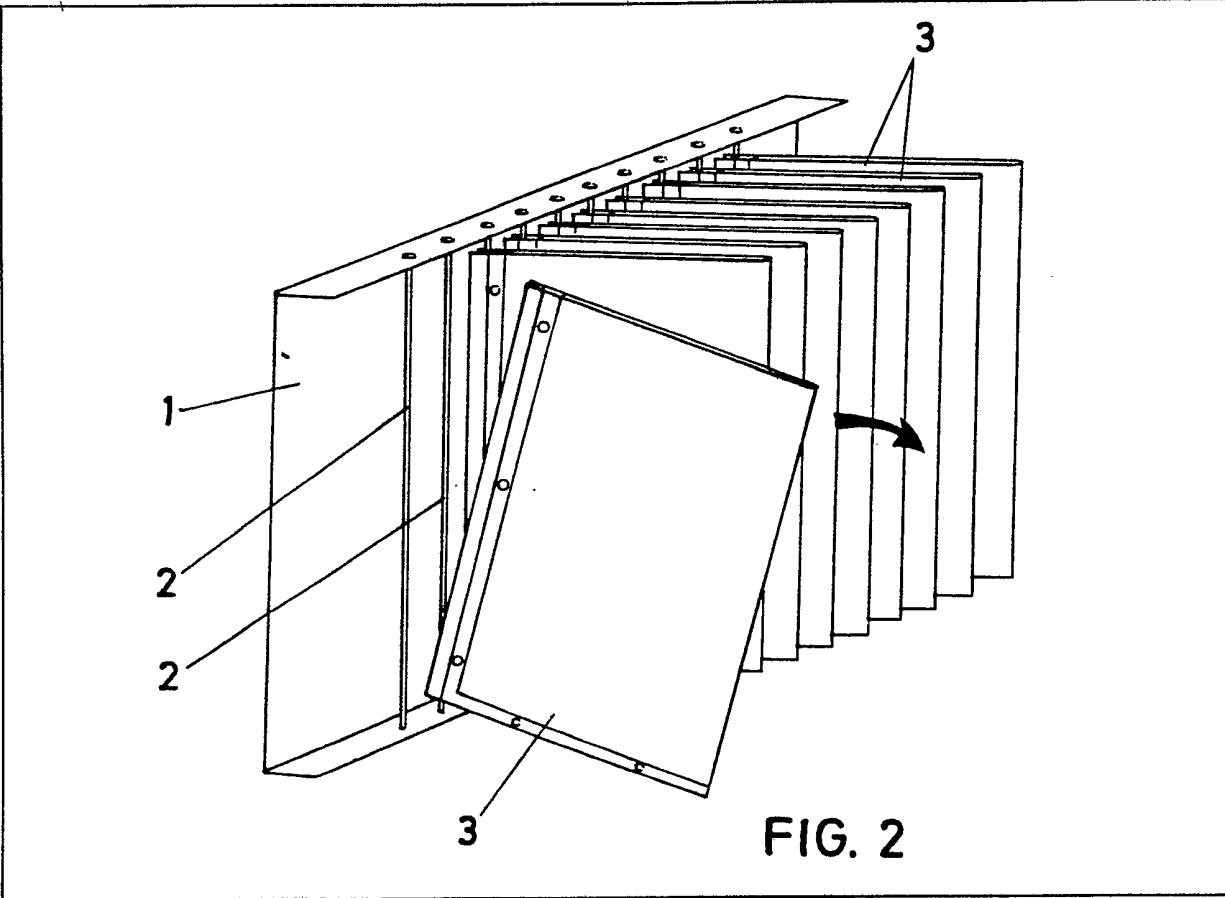


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(54) **Display assembly**
(57) A display assembly comprises a plurality of transparent envelopes or sleeves, each bearing a spine of resilient material formed with a longitudinal groove of re-entrant cross section; and a frame bearing a plurality of side-by-side parallel rods, which rods are releasably receivable in the grooves in the spines; whereby, in the assembled array, the sleeves are pivotally mounted in the manner of the leaves of a book.



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The drawing originally filed was informal and the print here reproduced is taken from a later filed formal copy.

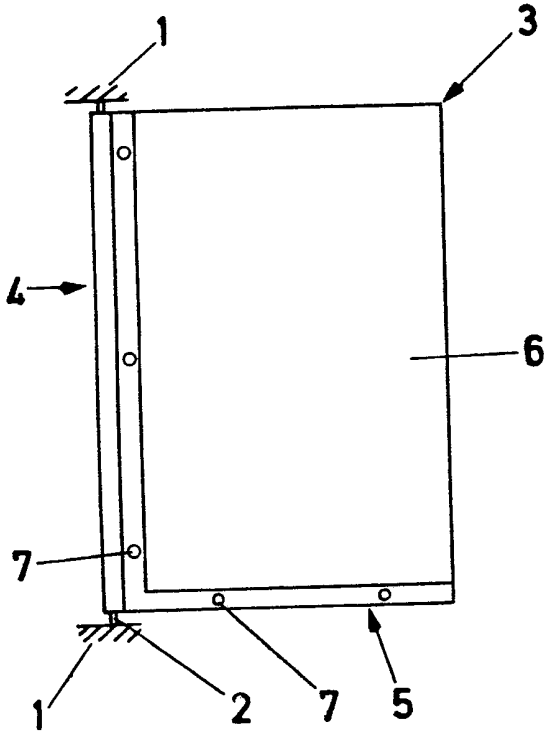


FIG. 1

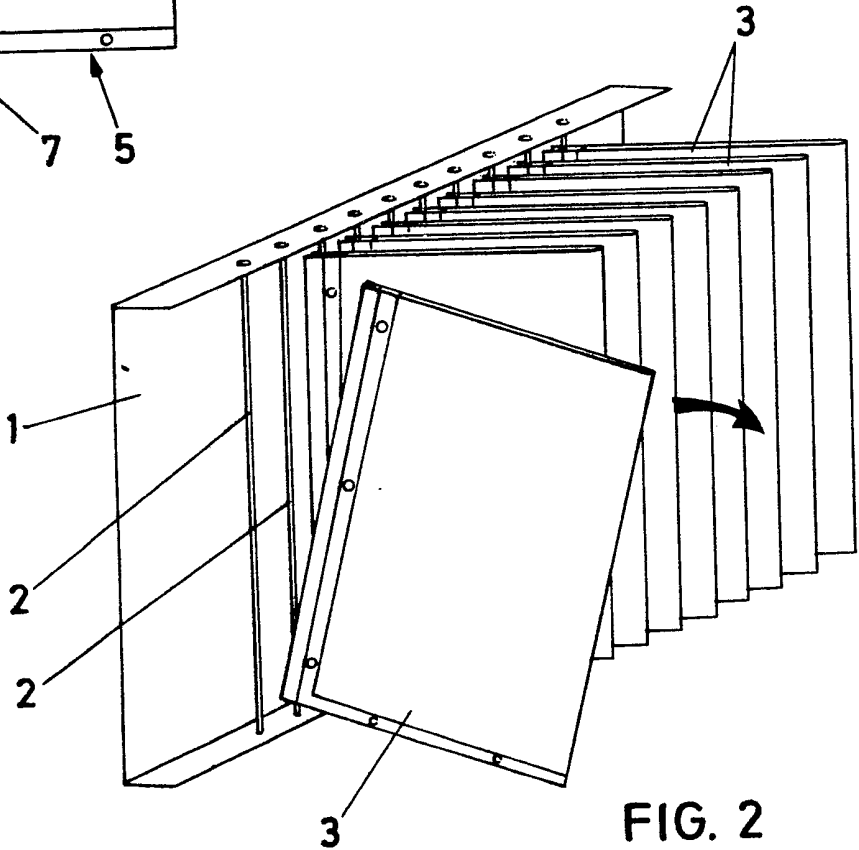


FIG. 2

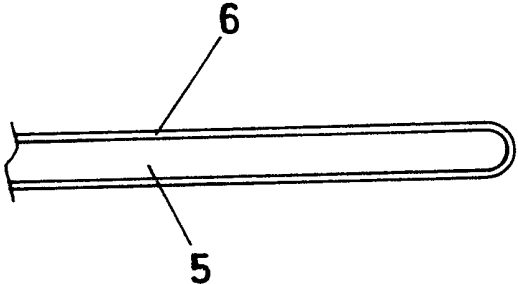
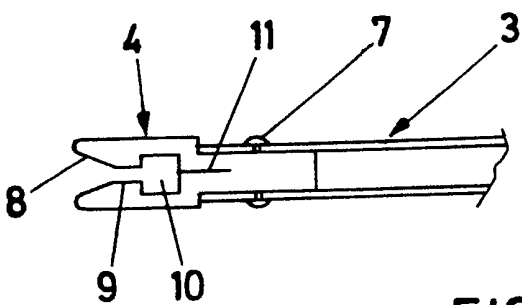


FIG. 3

SPECIFICATION
Display assembly

The invention relates to point-of-sale display assemblies suitable for retailing articles such as pre-recorded video tape cassettes or record discs. Of these, the greater merchandising problems arise with the video cassettes because of the bulk. If the cassette cases are to be displayed with their titles visible, they can occupy a considerable amount of shelf space. Moreover if the cassette cases are to be displayed containing the cassette housing and tape, then there is a considerable security problem as their theft is made relatively easy.

The security problem has in the past been overcome by providing a point-of-sale display assembly which includes means for locking the displayed cassettes into a rack so that they cannot be removed by the potential purchaser. This is in contrast with the well accepted method of selling pre-recorded disc records, whereby only the record outer cover is on display and a prospective purchaser must take his selected cover to a sales assistant who will retrieve the record, in its inner sleeve, from stock and complete the sale.

The present invention contemplates a point-of-sale display assembly which not only provides the security inherent in the above method of displaying and selling records, but also enables a substantially greater number of different titles to be displayed at a single time, while providing to the prospective purchaser a certain amount of tactile contact with the product, conducive to good salesmanship.

A display assembly according to the invention comprises a linear array of parallel rods in a frame, and for each rod a display envelope comprising a transparent cover supported by a spine formed from a resilient plastics material, the spine being provided with a longitudinal aperture comprising a rearwardly opening mouth leading past a constricted throat to a longitudinal channel for receiving one of the rods of the array so as pivotably to support the envelope on the rod, whereby each envelope may be removed from and replaced on its rod by flexure of the spine to open the throat. The linear array of parallel rods may be rectilinear or curvilinear, and preferably each rod is disposed vertically in the frame or at least in the vertical plane. Each display envelope, when presented with its spine vertical, preferably has an opening at the top edge only. In use, printed material identifying each individual article to be sold is placed in the display envelope. Preferably this printed material displays information identifying and advertising the product on both of its faces, so that it can be viewed from either side of the transparent cover of the envelope. The display envelopes are then pushed onto the respective rods so that each envelope is freely pivotable about its own rod, and the different envelopes can be turned like pages of a book by a prospective purchaser wishing to browse through the different titles on offer. When a purchase

choice has been made, the purchaser can remove the relevant display envelope by pulling it outwardly away from its supporting rod. This takes place most easily if the envelope is pulled from the top or from the bottom, so as to tilt about one corner of its spine, enabling it to be drawn progressively from the relevant rod. Although each envelope can very easily be removed in this way, the handling characteristics have been found to be particularly satisfactory in that it is relatively difficult to remove the envelopes accidentally either by a straight lateral pull or by an impact such as they are likely to experience in use. Indeed, an alternative construction in which each envelope was pivotally secured to the frame by clips at the top and bottom corners of the spine was found to be relatively unsatisfactory in practice, as there was either too great a resistance to deliberate removal of the envelope (due to overtight clips) or too little resistance to accidental removal.

When the display assembly according to this invention is used for the merchandising or pre-recorded record discs, then the outer sleeves of the records can be inserted into the display envelopes while the recorded discs in their inner sleeves are kept in a secure place. The advantages over conventional methods of retailing are two-fold: first of all the display envelope offers protection for the outer sleeves and prevent their becoming soiled due to excessive handling, and secondly the printed matter on the record sleeves is well displayed, with a portion of each record sleeve being always visible and with one or more generally two record sleeves being wholly visible where adjacent envelopes are pivoted in opposite directions on the respective rods in the manner of the pages of an open book.

When a display assembly according to the invention is used for the merchandising of pre-recorded video cassettes, then the printed inlay card or paper jacket from the cassette case can conveniently be used as the printed material for display in the envelope, where it attracts the same advantages as those discussed immediately above. In addition, the display assembly offers an element of security not previously achieved in so simple a display unit, by ensuring that access to the stock of pre-recorded tapes is permitted only by the sales assistant. In addition, the cassettes housing the tapes are retained in their cassette cases at all times, thus reducing the possibility of contamination of the tapes by dust or dirt. The utilization of display floor area using such a display assembly is at least nine times that which has been obtained in the past using conventional racks of cassette cases.

A further advantage of the display assembly according to the invention is that it facilitates stock control. Each time a sale is made, the purchaser returns to the sales assistant a display envelope containing the relevant printed material from or relating to the product. If the sales assistant keeps these display envelopes to hand, then at the end of each day it is possible to see

precisely how many articles have been sold, and at the same time to refill the display envelopes for return to their respective rods.

Drawings

5 Figure 1 is a side elevation of a single display envelope supported on a frame of a display assembly according to the invention;

10 Figure 2 is a perspective view of a display assembly according to the invention with one envelope having been fully removed and one in the process of being removed; and

Figure 3 is a plan view from above of the display envelope of Figure 1.

15 In the drawings a frame 1 (Figures 1 and 2) supports a linear row of parallel rods 2. On different rods 2 of the row are pivotally mounted display envelopes 3 in which printed material (not shown) can be displayed.

20 Each display envelope comprises a spine 4 and a base strip 5 of plastics material, around which is folded a transparent sheet 6 which provides the transparent cover for the envelope. The sheet 6 is secured to the spine 4 and to the base strip 5 by rivets, spot welds, continuous welds or adhesive indicated schematically as 7. The upper edge of each display envelope 3 is open, as best seen in Figure 2, permitting the printed material to be placed therein or removed therefrom.

30 The spine 4 is shown in greater detail in Figure 3 as comprising a rearwardly and outwardly divergent mouth 8 leading to a constricted throat 9 which opens into a longitudinal channel 10. The cross section of the spine 4 is constant along the whole of its longitudinal length. The longitudinal channel 10 is of a size such that it freely receives any one of the rods 2, and each envelope can be mounted on one of the rods by pushing the mouth 8 over the rod until the material of the spine flexes and opens the throat 9 far enough to allow the rod to pass into the channel 10. An optional feature is one or more longitudinal slits 11 which assist this flexure and permit more readily the opening of the throat. It will be appreciated that the one-piece construction of the spine 4 of Figure 3 is schematic only, and that this spine could equally be made from two or more suitably shaped longitudinal strips of plastics material secured together by rivets, welds or adhesive.

45 Although the fitting of the individual envelopes 3 onto the rods 2 is achieved simply by pushing the envelopes transversely onto the rods, their removal from the respective rods, it not quite as

55 easy because of the particular shape of the mouth, throat and channel of the spine 4. To remove a display envelope 3 from its supporting rod 2 it is necessary to grasp one outer corner, for example the top corner as shown in Figure 2, and to tilt the envelope about its opposite corner. This results in a progressive opening of the throat 9 starting at the top of the envelope and progressing towards the bottom as the envelope is rotated in the direction of the arrow shown in Figure 2. The envelope is thus "peeled" away from the rod rather than coming away completely on a single snatch or impact.

CLAIMS

1. A display assembly comprising a linear array of parallel rods in a frame, and for each rod a display envelope comprising a transparent cover supported by a spine formed from a resilient plastics material, the spine being provided with a longitudinal aperture comprising a rearwardly opening mouth feeding past a constricted throat to a longitudinal channel for receiving one or the rods of the array so as pivotably to support the envelope on the rod, whereby each envelope may be removed from and replaced on its rod by flexure of the spine to open the throat.

2. A display assembly according to claim 1 wherein each display envelope further comprises a base strip extending transversely from one end of the spine, the transparent cover being secured both to the base strip and to the spine so as to be open only along the edge remote from the base strip.

3. A display assembly according to either preceding claim, wherein the spine of each display envelope is formed initially from more than one strip of plastics material, the different strips being secured together on assembly of the envelope.

4. A display assembly according to any preceding claim wherein the constricted throat of the spine of each display envelope opens abruptly into the longitudinal channel for the whole of the length of the spine.

5. A display assembly according to any preceding claim wherein the spine of each display envelope is of uniform cross section along the whole of its length.

6. A display assembly for the point-of-sale display and merchandising of pre-recorded record discs or video cassettes, substantially as described herein with reference to the drawings.