Dec. 29, 1942. C. J. SEIFERT 2,306,412

FILE BOX

Original Filed June 19, 1940 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

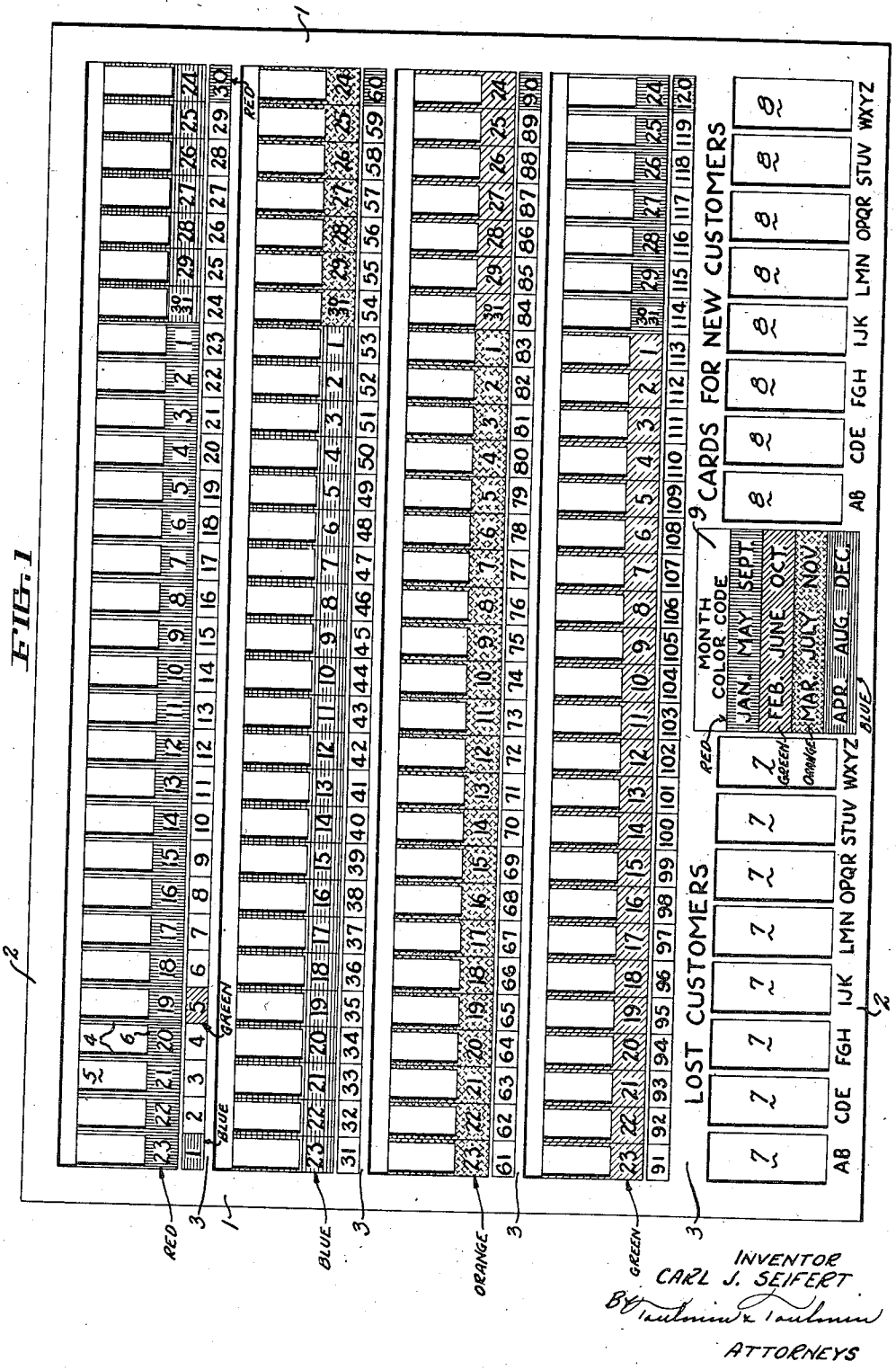


FIG. 1

INVENTOR
CARL J. SEIFERT
BY Taulmin & Taulmin
ATTORNEYS

Dec. 29, 1942. C. J. SEIFERT 2,306,412

FILE BOX

Original Filed June 19, 1940 2 Sheets-Sheet 2

FIG. 2

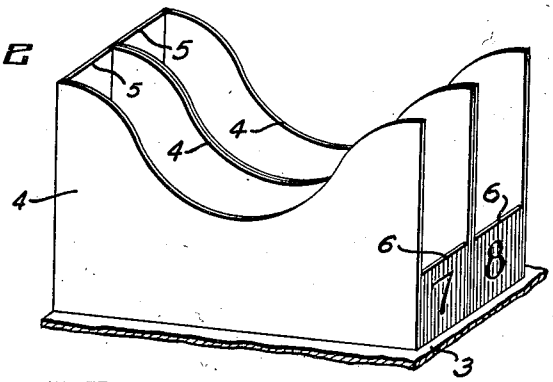
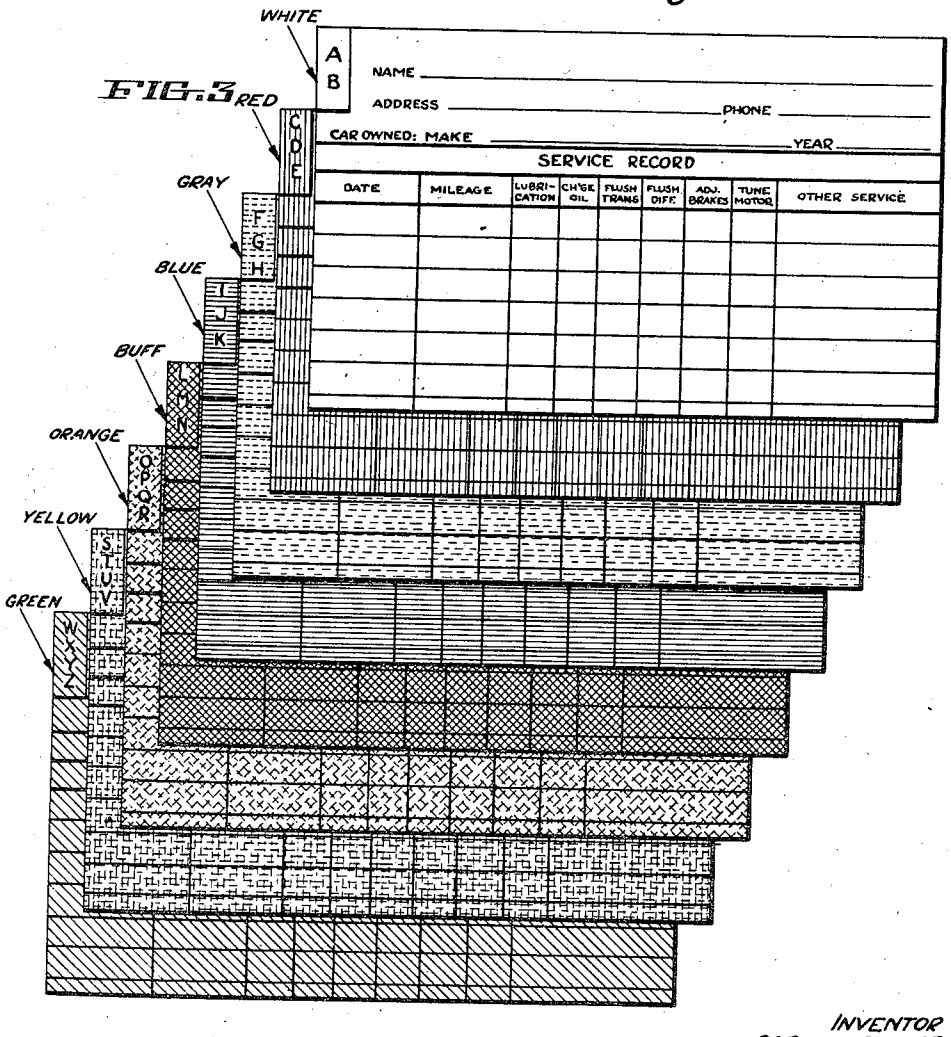


FIG. 3



INVENTOR
CARL J. SEIFERT
Toulmin & Toulmin
ATTORNEYS

Patented Dec. 29, 1942 2,306,412

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,306,412

FILE BOX

Carl J. Seifert, Dayton, Ohio, assignor to The Reynolds & Reynolds Company, Dayton, Ohio, a corporation of Ohio

Original application June 19, 1940, Serial No. 341,342. Divided and this application June 18, 1941, Serial No. 398,652

1 Claim. (Cl. 129—43)

The present invention relates to file boxes for use in filing cabinets.

When a dispenser of service such as an automobile repairman or the bookkeeping department of a department store desires to keep a record of his customers and the date on which they last requested service he usually makes out a card for each customer and fills in a notation on the card of all requests for service by that customer. These cards are generally classified alphabetically and unless the customer requests additional service or unless other occasion requires the garageman laboriously to go through the records it is not likely that further reference will be made to the cards. On occasion it may be desired, for example, to send a "thank you" card for services rendered at a designated number of days after the service has been given and again it may be desirable to send a reminder of service to former customers. In both such cases each card of the file must be examined separately to determine the date on which the customer had last requested service. It is apparent that under these circumstances all of the cards of the file may have to be consulted, even those cards on which notations of recent service have been made. In the event that certain classes of cards have been segregated from the remaining group of cards for special reasons, perhaps with a view toward reducing the time necessary in scrutinizing all of the cards, this segregation leads to a condition in which all of the cards are not grouped together or perhaps in regular alphabetical order so that an examination of all of the cards for any particular reason might still entail considerable work.

The primary object of the present invention is to provide an improved file box for a filing cabinet in which records are continuously aged or advanced any desired unit of time, usually a day, by moving the records during each unit of time through the filing cabinet to indicate the number of time units over which the records have been permitted to remain intact, or in other words, the records have not been removed from the cabinet for service requests.

Other objects and features will be apparent as the specification is perused in connection with the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 represents an elevational view of the improved filing cabinet;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of two filing boxes or shoes placed side by side to indicate their position when placed in the improved filing cabinet; and

Figure 3 shows a series of cards made up of distinctive colors as indicated in the figure, each color representing a certain portion of the alphabet to correspond with the first letter of the customer's last name.

Referring to Figure 1, only the front face of the cabinet is illustrated and this face is constituted of a pair of upright members 1, a pair of horizontal members 2, and four equally spaced transversely extending members 3 which serve as shelves for receiving the boxes shown in Figure 2. The latter is of the type in which each box is formed of side members 4 having an upper edge of curvilinear shape, the side members being spanned at the end by a back 5 and at the front by a narrow piece 6 on which there may appear a number from 1 to 31. In Figure 2, the numbers 7, 8 are indicated purely for exemplary reasons. Each box is closed at the bottom and is adapted to slide over the shelves 3.

As seen in Figure 1, there are thirty boxes per row and preferably four rows in each filing cabinet. The number of boxes corresponds to the number of days per month and the number of rows of boxes corresponds to the number of months for which the filing system is designed to cover. In case the system is intended to embrace a four months' filing period there are thirty boxes in each row and four rows, the permanent numbers under the boxes and applied to the cabinet ranging from 1 to 120. However, the number of the boxes themselves will range from 1 to 30 and will actually appear in the inverse order for each group of thirty due to the manner in which the boxes are shifted during the operation of the filing cabinet. In order to accommodate those months having 31 days, the box which would normally be labeled 30 will carry the two legends 30, 31 to accommodate both of these days when the occasion requires. It is most desirable to provide each monthly group, of which there are four, with different colors; for example, the first group designated 1 to 30, 31 may be colored red, i. e., have a red face on the box, the second group may be colored blue, the third group orange, and the last group green, all of which is indicated in the conventional manner by the proper design of cross-hatched lines. The purpose of this coloring scheme will be apparent as the operation of the cabinet is described hereinafter.

At the lower lefthand corner of the cabinet there may be provided a plurality of pigeon holes indicated at 7 and carrying the top label of "Lost customers." These pigeon holes of which eight have been illustrated, carrying letters of the

alphabet such as A, B, C, D, E, etc., into which service records are placed according to the first letter of the customer's surname. At the lower righthand corner of the cabinet there are provided a number of pigeon holes 8 (exemplified as eight in number), which carry the record cards of new customers and letters of the alphabet conveniently divided into groups are applied directly under these pigeon holes.

The lower row of the filing cabinet is completed by the interposition of a chart 9 setting forth the color code for the various months of the year. Thus for the months of January, May and September the color may be red similar to the color applied to the first group of boxes. For the months of February, June and October the color may be green; orange for March, July and November; and blue for April, August and December.

In the operation of the filing cabinet the first thing is to arrange the boxes beginning with the current month at the top which, for example, may be January and therefore have a red color and the preceding month, i. e., December which has a blue color in the second row and the November boxes which are orange in the third row and finally the October boxes which are green in the last row. The boxes are arranged according to number in the inverse sense, for example, the greatest number appears at the left and the smallest number at the right of the cabinet. In practice all of the boxes are actually moved along the rows breaking the monthly division between the rows until the box bearing the date which is one date previous to the date on which a transaction occurred and is of the proper color to denote the month during which the transaction occurred directly appears over the permanent number 1 on the cabinet. Supposing, for example, the garageman was given an order to repair a customer's car on January 23rd. On the next day, i. e., January 24th the customer's card will be placed in the box designated 23 having a red color to denote the month of January and this box will be placed directly over the permanent number 1 on the filing cabinet (lefthand end of first row), as indicated in the drawings. The number 1 appearing under the box shows that one day has elapsed from the date on which the transaction took place and the number on the box and the color of the box denotes the date and month of the transaction. The rest of the boxes follow along from the box marked 23 according to the color of the month with the numbers arranged in the inverse order as indicated. On the next day after the box marked 23 has been put in position, i. e. two days after the transaction, the box appearing above the cabinet numeral 120 is removed and any service cards contained therein are taken out and filed in the "Lost customer" section in proper alphabetical order. This empty box is set aside for the moment. All boxes on the fourth shelf are moved one position to the right leaving an empty space at the extreme left above the permanent numeral 91. The box above the permanent numeral 90 is removed and 90-day follow-up material is mailed to the customers whose record cards are found in this box. The box with the cards is now inserted in the empty space above the permanent numeral 91. All boxes in the third shelf are shifted one position to the right leaving an empty space above the permanent numeral 61. The foregoing method is repeated with respect to the second shelf and first shelf except that the follow-up material mailed out to the 60-day old customers and the 30-day old customers differs from that mailed out to the 120-day customers. At this point there is an empty space above the permanent numeral 1 and this space receives the empty box moved from the 120-day space. Record cards of those customers who were in for service yesterday are now inserted in the empty box above the permanent numeral 1 as was explained hereinbefore. The entire process is repeated each day. It will be noted that the background on which the numerals 30, 60, 90 and 120 appear is given a distinctive color so as the more readily to pick out the boxes appearing directly over these numbers for suitable follow-up letters. The numeral 1 is also given a distinctive color to impress on the filing clerk the absolute necessity of placing within the box directly over the numeral 1 the service records taken in the day before. The numeral 5 is given an identifying color because when the service record has reached this point the service order or transaction set forth on the card will have been five days old and the garageman or merchant may desire at this time to mail out a "thank you" card.

The purpose of the color scheme for the boxes and the monthly color code appearing on the cabinet is to provide an arrangement by which the record cards of the various customers who come in for service each day may be readily located. It is necessary that these cards be so located in order that they may be removed from the respective boxes in the cabinet and placed in the empty box inserted above the permanent numeral 1. To locate a customer's service card, it is merely necessary to refer to an alphabetical file of repair orders and note the date on which the customer was last in for service. Reference to the monthly color code immediately identifies the proper group of boxes and finding the proper numbered box in this group, the customer's record card can be quickly found. To further assist in locating the cards they are made up in a number of distinctive colors, for example, eight colors as indicated in Figure 3, each one representing a certain portion of the alphabet to correspond with the first letter of the customer's last name. Thus, the upper lefthand corner of the first card which may be of white color is designated A, B; the next card has a red color and is designated C, D, E, etc. The legends on these cards, as illustrated in Figure 3 are purely typical and as one example of the material which may be covered by the service record and which material, particularly the name and the date of service gives the essential information for the successful operation of the improved filing cabinet.

The main features or advantages of the cabinet and of the color scheme as applied to the boxes constituting the cabinet and to the service record contained within the boxes are as follows:

First.—By noting the relative number of cards in the various boxes on the four shelves it is possible to determine the extent to which customers are returning for service work.

Second.—Provides an automatic method whereby follow-up material is mailed out at regular 30-day intervals to all customers who do not return for service in the meantime.

Third.—It provides a means for sending out a thank you card five days following each service job. This is done by referring to the cards in each box when it reaches the fifth position on the top shelf.

Fourth.—By noting the accumulation of cards

in the "lost customer" section it immediately serves as a reminder to the dealer that his service operation or follow-up efficiency is slipping.

Fifth.—If it is desired to make a general mailing to all active customers the service record cards on the four shelves will represent a list of active customers to minimize promiscuous mailing to those who have left town or who for other reasons could not be expected to return for service.

From the foregoing it is evident that the aging of the records day by day is in one sense automatic and fool proof since it depends merely on the bodily shift of the boxes to the right after the last box of the series appearing over the numeral 120 has been removed and inserted in the space left above the numeral 1. No written records of this aging schedule need be made since all of the information is contained on the record cards and the position of the box containing that card within the filing cabinet tells at a glance exactly how many days have elapsed since an order for service has been given. The only record outside of the cabinet that is necessary is simply a small and simple alphabetical file of the repair orders and the date on which the customer was last in for service and from this information the filing clerk can immediately proceed to the box containing the service record. In case there are a large number of service records in that particular box the color scheme as was described in connection with Figure 3 will immediately assist the clerk in picking out the proper card from the group. It is apparent that while I have described my invention in connection with the use of individual boxes which are adapted to slide from left to right over any one of four shelves in order daily to age the records, it may be more convenient but not ordinarily except in small filing cabinets to provide a number of permanently positioned pigeon holes in which case the records are removed as a group from one pigeon hole to the next pigeon hole throughout the series. However, in general, I have found that the use of shiftable boxes provides a very quick and efficient way of advancing the cards from day to day.

It will be understood that I desire to comprehend within my invention such modifications as come within the scope of the claim defining the invention.

This is a division of my copending application Serial No. 341,342, filed June 19, 1940.

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

A box adapted to contain file records having sides with straight lower edges, the upper edge of each side of the box being formed as two outer curved portions positioned at each end of and merging into a central downwardly extending curved portion, the rear end of the box extending the full height of the box, and the front end extending from the bottom of the box upwardly only a partial heighth of the sides of the box.

CARL J. SEIFERT.