

[54] **PORTABLE WINDOW-SERVICE COUNTER
UNIT AND METHOD**

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[22] Filed: **July 24, 1974**

[21] Appl. No.: **491,236**

Related U.S. Application Data

[62] Division of Ser. No. 376,800, July 5, 1973, Pat. No.
3,841,037.

[52] U.S. Cl. **52/741; 52/234**

[51] Int. Cl. **E04h 1/06; E04b 1/343**

[58] Field of Search **52/741, 745, 64, 71, 67,
52/143, 33, 234, 239; 312/250, 258, 262**

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Primary Examiner—Price C. Faw, Jr.

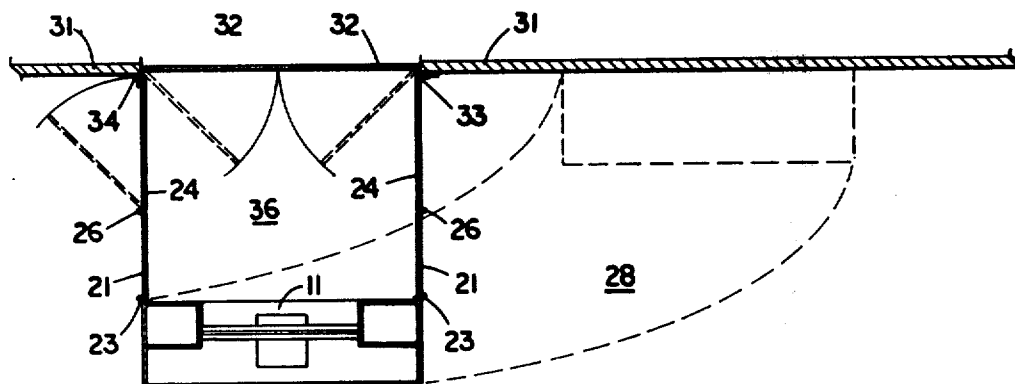
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Woodard, Weikart,
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[57]

ABSTRACT

A portable unit supported on casters, includes a wall, window, counter, and wing walls securable to door jambs of a building, but foldable around the unit for closure thereof, when not in use.

3 Claims, 9 Drawing Figures



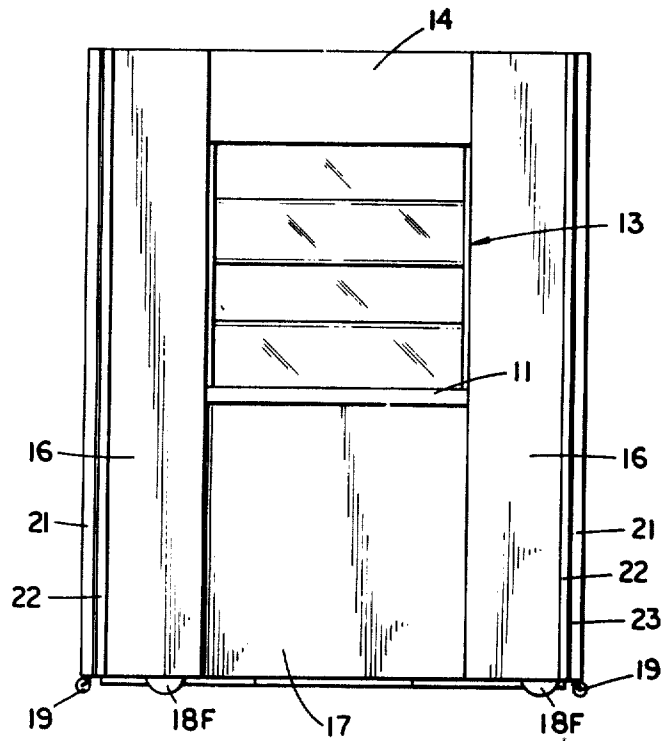


Fig. 1

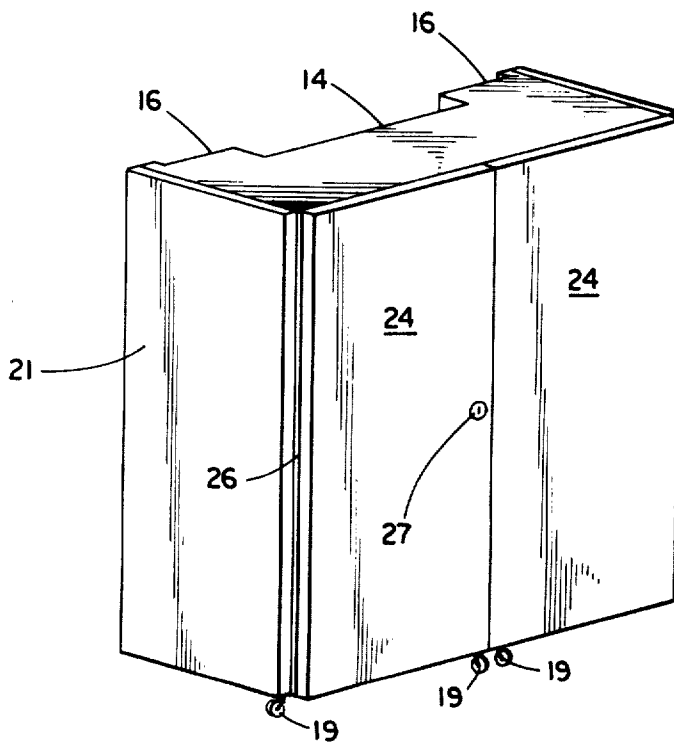


Fig. 2

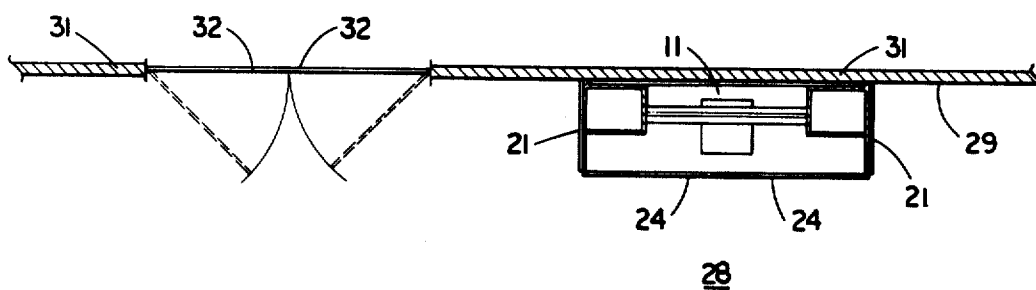


Fig. 3

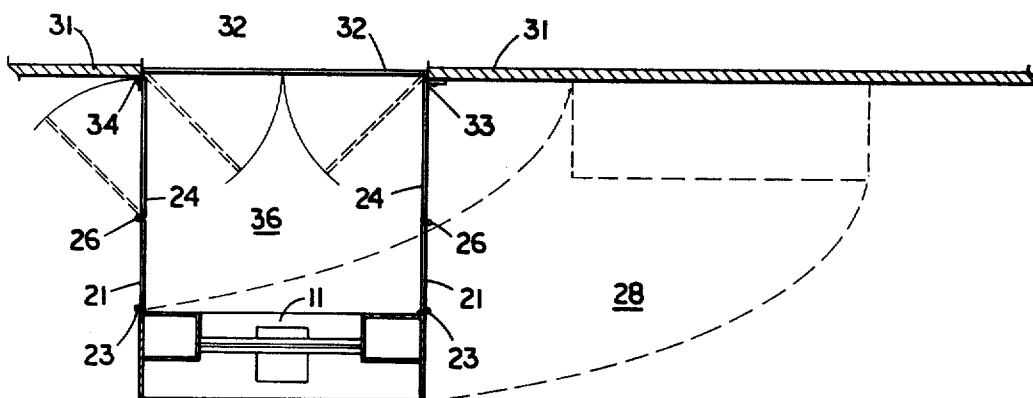


Fig. 4

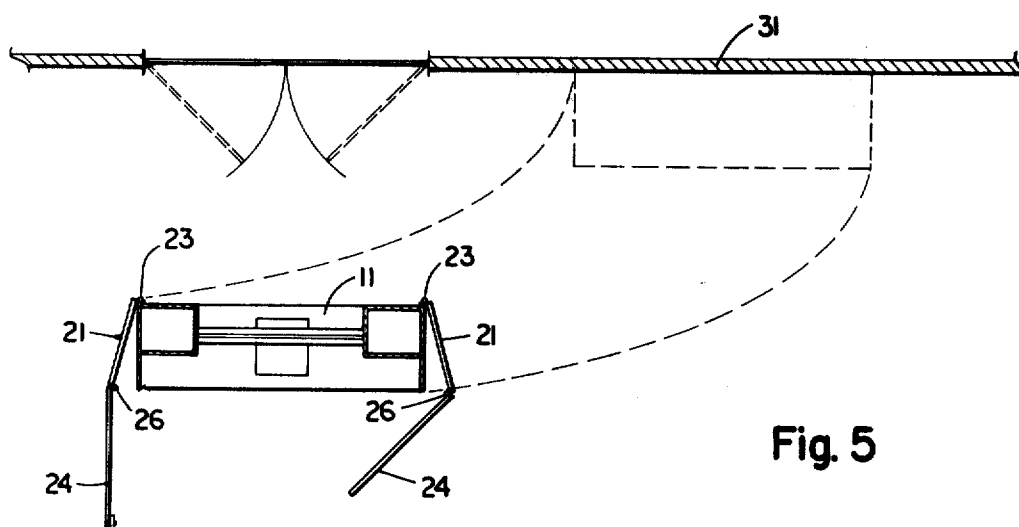


Fig. 5

Fig. 6

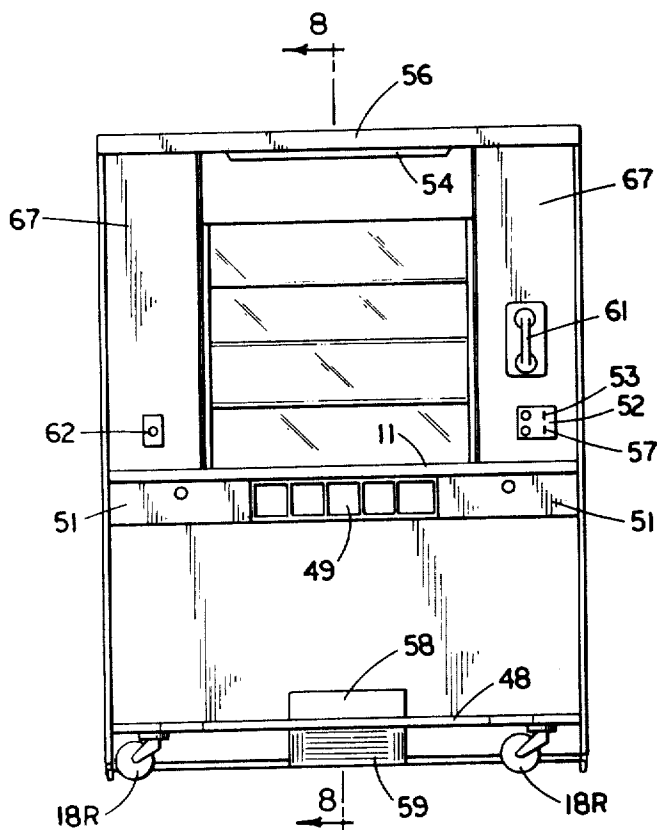
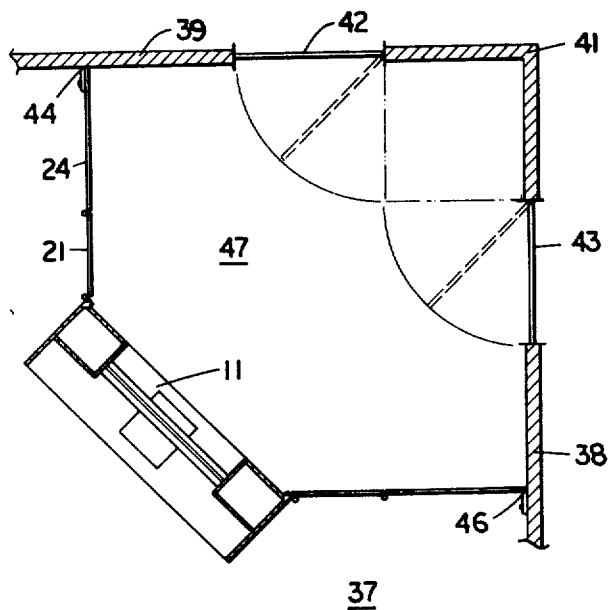


Fig. 7

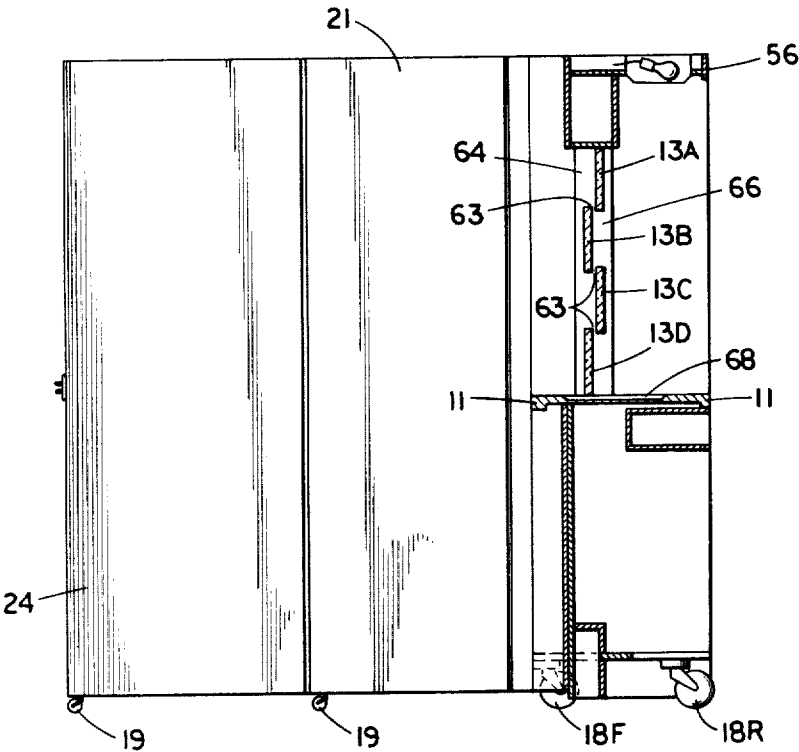


Fig. 8

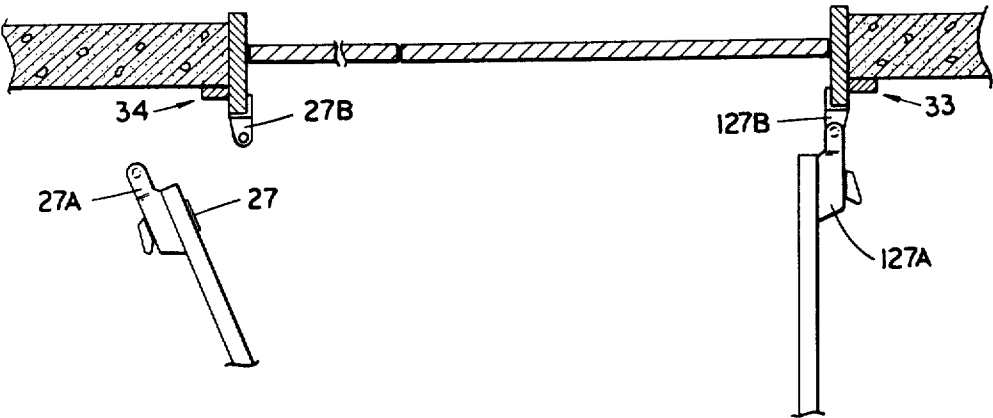


Fig. 9

PORTABLE WINDOW-SERVICE COUNTER UNIT AND METHOD

This is a division of application Ser. No. 376,800, filed July 5, 1973, now U.S. Pat. No. 3,841,037. IN-
VENTION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to portable counters, but more particularly to a portable wall unit having a window therein and sides thereon securable to a permanent wall to provide a vestibule and service window immediately within a building exterior door opening, for after-hours business transactions.

2. Description of the Prior Art

For many years in the United States, it has been the practice of banks to close their teller windows and terminate that form of service to the public, in the early afternoon. More recently, it has been found desirable by some banks to construct a window in an exterior wall of the building to provide after-hours teller service not only for drive-in customers, but also for walk-up customers. Although such provisions can be made in new construction, particularly for branch banking, the cost is substantial and, for existing building structures, there is not only the problem of high cost, but also the problem of finding an appropriate place in the building for placement of such a service window in an exterior wall. The present invention has been made in an effort to solve some of the problems of providing after-hours service, particularly to walk-up customers. It is useful not only to banks, but also to other businesses.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Described briefly, in a typical embodiment of the present invention, a customer-facing wall has a window therein and a counter is provided behind the window for the convenience of the person rendering the service at the window. Wall means are provided on the unit and movable from a position at least partially enclosing a portion of the unit, to a position where the wall means can cooperate with the front wall of the unit and with the wall of a building to provide a vestibule in the building faced by the window. Means are provided at the edge of the door means to secure it to the building wall, and means are also provided under the unit to facilitate moving it from position adjacent a building entrance door, to a storage position away from the entrance door.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of the unit as the customer would see it, but with the wing walls closed.

FIG. 2 is a perspective view thereof showing one side and the rear, with the wing walls closed.

FIG. 3 is a horizontal section at window level, with the unit stored against the wall in a building, a short distance from the doors at which it is to be used.

FIG. 4 is a horizontal section similar to FIG. 3, but showing the unit with the wing walls open and disposed in the in-use position at the building entrance, and showing by the dotted lines, the path through which the unit was moved from the stored position of FIG. 3, to the building entrance.

FIG. 5 is a section similar to FIG. 4 but showing the wing walls in the process of being closed.

FIG. 6 is a horizontal section at window level but showing the unit installed at a corner entrance of a building.

FIG. 7 is a view of the teller's side, with the unit open.

FIG. 8 is a section taken at line 8—8 in FIG. 7 and viewed in the direction of the arrows.

FIG. 9 is an enlarged fragmentary plan view showing some details on the devices at the connection of the wing walls to the bank entrance door jamb.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now to the drawings in detail, and particularly the front view shown in FIG. 1, there is a counter top 11 extending horizontally below the multi-pane bullet-resistant teller window 13, and opaque panels 14 and 17 above the window and below the counter top, respectively. Mullions 16 are provided at each side of the center panels 14 and 17. The inner faces of all of the panels 14, 16, and 17 are provided with bullet-resistant material of light weight, typically in a sheet form.

A pair of casters 18F is provided under the front of the unit, and another pair 18R is provided under the rear of the unit (not shown in FIG. 1, but visible in FIG. 8). Additional casters 19 can be seen at the sides, below the short intermediate side wing walls 21 which are hinged to the side walls of the basic unit by means of a plurality of hinges vertically spaced along the front edge of the side walls 22 such as at 23, for example.

As is best shown in FIG. 2, doors 24 are provided on the rear and meet at the center. Each of these doors is hinged to one of the intermediate walls 21 by a plurality of hinges for example, at 26. A lock assembly secures the doors 24 in the closed position, and may be unlocked by means of a key operated cylinder 27 in one of the doors, to open the unit.

As shown in FIG. 3, the interior of a bank, for example is represented at 28. The portable business window unit is shown stored against the inner face 29 of an exterior wall 31 of the building. It can be stored there or anyplace else desired, as it is easily movable on its wheels. Thus it can be inconspicuously out of the way of the customers doing business in the bank lobby 28. The regular bank entrance doors are shown at 32.

After regular banking hours, the unit is pushed or pulled from the position shown in FIG. 3 (and by dotted lines in FIG. 4) to the position shown by the solid lines in FIG. 4. Then, the lock cylinder 27 is unlocked, and the doors 24 are swung around, rolling on their casters 19. At the same time, the intermediate wing walls 21 are swung about their hinges 23 to the position shown. Then the lock units are secured to the building wall 31 at each side of the entrance doors 32 at the points designated generally 33 and 34. At the point 34, the lock case 27A operable by the cylinder 27, is secured to a strike 27B affixed to the wall 31. A typical attachment to wall 31 may be at the door jamb as shown best in FIG. 9. Similarly, a lock case 127A secured to the edge of the other door 24 on the unit is secured to a strike 127B mounted on the building wall at 33.

Then an electric cord and telephone cord are connected to appropriate wall outlets, and the unit is energized and ready for operation. Thus it is seen that when in the open condition, the unit forms a small vestibule 36 in the bank lobby, enabling continued service of

customers through the front doors of the bank, whereby they can stand out of the rain and weather, and yet the bank lobby itself remains secured.

Referring now to FIG. 5, one can see the intermediate wings 21 and remote wings (doors) 24 of the unit in the process of being closed after use of a unit. By providing one or two casters at the bottom of each of the intermediate wings 21 and doors 24, the swinging of these units from the open condition to the closed condition of FIGS. 1 through 3, is facilitated. After closure of the wings and doors 24, and locking the lock cylinder 27, the unit can easily be wheeled back to a storage position such as shown by the dotted line in FIG. 5, for example. The lock units 27A and 127A on the doors 24 may be slightly offset vertically with respect to each other, for cooperation with each other to secure the doors together, when closed.

Referring now to FIG. 6, the building lobby is shown at 37. The exterior walls 38 and 39 meet at a corner 41, and there are building entrance doors 42 and 43 on opposite sides of the corner. The unit of the present invention can be employed in this situation also. In the attitude shown in FIG. 6, the wing walls 21-24 thereof are secured to the exterior walls of the building on the inside surface thereof, but on two sides of the corner as at 44 and 46, respectively. The same kind of connections are employed here as in the embodiment of FIGS. 3, 4, and 5. They form a sort of semi-lobby 47 within the lobby 37 of the building.

It is normally contemplated that the unit be seven or eight feet in height, and that the vestibule or semi-lobby area not be covered by anything other than the ceiling of the building lobby. However it is possible, if desired, to provide a cover net, screen or other means in the building, as a temporary or permanent overhead structure to cover the vestibule or semi-lobby area when the unit is in use, if desired.

Referring now to FIG. 7, which shows the interior of the unit as viewed by the teller, the rear pair 18R of casters is shown, under the lower cross member 48. These and the front pair of casters 18F (FIGS. 1 and 8) provide the basic support for the unit. The counter is shown at 11, and below it there are centrally located a plurality of "pigeon holes" 49. At each side of these there is a drawer, such as a cash drawer 51, for example. An electric outlet plate may be provided at 52 with a switch 53 for an overhead light 54 under the roof 56, and a switch 57 for an electric heater 58. The heater outlet grill 59 provides warmth for the feet of the teller, and an outlet grill can be provided on the front, if desired, to warm the vestibule or semi-lobby. A telephone is provided at 61, and a thermostat may be provided at 62.

The nature of the window can best be seen in FIG. 8. It is a plurality of extra thick panes of "Plexiglas" or "Lucite," for example, these panes being staggered as

shown at 13A, 13B, 13C and 13D. There is a space between each of the panes and the next succeeding pane as indicated at 63, whereby voice communication can be achieved, but passage of guns, or access to a bullet, is precluded. These panes are supported at their ends in a slot or notch provided by a support 64 and support 66, which are secured to uprights at each side of the window immediately in front of the panels 67 (FIG. 7) at the inside of the unit. A pass-through tray 68 is provided at the center of the counter 11.

A type of lock assembly which can be used at 27A, B, 127A, B, is Model 197, 197 1/4, 198 and 198 1/4 Auxiliary Locks, as marketed by Yale Lock and Hardware Division of Eaton Yale and Towne, Inc., Rye, New York 10580. Others may also be used.

It is possible that the invention, in its broadest aspects, may be practiced by use of sliding wing walls or doors instead of, or in combination with, folding doors. Also, one edge of the unit may be connected directly to one door jamb, with a wing wall and/or door connected to the other door jamb, to form a vestibule. Also, in some installations, it may be desirable to use the entrance doors, or permanently installed auxiliary doors, or short walls, connected directly to the unit when moved into position to form the vestibule or semi-lobby. Therefore, while the invention has been disclosed and described in some detail in the drawings and foregoing description, they are to be considered as illustrative and not restrictive in character, as other modifications may readily suggest themselves to persons skilled in this art and within the broad scope of the invention.

The invention claimed is,

1. A method of providing a temporary customer-service window in a building having entrance door means in an exterior wall, the method comprising the steps of:

rolling into position facing the building entrance door means, a portable window unit;

securing wall means between the building wall and the unit at least one side of said door means whereby a customer service vestibule is formed within the building between the customer facing side of said unit and said exterior door means.

2. The method of claim 1 and further comprising the step of:

extending said wall means from said unit, and rolling said wall means into a position disposing outer ends thereof adjacent opposite sides of said exterior door means; and

securing said outer ends to the building wall at opposite sides of said door means.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the step of extending said wall means further comprises:

unfolding said wall means from said unit.

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