Jan. 25, 1966 R. J. HODSON 3,231,097

DISPOSABLE DISPLAY STAND

Filed Aug. 17, 1964

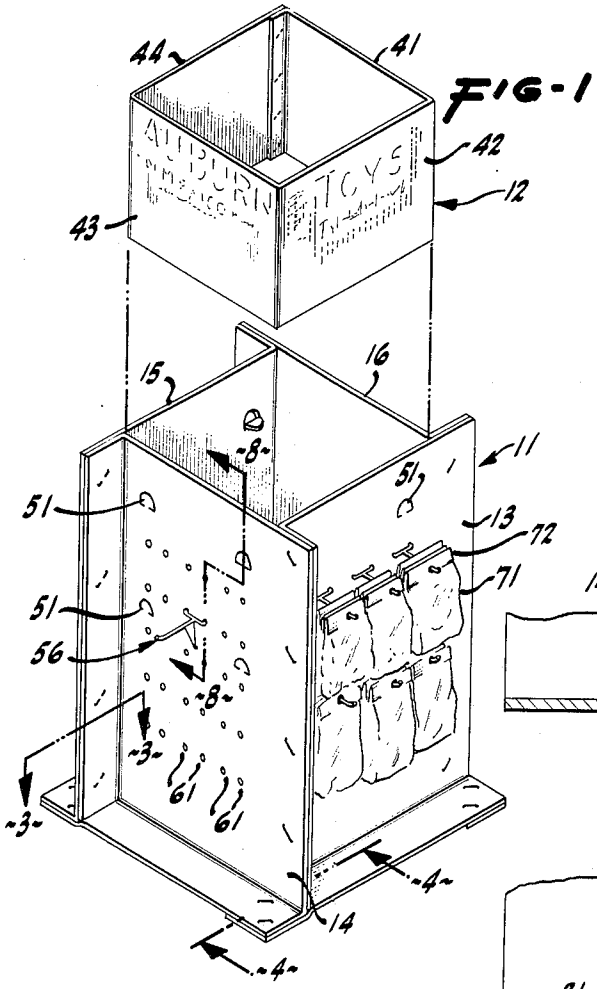


FIG-1

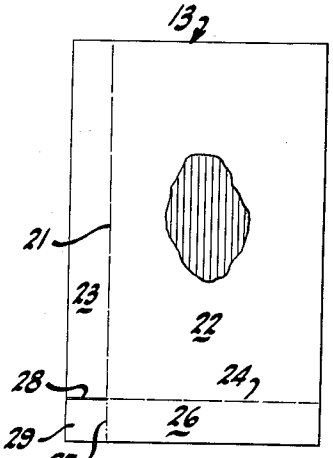


FIG-2

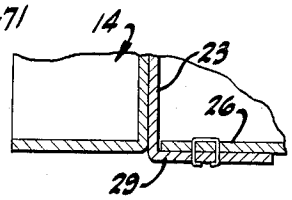


FIG-6

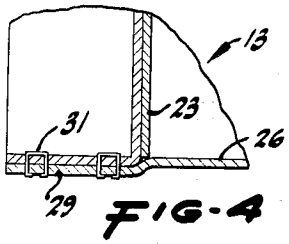


FIG-4

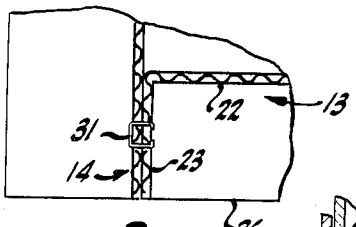


FIG-3

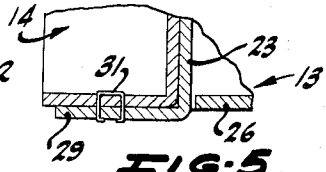


FIG-5

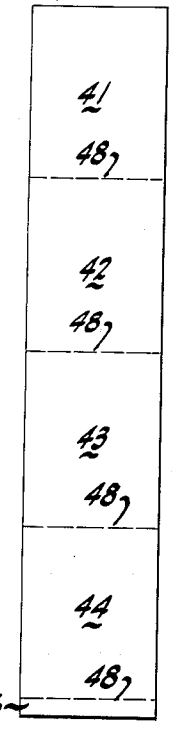


FIG-7

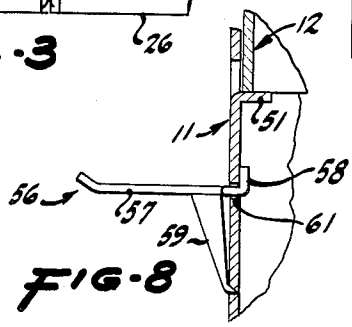


FIG-8

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DISPOSABLE DISPLAY STAND

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The present invention relates to a disposable tower or stand for carrying sale items such as toys, both during shipping and subsequent display for sale of the items carried.

It is common in the sale of many items, such as toys, for some type of permanent display stand, or the like, to be utilized, and in this connection a wide variety of items are now displayed and sold in disposable plastic bags. These bagged items are commonly provided with a semi-rigid top, as in the form of light cardboard for identifying the identity, origin and price of the item, and by this portion of the bag, are commonly mounted on hooks, or the like, for display in stores. With the advent of "bagging," it has become possible to materially improve the merchandising of many types of goods, and to extend the range of locations in which same may be displayed for sale. Thus, for example, supermarkets now often display for sale a wide range of toys, which are readily viewed by prospective purchasers through the transparent plastic bags in which they are originally wrapped.

In order that clerks in stores such as supermarkets, or the like, need not spend an excessive amount of time in the sorting, handling, pricing, and the like of bagged items, it is commonplace for sales companies to install permanent stands of metal, or the like, in the store and to provide the service of refilling these stands from trucks which service routes including a large number of the stands. It is not only the type of product packaging which makes it possible for items of this sort to be sold in markets which do not specialize in that type of item, but also the service which is provided in replacing sold items, so that the store manager need not concern himself or expend an undue amount of time in filling the stands or re-ordering items sold therefrom. There are many advantages to this type of merchandising, but also there are certain disadvantages attendant thereto. For example, store owners and managers are entirely dependent upon service companies which install and refill the display stands and, of course, the cost of this service must be deducted from the possible profit available to the retailer. Various other disadvantages are well known to those familiar to this field of merchandising.

The present invention provides a display stand or tower carrying bagged items and having such a low cost that the display stand is truly disposable. The particular structure of the display stand of this invention affords a high degree of rigid support for items carried thereon, and furthermore, is completely stable so as to be free standing without any problems of tipping or upsetting in a store. While the display stand hereof carries all items thereon in full view of prospective purchasers, the stand also provides sufficient protection for the items that the stand and items can be shipped together with the sale items mounted on the stand. Thus no personnel at the retail outlet need handle any sale items carried by the stand. Consequently, the stand itself comprises a carrier for the items during shipping, and maintains the desired segregation of the items and placement of same in the exact position in which they are displayed for sale. Furthermore, the display stand of this invention is telescoping, in that a portion of the stand may be raised into permanently extended vertical position for displaying advertising matter pertaining to the items carried by the stand. Extremely simple telescoping action allows the clerk of the retail

outlet to easily extend a top portion of the stand into permanently extended position.

A preferred embodiment of the present invention, together with certain alternative structures thereof, is illustrated in the accompanying drawing, wherein:

FIGURE 1 is an expanded perspective view of the display stand hereof showing only one segment of the stand carrying items for display;

FIGURE 2 is a plan view of a sheet of material such as corrugated cardboard, which is employed in folded condition as one of the panels of the display stand;

FIGURE 3 is a partial sectional view taken in the horizontal plane 3—3 of FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 4 is a partial sectional view of the lower left-hand corner of the display stand taken in the plane 4—4 of FIGURE 1 and showing the joinder of panels;

FIGURE 5 is an illustration of the same portion of the stand as FIGURE 4, but showing an alternative embodiment;

FIGURE 6 is a showing of the same portion of the stand as FIGURE 4, but illustrating yet another embodiment;

FIGURE 7 is a plan view of a sheet of material which is adapted to be folded into the telescoping top of the stand;

FIGURE 8 is a partial vertical cross-sectional detail of a portion of the display stand wall taken in the plane 8—8 of FIGURE 1 and showing the mounting of the telescoping top in extended position and a mounting bracket on the stand.

Considering now a preferred embodiment of the present invention, and referring to the drawings, there is shown in FIGURE 1 a perspective view of a display stand in accordance with the invention, and including an upright display unit 11 having an upwardly extending telescoping unit 12 above same. The upright display unit is formed of four identical panels 13, 14, 15 and 16, which originate as flat sheets, such as illustrated in FIGURE 2. Each of the panels is formed of a lightweight, inexpensive sheet material having a substantial rigidity, such as corrugated cardboard, illustrated in FIGURE 2. In employing corrugated cardboard for the panels, the corrugations are disposed laterally of the panels so that maximum vertical strength is imparted to the resultant unit.

As shown in FIGURE 2, a panel 13 is formed as a rectangle having a dimension, for example, of about two and one-half feet wide by five feet high. A vertical fold line 21 is formed as by scoring the sheet of material longitudinally thereof and inward a short distance from one lateral edge to thereby define a major panel portion 22 and an edge wall portion 23, as indicated. An additional fold line is provided transversely across the sheet displaced from the bottom the same distance that the vertical fold line 21 is displaced from the lateral edge of the sheet. This transverse fold line 24, which may be formed by scoring, perforation, or the like, defines a floor or stand portion 26, which is adapted to be folded upwardly along the line 24 into perpendicular relationship with the main panel portion 22. Insofar as the lower left-hand corner of the sheet is concerned, there are formed either fold lines or cuts, depending upon the particular manner in which the separate panels of the invention are to be joined, and thus a line 27, which is an extension of the fold line 21, extends across one end of the floor portion 26 and may either be a perforation or a cut. An additional line 28 extends laterally across the edge wall portion 23 as an extension of the fold line 24, and may, likewise, be either a fold line or a cut. In the instance wherein the two lines 27 and 28 are cuts, it will be seen that a small square portion 29 of the sheet is removed.

In assembly of four panels to form the stand of the present invention, each of the panels has the vertical edge

wall, such as 23 of panel 13, folded outwardly to lie at a right angle to the main panel portion, such as 22, and also has the bottom or floor portion, such as 26 of panel 13, folded outwardly to lie at a right angle to the main panel portion and side wall portion. With the corner square, such as 29 of panel 13, removed from each of the panels, assembly is simply accomplished by firmly joining the edge wall 23 of panel 13 to the back of adjacent panel 14. This, then, disposes the main portions of panels 13 and 14 in perpendicular relationship. The vertical edge wall of the panel 14 is then secured to the back of the adjacent panel 15. Panels 15 and 16 are similarly joined together, and 16 is joined to 13 to thereby form a unit having a central void of square cross-section and a generally square overall cross-sectional configuration.

Joinder of adjacent panels may be advantageously accomplished by utilization of large staples, as schematically illustrated at 31. It is, of course, also possible to join the separate panels together by adhesives, if desired. The bottom portion 26 of panel 13 is folded outwardly perpendicular to the remainder of the panel, and the bottom portions of the other panels are likewise folded outwardly.

Various alternatives are possible in the manner of forming the above-described corner portions of the stand, and some of these alternatives are shown in FIGURES 4, 5 and 6. Instead of removing the corner square portion 29 of the panel 13, a cut is made only along the fold line 28, as shown in FIGURE 2. This, then, leaves the corner portion 29 attached to the floor 26 of the panel 13 and makes it possible for this corner portion to be stapled or otherwise attached to the floor of the adjacent panel 14. In FIGURE 4, there is illustrated one manner of joinder wherein the corner square 29 is folded upwardly with the floor portion 26 to extend beneath adjacent panel 14, and is secured thereto by staples 31, to thereby additionally strengthen the bottom portion of the display stand. In this illustrated configuration, the bottom portion or floor of each panel is prevented from additional and undesirable movement or folding because it is secured to the corner tab 29 of the adjacent panel.

In addition to the possible configuration illustrated in FIGURE 4, it is also to be appreciated that the corner tab 29 may be cut free from the floor 26 along the line 27 and folded with the edge wall. In the embodiment of FIGURE 5, the fold line 28 is scored on the back face of the panel 13. This figure illustrates the resultant structure wherein the tab 29 is folded outwardly beneath the floor portion of the adjacent panel 14 and is joined thereto as by means of staples 31.

A further alternative attachment of adjacent panels is illustrated in FIGURE 6. In this instance, the panel 13 has a cut made along the line 27 so that the tab depends from the edge wall. Joinder of adjacent panels is herein accomplished by folding the edge wall 23 and floor portion 26 into right angle relationships with the main panel portion 22. The tab 29 is folded up beneath the floor portion 26 and is secured thereto as by staples 31. The next adjacent panel 14 is then placed in aligned abutting relationship with the edge wall 23 of the panel 13, and is stapled to the edge wall of panel 13. This configuration also serves to firmly lock together the lower portions of floor elements for the stand for increased rigidity of the overall display stand and prevention of inadvertent movement of these floor portions thereof.

Considering the general configuration of the display stand hereof somewhat further, it will be appreciated that the stand has a generally rectangular configuration from the top. A central rectangular opening is disposed through the center of the stand, and individual display panels are provided on the four exterior sides to hang merchandise for sale. The edge wall 23 of panel 13 and like portions of the other panels extend outwardly from the central rectangle of the stand to thus provide added lateral stability of the stand. Furthermore, the generally L-shaped area in plan view, within which individual items are mounted upon each panel, serves to inset these items from the extreme periphery of the stand without in any way decreasing the accessability of the items for viewing or sale. A certain measure of protection for the items is, however, afforded by this structure, and this is particularly important with respect to the shipping of the display stand loaded with items. Some type of external wrapping or carton is disposed about the entire stand having all panels thereof filled with items for display and sale. The exterior cover or carton (not shown) has the interior cross-sectional area equal in size and shape to the bottom area of the display stand and, consequently, the volumes within which the display items are mounted on the four panels of the stand are protected so that the items are not physically engaged by the surrounding carton. Internal rigidity to the carton is afforded by engagement of the vertical edge walls of the display stand with the interior surfaces of the surrounding carton.

The telescoping top portion 12, which may be provided with the stand hereof, has a rectangular configuration and fits within the central opening of the stand. This telescoping portion 12 need not have a top cover, unless desired, but does include four walls 41, 42, 43 and 44 forming a square, and may be joined together by folding an edge 46 of the wall 44 inside the adjacent edge 41 and stapling same together along this edge. A sheet 47 of corrugated cardboard or the like, as shown in FIGURE 7, is folded at lines 48 to form the top portion 12. In shipment, the top portion 12 is telescoped into the lower portion of the stand by sliding the unit 12 downwardly into the stand.

A slip-fit is provided between the telescoping top portion and the interior surface of the display panels of the stand, and provision is made for maintaining the top unit 12 in upwardly extending position upon set up of the stand for sale and display of items carried thereby. These means may include small tabs 51 formed in the panels of the display stand on a horizontal line around the periphery thereof, slightly below the top of the panels. As illustrated in FIGURE 2, these tabs may be formed by a cut as in the form of a semicircle with a fold line across the lower edge of the cut, so that a person may push the tab inwardly through the panel by pressing upon the tab. These tabs remain affixed to the panel and turn inwardly about the fold line, as illustrated in FIGURE 8, so that the top unit 12 may be lowered upon the tabs and thereby restrained from telescoping back inside the display stand. It will thus be seen that a plurality of these tabs 51 extend inwardly beneath the top unit 12 so that the unit is held in extended position. The top unit is not adapted to carry items for sale, but instead, carries advertising material printed on the external surface thereof. As an ornamental improvement to the display stand, the top of the telescoping unit 12 may be formed in any of a wide variety of configurations, such as cut-outs of toys, a cut-out of a castle silhouette, or various other possible shapes.

With regard to the mounting of items upon the display stand, there are preferably employed a plurality of hooks 56 formed of substantially rigid material and mounted upon each of the panels of the stand. Although a variety of different hook configurations are possible, the illustrated hook 56 includes an elongated bar 57 having a slightly upturned front end, and a pair of L-shaped projections 58 extending upwardly from opposite ends of a transverse member across the back end of the bar. The hook 56 also includes a depending brace 59 adjacent the rear end of the bar 57 and having a pointed rearward extension, as illustrated in FIGURE 8. The mounting hooks are adapted to be secured to the panel through pairs of openings 61 formed in the panels, as indicated, for example, in FIGURE 1.

Upon assembly of the display stand by stapling or otherwise joining together the four panels 13 to 16 thereof, the hooks are inserted by pushing the two hook extensions 58 of each hook through a pair of holes 61

in the panel, and then rotating the hook downwardly until the bar **57** thereof extends perpendicularly outward from the panel. In this position, the depending brace **59** has the bottom rearward point thereof resting against the exterior surface of the panel, so that pressure downwardly on the hook bar to bring it into horizontal position forces the bracket point into the panel to thereby lock the hook in position.

Following placement of the hooks upon each panel of the display stand, the stand is then loaded with display items by placing them upon the hooks. A group of display items is schematically illustrated in FIGURE 1 as comprising plastic bags **71** enclosing items for sale, and having a semirigid top portion **72** of light cardboard, or the like. Holes through this bag top **72** allow the bags to be hung upon the hooks, as shown in FIGURE 1. The weight of the bags necessarily holds the hooks downwardly in firmly anchored position upon the panels. Although there are shown only two rows of items on the panel **13** in FIGURE 1, such is not to be taken as limiting, for in actuality a relatively large number of bagged items may be mounted upon each panel of the display stand.

It is further noted with regard to the hooks for mounting of display items on the stand of this invention, that the upward projections **58** of each hook will tend to embed themselves somewhat in the corrugated cardboard, or the like, of the panel upon which they are mounted. This is not considered undesirable, and does, in fact, further lock the hooks in position. Additionally, it is noted that the amount of clearance provided between the telescopic top **12** and the interior opening of the bottom portion of the display stand shall be made sufficient that the top **12** slides fully into the stand, past the hook projections **58**. It may also be desirable to provide a second row of tabs similar to those shown in **51**, in order to limit the maximum depth of telescoping of the top into the bottom. For ease of raising the top, it is preferable that same be maintained in position to be readily reached by a person, rather than resting entirely at the bottom of the stand, and consequently additional tabs **51** may be disposed about the lower portion of the stand, at a distance below the top thereof substantially equal to the height of the top telescoping portion **12**. These lower tabs **51** would then be pressed inwardly of the panels at the time the top portion is inserted, and prior to shipping of the overall unit.

Considering now the utilization of the present invention, there is first constructed the top and bottom portions of the stand, in the manner described above by cutting sheets of semirigid material, such as corrugated cardboard, into the shapes illustrated in FIGURES 2 and 7, cutting tabs **51** in the panels and punching holes **61** therein. The sheets are then folded and joined together as by staples **31** to form the physical structure illustrated in FIGURE 1. Hooks **57** are inserted in the pairs of holes **61**, and bagged items **71** are hung upon these hooks. The top portion **12**, which may have advertising sales material printed upon the exterior surface thereof before assembly, is telescoped into the bottom main portion **11** of the stand. Prior to this telescoping of the top into the bottom, the lower tabs **51** may be pressed inwardly to limit the degree to which the top slides into the bottom, for the purposes noted above.

With the display stand fully loaded with a predetermined selection of bagged items, such as toys, the entire stand is then packaged for shipment. It is contemplated that a variety of different selections of toys, for example, will be available to the retailer so that he need only order a particular unit of merchandise to receive a complete disposable display stand containing a desired selection of ready-mounted items for sale. In packaging of the filled stand for shipment, there may be employed a cardboard carton of rectangular configuration having an interior side dimension equal to the total width of a panel **13** of the stand. The side walls of the carton will thus engage the vertical side edges of the panels and the outwardly turned bottom edge of each panel. Consequently, the carton will be reinforced internally by the display stand itself, and the bagged items carried by the stand will be disposed in the spaces between the carton wall and the display stand panels. Even though the carton wall then receives a blow or is dented in some manner, same will not injure the sale items carried by the stand.

The packaged stand and items carried thereby is then shipped to the retailer who removes the package carton, as by a perforated strip allowing the carton to be opened away from the stand resting upon its base. The retailer then raises the telescoping top **12** and presses the tabs **51** inwardly so that upon release of the top it rests upon these tabs in extended position. There is thus provided a complete display unit containing sale items, such as toys or the like, in plastic bags with appropriate advertising markings and sale prices for complete self-service selling.

Although it is possible to refill the stand by adding further bags thereto, it is not necessary to do so, for upon sale of a substantial amount of the items carried by the stand the few remaining may be removed and the entire stand destroyed, as by burning. The few remaining bagged items may then be mounted upon the next stand delivered, at least after some few sales have been made therefrom. It will be seen that to the retail merchandiser the necessity of handling, marking, and inventorying sale items is entirely removed by the present invention. Furthermore, there is afforded to the retail outlet a pleasing display of sale items, such as toys, with full manufacturer's advertising and marking thereon. The panels of the stand may, of course, be covered, marked, or otherwise treated to maximize saleability of the items carried thereon. It is, of course, in the best interests of the one providing the stand to maximize saleability of the items carried by the stand, and consequently the retailer may expect the very best type of advertising display, normally not available to the retailer because of costs.

It is particularly emphasized that the stand of this invention is intended to be disposable, and consequently to be formed of inexpensive materials. The use of corrugated cardboard stapled together fufills this requirement. The hooks **56** may be formed extremely inexpensively from lightweight plastic, and the overall stand provides requisite rigidity and structural strength to hold a very substantial number of display items that may in the aggregate have a considerable weight. The present invention does, in fact, open up an entirely new field of merchandising, wherein the manufacturer is placed in the position of directly exhibiting his wares through a retailer without the necessity of retail handling, or the like, and with the complete elimination of various middlemen. While certain aspects of this type of merchandise have been previously exploited, a wide variety of items have not lent themselves to previously available procedures. The improved disposable display stand of the present invention can accommodate any type of bagged item which is not too perishable, and is particularly applicable to the sale of toys. The ready availability of reasonably priced toys to the general public, particularly in locations frequented by parents and children alike, does substantially increase the total volume of sales of toys. The present invention accomplishes the foregoing, and is thus desirable from both the viewpoint of the manufacturer and the retailer.

Although the present invention has been described above with respect to a single, preferred embodiment of the invention with certain alternative configurations pointed out, it is not intended that the invention be limited by the terms of the description or illustration. Reference is made to the appended claims for a precise delineation of the true scope of this invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A disposable display stand comprising four rectangular panels of lightweight material, each of said panels having a single narrow vertical edge portion folded to

form an edge wall extending outwardly, said panels being vertically disposed with the edge wall of each abutting the back of an adjacent panel along one edge thereof to form a hollow, rectangular stand, and means securing said panels together at least along the edge walls thereof to form a rigid display structure adapted to hold items for display.

2. A stand as set forth in claim 1, further defined by each of said panels having a bottom edge portion folded outwardly and fixed to an adjacent panel in such position.

3. A stand as set forth in claim 1, further defined by a telescoping top unit dimensioned to slip-fit into the volume surrounded by said connected panels, and at least some of said panels having push tabs extendable into the interior of the stand adjacent the top thereof for holding said top unit in vertically extended position.

4. A disposable display stand comprising four vertical panels disposed in offset perpendicular relation to each other with each panel abutting the back of the next adjacent panel a short distance from a vertical edge thereof, means securing said panels together to define a rectangular upright stand with a different panel edge extending from each corner thereof, each of said panels having a bottom edge portion extending outwardly of the stand and secured in substantially perpendicular relation to the remainder of the panel, and means fixing said bottom edge portions in said perpendicular relation for defining a free-standing, upright stand adapted to carry display items.

5. A stand as set forth in claim 4, further defined by each of said panels being a separate sheet of corrugated cardboard having the corrugations laterally thereacross, each panel being folded along a vertical line adjacent one edge to form an edge wall lying against the back of an adjacent panel and secured thereto, each of said panels being folded outwardly along a horizontal line adjacent the bottom edge to form said bottom edge portion of the same width as the width of said edge wall, and a corner tab of each panel defined by said vertical and horizontal fold lines being partially cut free from the remainder and folded into contact with other panel portions with means securing the corner tab thereto for strengthening of the stand.

6. A stand as set forth in claim 5, further defined by said corner tab being separated from said edge wall for

extension under the bottom edge portion of the adjacent panel, and means attaching together said corner tab and said bottom edge portion of the adjacent panel.

7. A stand as set forth in claim 5, further defined by said corner tab being separated from said floor portion and being folded up under same and secured thereto.

8. A stand as set forth in claim 5, further defined by said corner tab being separated from said floor portion and being folded back from said edge wall in extension beneath the floor portion of the adjacent panel and secured thereto.

9. A disposable display stand comprising four flat panels disposed in perpendicular relationship to adjacent panels to define a hollow rectangle, each of said panels extending outwardly beyond the adjacent panel on one side and being vertically folded outwardly along the other side to form a narrow vertical wall lying flat against the back of the adjacent panel, staples securing said panels together along contacting sides thereof, each of said panels having the bottom edge folded outwardly the same distance as said vertical wall thereof to form a floor portion, each of said panels having a plurality of apertures therein for receiving hook means adapted to carry items for display, each of said panels having partial cut-out portions adapted to be bent inwardly of the stand, and a telescoping top unit dimensioned to fit into the stand defined by said panels and to rest upon the inwardly bent partial cut-out portions of said panels to remain in upwardly telescoped position.

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