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M. TARNOFF

3,211,293

RACK MOUNTABLE ARTICLE OF MANUFACTURE

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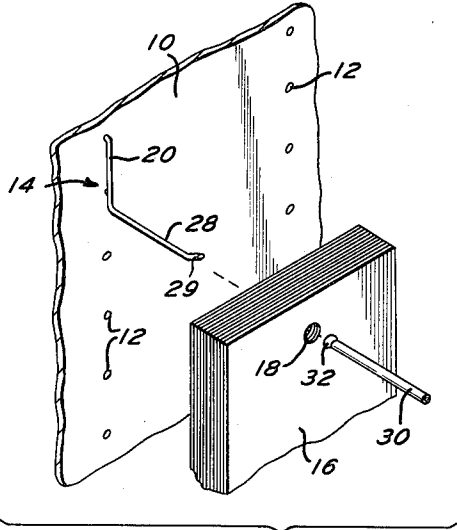


FIG. 1

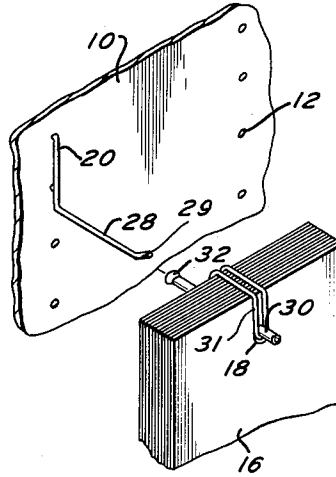


FIG. 2

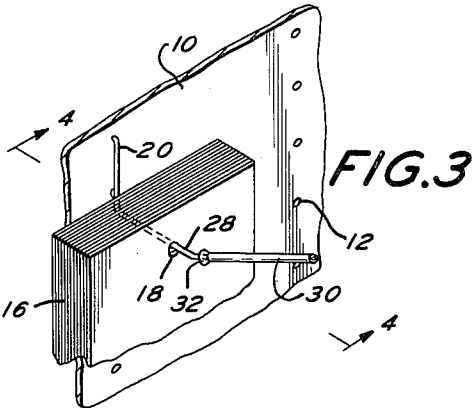


FIG. 3

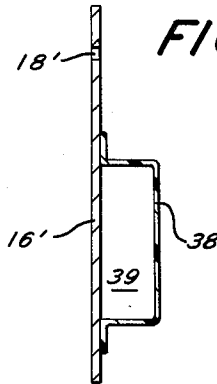


FIG. 5

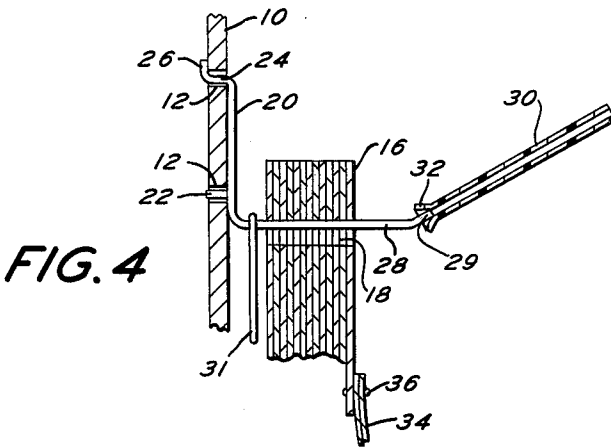


FIG. 4

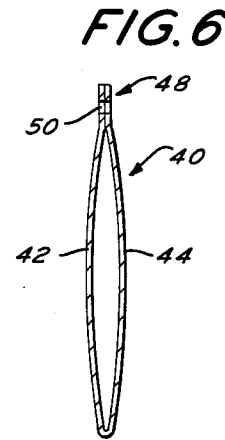


FIG. 6

INVENTOR.
MORRIS TARNOFF

BY

Arthur A. Seidel
ATTORNEY

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3,211,293 RACK MOUNTABLE ARTICLE OF MANUFACTURE

Morris Tarnoff, Erdenheim, Pa.
(2911 C St., Philadelphia, Pa.)
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This invention relates to a rack mountable article of manufacture. By a rack is meant a pegboard or other supporting surface on which is provided a plurality of spaced brackets. The brackets are adapted to support generally flat articles of manufacture, each having a hole through which an arm of the bracket extends.

Numerous articles of manufacture have been proposed heretofore which are adapted to be supported as described above in a store or the like. When it is desired to purchase one of the packages, the package is merely moved off the supporting arm of the bracket. When all of the articles on a particular bracket have been sold, they must be replaced one at a time by a clerk or employee. The present invention overcomes the time consuming task of replacing such packages one at a time. Thus, the present invention contemplates a stack or group of such articles of manufacture held in assembled relationship by a tube extending through the aligned holes in the stack and by a rubber band. This will enable the entire stack to be placed on an empty bracket.

The stack of articles may be sold with a tube extending through the aligned holes and a rubber band cooperating therewith for holding the stack in assembled relationship. The tube and rubber band are expendable.

The articles to be stacked may assume a variety of forms and generally will be in the nature of article bearing cards or envelope-type packages. The cards may have supported thereon a wide number of articles. For example, it is quite common to attach small packages of nails, screws, washers, etc. to a card by stapling, adhesive, or blister packaging. The same articles or different articles may be provided in the envelope-type packages. For example, envelope-type packages could contain seeds, stretch nylon hose, ribbons, needles, tools, etc.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a novel rack mountable article of manufacture.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a stack of articles held together in assembled relationship by means of a removable tube.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a stack of packages and an expendable mounting tube to facilitate mounting the stack on a bracket.

It is another object of the present invention to provide novel structure for stacking apertured articles of manufacture on a bracket supporting arm.

Other objects will appear hereinafter.

For the purpose of illustrating the invention, there is shown in the drawings a form which is presently preferred; it being understood, however, that this invention is not limited to the precise arrangements and instrumentalities shown.

FIGURE 1 is an exploded view of a supporting surface, a stack of articles, and mounting tube.

FIGURE 2 is an exploded view showing the components of FIGURE 1 in the relationship present when the stack is being mounted on the bracket.

FIGURE 3 is a partial perspective view of the stack of articles supported by the bracket with the mounting tube being removed.

FIGURE 4 is a sectional view taken along the line 4-4 in FIGURE 3.

FIGURE 5 is a sectional view through an alternative package.

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FIGURE 6 is a sectional view through another alternative package.

Referring to the drawing in detail, wherein like numerals indicate like elements, there is shown in FIGURE 1 an exploded view of the elements associated when using the present invention. Thus, in FIGURE 1, there is illustrated a supporting surface such as an upright board 10 having a plurality of spaced symmetrically arranged holes 12. A bracket designated generally as 14 is supported by the board 10 and has portions extending through the holes 12 as will be made clear herein-after.

A plurality of article bearing cards or envelope-type packages 16 are adapted to be supported in stacks from the brackets 14. The brackets 14 include a body portion 20 having legs 22 and 24. The legs 22 and 24 extend through the holes 12 in the board 10. Leg 24 is preferably provided with a bent tip 26. Bent tip 26 and leg 24 are inserted first when mounting the bracket 14 on the board 10. The body portion 20 is integral with the supporting arm 28 and is generally perpendicular thereto. Arm 28 terminates in angled tip 29. Bracket 14 is merely illustrative of one type of bracket which is commercially available and commonly used.

The cards or packages 16 are provided with a hole 18. The holes 18 are aligned with one another. The thickness of a stack of cards or packages 16 is slightly less than the length of the arm 28 on which the stack will be supported. The cards or packages 16 may have printed matter thereon in the form of advertisements or instructions with respect to the articles.

In one form of the present invention, the cards are arranged in a stack with the holes 18 in line with one another. A hollow mounting tube 30 extends through the hole 18. The outer diameter of the entire tube 30 is less than the diameter of the hole 18. A rubber band 31 is looped around the ends of tube 30 and extends over the top of the stack. The length of the tube 30 is preferably slightly greater than the thickness of the stack. The relationship between the length of the tube 30 and the thickness of the stack is slightly exaggerated in the drawing for purposes of illustration.

One end of the tube 30 is provided with a flared portion 32 to facilitate ease of entry of the tip 29 into the tube 30. The inner diameter of the tube 30, except for portion 32, is slightly smaller than the outer diameter of the arm 28. An article may be mounted on the card or package 16 in any convenient manner. As illustrated, an envelope 34 containing an article is secured to each card by a staple 36.

When all of the cards or packages 16 have been sold from a particular bracket, the present invention eliminates the necessity of replacing a stack of cards one by one. Thus, a stack of the cards or packages 16, which for example can be 15-20 cards or packages, can be assembled at the place of manufacture and held in assembled relationship by the tube 30 and rubber band 31. Thus, the clerk or operator need only cause the tip 29 of the arm 28 to enter the flared portion 32 on the tube 30, remove the rubber band 31 from the free end of tube 30, and thereafter slide the stack onto the arm 28. Alternatively, the stack and rubber band can be slid onto arm 28 with subsequent removal of one end of the rubber band. Thereafter, the tube 30 will be removed from the tip 29 and discarded. The rubber band 31 will be removed from arm 28 when all of the cards or packages 16 have been sold. Thus, the tube 30 and rubber band 31 may be considered to be expendable.

If desired, one or more of the tubes 30 may be incorporated in a container having a substantial number of stacks of cards or packages 16 held together by a clip,

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ribbon, or loosely positioned within the container. When it is desired to replace a stack of cards or packages 16 on an empty bracket 14, the tube 30 is first inserted through the aligned holes in the stack with the flared portion 32 of the tube 30 adjacent to the back surface of the bottommost card or package 16 of the stack. Thereafter, the stack is disposed on the supporting arm 28 of the bracket 14 as described above. When the stack has been so-mounted, the tube 30 may be pulled in the direction of the arrow in FIGURE 4, thereby leaving the stack on the supporting arm 28. The angle of tip 29 assists in loading a stack on arm 28 since the tube 30 will be at the same angle during loading and also assists in preventing the card or package 16 from inadvertently falling off arm 28.

In FIGURE 5, there is illustrated another embodiment of a card 16' having a hole 18'. A stack of such cards may be held together and/or mounted on a supporting bracket as described above. The article supported by the card 16' may be supported thereon by means of a blister 38. The article to be supported by the card 16' will be disposed within the space 39.

In FIGURE 6, there is illustrated another embodiment for an envelope-type package which is designated generally as 40. Package 40 is in the form of an envelope having side walls 42 and 44 integral at the bottom and provided with a seal joint 48 over a substantial portion at the upper edge thereof. A hole 50 is provided in the seal joint 48. The space between the side walls 42 and 44 is adapted to contain an article. The side edges of the envelope 40 may be a fold line or a seal joint. The seal joints may be attained by adhesives or by heat sealing if the envelope is made from a polymeric material such as polyethylene.

The relationship between the length and dimensions of the mounting tube and the holes 18 as described above is also applicable when using cards or packages as illustrated in FIGURES 5 and 6. The specific article supported by the cards or packages can assume a wide variety of shapes, forms and purposes. In addition to the above-mentioned articles, other articles such as slippers, slipper socks, bottle openers, picture hangers, etc. may be merchandised in accordance with the present invention. As used hereinafter, the word "package" is used in a generic sense whereby it embraces cards, envelopes, and other structures capable of having a hole therethrough which does not interfere with the mounting or disposition of the article supported thereby. Preferably, the tube 30 is made from

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a stiff or rigid material, such as rubber, or a polymeric material such as polyethylene or polyvinyl chloride.

The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the spirit or essential attributes thereof and, accordingly, reference should be made to the appended claims, rather than to the foregoing specification as indicating the scope of the invention.

I claim:

1. A combination comprising a support, a substantially rigid rod extending away from said support and having an offset portion at its free end remote from said support, an elbow portion connecting said rod to said offset portion, a stack of superimposed articles, each of said articles having a mounting aperture therein, the mounting apertures of all of said articles being in axial alignment with each other to form a bore extending through said stack, a substantially rigid tubular mounting member releasably positioned in said bore and having its opposite end portions extending outwardly from the corresponding ends of said bore, said mounting member being telescopically movable over said offset portion to effect a releasable coupling, said mounting member being limited in its telescopic movement by said elbow portion, whereby substantially the full extent of said rod remains free for reception of said stack, said stack being slidable in a continuous path longitudinally of said mounting member and of said rod when said mounting member is coupled to said rod.

2. The assembly of claim 1 wherein an elastic retaining means is resiliently clamped around one edge of said stack and is releasably engaged with said opposite end portions of said mounting member.

3. The assembly of claim 1 wherein said mounting member is provided with an outwardly flared end for telescopically engaging said offset portion.

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Theron E. Condon, *Primary Examiner*.