Jan. 31, 1950 K. S. TRENHOLM 2,496,073

SHIELDED SERVICE SIGNAL FOR COUNTERS

Filed Dec. 17, 1947

Fig. 1.

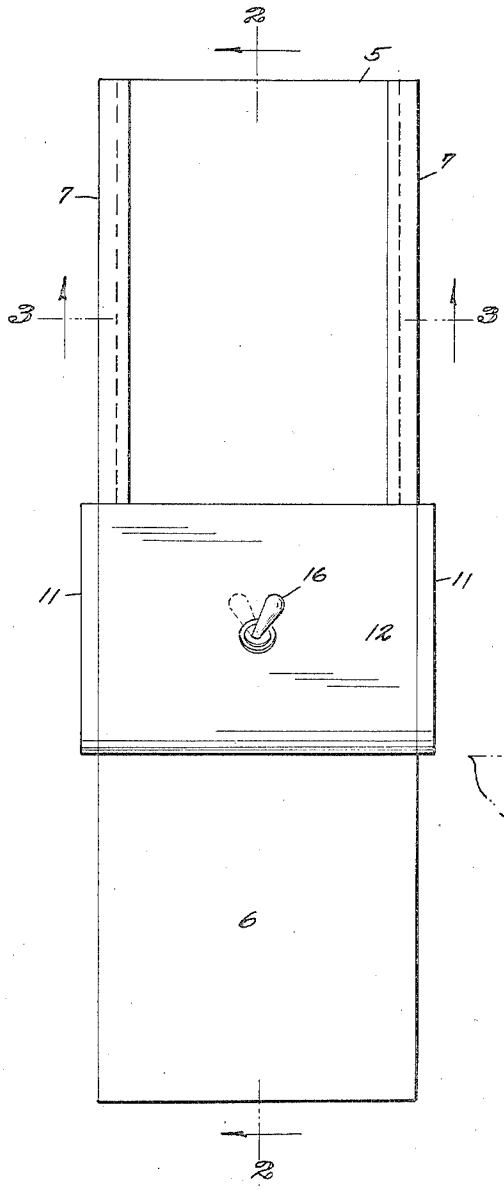


Fig. 2.

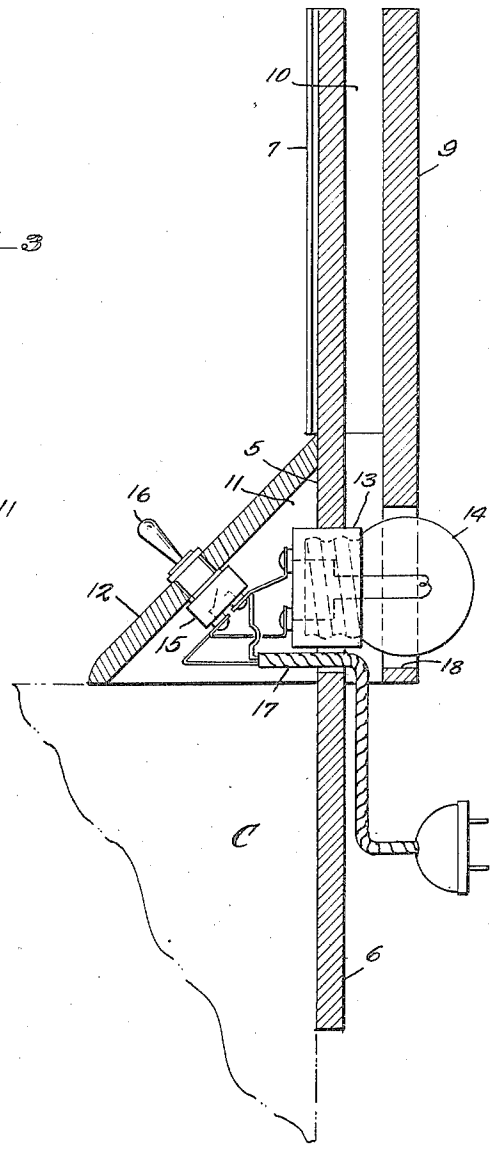
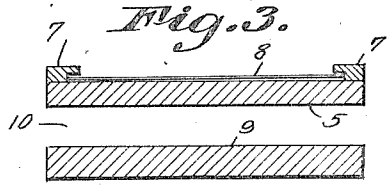


Fig. 3.



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SHIELDED SERVICE SIGNAL FOR COUNTERS

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2 Claims. (Cl. 177—329)

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This invention relates to a service signal, adapted to be mounted on fountain or lunch counters or the like.

It is a well known fact that especially during busy times, a customer at a counter may find it very difficult to obtain the attention of the counter attendant. This is an irritating occurrence, and reacts to the embarrassment and inconvenience of the persons on both sides of the counter.

The main object of the present invention is to provide an installation for a counter whereby a customer is enabled to convey his desire for service to the attendant immediately, and whereby, further the attendant can by a quick glance know exactly which customers are in need of service.

Still another important object is to provide a device of the type stated which is so formed as to be capable of serving not only as a service signal, but also as an advertising display and menu holder.

With the foregoing and other objects in view which will appear as the description proceeds, the invention consists of certain novel details of construction and combinations of parts, hereinafter more fully described and pointed out in the claims, it being understood that changes may be made in the construction and arrangement of parts without departing from the spirit of the invention as claimed.

Referring to the drawing

Figure 1 is a front elevational view of a device constructed in accordance with the invention.

Figure 2 is a section on line 2—2 of Figure 1, a portion of a counter being shown in dotted lines.

Figure 3 is a section on line 3—3 of Figure 1.

Referring to the drawing in detail, the reference character 5 designates a front panel, which can conveniently be formed from wood, metal, or any other suitable material. In the present instance, the panel is of relatively elongated and rectangular conformation, and is adapted to be vertically mounted against the back of a counter C, so as to project above the top surface thereof. The lower end of the panel has been designated by the reference numeral 6, and permits the panel to be secured to the back of the counter by any suitable fastening means, not shown.

To the front face of the upper end of the panel 5 are secured a pair of guides 7. These are mounted so as to extend longitudinally of the side edges of the panel, and are adapted to receive a celluloid window 8, behind which can be removably inserted a card on which is imprinted advertising material. Since the card itself constitutes no part of the present invention, it has not been illustrated.

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In spaced parallel relation to the front panel 5 is a rear panel 9 which is shorter than the front panel, extending from the top of the front panel to the plane of the counter surface. A space 10 is defined by the two panels, in which can be placed a menu or the like. The rear panel 9 is assembled with the front panel by means of side members 11. These members extend forwardly of the front panel, so as to overlie the upper surface of the counter C. The forwardly projecting portions are inclined, and extended therebetween is a switch panel 12.

Mounted in the front panel 5 and behind the switch panel 12 is a lamp socket 13, which opens to the rear. Screwed into the lamp socket is a bulb 14, which projects rearwardly and slightly beyond the rear panel 9. The bulb is in circuit with a switch 15, mounted in the switch panel, that is provided with lever 16 for the convenience of the customer and the attendant. Power is supplied through a cord 17, which can be plugged into a suitable circuit. As will be understood, such a circuit would include other devices like that illustrated, it being intended that there be one such device mounted before each seat, or before pairs of adjacent seats.

It is to be noted that the rear panel 9 is formed with an opening 18 through which the lamp bulb 14 extends. Thus, the rear panel serves not only as a means for placing a menu in the device, but also, is a protective means for the bulb, preventing accidental breaking of a bulb by an attendant as he moves along the counter.

It will now be seen that with a device of the type described and illustrated mounted against the back of a counter in front of each seat, an attendant can tell at a glance which customers desire service, since the customer is enabled, whenever he desires service, simply to close the switch 16. Thus, the attendant can observe at one time all illuminated bulbs. When the attendant has ascertained the customer's wants, the attendant can simply flick the switch, so as to turn off the light.

It may be further noted that where there are a number of counter attendants, each having separate stations, lamp bulbs of different colors can be used, with each color being limited to a particular station.

Another important characteristic of the device is the fact that it not only serves as a means for

signifying the necessity of service, but additionally, is a combined menu holder and advertising display. The device, while serving these various purposes, yet takes up a complete minimum of space, most of the device being positioned rearwardly of the counter, though not to an extent which would be bothersome to the counter attendants.

By use of devices of this type, the important advantages are obtained of increased efficiency in waiting on customers, increased sales by giving customers prompt service, and a direct display of advertising material where the customer cannot help but see it.

It is believed obvious that each unit can draw its power from a battery mounted in association therewith, rather than from the house circuit.

What is claimed is:

1. A service signal installation for a counter including a flat supporting panel adapted to be mounted against the back of a counter, a switch panel forwardly extended therefrom and overlying a portion of the top of the counter, a switch mounted in the switch panel in position for actuation by a customer, a flat rear panel having an aperture secured to and spaced from the front panel, and a signal device in circuit with the switch, mounted in the supporting panel and rearwardly extended therefrom partway through the aperture of the rear panel so as to be shielded thereby.

2. A service signal installation including a flat front panel adapted for vertical mounting at the back of a counter and including a lower portion abutting against the counter and an upper portion projecting above the counter, a flat rear panel disposed back of the front panel and in spaced parallel relation thereto, side members connecting the front and rear panels and overlying the top of the counter, a switch panel extended between the side members, a lamp socket mounted in the upper portion of the front panel and rearwardly extended therefrom, the rear panel being formed with an opening concentric with the socket and through which a lamp bulb is adapted to be partially extended so as to be shielded by the rear panel, and a switch carried by the switch panel in circuit with the signal device.

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