



US 20080217210A1

(19) United States

(12) Patent Application Publication  
BANWARTH

(10) Pub. No.: US 2008/0217210 A1

(43) Pub. Date: Sep. 11, 2008

## (54) SELF-CONTAINED RACK DISPLAY

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(21) Appl. No.: 11/684,079

(22) Filed: Mar. 9, 2007

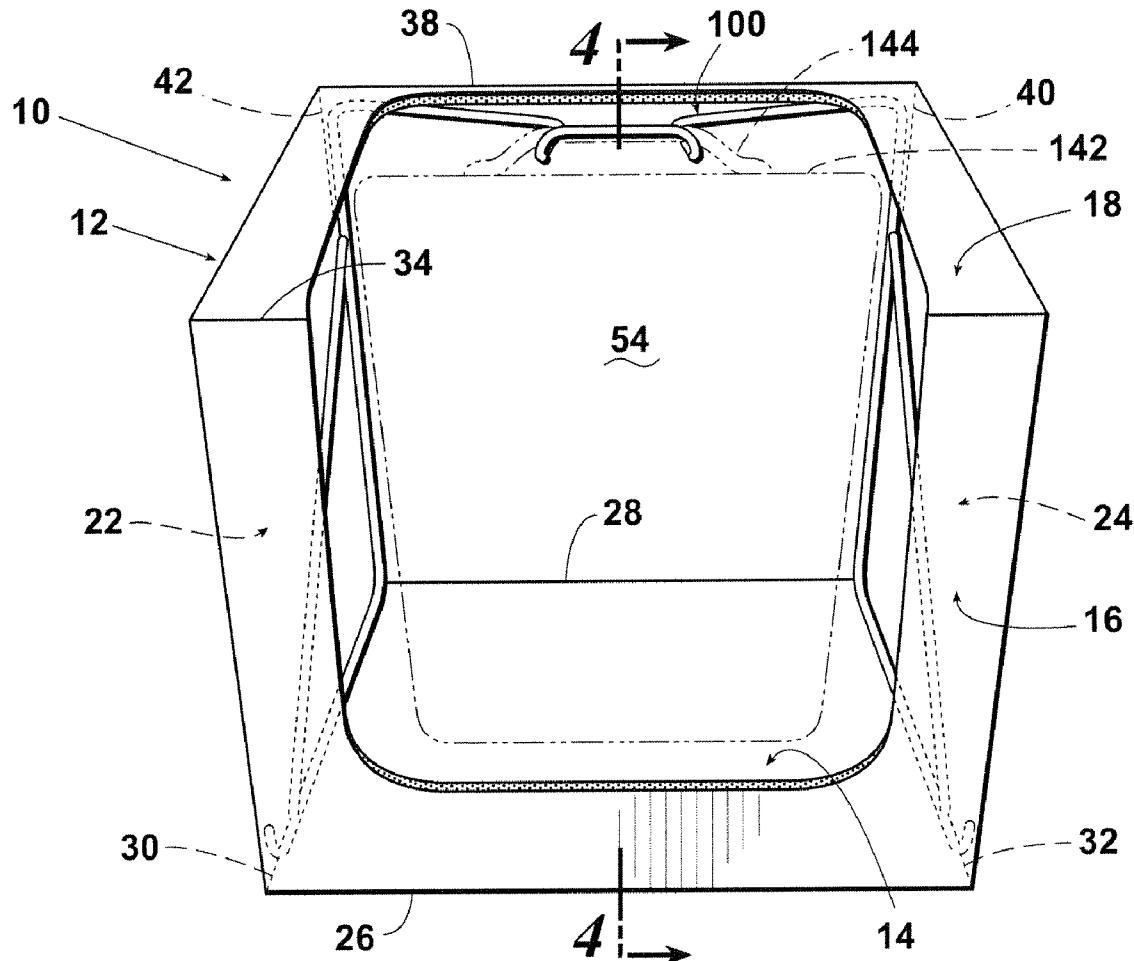
## Publication Classification

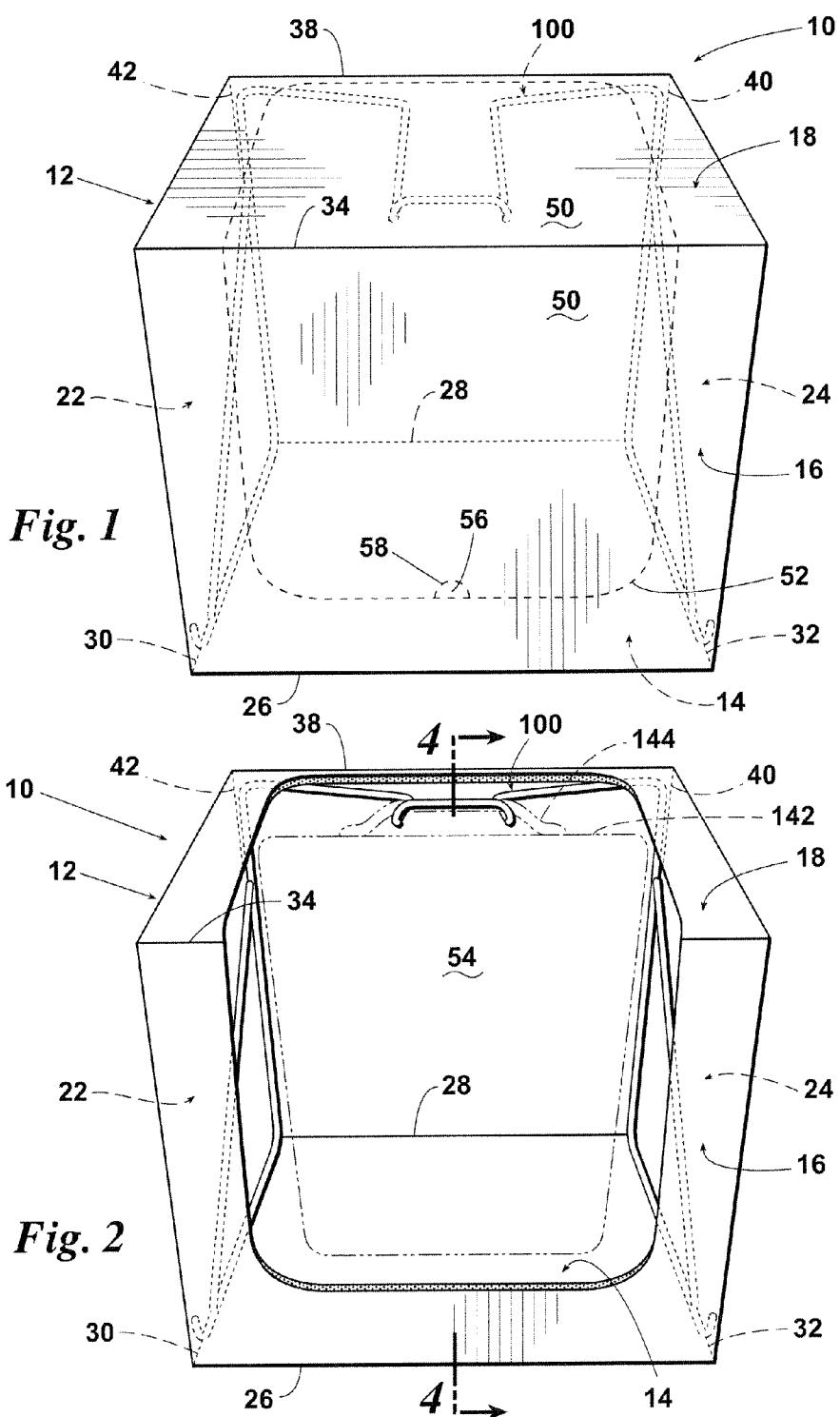
(51) Int. Cl.  
**B65D 5/52** (2006.01)

(52) U.S. Cl. ..... 206/736

## (57) ABSTRACT

A combination shipping and display container includes a container provided with a removable cover for covering an opening in the container. A frame is located within the container. The frame is preferably provided with a hanger member suitable for supporting product. The hanger member of the frame is proximate the opening for providing access to the hanging product when the removable cover is removed. The invention allows for product to be located on the hanger member of the frame and then sealed within the container. The loaded container may then be shipped to a destination, where the removable cover may be removed to provide consumer access to the product loaded on the hanger member. The container of the invention eliminates a necessity for employees of a store to organize product for display once the product arrives in the store.





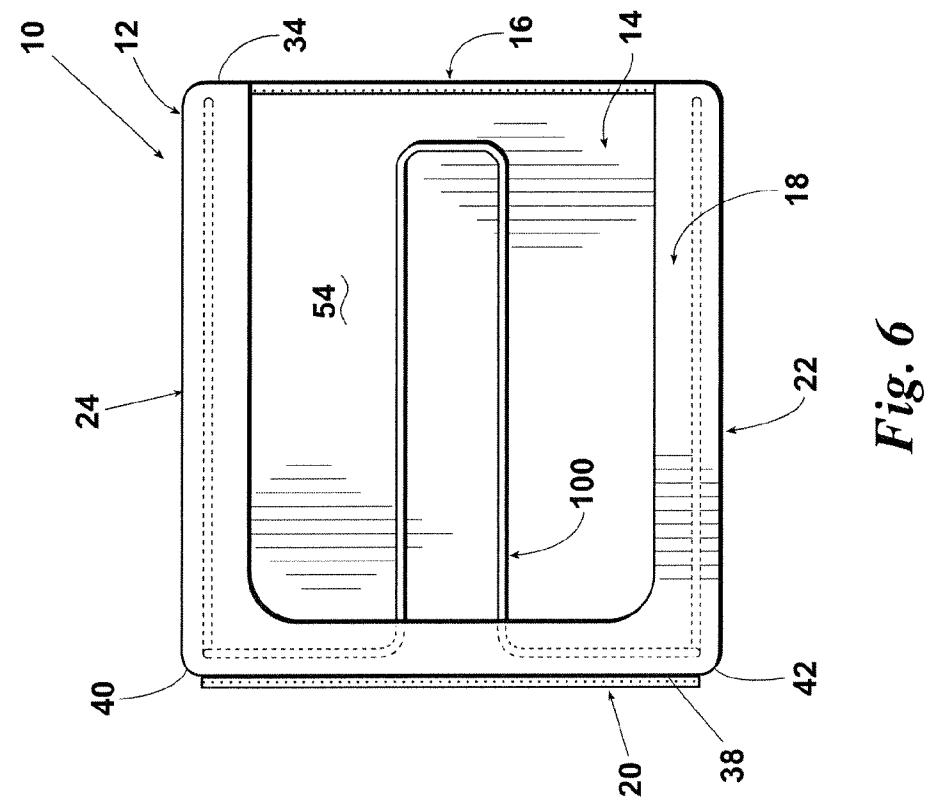


Fig. 6

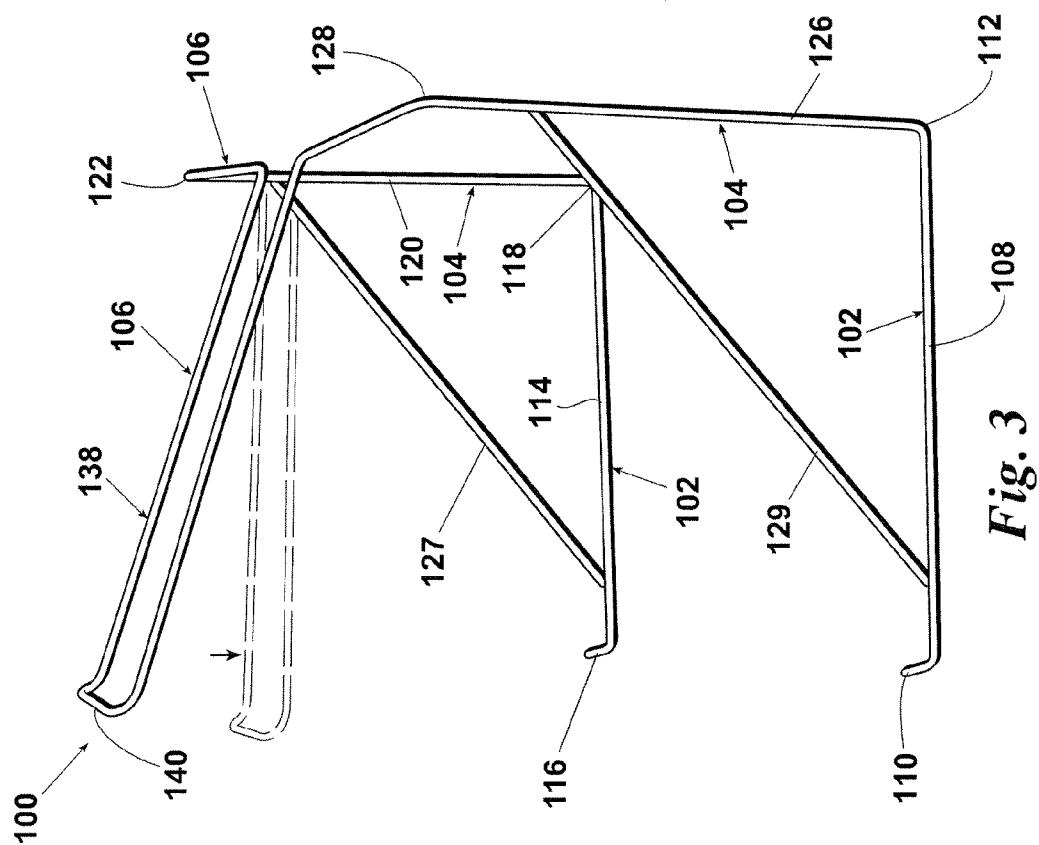


Fig. 3

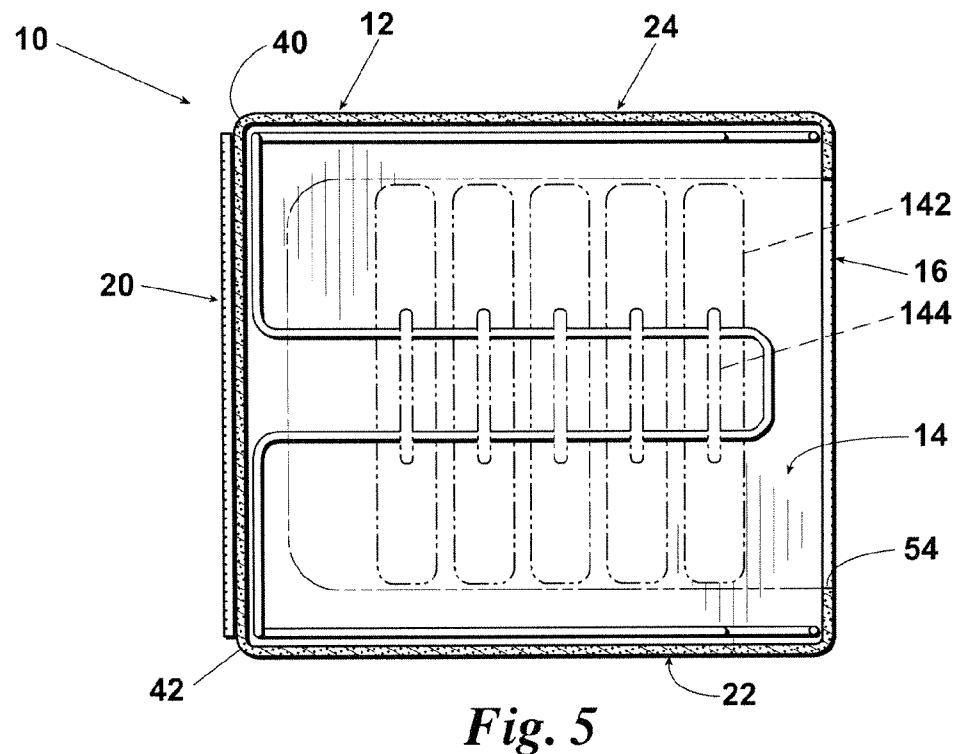


Fig. 5

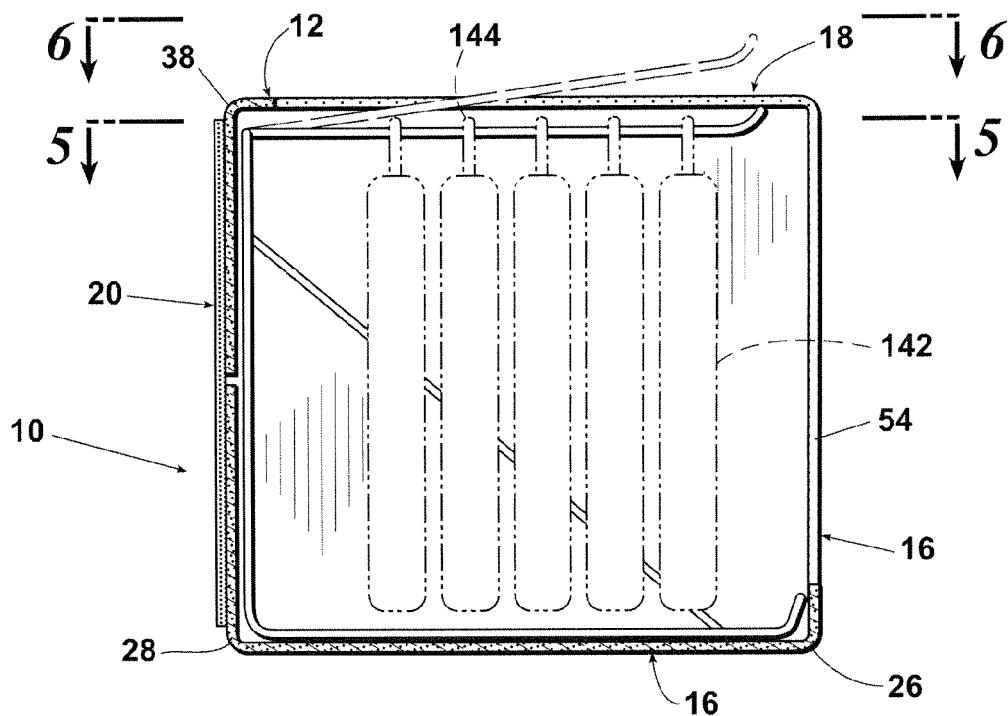


Fig. 4

## SELF-CONTAINED RACK DISPLAY

### FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to containers for retaining, protecting, shipping and displaying goods and methods for using such containers. In particular, the present invention relates to a shipping container that is also a container suitable for use for product display to consumers.

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Warehouse stores and warehouse clubs have become increasingly popular in the United States. These types of stores are also sometimes referred to as a "Big Box" or "Price-Impact" store because of the warehouse style of the interior and the low prices of products sold therein.

[0003] In an effort to keep costs low, products are sometimes displayed in their shipping boxes, which are oftentimes located on pallets on the store floor. Tightly packed merchandise within such containers tends to maintain an orderly appearance and is therefore attractive for consumer purchase. Other products, however, tend to become disorderly during shipping and therefore require store personnel to locate the items on shelving or to spend time organizing the product within the containers.

[0004] It is desirable to provide a combination shipping and display container that may be used to ship product from a manufacturer to a store, such as a warehouse store, and that could be converted into a display container with a minimal amount of effort by store personnel. It is further desirable to provide a means for shipping product that doubles as a product organizer that maintains product in an orderly condition within the container and that assists in dispensing product to an end consumer.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0005] The self-contained rack of the present invention provides the retailer/user a convenient, more appealing display method for hanging products. Due to the self-contained design, hanging products are shipped within a carton and arrive ready for sale. The design also benefits the consumer, as it provides the consumer a convenient means of purchase.

[0006] The combination shipping and display box of the invention preferably includes a container provided with a removable cover for covering an opening in the container. The container may be a cardboard box or other suitable structure. The removable cover may be a portion of the container defined by perforations or another type of removable structure. A frame is provided that is sized for locating within the container. The frame is preferably provided with a hanger member suitable for supporting product. The hanger member of the frame is proximate the opening for providing access to the hanging product when the removable cover is removed.

[0007] In use, product may be located on the hanger member of the frame and sealed within the container. The loaded container may then be shipped to a destination, where the removable cover may be removed, e.g., a perforated section of the container may be removed, to provide consumer access to the product loaded on said hanger member.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of combination shipping and display box of the invention, shown in a shipping configuration;

[0009] FIG. 2 is a front perspective view of the combination shipping and display box shown in FIG. 1, shown in a display configuration;

[0010] FIG. 3 is a perspective view of a frame for locating in the combination shipping and display box of FIG. 1;

[0011] FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional elevation view of the combination shipping and display box of FIG. 1, taken along lines 4-4 of FIG. 2;

[0012] FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional plan view of the combination shipping and display box of FIG. 1, taken along lines 5-5 of FIG. 4;

[0013] FIG. 6 is a plan view of the combination shipping and display box of FIG. 1, taken along lines 6-6 of FIG. 4, shown in a display configuration.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0014] Referring now to FIGS. 1 through 6, shown is a combination shipping and display box referred to generally as 10. The combination shipping and display box 10 includes a frame 100 and a container 12 having base 14, front face 16, top face 18, back face 20, left face 22 and right face 24. Base 14 is partially defined by base front edge 26, base rear edge 28, base left edge 30 and base right edge 32.

[0015] Front face 16 is partially defined by base front edge 26 and top front edge 34. Top face 18 is defined by top front edge 34 and top rear edge 38. Back face 20 is defined by base rear edge 28, top rear edge 38, rear right edge 40 and rear left edge 42. Left face 22 is defined by rear left edge 42 and base left edge 30. Right face 24 is defined by rear right edge 40 and rear left edge 42.

[0016] In a preferred embodiment, a removable panel 50 (FIG. 1) is defined by top face 18 and front face 16. However, removable panel 50 may be confined to a single face, e.g., front face 16 or top face 18. Removable panel 50 is defined by perforation 52, e.g., formed in front face 16 and top face 18. In a preferred embodiment, once removable panel 50 is removed, front face 16 and top face 18 define opening 54 (FIG. 2) in container 12.

[0017] Finger opening 56 (FIG. 1) is adjacent to removable panel 50, e.g., defined by front face 16, wherein finger opening 56 is defined by finger opening perforation 58 in removable panel 50. Finger opening 56 facilitates ease of removal of removable panel 50.

[0018] Frame 100, best seen in FIG. 3, is sized for locating within container 12. Frame 100 is constructed of base structure 102, vertical structure 104, and upper structure 106.

[0019] Base structure 102 has a right base member 108 having a forward right upturned end 110 and a right rear end 112. Left base member 114 has a forward left upturned end 116 and a left rear end 118.

[0020] Vertical structure 104 has a left vertical member 120. Left vertical member 120 has a left upper end 122 and a left lower end that joins left base member 114 at left rear end 118. Vertical structure 104 additionally has right vertical member 126. Right vertical member 126 has a right upper end 128 and a right lower end that joins right base member 108 at right rear end 112. Left diagonal brace bar 127 spans between left vertical member 120 and left base member 114. Right diagonal bar 129 spans between right vertical member 126 and right base member 108. Diagonal brace bars 127 and 129 provide support to vertical structure 104, which assists in allowing vertical structure 104 to remain upright when upper structure 106 is fully loaded.

**[0021]** Upper structure 106 has a right end that joins right vertical member 126 at right upper end 128. Upper structure 132 has a left end that joins left vertical member 120 at left upper end 122. Upper structure 106 additionally defines hanger member 138 that extends forwardly. Hanger member 138 is provided with an upturned forward end 140 for retaining product 142 (FIGS. 2, 4 and 5) on hanger member 138. Hanger member 138 may extend upwardly, as shown in FIG. 3, when in an unloaded state. Hanger member 138 may then be deflected downwardly by the weight of product when hanger member 138 is loaded, which allows hanger member 138 to fit within a fully enclosed container 12, i.e., fit within container 12 when in a shipping configuration as shown in FIG. 1. As consumers remove product from hanger member 138, hanger member 138 may return to an upwardly extended position and extend above top face 18 of container 12, which may function to more prominently display product.

**[0022]** Frame 100 is sized such that left base member 114 locates adjacent to base left edge 30 and right base member 108 locates adjacent to base right edge 32. Left vertical member 120 locates adjacent to rear left edge 42 and right vertical member 126 locates adjacent to rear right edge 40. Upper structure 106 locates adjacent to top rear edge 38 and hanger member 138 locates adjacent to removable panel 50 on top face 18. Therefore, it can be seen that in a preferred embodiment, frame 100 substantially fills container 12 to prevent shifting of frame 100 within container 12 and also to function as a structural support, to prevent crushing or damage to container 12 during shipping.

**[0023]** Hanger member 138 of frame 100 is designed to pass through hanger receiver 144 of product 142. When product 142 is located on hanger member 138, product 142 is retained in an orderly configuration during shipping. Product 142 is also readily accessible by consumers once removable panel 50 is removed from container 12. An example of a suitable product 142 for use with the inventive combination shipping and display box 10 is a thermal carrier bag having a handle that functions as hanger receiver 144. However, many types of merchandise and packaging can be easily adapted for shipping and display within Applicant's combination shipping and display box 10.

**[0024]** Thus, the present invention is well adapted to carry out the objectives and attain the ends and advantages mentioned above as well as those inherent therein. While presently preferred embodiments have been described for purposes of this disclosure, numerous changes and modifications will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. Such changes and modifications are encompassed within the spirit of this invention as defined by the claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A combination shipping and display box comprising:  
a container with an opening;  
a selectively removable cover that selectively obstructs said opening;  
a frame sized for locating within said container, said frame having a hanger member for supporting product; and  
wherein said hanger member is proximate said opening for providing access to said product when said removable cover is removed.

2. The combination shipping and display box according to claim 1 wherein:  
said container has a top face and a front face; and  
said removable cover is defined by said top face and said front face.
3. The combination shipping and display box according to claim 1 wherein:  
said removable cover is defined by perforations in said container.
4. The combination shipping and display box according to claim 1 wherein:  
said container further defines a finger opening proximate said removable cover, wherein said finger opening facilitates ease of removal of said removable cover.
5. The combination shipping and display box according to claim 1 wherein:  
said frame defines a hanger member for supporting product, said hanger member extending above a plane defined by a top face of said container.
6. The combination shipping and display box according to claim 1 wherein:  
wherein said frame provides structural stability to said container.
7. The combination shipping and display box according to claim 1 wherein:  
said hanger member is sized to be received within a hanger receiver defined by said product.
8. A method of shipping and marketing a product comprising:  
providing a container that defines an opening;  
obstructing said opening with a selectively removable cover;  
locating a frame within said container, said frame having a hanger member for supporting product;  
loading said hanger member with product;  
enclosing said container;  
shipping said loaded container to a destination;  
removing said removable cover at said destination to provide consumer access to said product loaded on said hanger member.
9. The method according to claim 8 wherein:  
said step of removing said removable cover exposes said opening that is defined by a top face and a front face of said container.
10. The method according to claim 8 wherein:  
said step of removing said removable cover includes tearing said removable cover along perforations defined by said container.
11. The method according to claim 8 wherein:  
said step of removing said removable container includes punching out a finger opening proximate said removable cover, wherein said step of punching out said finger opening facilitates ease of removal of said removable cover.
12. The method according to claim 8 wherein:  
said step of loading said hanger member with product includes passing said hanger member through hanger receiving orifices in said product.

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