



(11) (21) (C) **2,000,768**
(22) 1989/10/16
(43) 1990/05/15
(45) 2000/04/11

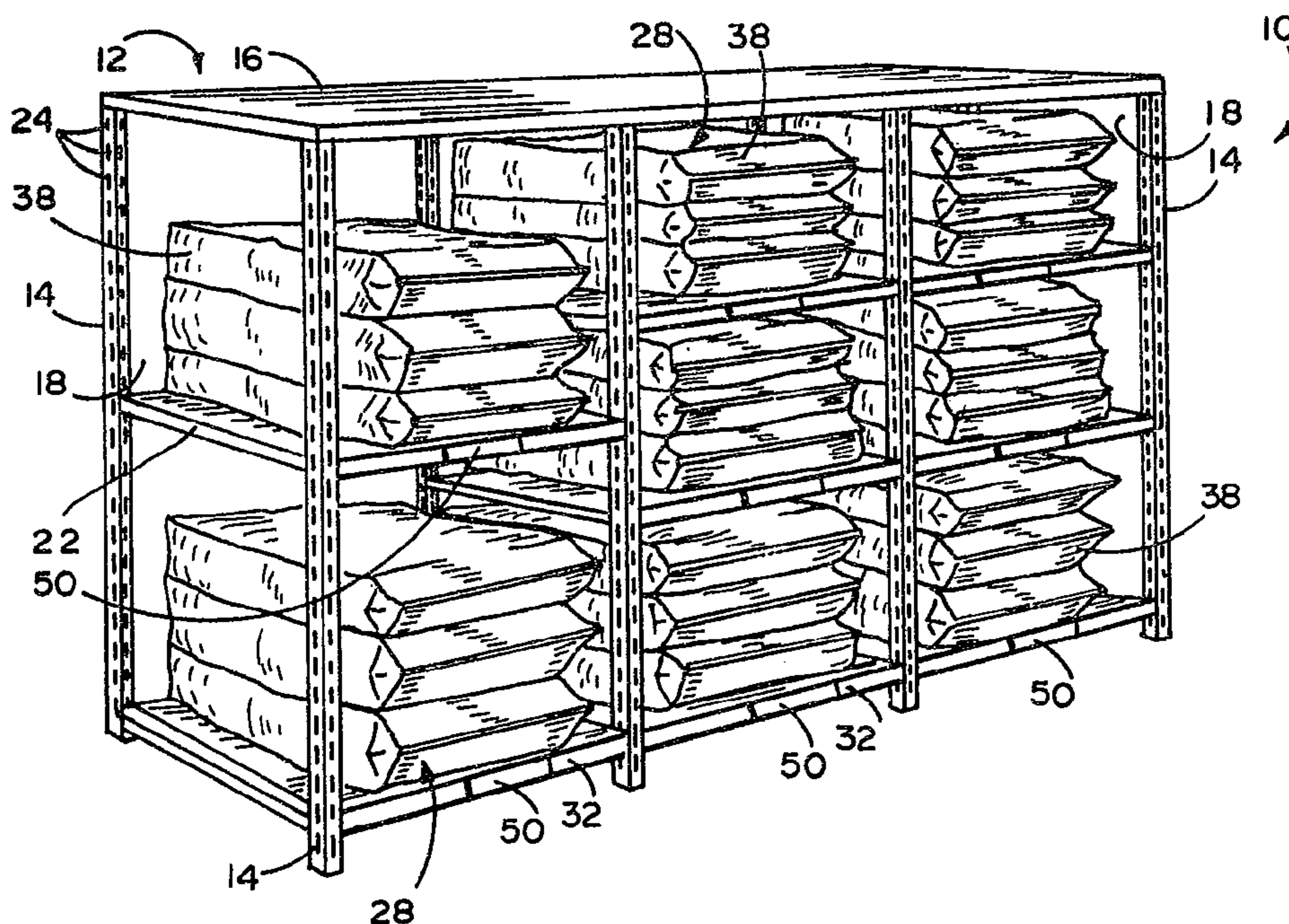
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(51) Int.Cl.⁵ G09F 3/20

(30) 1988/11/15 (271,949) US

(54) **SYSTEME POUR VENTE LIBRE-SERVICE DE GROS
CONTENANTS**

(54) **SELF-SERVICE SALES SYSTEM FOR LARGE CONTAINERS**



(57) A self-service sales system for large containers such as pet food bags and the like includes a fixture having a plurality of container or bag shelves. A price channel positioned at each of the shelves contains product identification and marketing information. In addition, a plurality of Universal Product Code (UPC) symbol pads are fixed to the price channels. The symbol pads are attached by an adhesive coated foam strip. The pad contains a plurality of removable sheets, each of which are imprinted with a product description and UPC code. The purchaser may remove a sheet corresponding to each product to be purchased. The sheets are taken to the checkout counter where the UPC code is read. After payment for the product, the retailer retrieves the product for the customer.



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1 SELF-SERVICE SALES SYSTEM FOR LARGE CONTAINERS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

 A self-service sales system for large containers
such as pet food bags and the like includes a fixture having
5 a plurality of container or bag shelves. A price channel
positioned at each of the shelves contains product identifi-
cation and marketing information. In addition, a plurality
of Universal Product Code (UPC) symbol pads are fixed to the
price channels. The symbol pads are attached by an adhesive
10 coated foam strip. The pad contains a plurality of remov-
able sheets, each of which are imprinted with a product
description and UPC code. The purchaser may remove a sheet
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are taken to the checkout counter where the UPC code is
15 read. After payment for the product, the retailer retrieves
the product for the customer.

SELF-SERVICE SALES SYSTEM FOR LARGE CONTAINERSBACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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The present invention relates to merchandising systems and more particularly to a unique sales system for large containers, bags and the like.

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Typical supermarkets or retail outlets include a plurality of fixtures or shelving for product display and storage. The fixtures include price channels which receive product description and price information. Generally, each product includes a label having a Universal Product Code (UPC) imprinted thereon. UPC supermarket systems are used with direct bagging check stands. Customers make their selections and place the products into a shopping cart. Checkout stands include a conveyor table, an optical scanner and a terminal. The optical scanner examines the UPC symbols printed on the items as they are pulled across a scanner window. The terminal in response to signals from the scanner automatically retrieves a product description and price. The terminal calculates the total charge, tax and change and prints a customer receipt on a tape. Such systems also include a keyboard which permits manual keying of product number and price or product information. An example of such a system may be found in U.S. Patent No. 3,959,624 entitled CODED MERCHANDISING COUPON and issued on May 25, 1976 to Kaslow.

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Problems are encountered with the retailing of large containers such as 25 pound and 50 pound bags of pet food, cat litter and the like. The bags are heavy and bulky. The product is difficult for the average customer to pick up and place in a shopping cart. Once brought to the checkout counter, difficulties are experienced with using a

1 UPC symbol printed on the container. The product number or
price must be manually entered at the UPC terminal. The
bulkiness and weight of the product creates an inherent
barrier to purchase. Due to the product size, customer
5 assistance is generally necessary.

A need exists for an improved sales system
providing enhanced large bag or container retail merchandis-
ing presentation, which will improve inventory-to-sales
stock ratio, reduce out-of-stock situations and result in an
10 increased sales experience and accurate sales data due to
the UPC tracking system.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with the present invention, the
aforementioned needs are substantially fulfilled. Essen-
15 tially, the present invention includes a display or sales
fixture including a shelf or platform for supporting a
plurality of large containers, bags and the like. A price
channel is affixed to the fixture adjacent the shelf. The
price channel contains product identification and pricing
20 information. A UPC symbol pad is fixed to the price
channel. The pad includes a plurality of removable sheets
containing a product description and a corresponding UPC
code. The merchandising system allows the customer to
select the product, remove one of the UPC sheets and take
25 only the sheet to the checkout counter. The UPC sheet is
easily read by the optical scanner at the checkout counter.
The retailer can then retrieve and deliver the product to
the customer's vehicle. The retailer can provide the
service in conjunction with normal curbside pickup or lot
30 delivery services. The inherent barriers to bulk purchase
of product are eliminated. The customer therefore obtains

1 the benefits of reduced price normally associated with bulk
purchase and sales are enhanced. The retailer can insure a
more accurate control over inventory since personnel of the
retailer are removing the stock from the display fixture.

5 Out-of-stock situations are reduced or eliminated. In
addition, the customer no longer has to wrestle with the
heavy containers to remove them from a display shelf, place
them into a shopping cart and/or carry them to the checkout
counter and subsequently to their vehicle.

10 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a front, perspective elevation of a
display fixture incorporating the sales system in accordance
with the present invention;

15 Fig. 2 is an enlarged, fragmentary, front
elevational view of a price channel in accordance with the
present invention; and

Fig. 3 is a cross-sectional view taken generally
along line III-III of Fig. 2.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

20 A self-service sales system in accordance with the
present invention is illustrated in Fig. 1 and generally
designated by the numeral 10. System 10 includes a display
or storage rack or fixture 12. In the preferred form,
25 fixture 12 includes a plurality of vertical uprights 14, a
top 16 and open sides 18. Adjustably supported between
uprights 14 are product support shelves 22. As shown in
Fig. 1, uprights 14 are provided with vertically spaced
slots 24. Shelves 22, in a conventional fashion, include
30 suspension hooks or tabs which are received within the slots
24. As a result, a plurality of different size compartments

1 or bins 28 capable of accommodating different size
containers are defined by the fixture 12.

Positioned along the front of each of the shelves
22 is a price channel member 32. In a conventional fashion,
5 price channel member 32 contains product description and
pricing information. Each price channel 32 also supports a
Universal Product Code symbol pad 50.

Each of shelves within the respective bin or
compartment 28 supports large containers or bags 38. The
10 containers may be of different sizes such as 25 pound, 50
pound and 75 pound sizes. The bin sizes may be varied in
vertical height to accommodate more bags of the higher
demand product. The fixture is capable of displaying many
different products to the customer including pet foods, cat
15 litter and the like.

As seen in Figs. 2 and 3, price channel 32 is an
elongated member. It is preferably formed from a sheet
metal employing a roll forming process. Channel 32 includes
a planar base portion 54 having an upper edge 56 and a lower
20 edge 58. A forwardly angled, upper, planar portion 60 is
joined with and formed integral with upper edge 56. Portion
60 extends at an angle "a" of approximately 30° with respect
to portion 54. Extending along and formed integral with an
upper edge 62 of portion 60 is a configured top flange 64.
25 Top flange 64 is reverse bent to define a forward bead 66
and a rearwardly extending flange portion 68. Flange 64
defines a rearwardly opening channel 70. Formed integral
with lower edge 58 of base portion 54 is a lower flange 74.
Flange 74 is reverse bent and also defines a forward bead 76
30 and a rearwardly extending flange portion 78. Flange 74
defines a rearwardly opening channel 80.

1 In a conventional fashion, price channel 32 at
edges 58 and 62 receives and supports flexible pricing
cards. In addition, base portion 54 defines a flat surface
which is positioned for ease of viewing by the customer. A
5 pricing or other merchandising and product information label
may also be applied to this surface.

 The UPC symbol pad 50, as also seen in Figs. 2 and
3, includes a plurality of removable sheets 90. The indi-
vidual sheets are held by a suitable adhesive or glue
10 binding 92 along the upper edge of the pad. A rearmost
sheet 94 is secured to an adhesive coated, foam pad or
attachment strip 96. Strip 96 has pressure sensitive
adhesive applied to its front and back surfaces. The strip
is pressed against portion 54 to secure the UPC symbol pad
15 to the price channel. As seen in Figs. 2 and 3, foam strip
96 is dimensioned to position the lowermost edge of the
bottom sheet 94 outwardly from beads 76 of lower flange 74.
As a result, all of the sheets are positioned so that the
customer may easily tear or remove an individual sheet from
20 the pad. Pad 90 extends from a point adjacent flange 74 to
flange 64. Each sheet 90 includes a product description 98
and a UPC symbol 100. The UPC symbol is read by the optical
scanner at the checkout stand in a normal fashion.

 In use, the retailer positions the display or
25 storage fixture at a convenient point in the store. Since
the retailer will remove the product from the fixture, it
will normally be placed near a store exit associated with a
curb pickup lane. Suitable product 38 is placed on the
individual shelves. The appropriate UPC symbol pads are
30 positioned on the shelves employing the pressure sensitive
adhesive pads 96. The customer is presented with a visual

1 presentation for the individual product which is improved
over pallet stacks and other arrangements previously used.
The customer can easily see the product and readily make his
5 selection. The customer need not, however, physically
remove the product from the storage shelves and take it to
the checkout counter. The customer removes one of the
10 sheets from the appropriate UPC symbol pad. The sheet is
presented at the checkout counter. The checker will read
the sheet using the optical scanner. A bag person or other
assistant can retrieve the appropriate product from the
display fixture 12 and deliver the product to the customer's
vehicle.

The unique large container or bag sales system in
accordance with the present invention eliminates the
15 inherent resistance to purchase of bulk products heretofore
experienced. The system makes the purchase of heavy and
bulky product substantially easier. The system reduces
brand out-of-stock situations and provides an improved
visual presentation to the customer. The system increases
20 sales over prior approaches.

In view of the foregoing description, those of
ordinary skill in the art will undoubtedly envision various
modifications which would not depart from the inventive
concepts disclosed herein. It is expressly intended,
25 therefore, that the above description should be considered
as only that of the preferred embodiment. The true spirit
and scope of the present invention may be determined by
reference to the appended claims.

The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A merchandising system for large containers, comprising:

a rack including a plurality of shelves for supporting and displaying of plurality of large products of different sizes and types;

a UPC symbol pad associated with each product, each said pad including a plurality of manually removable individual sheets, each sheet having respective product information and a UPC symbol thereon;

attachment means engaging each said pad for attaching said respective pad to said rack adjacent said associated product;

each said attachment means comprising:

an elongated price channel which defines a generally planar base portion; and

an adhesive strip secured to said pad and associated said planar base portion of said channel, said strip dimensioned to position said pad for ease of removal of said sheets.

2. A merchandising system as defined by claim 1 wherein said price channel further includes upper and lower configured flanges defining forwardly facing beads and a forwardly angled upper portion joined to said base portion.

3. A self-service sales system for large containers, said system comprising:

a storage fixture defining a plurality of container shelves for supporting a plurality of large containers;

a plurality of price channels, each positioned along one of said shelves, each price channel providing product identification and price information;

each of said price channels being an elongated member defining a planar base having an upper edge and a lower edge, a forwardly angled planar upper portion integral with said upper edge, a reverse bent, configured upper flange joined to said upper portion and a reverse bent, configured lower flange integral with the lower edge of said planar base;

a plurality of UPC symbol pads, each pad fixed to one of said price channels, said pads including a plurality of removable sheets containing a product description and a corresponding UPC symbol so that a purchaser may remove a sheet corresponding to the product to be purchased and present the sheet at a checkout counter for purchase; and

each of said UPC symbol pads further including an adhesive coated foam attachment strip engaging said planar base and a bottom one of said removable sheets, said sheets being dimensioned to extend from a point adjacent said lower flange to said upper flange.

4. The self-service sales system as defined by claim 3 wherein said foam attachment strip has a thickness which positions said removable sheets away from said lower flange to facilitate removal of said sheets by a customer.

5. A merchandising system for large containers,

comprising:

a rack for the storage and display of a plurality of large, bulk containers, said rack including a plurality of shelves for supporting a plurality of product containers of different size and type;

a UPC symbol pad including a plurality of manually removable individual sheets, each sheet having product information and a UPC symbol thereon; and

attachment means engaging said pad for attaching said pad to said rack, said attachment means comprising:

an elongated price channel which defines a generally planar base portion, an upper edge with a forwardly extending top flange and a lower edge with a forwardly extending bottom flange; and

an adhesive strip secured to said pad and said planar base portion of said channel, said strip being dimensioned to position said pad on and within said price channel with the sheets spaced from the planar base and positioned outwardly from the lower edge of said channel and forwardly of the bottom flange thereof for ease of removal of said sheets.

6. A merchandising system as defined by claim 1 wherein said flanges define forwardly facing beads and a forwardly angled upper portion joined to said base portion.

7. A merchandising system as defined in claim 1 wherein said system includes additional UPC symbol pads and attachment means associated with each of said products.

8. A self-service sales system for large containers, such

as pet food bags and the like which contain product, said system comprising:

a storage fixture defining a plurality of container shelves for supporting a plurality of large containers;

a plurality of price channels, each positioned along one of said shelves, each price channel providing product identification and price information, each of said price channels being an elongated member defining a planar base having an upper edge and a lower edge, an upper portion integral with said upper edge, a reverse bent configured upper flange joined to said upper portion and extending forwardly thereof and a reverse bent configured lower flange integral with the lower edge of said planar base and extending forwardly thereof; and

a plurality of UPC symbol pads, each pad disposed within and fixed to one of said price channels, said pads including a plurality of removable sheets containing a product description and a corresponding UPC symbol for the product in the large containers, wherein each of said UPC symbol pads further includes an adhesive coated foam attachment strip engaging said planar base of one of said price channels and a bottom one of said removable sheets, said upper and lower flanges being dimensioned such that said sheets extend from a point adjacent and forward of said lower flange to said upper flange of said one of said price channels and wherein said foam attachment strip has sufficient thickness such that it extends forward of the reverse bent lower flange to position said removable sheets forward of said lower flange to facilitate removal of said sheets by a customer.

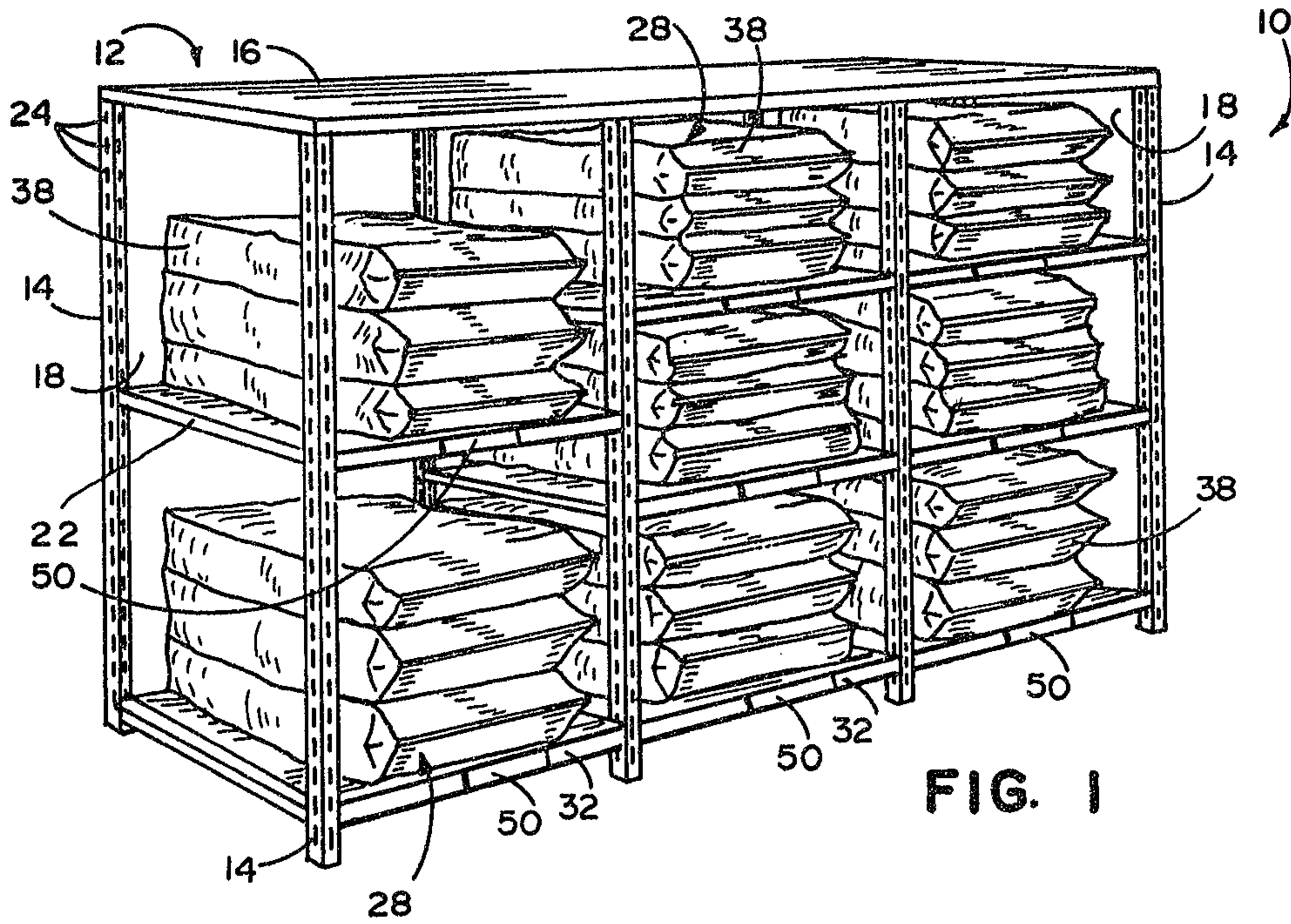


FIG. 1

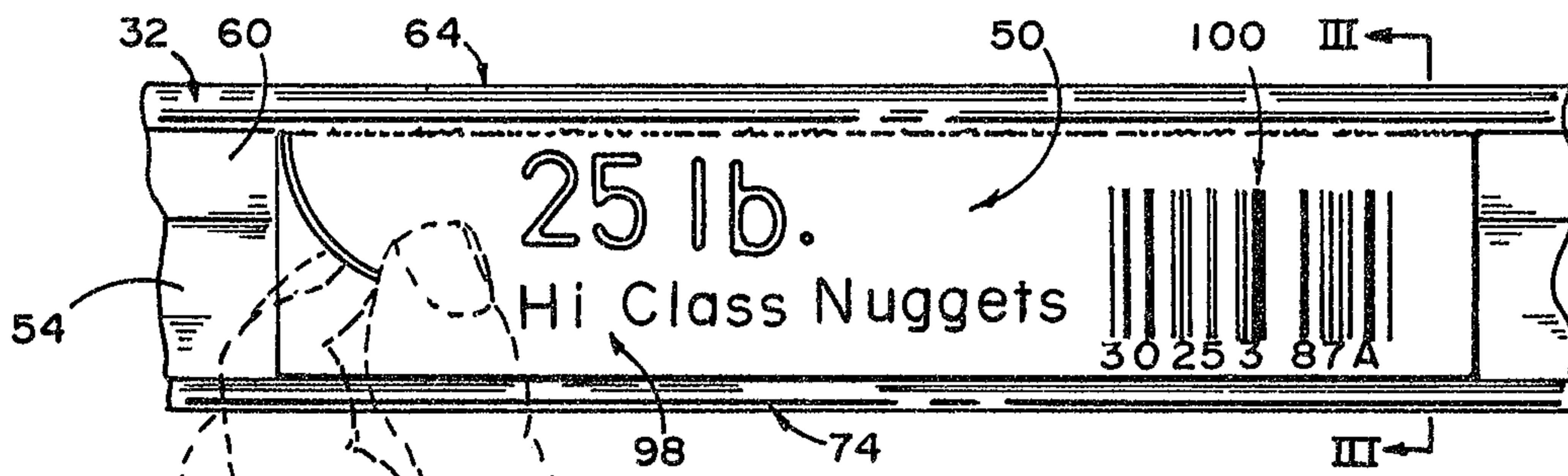


FIG. 2

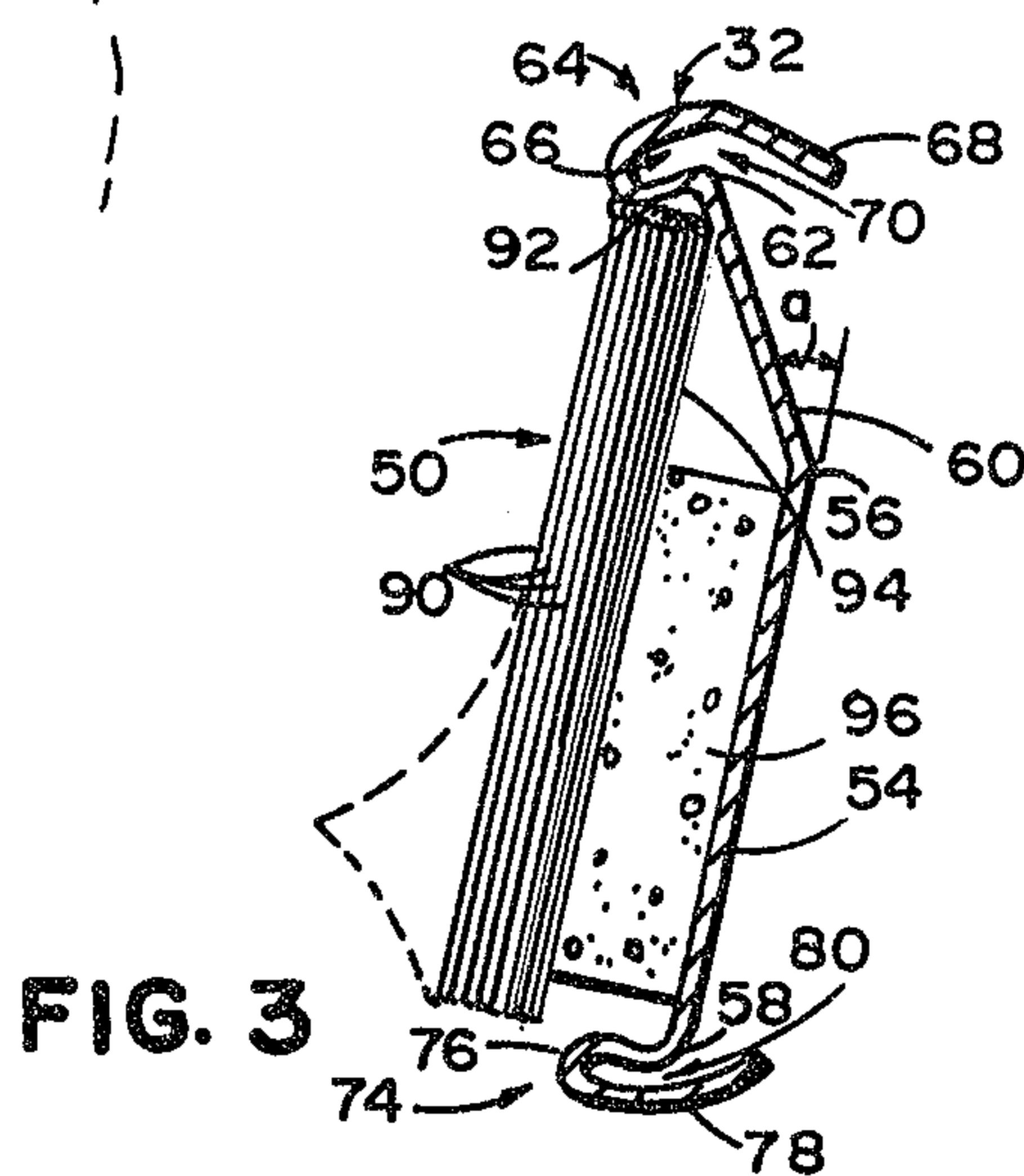


FIG. 3

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