

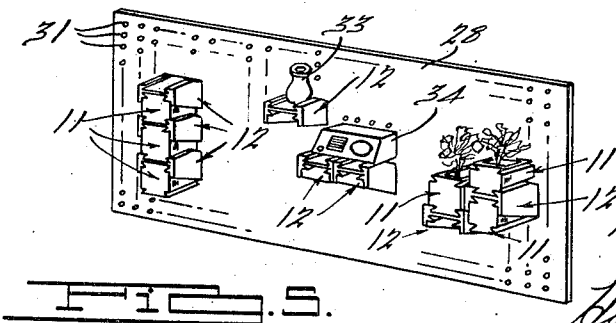
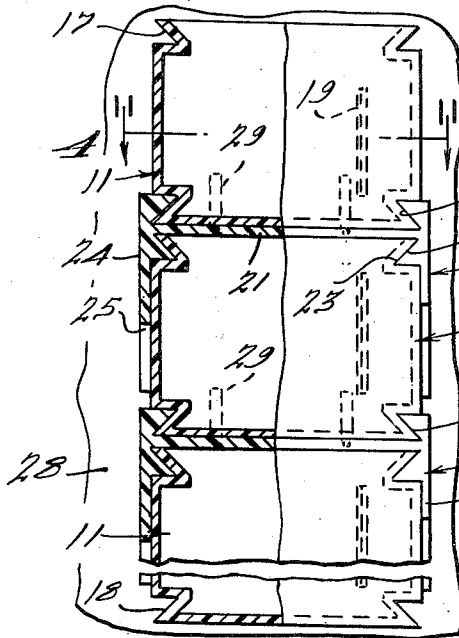
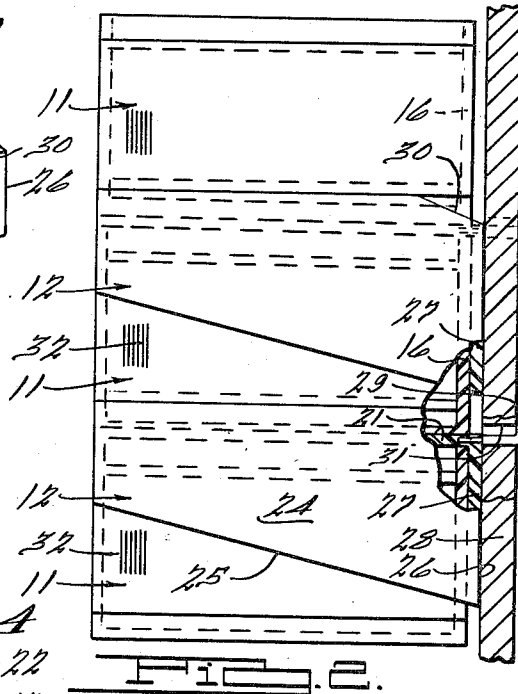
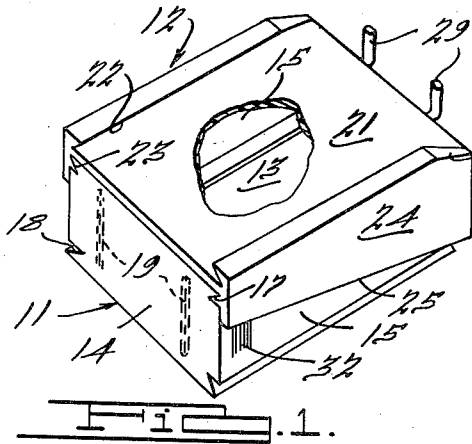
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MULTI-PURPOSE CONTAINER AND SUPPORT

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MULTI-PURPOSE CONTAINER AND SUPPORT

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This invention relates to multi-purpose containers and supports, and more particularly to units which are adapted for assembly in various ways for the purpose of storing, supporting or displaying articles.

It is an object of the invention to provide a multi-purpose unit which can be cheaply and easily fabricated, and which can serve a variety of commercial, industrial and domestic purposes. In this connection, it is an object to provide an interfitting container and support which can be assembled together in various ways or used separately, and which in their assembled condition may be applied in a variety of arrangements to different types of stationary supports for use as a display or merchandising unit, in factories, stores and in the home.

It is a further object to provide a container and support combination of this character which is especially adapted for use with perforated panels of the type which has become increasingly popular for use in hanging and otherwise storing all types of articles.

Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will become apparent from the subsequent description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a perspective view showing a container and support of this invention with the container suspended from the support, parts being broken away for clarity;

Figure 2 is a side elevational view, partly in cross section, showing several containers and supports assembled in vertical alignment for storage purposes;

Figure 3 is a front elevational view partly in cross section, showing the interlocking arrangement between the containers and supports;

Figure 4 is a fragmentary cross-sectional view taken along the line 4-4 of Figure 3 and showing the card holders in the container; and

Figure 5 is a perspective view of a perforated panel showing a variety of arrangements with multiple use of the containers and supports.

The container and support are shown assembled in Figure 1 and comprise a container generally indicated at 11 and a support generally indicated at 12 having means for connecting the two parts in various ways. The material of which these parts are constructed may vary in accordance with requirements; for example, plastic materials, metal or wood may be used. Container 11 comprises a bottom 13, a front wall 14, side walls 15 and a rear wall 16. The upper and lower edges of the container are provided with tracks 17 and 18 respectively which are shown in the form of dovetailed grooves or recesses in the container. It will be understood that other types of retaining means could be formed on the container within the principles of the invention. These four tracks extend along the entire length of container 11, the pair of tracks 17 being adjacent the top of the container on opposite sides thereof, and tracks 18 being adjacent the container bottom. If the front of the box is made of transparent material, card holders 19 may be formed on the inside of

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front wall 14 so that an identification card 20 may be held in protected but visible position.

Support 12 comprises a flat panel portion 21 and two pairs of tracks 22 and 23 extending along the side edges of panel 21. Grooves 22 are disposed immediately above panel 21 on opposite sides thereof whereas grooves 23 are positioned immediately below the panel. The cross-sectional configurations of tracks 22 and 23 are made in conformity with those of tracks 18 and 17 respectively so that tracks 23 may interlock with tracks 17 and tracks 22 with tracks 18. Support 12 is also provided with a pair of flange portions 24 which extend transversely to panel 21. These flanges have inclined outer edges 25 which, in the normal position of the support as shown in Figure 2 with panel 21 in horizontal position, are inclined downwardly and rearwardly, so that flanges 24 have edges 26 of substantial length at the rear of the support. A rear wall 27 may be provided connecting rear edges 26 of flanges 24.

Means are provided on support 12 for removably securing the support to a stationary member to which the unit is to be attached. This securing means may take various forms depending upon the type of stationary member to be used. In the illustrated embodiment, the invention is adapted for use with a perforated panel 28 of hardboard, wood, metal or plastic. Panels of this type have a plurality of holes or perforations arranged in vertical and horizontal rows and spaced apart a uniform and standard distance, for example one inch. Such boards are widely used in homes, factories and merchandising establishments to store or display articles, and large varieties of brackets, trays and other attachments are available for such panels. Support 12 is provided with a pair of hooks 29 extending outwardly from rear wall 27 and adapted to be secured to panel 28. These hooks, which may be of different material than the remainder of the support for strength purposes, are spaced apart the standard perforation distance. The rear portions of tracks 22 are provided with inclined clearance recesses 30, and hooks 29 are so shaped as to be insertable in perforations 31 when the support is first tilted upwardly, and then swung down into position. The mounted position of support 12 is shown in Figure 2. In this position, edges 26 of flanges 24 will rest against perforated panel 28 so that the support will be held with panel 21 and tracks 22 and 23 horizontal. Supports 12 may be removed from the perforated panel by swinging them upwardly and removing hooks 29 from perforations 31.

The operation and use of the novel container and support can perhaps best be described with reference to Figures 2 and 5 in which various applications of the unit are shown. As indicated above, support 12 may be either attached to a stationary vertical member such as a perforated panel, or may remain unattached to any holder. Besides serving as a support for container 11, support 12 may function as a lid for the container, as a shelf for supporting various objects, or for both of these purposes simultaneously. Container 11 may serve as a holder for small objects, the container being open or closeable depending on whether it is above or below panel 21. When supported above panel 21, container 11 may also be used as a holder for flowers or plants, or for similar purposes. Multiple units comprising containers 11 and supports 12 in alternate relation may be assembled vertically, side by side, or both so as to form compact storage or display arrangements.

Referring particularly to Figure 2, it will be seen that tracks 17 of central container 11 are engageable with tracks 23 of support 12 immediately above. Flanged portions 24 of the supports are spaced apart a sufficient distance to accommodate the containers. The lower tracks 18 of central container 11 are engageable with

tracks 22 of support 12 immediately below. The upper container 11 is open-topped and is supported at its base by support 12 immediately below, tracks 18 of this upper container being engageable with tracks 22 of the support. Lower container 11 is suspended from the support 12 immediately above, its tracks 17 being engageable with tracks 23 of the support. Central container 11 is slidable outwardly so as to gain access to the interior, and frictional gripping ridges 32 may be provided on the outer surfaces of side walls 15 for this purpose.

In order to assemble the multiple unit shown in Figure 2, supports 12 are first attached to perforated board 28. The sequence of attaching these supports to the board is immaterial, either the upper or the lower support being attached first. Containers 11 are then applied to the supports in the manner described above. The resulting arrangement is extremely compact and utilizes a maximum of the space occupied on the perforated board. Individual boxes may be slipped in or out without disturbing or removing other component parts of the arrangement. The units may be disassembled by first removing containers 11 and then extracting hooks 29 of supports 12 from the perforated board apertures as described previously.

Figure 5 illustrates various uses of the novel unit in conjunction with a perforated board, these uses being of a domestic nature by way of example. On the left hand portion of board 28 a plurality of containers 11 and supports 12 are secured in vertical relation to form drawers for holding various articles. To the right of this row of drawers, a support 12 is secured to a central portion of board 28 for use as a shelf to support a vase 33 for decorative purposes. Below and to the right of this shelf are a pair of supports 12 secured to the board alongside each other to form an elongated shelf for a radio 34. To the right of the radio shelf is a multiple arrangement of units for combined storage and decorative purposes. In particular, two containers 11 are mounted above supports 12 and serve as holders for flowers at different levels, and the right hand support 12 is also provided with a suspended container 11 for storing articles. It will be obvious that the decorative and utilitarian functions of these units may be changed at will to form various interesting and useful arrangements. Containers 11 may, for any given front-to-rear length of supports 12, be made of various lengths depending on the purpose desired. Supports 12 could furthermore be fabricated of multiple widths (that is, one long support having several sets of tracks side by side) so that one support 12 could be used for two or more containers 11 above and below. The top-to-bottom height of containers 11 could also be varied for any given size of support 12.

While it will be apparent that the preferred embodiment of the invention disclosed is well calculated to fulfill the objects above stated, it will be appreciated that the invention is susceptible to modification, variation and change without departing from the proper scope or fair meaning of the subjoined claims.

What is claimed is:

1. In combination, a rectangular container having an open top, four parallel tracks formed on opposite sides of said container along the upper and lower edges thereof, a support having a flat panel, means for securing said support to a stationary member whereby said panel is in a horizontal position, and four parallel tracks on said support immediately above and below said panel and extending along the side edges thereof, the tracks above said panel being adapted to receive the tracks at the lower edge of said container, the tracks below said panel being adapted to receive the tracks at the upper edge of said container.

2. In combination, a container having a rectangular shape and an open top, a pair of tracks extending along the top of said container on opposite sides thereof, a

second pair of tracks extending along the bottom of said container on opposite sides thereof, a support having a rectangular panel, means adjacent one end of said panel for removably securing said support to a stationary member with the panel in horizontal position, a first pair of tracks on said support extending along the side edges of said panel and adapted to receive the first pair of tracks on said container, whereby the container is slidable below said panel with the panel acting as a lid for the container, and a second pair of tracks on said support extending along the side edges of said panel and adapted to receive the second pair of tracks on said container, whereby the support will act as a shelf for the container.

3. In combination, a container having a rectangular shape and an open top, a pair of tracks extending along the top of said container on opposite sides thereof, a second pair of tracks extending along the bottom of said container on opposite sides thereof, a support having a rectangular panel, a plurality of hooks extending from one end of said panel and adapted to be inserted in the perforations of a stationary perforated board whereby the support will be held with its panel in horizontal position, a pair of tracks on said support extending along opposite sides of said panel immediately below, said last-mentioned pair of tracks being adapted to receive the first pair of tracks on said container whereby the container is slidable below said panel with the panel acting as a lid for the container, and a pair of tracks extending along the side edges of said panel immediately thereabove, said last-mentioned tracks being adapted to receive the second pair of tracks on said container whereby the support will act as a shelf for the container.

4. In combination, a container having a rectangular shape and an open top, a pair of tracks extending along the top of said container on opposite sides thereof, a second pair of tracks extending along the bottom of said container on opposite sides thereof, a support having a rectangular panel, a plurality of hooks extending from one end of said panel and adapted to be inserted in the perforations of a stationary perforated board whereby the support will be held with its panel in horizontal position, a pair of transverse flanges on opposite sides of said panel, the lower edges of said flanges being inclined downwardly and rearwardly, the rear edges of said flanges being of substantial length and adapted to engage said stationary perforated board to further support said panel in horizontal position, a first pair of tracks on said support extending along opposite sides of said panel and adapted to receive the first pair of tracks on said container, whereby the container is slidable below said panel with the panel acting as a lid for the container, and a second pair of tracks on said support extending along the side edges of said panel and adapted to receive the second pair of tracks on said container, whereby the support will act as a shelf for the container.

5. In combination, a container having an open top, a pair of tracks extending along the top of said container on opposite sides thereof, a second pair of tracks extending along the bottom of said container parallel to said first tracks, a support having a panel, means adjacent one end of said panel for removably securing said support to a stationary member with the panel in horizontal position, a first pair of tracks on said support adapted to receive the first pair of tracks on said container, whereby the container is slidable below said panel with the panel acting as a lid for the container, and a second pair of tracks on said support adapted to receive the second pair of tracks on said container, whereby the support will act as a shelf for the container.

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