This invention relates to an improved combination bag and bag holding and dispensing unit, and it particularly relates to a combination of the aforesaid type wherein the bags are automatically opened as they are removed from the dispensing means.

This is a continuation-in-part of applicant's co-pending application Serial No. 215,932, filed August 9, 1962, now Patent No. 3,144,960.

The combination disclosed in the aforesaid co-pending application comprised a dispensing unit consisting of a relatively rigid rectangular sheet having its side marginal portions folded back to form marginal flanges at the rear. A longitudinal slit was provided in the sheet at each side adjacent to but spaced from the corresponding edges, and these slits permitted the corresponding edges of the stack of bags to be inserted into the corresponding longitudinal pockets formed within the folded-over marginal portions. Each bag in the stack was made of flexible material such as polyethylene and comprised a rear wall which extended above the front wall so that the front wall formed a lip. A central fastening means secured the rear walls of the bags to the sheet. In this manner, when the upper edge of the front wall of the uppermost bag was grasped and pulled out, the side edges of the bag would be momentarily retained by the longitudinal pockets so that the pulling force, counteracted by the retaining force of the pockets, resulted in an automatic opening of the topmost bag as it was being pulled away from the dispensing unit. This was highly important when the bags were made of polyethylene or the like since such plastic materials tend to stick together and it is usually difficult to pry the two walls of the bag apart.

The above-described device was very satisfactory for its purpose, however, the construction of the dispensing unit was somewhat complicated and required an undue number of manufacturing steps, such as the slitting of the longitudinal slits, the folding back of the marginal portions, the necessity of providing adhesive or other securing means for holding the folded marginal portions in place, etc. Furthermore, the only provision made for hanging the unit in place was a hole in the sheet to admit entrance of a nail or hook. This did not permit it to be hung in places where it was not practical or desirable to use nails, hooks, or the like.

It is, therefore, one object of the present invention to provide an improved combination bag and bag holding and dispensing unit wherein the dispensing unit is provided with an improved and simplified construction and which can be produced more inexpensively than was heretofore possible.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a unit of the aforesaid type which is adapted to be hung in any accessible place, either with or without the use of hooks, nails, etc.

Other objects and many of the attendant advantages of this invention will be readily appreciated as the same becomes better understood by reference to the following description when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings wherein:

Fig. 1 is a front elevational view of an embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a fragmentary rear perspective view of the device of Fig. 1, showing the hanger assembly.

Fig. 3 is a view similar to Fig. 2 but showing the hanger assembly in an alternate position.

Fig. 4 is a cross-sectional view taken on line 4-4 of Fig. 1.

Referring now in greater detail to the various figures of the drawing wherein similar reference characters refer to similar parts, there is shown a holding and dispensing unit, generally designated 10, comprising a flat rectangular sheet of relatively rigid material, here illustrated as cardboard but which may be any other material such as wood, plastic, metal, etc. The major portion of the sheet constitutes the rear wall 12, whereas the longitudinal marginal portions of the sheet are folded over to the front to form front strips 14. These marginal front strips 14 define a front opening 16 which extends from top to bottom of the unit.

The marginal strips 14 each coat with the adjacent portions of the rear wall 12 and the hinged connections 18 therebetween to form corresponding marginal pockets within which are releasably positioned the side portions of the bags 20 arranged in a stack (as best shown in FIG. 4). The upper and lower ends of the strips 14 are connected to the rear wall 12 by any desirable means. As illustrated, the ends, indicated at 22, are secured to the rear wall by adhesive.

Each bag 20 comprises a rear wall 24 and a front wall 26, the rear wall 24 extending above the front wall 26, whereby the upper edge of the front wall forms a lip. The bags 20 are preferably constructed of a pliable synthetic resin such as polyethylene.

The stock of bags are secured to the dispensing unit 10, adjacent the upper end, by a hollow rivet or the like, shown at 28. This rivet, furthermore, secures a hanger strip 30 to the rear face of the rear wall 12, the rivet acting as a pivot attachment for the hanger strip.

The hanger strip 30, itself, comprises a first layer 32 having adhesive 34 on its rear face (see FIG. 3) with a removable protective layer 36 which may be stripped away when the adhesive is desired to be exposed. By this construction, the hollow rivet 28 may serve as an eyelet for passage of a nail or hook when it is desired to use such hanging means for the unit, or the rivet may serve as the means for securing the hanger strip 30 in either its inoperative position (as in FIG. 2) or in its operative position (as in FIG. 3), in which latter position it may be used to hang the unit where nails, hooks, etc. are not feasible or desirable.

In use, the dispensing unit is hung in place and whenever it is desired to obtain a bag, the lip formed by the upper edge of the topmost bag is grasped and pulled out. This not only tears it away from the rivet 28 but, because the sides are initially held by the strips 14 forming the pockets, there is a force and counterforce which serves to open up the bag automatically. This is a highly desirable action, especially when the bags are made of polyethylene or the like where the walls of the bags tend to adhere to each other.

Although the invention has been described with reference to plastic bags, it is also adapted for use with paper bags, metal foil bags, etc.

Obviously, many modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in the light of the above teachings. It is, therefore, to be understood that, within the scope of the appended claims, the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described.

The invention claimed is:

1. A combination bag and bag holding and dispensing device comprising a retaining means in the form of a generally flat sheet, a framed portion on one face of the sheet, said framed portion being defined by oppositely disposed linear pockets, said pockets having open edges facing each other and being defined by marginal portions of said sheet which are folded over into parallelism with the main portion of said sheet and secured to said main
portion at each of their ends to form said pockets, said main portion constituting the rear wall of said retaining means, a stack of superimposed flattened bags, a fastening means adjacent one end of said framed portion between said linear pockets, said fastening means being constructed to releasably retain said stack of flattened bags against said sheet within said framed portion, each bag having a rear wall, a front wall and an open top, said front wall and rear wall being connected by longitudinal edges, the rear wall of each bag extending beyond the front wall at said open top, said longitudinal edges of said bags being releasably positioned within the corresponding linear pockets, said fastening means securing said rear walls of said bags between said linear pockets to said rear wall of the retaining means, and the front wall of each bag being free to be pulled away from the rear wall of the corresponding bag while the last mentioned rear wall is secured by said fastening means.

2. The combination of claim 1 wherein said fastening means comprises a hollow rivet extending through the rear walls of the bags and through the rear wall of the retaining means, said rivet also pivotally securing a hanger to the rear face of the rear wall of the retaining means, said hanger comprising an adhesive covered strip with a removable protective layer over the adhesive.

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