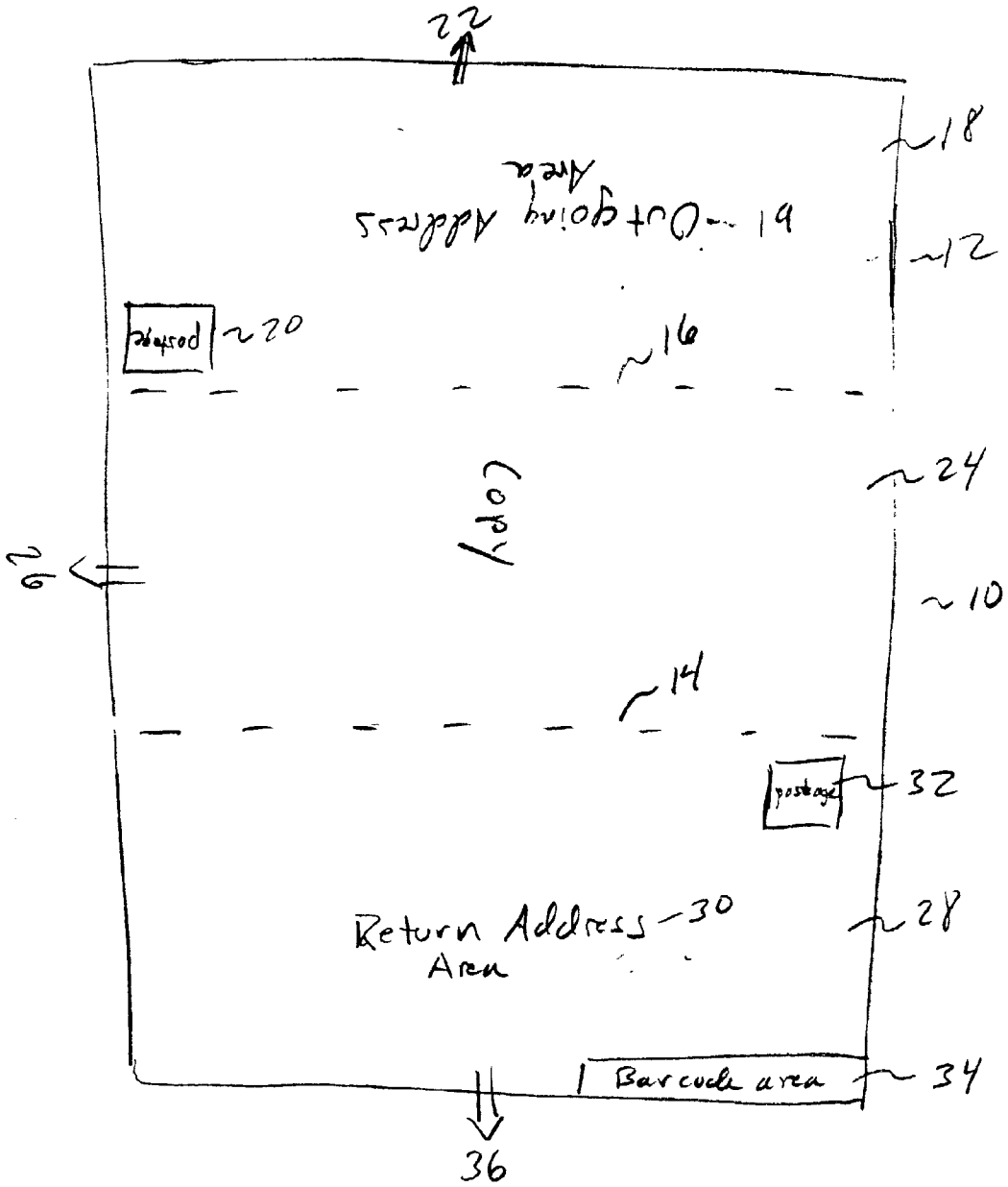
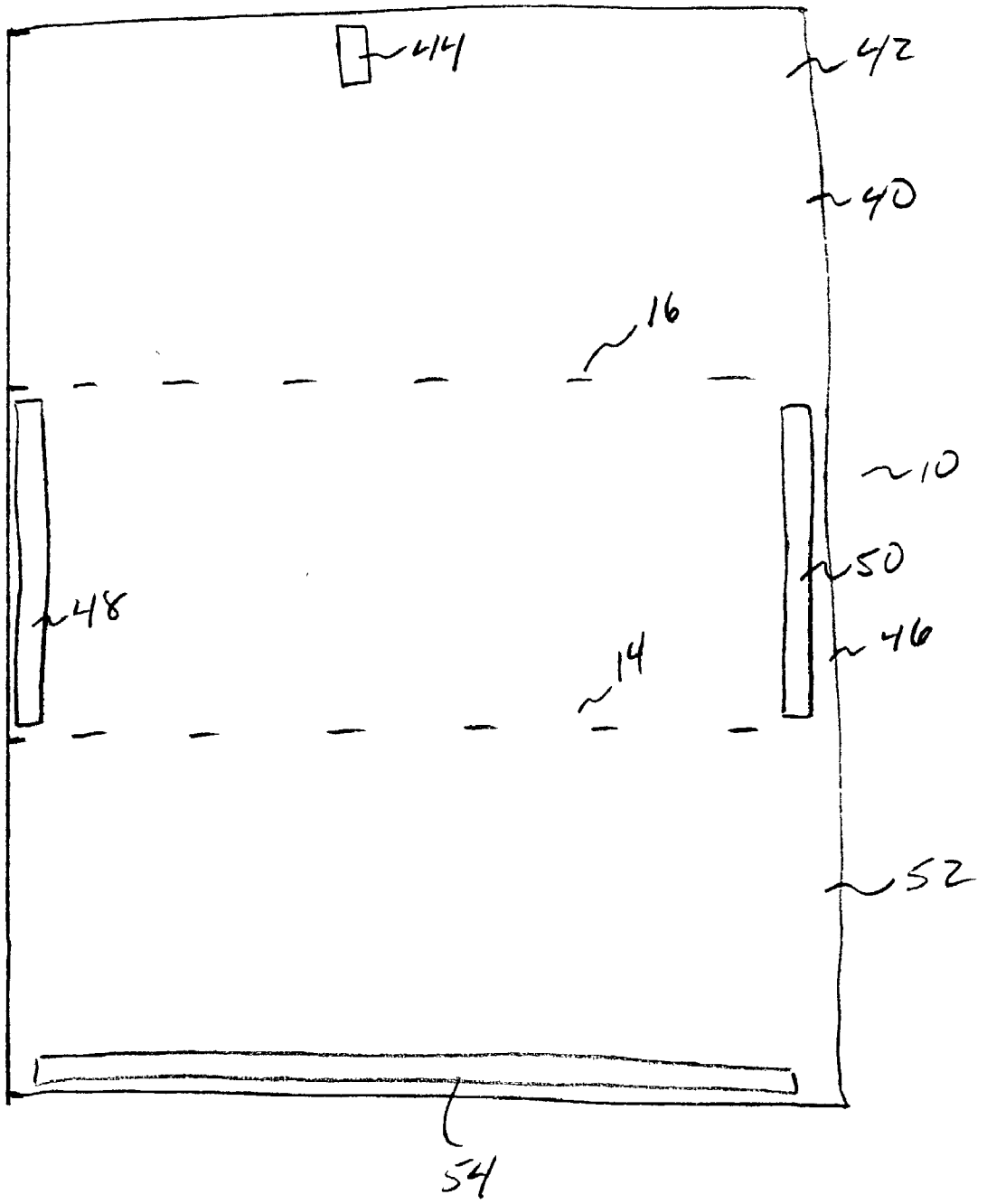


Fig. 2



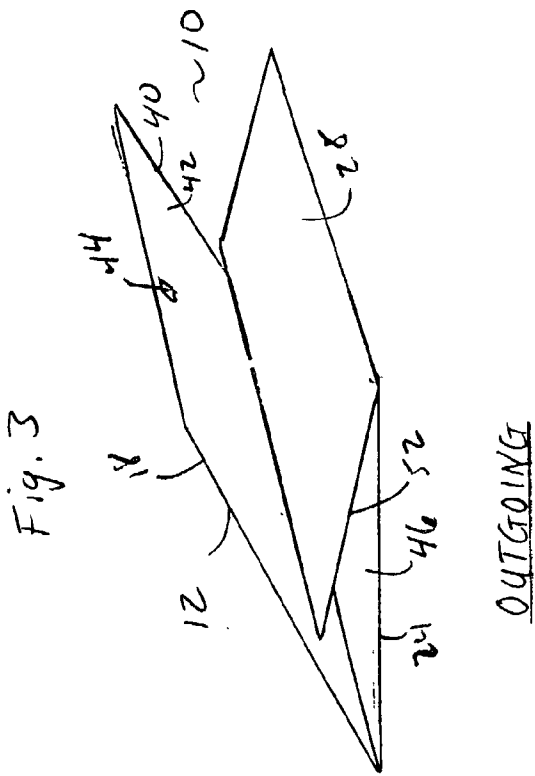
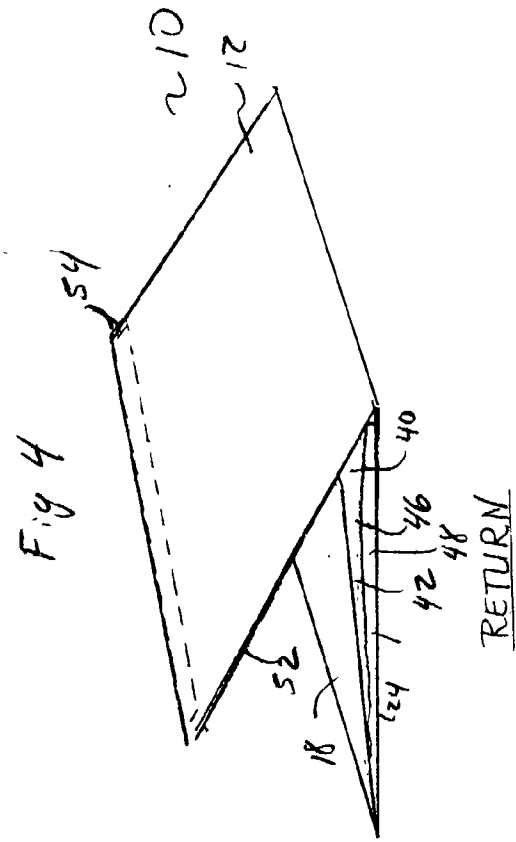


Fig. 5

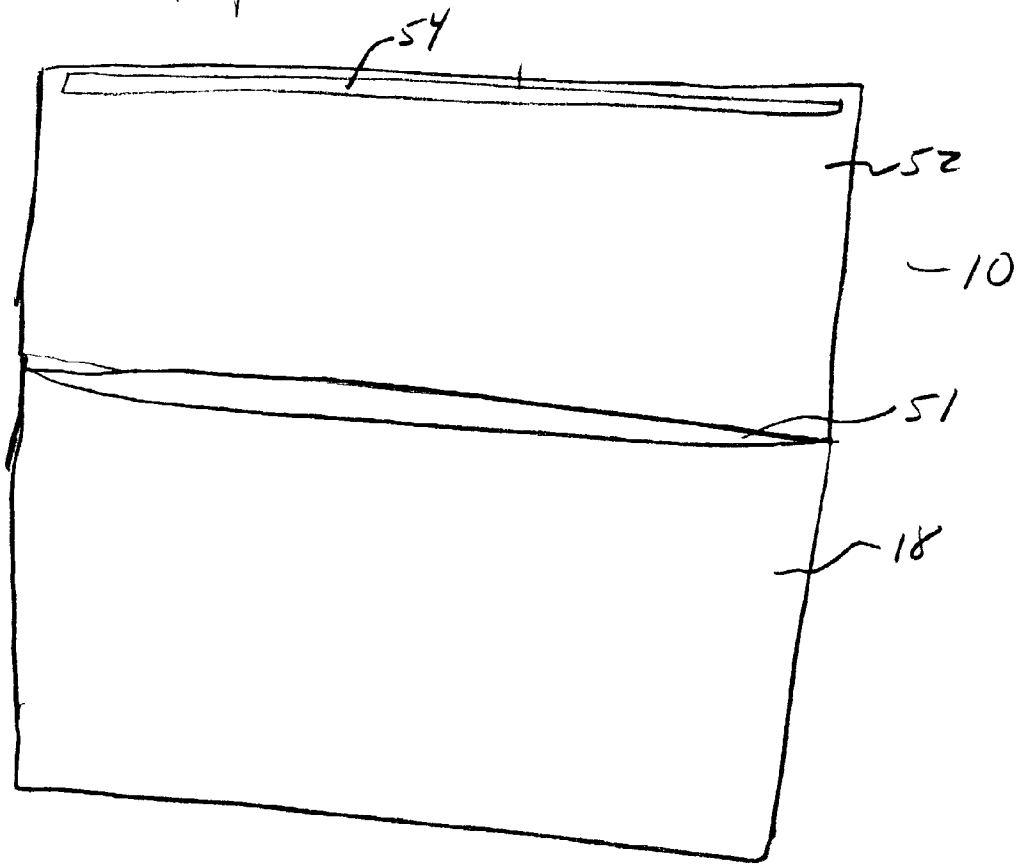
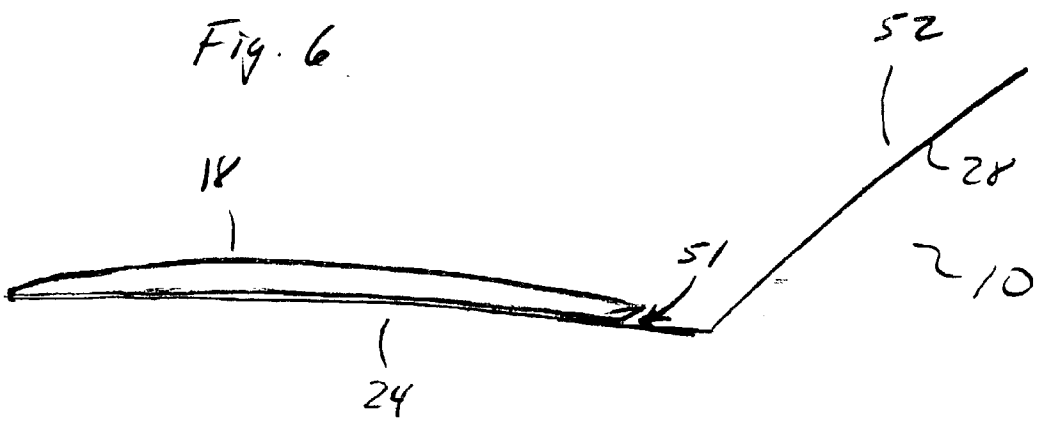


Fig. 6



## TWO WAY MAILER

### FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention is directed to a two way mailer. More specifically, the present invention is directed to a single sheet two-way mailer.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Mailers are commonly used as a cost efficient and effective way to reach the general public for solicitation, advertising, invoices and similar material. There are many different types of mailers. Some mailers are comprised of more than a single sheet of paper, with the second sheet being used for a return reply. Such a mailer, however, is expensive and not cost efficient. Accordingly, single sheet mailers were developed.

[0003] One type of single sheet mailer involves folding a sheet into three generally rectangular panels, including upper, middle and lower panels. The lower panel is folded over onto the middle panel, then the upper panel is folded over onto the lower panel such that the mailer forms a C pattern. This is referred to as a C Fold Mailer. Alternately, the upper panel may be folded back against the middle panel so that the mailer is fan folded or forms a Z pattern. This is referred to as a Z Fold Mailer. One problem with a Z-fold business mailer such as that shown in U.S. Pat. No. 6,152,361 (Abercombie et al.) is that an adhesive has to be applied by the manufacturer onto two sides of the piece of paper. A third mailer, the V fold, includes only two panels and usually is folded in half. Many of these mailers, however, are only meant to be received by the general public and lack an acceptable means for a return reply.

[0004] Accordingly, one of the objectives of those designing mailers was to produce a single sheet mailer which could be used to send to the targeted audience and for consumer to reply using the same sheet of paper. A further objective was for the single sheet mailer to be used by the consumer as a reply envelope that accepts a conventional size personal check without folding the check.

[0005] As a result, mailers were designed with a complicated set of detachable perforations along the side of the mailer. An example is shown in U.S. Pat. No. 6,412,687 (Steitz). In order to provide for a return mechanism, such mailers are often formed of four panels and require a mailer that is at least 14 inches long. Such mailers have a number of disadvantages. In particular, the instructions for opening and refolding the mailer are confusing and often performed wrong, ruining the return mailer. The perforations are also confusing and sometimes difficult to remove. Further, if the mailer is ripped while removing the perforations, the return mailer is ruined. Finally, the size of the mailer and perforated material require a significant amount of material and cost.

[0006] Another type of mailer has a return envelope formed from side flaps on the mailer which fold inward. An example of such is shown in U.S. Pat. No. 6,192,661 (Bodart et al.). Such mailers, however, are also complicated to use. Further, if one of the side flaps should rip, whether during mailing assembly by the consumer or otherwise, the return mailer is useless. Additionally, the side flaps are additional material and cost.

[0007] Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to provide a single sheet two way mailer that can be used to

return a personal check without folding the check, that is easy to use, and that is cost effective.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The present invention is directed to a two-way mailer comprising a single sheet of paper having two sides. Preferably, the two-way mailer has two transverse fold lines that divide the paper into three panels. Adhesive for holding the mailer together for both outgoing and return mail is located on only one side of the mailer. Preferably, adhesive for the outgoing is located only on the first panel on the first side of the mailer, with adhesive for the return mail located only on the second and third panels on the same side. Preferably, the adhesive on the first panel is located on one end of the paper, while the adhesive on the third panel is located on the other end of the paper. The adhesive on the second panel is preferably located on the sides of the paper.

[0009] In a further embodiment of the present invention, the single sheet two way mailer has first and second fold lines dividing said paper into substantially equal first, second and third panels. An outgoing address area is defined on the first side of the first panel of said paper. The outgoing address faces in a first direction. A return address area is defined on the first side of the third panel of the paper. The return address faces in a second direction, opposite to the first direction of the outgoing address. A first adhesive area is defined on the second side of the first panel for holding the sheet of paper together as an outgoing mailer when the sheet is folded along the fold lines with the first panel over the third panel. Second and third adhesive areas are defined on each side edge on the second side of the second panel, for holding the first panel against the second panel for defining a return envelope. Preferably, the return envelope can hold a personal check without the check being folded. A fourth adhesive area is defined on the second side of the third panel for holding the sheet of paper together as a return mailer with the third panel over the first panel.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] FIG. 1 is a top view showing a first side of an embodiment of the two way mailer of the present invention.

[0011] FIG. 2 is a top view of a second side or opposite side of the two way mailer of FIG. 1.

[0012] FIG. 3 is a side view showing the folding of the two way mailer of FIG. 1 for use as an outgoing mailer.

[0013] FIG. 4 is a side view of the reverse folding of the two way mailer of FIG. 1 for the return or reply mail.

[0014] FIGS. 5 and 6 are a top and a side view respectively showing how the two way mailer of FIG. 1 is folded to form a return envelope.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENTLY PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0015] The two way mailer of the present invention is formed of a single sheet of paper. Preferably, the sheet of paper is 8½×11 inches, however, other sizes can also be used. The mailer has a first side 12 and a second side 40.

[0016] FIG. 1 shows atop view of an embodiment of one side 12 of the two way mailer 10 of the present invention. The mailer has a first fold line 14 and a second fold line 16.

Preferably, the fold lines divide the piece of paper or mailer into three rectangular panels of equal proportions. On first side **12**, one panel **18** defines the outgoing address mailer. This is the panel used by the mailer to display the address of the intended recipient, such as for example, the general public or a target audience. Panel **18** has an area **19**, for the outgoing address. Panel **18** will typically have a spot for postage **20** which is usually provided by the sender of the two way mailer. Panel **18** preferably will face in a first direction **22**. Directly adjacent to panel **18** is a second panel **24**. This panel can have copy thereon, preferably advertising copy. However, other types of copy could be included here. In a preferred embodiment, the copy will face in a second direction **26**. The two way mailer has a third panel **28** which defines the return address mailer. This panel will have a return address area **30**. This enables the customer to easily mail a response back to the sender of the mailer or whomever the return address is addressed to. There will also be an area **32** for postage. In a preferred embodiment, the postage will be prepaid. In a further embodiment, panel **30** will have an area **34** for bar codes. The return address on panel **28** will preferably face in direction **36** which is opposite to direction **22** of the outgoing address **19** for panel **18**.

[0017] FIG. 2 shows a top view of the opposite side **40** of the two way mailer **10**. In a preferred embodiment, side **40** will be printed with an order form, survey, invoice, statement or similar material. For example, side **40** could include an order form for subscriptions to magazines which the customer would fill out and send back to mailer. Preferably the text would run from the top to the bottom of this side. This side also features folds **16** and **14** which divides this side into three panels. The first panel **42** has an adhesive area **44** located at the top center of this panel. Preferably, adhesive area **44** is small and square in shape. As explained infra, adhesive area **44** is used by the mailer for sealing the outgoing mailer. The second panel **46** features two adhesive strips **48** and **50** on either side of the panel and preferably extending the length of the panel. As explained infra, these strips are used to form the return envelope. The third panel **52** has an adhesive strip **54** on the bottom of the panel, preferably expanding the length of the panel. As explained infra, adhesive strips **48**, **50** and **54** are used by the customer for sealing the return mailer. The adhesive may be a remoistenable type glue, a pressure sensitive type glue, or other similar types of adhesives, or even a double-sided tape with a releaseable strip. In a preferred embodiment, these strips will include a legend such as "moisten here and seal".

[0018] FIGS. 3 and 4 show how the two way mailer **10** can be folded for outgoing mail to the customer (e.g. general public or targeted audience) (FIG. 3) and folded by the customer for return mail back to sender of the mailer or to whomever the return address is addressed to (FIG. 4).

[0019] As shown in FIG. 3, for sealing outgoing mail to the customer, panel **52** is folded inward against panel **46**. The adhesive strips **48**, **50** and **54** are not moistened at this time. Thereafter, panel **42** is folded over on top of panel **28** which has the return address. The adhesive area **44** on panel **42** is moistened to seal against panel **28**. As a result, all that is showing is panel **18**, which has the outgoing address and panel **24** which can have copy such as advertising copy.

[0020] When a customer receives the mailer, the customer can easily pop open the mailer as it is only being held folded

together by small adhesive area **44**. The customer can then fill out the form on the inside side **40** as directed on that page. Then, as shown in FIG. 4, the customer can fold the two way mailer to send it back to sender of the mailer or to whomever is indicated on in the return address. More specifically, a customer will moisten strips **48** and **50**, then fold panel **42** onto panel **46**. This forms an envelope **57** (see FIGS. 5 and 6) for which a personal check can be inserted without having to fold the check. The customer would then moisten strip **54** and fold panel **52** onto panel **18**. Strip **54** would attach to panel **18** sealing the envelope that is now ready for mailing. This is the reverse of the folding done for FIG. 3. All that is showing is panel **28** with the return address thereon and panel **24**.

[0021] This mailing is advantageous as it takes the place of an outgoing envelope, return envelope and a letter that is found in a typical mailing. By only using a single sheet of paper without side flaps or perforations, the two way mailer of the present invention uses less paper, is easy to produce, is highly cost efficient and is easy to use. Because less paper is used, it is also environmentally friendly.

[0022] Further, using the two way mailer of the invention, pre-imprinted invoices and statements can be personalized and mass mailed at a fraction of the cost of current mailers.

[0023] In an alternate embodiment, potential mailers could also buy the two way mailer of the invention unprinted at a office supply store and print them on their computers, fold them and seal the adhesive area **44** for mailing.

[0024] This description has been offered for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to limit the invention of this application, which is defined in the claims below. Numerous modifications may be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the true spirit and scope of the invention.

1. A two way mailer comprising:

a single sheet of paper having a first side and a second side, with a first transverse fold line and a second transverse fold line dividing the paper into three panels;

an adhesive area on said first panel on said first side;

two adhesive areas on said second panel on said first side; and

one adhesive area on said third panel on said first side.

2. The mailer of claim 1 wherein said sheet of paper has a width of 8.5 inches and a length of 11 inches.

3. The mailer of claim 1 wherein each panel is substantially equal.

4. The mailer of claim 1 wherein each panel is rectangular.

5. The mailer of claim 1 wherein said adhesive area on said first panel is located at one end of the paper, said adhesive area on said third panel is located at the other end of the paper and said adhesive area on said second panel is located on both edges of said paper.

6. The mailer of claim 6 wherein said adhesive area on said first panel is a small area and said other adhesive areas are strips.

7. The mailer of claim 1 wherein said first panel on said second side has an outgoing address and said third panel on said second side has a return address.

8. The mailer of claim 7 wherein said outgoing address and said return address face in opposite directions.

**9.** The mailer of claim 7 wherein said adhesive is selected from the group consisting of a remoistenable type glue, a pressure sensitive type glue and a double-sided tape with a releaseable strip.

**10.** The mailer of claim 1 wherein

said mailer forms an outgoing mailer by said first side of said third panel being folded against said first side of said second panel, said first side of said first panel being folded against said second side of said folded third panel and said adhesive area on said first panel sticking to said second side of said third panel, and

said mailer forms a return mailer by said first side of said first panel being folded against said first side of said second panel and said two adhesive areas on said second panel sticking to said first side of said first panel, and said first side of said third panel being folded against said second side of said first panel and said adhesive area on said third panel sticking to said second side of said first panel.

**11.** The mailer of claim 10 wherein said return mailer is a return envelope that can hold a personal check without folding the check.

**12.** A two way mailer comprising:

a single sheet of paper having a first side and a second side;

first and second fold lines dividing said paper into substantially equal first, second and third panels;

an outgoing address area being defined on said first side of said first panel of said paper, said outgoing address facing in a first direction;

a return address area being defined on said first side of said third panel of said paper, said return address facing in a second direction, opposite to said first direction of outgoing address;

a first adhesive area being defined on said second side of said first panel for holding said sheet of paper together as an outgoing mailer when said sheet is folded along said fold lines with said first panel over said third panel;

second and third adhesive areas being defined on each edge of said second side of said second panel, for holding said first panel against said second panel for defining a return envelope; and

a fourth adhesive area being defined on said second side of said third panel for holding said sheet of paper together as a return mailer with said third panel over said first panel.

**13.** The mailer of claim 12 wherein said second panel on side first side has copy thereon.

**14.** The mailer of claim 12 wherein said return envelope can hold a personal check without folding the check.

**15.** The mailer of claim 12 wherein said return address area has a preprinted return address thereon.

**16.** The mailer of claim 12 wherein said second side has copy thereon.

**18.** The mailer of claim 12 wherein said sheet of paper has a width of 8.5 inches and a length of 11 inches.

**19.** The mailer of claim 12 wherein said first adhesive area on said first panel is a small area and said other adhesive areas are strips.

**20.** The mailer of claim 12 wherein said adhesive is selected from the group consisting of a remoistenable type glue, a pressure sensitive type glue and a double-sided tape with a releaseable strip.

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