May 1, 1928. 1,668,171

L. E. PRATT

COUNTER DISPLAY AND DISPENSING DEVICE

Filed March 7, 1927 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1

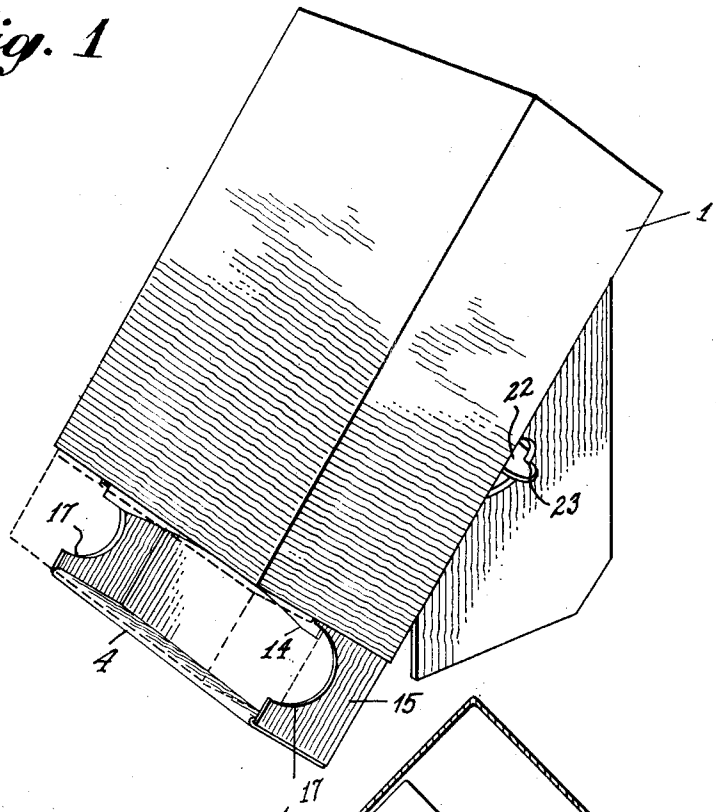
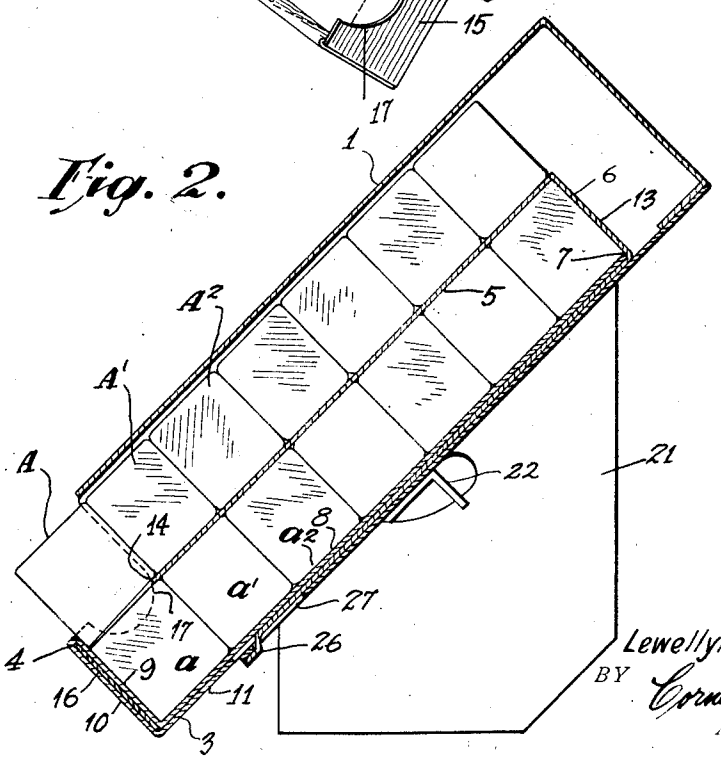


Fig. 2.



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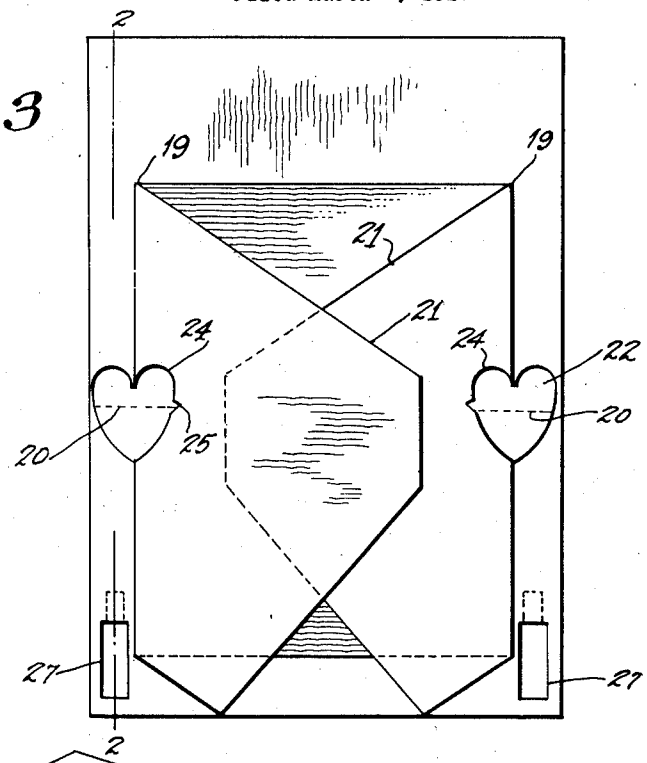
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Fig. 3



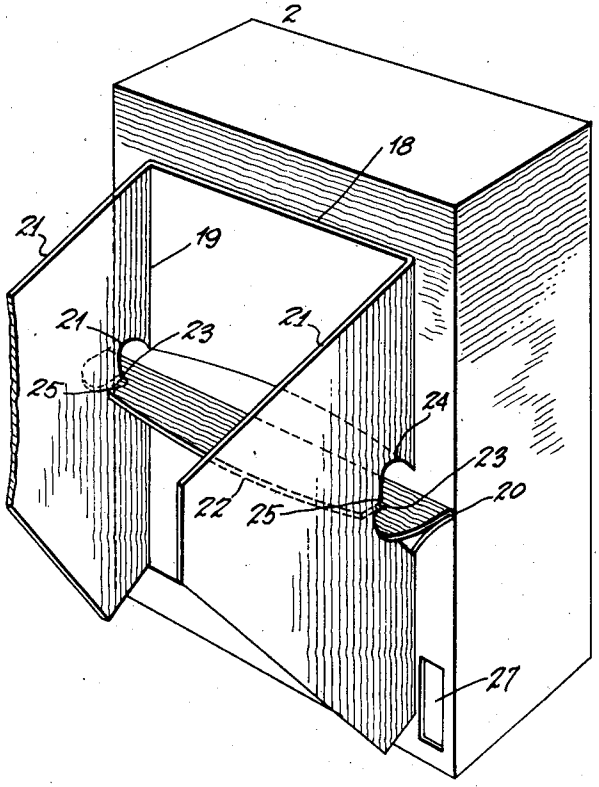


Fig. 4

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Patented May 1, 1928. 1,668,171

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

LEWELLYN E. PRATT, OF NUTLEY, NEW JERSEY.

COUNTER DISPLAY AND DISPENSING DEVICE.

Application filed March 7, 1927. Serial No. 173,527.

This invention is a dispensing device adapted primarily for counter display of vendable articles, and the object of the invention is to provide a simple and efficient display and dispensing device which is also well adapted for packaging vendable articles. In other words, the device of this invention is so constituted that it may be employed as a carton for the shipment of the articles to be dispensed and upon arrival at the place where the articles are to be sold, it may be set up in a position to automatically dispense the articles and simultaneously serve as a display therefor.

In practically carrying out the invention, the device embodies a suitable casing provided with an open end and with the bottom of which casing is associated a collapsible easel for supporting the casing in inclined position with the open end thereof down.

Positioned for sliding movement within the casing is a sliding drawer which, for the greater portion of its length, is substantially equal to the height of the casing. Said drawer is, however, cut away at its front end so that the front wall of the drawer is slightly greater in height than one half the height of the casing.

The said drawer carries a partition which extends forwardly from substantially midway of the height of the back thereof to a point slightly rearward of the front end of the drawer. This partition divides the casing into upper and lower compartments in both of which the articles to be vended are initially packed. When the device is prepared for shipment, the articles to be vended are positioned within the drawer with one series of articles in the base of the drawer and a second series resting upon the partition. The drawer is then closed to position all of the articles within the casing. The easel associated with the bottom of the casing is of the foldable type and during manufacture is made in collapsed form, so as to lie flat against the bottom of the casing.

The casing with the articles packaged therein and with the easel in folded condition may be compactly shipped to a destination at which point the easel is unfolded to support the casing in inclined position on a showcase. When the casing is inclined, as stated, the weight of the articles in the drawer will cause the drawer to slide forward sufficiently to rest upon the surface on which the easel is supported. Means is preferably associated with the drawer to engage with the casing and limit its forward movement of the drawer in order that the extent of projection of the drawer may be accurately assured.

When the device is set up in the manner described, the foremost article of the top layer will be exposed beyond the front end of the casing, but will be maintained in position by the front edge of the drawer. In this position, said foremost article will be exposed to view and may be conveniently removed by simply lifting it free from the drawer. As soon as the foremost article is removed, the remainder of the upper row of articles will gravitate forwardly until the next article engages the front of the drawer, i. e., until it comes into the position previously occupied by the article just removed. When this next article is removed, the upper series of articles will again gravitate forwardly in the manner described and in this way, all of the upper series of articles are successively fed into exposed position for convenient removal. After the upper series of articles have all been removed, the lower series of articles may be individually removed in the same manner, it being apparent that said articles will successively gravitate into exposed position as the foremost articles are successively removed from the drawer.

The device of this invention thus provides a simple and convenient means for dispensing merchandise in a thoroughly reliable and efficient manner.

The device of this invention is of marked advertising value and materially assists in the making of sales. The articles to be vended are in full view of the prospective customer in that he can see the next article to be dispensed. Furthermore, the surface of the casing provides ample space for such advertising matter as it may be desirable to apply thereto, and the device is compact and does not occupy any more space on a counter than would be required for the goods themselves.

Features of the invention, other than those adverted to, will be apparent, from the here-

inafter detailed description and claims, when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

The accompanying drawings illustrate one practical embodiment of the invention, but the construction therein shown is to be understood as illustrative, only, and not as defining the limits of the invention.

Figure 1 is a perspective view showing the device of this invention in display and dispensing position.

Figure 2 is a longitudinal section of the structure as shown in Figure 1, this section being taken in the plane of the line 2—2 of Figure 3.

Figure 3 is a bottom plan view of the device with the parts in compacted positions.

Figure 4 is a perspective view showing the easel unfolded and in the condition in which it is shown in Figure 1.

Referring to the drawings, 1 designates a casing shown as rectangular and having an open end 2, and closed top, bottom, sides and back. The casing may be made of any suitable material, but, in practice, I find it convenient in the interest of economy, to fabricate it from cardboard, suitably folded in any manner well known to the box maker's art.

Operable within the casing 1 is a drawer 3. This drawer is preferably in practice of a height approximately equal to the height of the casing, but is provided with a front wall 4 preferably somewhat higher than half the height of the casing, but less than the full height of the casing. The drawer may be made in any suitable manner or material, but, in practice, I find it economical and convenient to make it of cardboard with a partition 5 extending forwardly from the back 6 of the drawer to a short distance from the front 4, as shown best in Figure 2.

It is important in practice that the front 4 of the drawer be in the form of a relatively strong abutment, and it may be so constituted by making the drawer with the cross section, such as shown in Figure 2. That is to say, the stock which forms the drawer, and more particularly the bottom and front thereof, extends forwardly from the point 7 at the back end of the drawer, along the bottom of the drawer, as shown at 8, to the front, whence it is carried upwardly, as shown at 9, to the upper edge of the front. From this point, it is returned upon itself, as shown at 10, and carried down to the bottom of the drawer and rearwardly along beneath the part 8, as shown at 11, to the back edge of the drawer. Here it is extended upwardly, as shown at 13, for substantially one half the height of the casing at which point it is bent forwardly to form the partition 5 which terminates short of the front of the drawer as shown at 14. The sides 15 of the drawer are bent up from the part 11 and both sides are provided at their front ends with flaps 16, bent at right-angles to the sides and tucked in between the parts 9 and 10.

The sides of the drawer directly posterior to the front are cut out as shown at 17 to allow ready access to an article positioned in the front end of the drawer.

It is to be noted that in this manner of forming the drawer, the part 8 constitutes a false bottom, which lends rigidity to the construction and renders the front 4 more rigid and capable of withstanding strains imposed thereon by the articles to be dispensed.

Mounted on the bottom of the casing 1 is an easel 18, which, in practice, may be conveniently made of cardboard. This easel is preferably glued to the bottom of the box and is scored along the lines 19 and 20 to facilitate bending along these lines. In compacted position, the easel is folded, as shown in Figure 3, so that the brackets 21 lie flat against the bottom of the box and the spacing flap 22 also lies flat, as shown in Figure 3.

When it is desired to set up the device for display and dispensing purposes, the brackets 21 are swung outwardly into right angular relation with the bottom of the box and thereafter the spacing flap 22 is also bent into right angular relation to the box, as shown in Figure 4.

From Figure 4, it will be noted that the easel portion of the structure is formed from one piece of cardboard scored and cut to be folded in the manner described, and the spacing flap 22 is notched as shown at 23, so that it will maintain the brackets 21 in parallel relation to one another. The spacing flap operates within cut outs 24 in the brackets and these cut outs are notched, as shown at 25, to interfit with the notches 23 and lock the spacing flap in the position in which it is shown in Figure 4, so that the easel will not inadvertently collapse.

The brackets 21 are shaped to support the casing in the inclined position shown in Figures 1 and 2 and are so positioned with respect to the casing that the open end of the casing will be elevated above the surface on which the brackets rest. With this arrangement, the weight of articles packed within the drawer will cause the drawer to gravitate into the open position shown in Figures 1 and 2, and in which position the front edge of the drawer will engage with the surface on which the easel rests and will cooperate with the easel to support the weight of said articles. To insure this relationship between the parts, the part 11 of the drawer bottom is provided with cut out tongues 26 which work in slots 27 formed in the bottom of the casing, and these slots are so positioned that the tongues will engage with the forward ends of the slots when the drawer is moved forwardly the distance necessary

to engage with the surface on which the device is supported. These tongues therefore limit the forward movement of the drawer to a predetermined maximum.

As shown best in Figure 2 of the drawings, the articles are packed in two layers, the lower layer of which rests directly upon the false bottom and the upper layer of which rests directly upon the partition 5. The articles of the upper layer are designated, respectively, from the front to the back, as A, A′, A², etc., while the articles of the bottom layer are designated in like manner, *a*, *a′*, *a²*, etc. The partition rests directly upon the articles of the bottom layer and this enables the partition to properly support the articles of the upper layer. It will of course be understood that the device is of such size and proportions as to properly house the articles which it is desired to dispense therefrom and to form a fairly close fitting container therefor.

In the initial packaging of the articles, they are introduced into the casing and the drawer closed. At this time, the easel is in the folded condition of Figure 3, and the device may be shipped in a manner to require practically no more space than is required for the articles themselves. Upon reaching its destination, the device may be readily set up for the display and dispensing of the articles contained therein. This is accomplished by unfolding the brackets 21, turning down the spacing flap 22 to hold the easel in supporting position and permitting the drawer to open. When the device is set, for example, upon a counter or showcase, the drawer will immediately open until the lower end of the drawer engages the counter at which time, the tongues 26 will simultaneously engage with the forward ends of the slots.

When thus conditioned, the article A will be exposed to view and may be removed by a prospective purchaser. Upon removal of the article A, the articles A′, A², etc., of the upper layer will slide forwardly to move the article A′ into exposed position. This operation will be completed as the articles of the upper layer are consecutively vended.

After the upper layer has been exhausted, the article *a* of the lower layer comes into view and upon its removal, the remaining articles of the lower layer gravitate into a position to expose the article *a′*. This operation is repeated with the vending of successive articles until the casing is empty.

I wish to call attention to the fact that the partition 5 should extend sufficiently forward to slightly overlap the articles *a*, so as to provide for the uninterrupted sliding of the articles of the upper layer into exposed or vending position.

If the partition were shorter, there would be a tendency of the articles to engage with the edge of the article *a* under some conditions and preclude the free sliding operation of the articles of the upper layer.

Attention may also be directed to the utility of the false bottom which I have described. Substantially the greatest strain imposed upon the front 4 of the drawer is when all the articles are in the container or when only one or two of the articles are removed and the remaining articles of the top layer slide forward to engage the front 4. At these times, the false bottom is carrying the greater portion of the weight of the articles and inasmuch as the false bottom is secured to the drawer front, it ties the front firmly to the drawer and renders said front better able to withstand the stresses to which it is subjected. Furthermore, the false bottom serves to hold back the parts 13 and 5 when all the articles of the top layer are removed and obviates the tendency of the partition to move forwardly with the articles of the lower layer.

The device which I have described is simple in construction, may be economically manufactured, does not require appreciably more shipping space than the articles themselves and may be shipped in compacted position and easily set up by a store keeper. The article to be dispensed is within the full view of the prospective purchaser and the exterior of the casing, as well as all other exposed portions of the device, may be ornamented or may contain advertising matter appropriate to the articles to be dispensed.

The foregoing detailed description sets forth the invention in its preferred practical form, but the invention is to be understood as fully commensurate with the appended claims.

Having thus fully described the invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A display and dispensing device embodying a casing having an open end, a collapsible easel associated with the bottom of the casing for supporting the casing in inclined position with the open end down, a drawer slidable within the casing and adapted to be partially opened to expose articles contained in a plurality of layers in the drawer, the front of the drawer being sufficiently high to preclude articles in the top layer from falling out of the drawer when the drawer is opened, and a partition carried by the drawer and extending between the superimposed layers of articles to afford a smooth sliding surface to the articles of the upper layer.

2. A display and dispensing device embodying a casing having an open end, a collapsible easel associated with the bottom of the casing for supporting the casing in inclined position with the open end down, a drawer slidable within the casing and

adapted to be partially opened to expose articles contained in a plurality of layers in the drawer, the front of the drawer being sufficiently high to preclude articles in the top layer from falling out of the drawer when the drawer is opened, a partition carried by the drawer and extending between the superimposed layers of articles to afford a smooth sliding surface to the articles of the upper layer, and cooperating means formed on the drawer and casing for limiting the opening movement of the drawer to a predetermined extent.

3. A display and dispensing device embodying a casing having an open end, a collapsible easel associated with the bottom of the casing for supporting the casing in inclined position with the open end down, a drawer slidable within the casing and adapted to be partially opened to expose articles contained in a plurality of layers in the drawer, the front of the drawer being sufficiently high to preclude articles in the top layer from falling out of the drawer when the drawer is opened, a partition carried by the drawer and extending between the superimposed layers of articles to afford a smooth sliding surface to the articles of the upper layer, and tongues formed on the bottom of the drawer and cooperating with slots formed in the bottom of the casing to limit the opening movement of the drawer to a predetermined extent.

4. A display and dispensing device embodying a casing having an open end, a collapsible easel associated with the bottom of the casing for supporting the casing in inclined position with the open end down, a drawer in the casing, said drawer having a false bottom formed integral with the front of the drawer and serving to reinforce said front, the front of the drawer being of less height than the height of the casing, but a height greater than half the height of the casing, and a partition carried by the drawer and extending forwardly from the back thereof to divide the casing into upper and lower compartments, each of which is adapted to contain a layer of articles to be vended, said partition extending forwardly to a point short of the front of the drawer to expose successively articles of the lower layer after all the articles of the upper layer have been dispensed.

5. A display and dispensing device embodying a casing having an open end, a collapsible easel associated with the bottom of the casing for supporting the casing in inclined position with the open end down, a drawer in the casing, said drawer having a false bottom formed integral with the front of the drawer and serving to reinforce said front, the front of the drawer being of less height than the height of the casing, but a height greater than half the height of the casing, and a partition carried by the drawer and extending forwardly from the back thereof to divide the casing into upper and lower compartments, each of which is adapted to contain a layer of articles to be vended, said partition extending forwardly to a point short of the front of the drawer to expose successively articles of the lower layer after all the articles of the upper layer have been dispensed, and means associated with the drawer and casing for limiting the opening movement of the drawer to a predetermined extent.

6. A display and dispensing device embodying a casing having an open end, a collapsible easel associated with the casing to support the same in an inclined position with the open end down, and a drawer slidable within the casing and adapted to be partially withdrawn from the casing to expose articles adapted to be contained therein.

7. A display and dispensing device embodying a casing having an open end, a collapsible easel associated with the bottom of the casing for supporting the casing in inclined position with the open end down, a drawer slidable within the casing and adapted to be partially opened to expose articles contained in a plurality of rows in the drawer, and a partition carried by the drawer and extending between the rows of articles to preclude the articles in one row from engaging the articles in the adjacent row in order that said articles may slide freely when the casing is inclined.

8. A display and dispensing device embodying a casing having an open lower end, a collapsible easel associated with the casing to support the same in an inclined position with the open end down, a drawer slidable within the casing and the front of which drawer is of appreciably less height than the height of the casing, whereby articles contained within the casing are adapted to gravitate into exposed, readily accessible position at the front of the drawer.

In testimony whereof I have signed the foregoing specification.

LEWELLYN E. PRATT.