ADVERTISING AND SALES PROMOTION
METHOD AND APPARATUS

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ABSTRACT

Herein disclosed is a method and apparatus to advertise and promote the sales of certain consumer goods by accompanying the visual presentation or display of a product with the distinctive odor or smell which is characteristic of its use or preparation or consumption, said odor not necessarily being usually and normally present during such presentation or display. Such simultaneous visual and olfactory recognition serving to stimulate and enhance the sense of immediate or anticipated enjoyment and desire for goods so presented or displayed to prospective customers, thus encouraging the purchase and use or consumption or enjoyment of goods so advertised or promoted for sale.

4 Claims, 10 Drawing Figures
My invention concerns a technique and apparatus or device for advertising or promoting the sales of certain consumer goods by providing for the presence of the distinctive and characteristic odor or smell of such goods simultaneous with the visual display or presentation of such goods to prospective customers. Through such simultaneous visual and olfactory stimulation and sensations, my invention will serve to enhance and motivate desire for products so presented or displayed and thus increase the sale and use or consumption or enjoyment of such goods.

My invention is concerned with goods having a great range of inherent properties, including either the presence or absence of a smell characteristic of such goods when advertised or promoted or presented for sale, therefore the concept or principle of my invention is capable of several aspects or forms so as to successfully advertise or promote the sales of such diverse goods or products.

This disclosure concerns two such basic aspects or forms or embodiments of my invention. In one form, the advertising or sales promotion medium or technique presents or displays the goods away from the point of retail sale or display and consists of delivery of a device or apparatus to the home or office of a pres-lected prospective customer for a particular product. This device is in the form of an inexpensive stereoscopic picture viewer, together with photographic images of the goods being advertised or promoted, an example being a line of new automobiles. When the prospect operates the stereo viewer and looks at the photographic images, in this example, the single-cycle action of a mechanism which I have invented, being enclosed within the stereo viewer, provides for the controlled release and dispensing of an odor which would be that of a “new car smell.” Thus the viewing of stereo images of a line of new cars in the semi-privacy of a home or office by a prospective customer is accompanied simultaneously with the sensory stimulation and pleasure of a new car smell as if the prospect were physically at the showroom of a new car dealer or inside a demonstration model of a new car line or the like.

In another aspect or embodiment, the advertising or sales promotion technique of my invention consists of enhancing and stimulating the immediate or anticipated sense of enjoyment and desire of many prospective customers in a retail outlet or store or the like by simultaneously accompanying the visual display or presentation of certain goods with a distinctive and characteristic odor or smell as would normally and usually only be present or associated with the use or preparation or consumption of such goods. Said odor being controlled or regulated as to presence and strength and area of detection by a multiple-cycle action of the method and apparatus or device which I have invented, so as to be recognized by prospective customers within a reasonable proximity to said apparatus and to the immediately adjacent display or presentation of such goods.

In each such aspect or embodiment, my invention provides that the visual perception of products or of the images of products is accompanied and enhanced by simultaneous olfactory perception of an odor or smell characteristic of such products.

It will be apparent in describing the various aspects or forms of my invention that the words “presentation” or “visual presentation” or “visual perception” or “visual display” or “visual” or the like apply both to the physical presence and display of certain products, or alternatively to the display or presentation of an image or images of such a product, such as a film slide or a graphic or photographic image.

It is well known in the art of advertising and sales promotion that certain products with which my invention is concerned usually generate or dispense their most appealing and characteristic odor or smell during processing or preparation, and prior to packaging and distribution to retail outlets or stores or the like for display or presentation and sale. Freshly baking bread or freshly ground roast coffee beans are examples of such products and of their preparation prior to packaging.

Certain other products do not usually generate or dispense their most appealing and characteristic odor or smell until they have been purchased at a retail outlet or store or the like and taken into the home. During the heating or cooking process in preparation for use or consumption, after such products have been removed from their packaging, they generate or dispense their most appealing and characteristic odor or smell. Frying bacon or baking frozen pizza pie are examples of such products and of their preparation in the home.

Still other products with which my invention is concerned usually generate or dispense their most appealing and characteristic odor or smell during normal presentation or display for sale at a retail outlet or the like. A retail display of ripe bananas with its characteristic smell, or presentation and display of a line of new automobiles with their distinctive “new car smell” are examples of such products.

It is also well known in the art of advertising and promoting the sales of the aforementioned diverse consumer goods that separate stimulation of the senses of prospective customers with the sight or with the smell of such goods, even when such separate sensory stimulations are totaled together in their effect, does not equal the effect of the simultaneous stimulation of the senses of prospective customers with both the sight and the smell of such goods. This is true whether such simultaneous sight and smell sensory stimulation of prospective customers occurs in the physical presence of such goods or away from the physical presence of the goods.

As a consequence of this knowledge in the aforesaid art, and of the sales advantages to be gained from the simultaneous presentation of the sight and the smell of certain consumer goods, many different attempts and methods to accomplish this extremely desirable advertising and sales promotion technique have been undertaken. Such attempts have previously met with varying degrees of success and with universal serious and expensive and bothersome disadvantages and drawbacks.

Typical of the state of the art in advertising or sales promotion of certain products in retail outlets or the like, when olfactory stimulation is normally absent at the point of display or presentation for sale, it the technique of in-store sampling. With this technique, for example, a shopper would be offered a freshly baked portion of pizza pie. Thus the shopper would be simulta-
neously exposed to the sensory stimulation of the sight of such a product, and also to the sensory stimulation of its most appealing and characteristic smell or aroma.

While this sampling technique can be both useful and effective in many instances, it has serious and expensive drawbacks and disadvantages for both the manufacturer and the retailer. Salespeople must be hired and trained to do the preparation and the sampling. Costly equipment must be purchased and transported and maintained in a sanitary and attractive condition. Inaccurate schedules must be arranged and coordinated with management and with store personnel. Valuable floor space must be assigned as a preparation and sampling area. In addition, store aisles soon become littered, smooth flow of store traffic is interrupted and odors and aromas from the preparation and cooking of product samples spread and permeate the entire store.

Typical of the state of the art in advertising and sales promotion of a product whose physical presence does provide for simultaneous visual and olfactory sensory stimulation to prospective customers, such as a line of new automobiles, for example, is the technique of providing for a display of new model cars or a demonstration ride in a new model car. Thus the prospect is exposed to or surrounded with the simultaneous sensory stimulation of both visual perception and olfactory perception of new cars through his sense of sight and his sense of smell. This technique is somewhat comparable to that of in-store sampling for certain products.

While this technique of product display and a demonstration can be both useful and effective, it also has serious and expensive drawbacks and disadvantages for both the manufacturer and the retailer. There is the need for a display salesroom, and for display and demonstration models of the new car line, in this example. There is also the need for expensive mass media use to inform and persuade prospective customers to visit the salesroom of a particular new car dealer, or to arrange for a demonstration ride. At best, costly mass media advertising can usually highlight only a few models or features of a new car line. Even at the retail outlet or salesroom, the variety of new car models and their features which can be displayed is limited to available space.

There is also an advertising technique in the present state of the art whereby a printed advertisement can display both the sight or image of a product together with the limited capability of presenting the characteristic smell of said product. Through this technique, tiny capsules which are invisible to normal eyesight enclose microscopic portions of certain odor essences. These micro-capsules are then mixed into printing ink, or into a neutral carrier, and applied to areas of printed advertisements.

The reader of such an advertisement is instructed to scratch an indicated area of the ad, thereby breaking some of the micro-capsules and releasing the odor essences contained in them. He is instructed to then quickly raise the scratched area to his nose and “sniff,” thereby detecting and perceiving the sensory stimulation from the characteristic odor or smell of that product so advertised or promoted.

While this technique has proved to be somewhat useful and effective for certain specialized products such as perfume and cosmetics, it also has many serious drawbacks and disadvantages. It is very expensive to produce an advertisement of this kind. The require-

ment of scratching the ad in a certain area and then raising and sniffing it discourages many readers. The maximum potential from an enhanced desire for a product, when unobtrusively and without a conscious act a prospective customer is stimulated by simultaneously perceiving both the sight and the characteristic smell of said product, is largely lost by the requirements of reading and understanding and consciously acting to follow detailed instructions. In addition, this particular technique is both difficult and costly to adapt to the advertising and promotion for most consumer goods at the retail point of sale or display or the like.

OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

It is accordingly a primary object of my invention to avoid the serious and expensive disadvantages and drawbacks which are inherent in the aforesaid well known practices and techniques in the art of advertising and sales promotion, as well as other methods well known and familiar but not aforesaid. Instead, the concept and principle of my invention, in its several aspects or forms, will serve to simply and inexpensively increase and enhance the sales of diverse consumer goods whether prospective customers are present at a retail outlet or sales location or the like, or away from said retail sales location in the semi-privacy or a home or office or the like. My invention accomplishes this object by providing for the accompaniment of a visual display of certain goods with the simultaneous presence of the most appealing and characteristic odor or smell usually associated with the use or preparation or consumption of such goods. My invention thus provides for a prospective customer to be sensorily stimulated by both the sight and the smell of certain goods at one and the same time, so as to enhance the motivation and desire to purchase and use or consume or enjoy the goods so displayed. In one aspect or embodiment of my invention concerned with semi-private presentation of advertising or sales promotion, using the example of advertising a line of new cars, it is an object of my invention to entice the prospect to view the various models and features and competitive advantages of said new car line in his home or office or the like. This is accomplished by delivering an inexpensive stereoscopic viewing machine to the prospect without charge, together with a plurality of stereo scenes or images of the new car models and features and the like. While the prospect is viewing said stereo scenes, my invention provides that he is also exposed to the added enjoyment and pleasure and simultaneous sensory stimulation of an accompanying “new car smell,” said smell heretofore only usually present in or immediately adjacent to an actual new car and not in a home or office or the like. Said pleasurable sensory stimulation serving to entice the prospect into viewing the advertised competitive features included in the plurality of stereo scenes which accompany said stereo device. It is another object of my invention that such simultaneous presentation of a visual display and an olfactory presence be accomplished both unobtrusively and without any conscious act or foreknowledge of the prospective customer. My invention thus provides for the pleasure and enjoyment and enhanced sensations which such unanticipated simultaneous sight and smell, or the illusion of one or the other or both, serves to create in the mind of the prospect so viewing and smelling.
Another object of my invention is that such odor or smell as desired be provided and controlled as to its presence or absence, and that the odor be controlled and regulated as to strength and intensity and as to the duration and area of its detection and recognition.

Another object of my invention is to provide for automatic control as to the release and dispensing of the desired odor or smell. In the aspect of my invention concerned with the aforementioned stereo viewer; the release and subsequent dispensing of the desired odor is controlled through the one-cycle operation of an odor release and dispensing mechanism whereby there occurs a one time release of the odor. Said released odor is subsequently controlled as to duration and strength and area of detection, said area being in close proximity to the nostrils of a prospect operating and using the aforementioned stereo viewing device.

The above objects, and other objects and features and advantages of the stereoscopic viewer form or embodiment of my invention will be apparent from the later detailed drawings and description of said embodiment.

In another aspect or form or embodiment of my invention, an object is to provide at the retail point of display or sale or presentation of certain goods, the particular and appealing and characteristic odor or aroma such as is usually associated with the preparation of such goods prior to packaging and distribution to said retail outlets or stores or the like, said odor or aroma being usually and normally absent at such retail outlet or store.

Another object of my invention in this retail outlet or store aspect or embodiment, is to provide for the presence at the point of display or sale of certain products the particular and appealing and characteristic odor or smell such as is usually associated with the in-home preparation or heating or cooking for use or consumption of such products, after they have been purchased and taken home from said retail outlet. Such distinctive and characteristic odor or smell not being usually or normally present at said point of retail display or sale.

Another object of my invention as concerns the advertising or promotion of certain goods at retail outlets or the like is to provide for the technique and the means of accomplishing that technique so that the desired odor or smell will be released and dispensed within a predetermined and defined area, thereby avoiding permeation of the entire store with the dispersed odor.

Another object is to control and regulate the strength and presence of the odor for a specific time period so that the desired odor is detectable only during certain hours, or only during certain hours of certain days, thereby avoiding expense and waste by not providing the odor or aroma when the retail outlet is closed, or when customer traffic or shopping volume does not justify the moderate cost of providing the said odor.

Another object is to provide for the repeated cyclical release and dispensing of the desired odor at a predetermined strength throughout a predetermined area, in order that the level or concentration of the odor remains nearly constant for the desired duration in the desired proximity to the display or presentation of the particular product so advertised or promoted.

A specific feature and object of my invention, in at least one form or embodiment, is contained in the provision for automatic control means for timing and regulating the presence or absence and the duration and intensity of the desired odor in a predetermined area adjacent to a display of associated goods.

The above objects, and other objects and features and advantages, are fulfilled by a primary and broad feature of my invention, namely a mechanism or device or apparatus whereby a pouch containing certain desired odor essences in a liquid carrier is opened and the odor-liquid is released and deposited onto an absorbent material from which the odor essences are vaporized and dispersed into the atmosphere, with all such described means being regulated and automatic and unobtrusive and not requiring any conscious act or foreknowledge by a prospective customer.

The aforesaid objects and features and advantages of my invention in its several forms or aspects will be apparent from the detailed description which follows in conjunction with the accompanying drawings:

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

**FIG. 1** is an elevational view of the stereoscopic viewer embodiment of my invention, partly broken away to illustrate the concerned portion of the modified section of the device. Phantom lines indicate the concerned compartment behind the metal film image advance ring.

**FIG. 2** is a view of the metal film image advance ring and the attached finger lever, showing the modification which provides for a knife-like mechanism.

**FIG. 3** is a horizontal sectional view of the metal film image advance ring taken on the line 3–3 of FIG. 2, illustrating the depression of the knife-like mechanism.

**FIG. 4** is an enlarged view of the concerned compartment of the stereo device, illustrating the removed section of an interior wall and the perforations through the casing wall which provide for passage of the desired odor vapors into the atmosphere.

**FIG. 5** is another enlarged view of the concerned compartment, illustrating the odor containing and releasing and dispensing mechanism and means as positioned within said modified compartment.

**FIG. 6** is a sectional view of the modified compartment taken on the line 6–6 in FIG. 5, illustrating the configuration of the absorbent material and the coating applied to certain areas of said absorbent material.

**FIG. 7** is a schematic diagram of an alternate aspect or embodiment of my invention useful in the advertising or sales promotion of certain products in retail outlets or stores or the like.

**FIG. 8** is a vertical end view of FIG. 7 taken on the line 8–8 in FIG. 7, illustrating particularly the odor-liquid releasing and absorbing and dispensing means.

**FIG. 9** is another vertical end view of FIG. 7 taken on the line 9–9 in FIG. 7, illustrating particularly the pouch strip driving means and means for storage of the strip of emptied pouches.

**FIG. 10** is a side view, partly broken away, of the storage magazine for the flexible strip of liquid-containing pouches.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION**

**FIG. 1–6 EMBODIMENT**

Referring to FIGS. 1–6 in the drawing, there is illus-
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illustrated a stereoscopic viewing device embodiment of my invention in an aspect useful in connection with a single-cycle action advertising or sales promotion technique and apparatus.

Implementation of the stereo viewer technique and embodiment of my invention provides for the delivery without cost to a preset selected prospect of an improved and modified stereoscopic viewing device of the type sold under the trademark of GAF "VIEW-MASTER." Said improved device containing an odor releasing and dispensing mechanism and means to operate same. Together with said improved device, the prospect is provided with a plurality of film slides or transparencies positioned in a disc-shaped film slide holder for viewing stereoscopically in said stereo device.

Upon viewing said stereo scenes in the improved device, the prospect operates a mechanism which, without his conscious knowledge, provides for the release and dispensing to the nostrils of the prospect an odor which is characteristic of the product or goods so presented in the stereo device. Thus the prospect will enjoy simultaneously the stereo images of certain goods together with their characteristic odor or smell, and so be sensorily stimulated as regards both present and anticipated desire to purchase and use or consume the goods so presented. In this form or embodiment, therefore, my invention becomes an inexpensive advertising or sales promotion medium or technique for presenting certain consumer goods to selected prospects, of which the aforementioned presentation of a new car line is an example.

Accordingly, in common with another form or embodiment of my invention to be subsequently described, the stereo viewer device improvement and modification incorporates the primary feature of my invention, such broad feature being a mechanism which includes a pouch containing an odor-producing liquid, means for opening the pouch by a penetration or slitng action and absorbent material for receiving and absorbing the odor-liquid as it is released from its pouch container so as to flow onto said absorbent material, thus providing means for vaporizing the odor essences from the odor-liquid and means for dispensing said vapors. Such apparatus and means for operating same being automatic and providing means for control and regulation as to the presence or absence of the desired odor and as to the strength and area of detection and duration and recognition of said odor vapors.

There will be seen in FIGS. 1-6 a stereo viewer generally comprising a housing formed from two interfitting sections. In the forward section of said stereo viewer with which my invention is concerned, designated 22, there is positioned a pair of viewing lenses (not shown). In the other interfitting section, as illustrated, there is positioned a pair of corresponding openings for admitting light to said lenses. Said light-admitting interfitting section constitutes no part of my invention which improves and modifies the aforementioned type of stereo viewing device.

However, it will be understood that in the light-admitting section of the stereo viewing device there is provided a suitably shaped opening and cavity to receive and properly position a disc-shaped film slide holder (not shown) for stereo viewing. This disc-shaped film slide holder contains 14 frames or film transparencies, thus providing for the viewing of seven separate stereo scenes with each scene consisting of two separate film frames which combine to form a single stereo scene in the visual image of the user.

Operation of the stereo viewing device as thus far described, and without improvement and modification by my invention, provides for downward pushing of the finger lever 26 which is part of the metal disc 24 within the housing 20, and is positioned on the left as seen in FIGS. 1 and 2. Said finger lever 26 is normally on the right, from the position of a user looking into the viewing lenses while operating the device. Such downward movement of the finger lever 26 causes rotation of the metal disc 24, as may be seen by reference to the dotted line — arrow indication in FIGS. 1 and 2, said finger lever being spring biased to enable it to return to its normal upper position.

The metal disc 24 includes a projection 28 which engages successively in slots at the edge of the disc-shaped film slide holder. Rotation of the metal disc 24 thus advances said film slides so as to position another stereo scene for viewing by the operator of the device.

As an integral part of the improvement and modification of the stereo viewer 20, so that said viewer is useful as an advertising and sales promotion device incorporating the dispensing of a desired odor to accompany the viewing of desired stereo images, my invention improves and modifies the metal advance ring 24 as will be seen in FIGS. 2 and 3. My invention also improves and modifies the existing compartment 32 as will be seen by reference to FIGS. 4 and 5.

As will be seen in FIG. 2, the metal advance ring 24 is modified by stamping out from it a knife-like mechanism 30, or by attaching such a mechanism to said metal advance ring. The depressed shape and position of the knife 30 is illustrated in a sectional view of the metal advance ring 24 as will be seen in FIG. 3. Such shaping and position providing for a penetrating and slitting action of the knife 30 as later described.

In FIG. 4 will be seen the modifications of the existing compartment 32, said compartment being indicated by phantom lines in FIGS. 1 and 2. Modifications include removal of the arcuately extending interior wall 42, as indicated by the phantom lines in FIG. 4. Additionally, it will be seen in FIG. 4 that suitable holes or perforations, designated 44, are provided in the front portion of the housing 26, said holes passing through the exterior wall 46 of the compartment 32. These holes or perforations provide for dispensing the vaporized odor essences into the atmosphere as will be described later.

FIG. 5 particularly illustrates the improvements in the modified compartment 32, said compartment being bounded by the exterior wall 46 and by interior radially extending walls 36 and 40, as well as arcuately extending top wall 34 and bottom wall 38. As will be seen by reference to FIG. 5, a pouch containing a predetermined quantity of odor producing liquid is adapted to be fitted in the upper right hand corner of modified compartment 32 and to be firmly attached to the exterior wall 46. The knife 30 fits into the modified compartment 32 in the position shown, and a pad of absorbent material 50 is disposed within the modified compartment 32, said pad also being firmly attached to the exterior wall 46.

It should be noted that crushed and molded fibrous material such as contained in common paper towels has been found to be a useful composition of the absorbent
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Said material will absorb the provided amount of odor-liquid and retain it so as to provide for a predetermined rate of vaporization of the aforementioned odor essences. Such material will perform this action without swelling or otherwise changing shape or interfering in any manner with the normal operation of the stereo viewing device 20.

Said absorbent pad is specially shaped, as will be seen in FIGS. 5 and 6, so as to perform at least two essential functions. The first function being to accommodate the pouch 48, to absorb the odor-liquid released from said pouch, to provide for vaporization of odor essences from said liquid, and to promote the passage of said vapors into the atmosphere through the perforations 44, located behind said absorbent material 50. It will thus be appreciated that pouch 48 is so positioned, and the entire pad of absorbent material 50 is so configured and positioned as to provide for maximum absorption of the odor-liquid by the absorbent pad 50 when the pouch 48 is opened in the manner to be described.

The second function of the configuration of pad 50, as shown in FIG. 6, is accomplished whereby the thinnest portion 52 allows free passage over it for the arc of travel of the knife 30, the next thinnest portion 54 allows free passage over it for the arc of travel of the slide film advance projection 28 and the thickest portion 56 allows free passage over it for the arc of travel of the metal advance ring 24.

In the use and practice of this embodiment of my invention, the stereo device 20 is modified and improved as aforedescribed and delivered to the home or office or the like of a preselected prospect who will operate and use said stereo device for his own enlightenment. Upon initiation of the operating sequence of the device, that is by inserting one of the film slide discs which accompany the stereo viewer and depressing for the first time the finger lever 26, rotation of the metal disc 24 produced by said movement of the finger lever results in movement of the knife 30 in an arcuate path, as may be seen in FIG. 5. Accordingly, the point of the knife 30 pierces the pouch 48, and the extension of the knife slits open a portion of the pouch. The result is that the odor-liquid contained in the pouch 48 is released and flows from the pouch onto and is absorbed into the pad of absorbent material 50, as can be seen by referring to FIGS. 5 and 6.

It will also be seen in FIG. 6 that a thin coating designated 58, said coating being particularly resistant to the passage through it of either said odor-liquid or said vaporized odor essences, covers the rear facing areas of portions of the absorbent material designated 54 and 56, leaving the top facing portion of 56 and all of 52 open and not covered. Said coating 58 also covers the bottom facing portion of 54 and a small portion of the front facing portion 54. The coating 58 thus serves to retain all of the released odor-liquid within the absorbent material 50. Presence of the coating 58 also serves to help regulate and direct the odor vapors outward from modified compartment 32 through the perforations 44 and into the atmosphere directly under or adjacent to the nostrils of a prospective customer using the improved stereo device 20.

The aforedescribed absorption of the odor-liquid into the absorbent pad 50, in the amount of approximately 1 cc of odor-liquid and the subsequent regulated vaporization of the odor essences at a predetermined rate, provides for the sustained presence of the desired intensity or strength of said odor vapors for a time period in the order of 6 to 8 hours after the initial operation of the finger lever 26 by the preselected prospect.

Although not necessarily limited to a single instance of advertising or sales promotion, the stereo device aspect or form or embodiment of my invention as aforedescribed is considered to be especially adaptable, as previously alluded, to advertising or promoting the sales of a line of new automobiles. Accordingly, the odor which would be provided in such instances would be one which corresponds to the distinctive and characteristic "new car smell." The accompanying film slide discs, of course, would contain images of models and features of said new car line and of various dealers' salesrooms and the like.

It should be pointed out that nothing concerning the improvements and modifications of my invention as aforedescribed in this stereo viewer aspect will prevent the normal and usual operation and usefulness of said stereo device in the viewing of various film slide discs such as are sold for normal use in the unmodified and unimproved GAF "VIEW-MASTER" stereo viewers.

FIG. 7-10 EMBODIMENT

Referring now to FIGS. 7-10 in the drawing, there is illustrated the multiple-cycle aspect or embodiment of my invention, generally designated 60, which is useful in connection with advertising or sales promotion at the point of sale or display or presentation of certain consumer goods in a retail outlet or store or the like. As previously alluded to in said aspect or embodiment, it is a primary object of my invention to provide the technique and the apparatus or means to carry out that technique, so as to simultaneously provide the most appealing odor or smell characteristic of a product, together with the display or presentation of said product for sale in a retail outlet or store or supermarket or the like. Such simultaneous sensory stimulation of both the sight and the smell of prospective customers serving to avoid the serious disadvantages and drawbacks of aforedescribed well known practices and techniques in the retail point of sale advertising and sales promotion of certain goods. Thus this aspect or form of my invention serves to enhance the desire and motivation to purchase and use or consume and enjoy certain goods displayed and presented to the general public at the point of retail sale or the like.

In this alternate form, my invention provides a sustained or long lasting multiple-cycle version of that broad feature previously alluded to, namely providing a pouch containing a desired odor-liquid, means for slitting or opening said pouch and an absorbent material positioned so as to receive and absorb said odor-liquid, and to provide for the controlled and regulated vaporization of the desired odor essences and dispensing them into the adjacent atmosphere.

This alternate embodiment of my invention includes a plurality of odor-liquid containing pouches arranged and stored in the form of a flexible strip so as to provide a supply of the desired odor essences during a prolonged period of operation of the device. Also included are powered means for operating said multiple cycles of the apparatus, powered means for dispensing the desired odor essences into the adjacent atmosphere and powered means for holding and retaining the emptied pouches and said flexible strip so as to prevent interference with the multiple-cycle action of said embodiment.
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and apparatus. Said powered means for operating said multiple-cycle embodiment of my invention are controlled and regulated by a clockwork-type master timer and control device such as is well known in the art of control and regulation of various cycles and operations of powered mechanical devices.

As will be seen in FIGS. 7-10, in this retail outlet embodiment of my invention, the apparatus 60 includes a frame 62 which is open on all sides and within or upon the frame 62 the various operating components are suitably mounted and arranged and disposed so as to provide for the desired odor or smell on a repeating cycle, timed basis. The device also comprises a strip-like member 68 which is provided with a spaced series of pouches 70, each of which is adapted to contain a predetermined quantity of a liquid capable of producing the desired odor. The strip 68 is constituted of a flexible material with individual pouches 70 being formed as an integral part of flexible strip 68.

As will be seen by reference to FIGS. 7 and 10, a supply of flexible strip 68 is stored in a magazine or container 72, from which it is fed or furnished in a manner similar to the feeding of belted machine gun ammunition, according to which said flexible strip is folded over itself in short lengths when so stored. Operation of this retail outlet embodiment of my invention, designated 60, provides that flexible strip 68 travels along a vertical reach from storage over guide bar 74 and over guide roller 76, and thence along a horizontal reach to drive roller 78, as shown in FIG. 7. Said strip 68 being pulled through the aforesaid vertical and horizontal reaches by cyclical rotation of drive roller 78. As will be seen in FIGS. 7 and 8, drive roller 78 is provided with projections 80, said projections serving to penetrate the flexible strip 68 and pull it through the arc of rotation of drive roller 78. Said strip 68 then travels on a vertical reach over guide bar 82 to retention and storage on take-up roller 84.

As will be seen in FIGS. 7 and 8, the flexible strip 68 passes along the horizontal reach, pouches 70 successively come into contact with conical portion 88 of trough 86, and then with the knife 90, said knife being located immediately below the horizontal reach of strip 68. The knife 90 operated to slit open the pouches 70 in succession, thereby releasing the predetermined quantity of odor-liquid contained inside said pouches. As the pouches 70 are opened by contact with and passage across the knife 90, the odor producing liquid contained in them is caused to flow out of each in turn, and by gravity and contact to flow down the conical portion 88 of trough 86 onto the pads of absorbent material 92. Said absorbent material 92 is arranged to extend along both sides of trough 86 along the lower horizontal reach of strip 68. Accordingly, the contents of one pouch 70 are emptied by the action of one revolution of drive roller 78 and the odor-liquid therein is absorbed by the pads 92 after flowing down the conical portion 88 of trough 86. Release and flow of the liquid can be appreciated by reference to FIGS. 7 and 8.

It will be understood that the individual pouches 70 and the absorbent pads 92 perform vital functions in the positive control of both the strength and duration of the aforementioned desired odor. The pouches provide a predetermined amount of desired odor-liquid. The pads absorb the odor-liquid as it is emptied from each pouch as part of a cycle-action. This allows the regulated vaporization of the odor essences into the atmosphere, said vaporization being at a predetermined rate so as to provide for the proper strength or intensity and duration or persistence of the desired odor. In this connection, it should be pointed out that for a typical desired odor as aforedescribed, the quantity of odor producing liquid contained in each pouch is on the order of 10 cc. This amount of odor-liquid has been found to provide the desired strength of the desired odor within the desired area of atmosphere for a time period of approximately 45 minutes, as will be described later.

As shown in FIG. 7, a fan is provided for the regulated dispensing and distribution of the odor vapors through the sides and base of the frame 62. Designated 98, said fan is located over the horizontal reach of the flexible strip 68. The fan blades are covered with a protective open grid 100. As will be appreciated by reference to FIGS. 7-9, said fan promotes the movement of air over the absorbent pads 92, thus carrying the vaporized odor essences downward and outward into the predetermined and desired area of the adjacent atmosphere for detection and recognition by prospective customers in the immediate proximity of the apparatus 60.

Fan speeds of 800 to 1,000 rpm have been found to be useful in connection with providing a volume of approximately 500 cu. ft. of atmosphere adjacent to the apparatus 60 with the desired intensity of odor vapor as aforedescribed. This volume of atmosphere at a level of approximately 3 ft. from the floor to a level of approximately 7 ft. from the floor is useful as an area of recognition of the desired odor adjacent to a retail display of certain goods as aforedescribed.

To prevent the possibility of odor build-up or of odor distribution beyond the desired area immediately adjacent to the apparatus 60, provision is made for the fan 98 to operate for a period of 15 minutes after the elapse of the 45 minutes of each cycle of operation during which the odor essences are vaporized at the desired level of strength and intensity. The aforesaid operating cycle thus means that a 4 inch portion of flexible strip 68, including a 2 inch pouch 70 centered on said 4 inch strip portion, provides for and equals one hour of operating time of the device 60.

The device or apparatus 60 will be programmed by a master timer, designated 104, to operate only during peak periods of customer traffic and shopping when installed in retail outlets or stores or the like. Said operating periods are anticipated as being from Wednesday through Saturday, and from 10:00 AM through 7:00 PM only, for two successive periods. Thus the apparatus 60 will be provisioned for operation over a calendar time period of two weeks, requiring that a supply of flexible strip 68 and integral pouches 70 of some 24 feet in length be stored in the magazine 72.

It will be understood that a variety of desired odors can be provided and dispensed as aforedescribed by this multiple-cycle embodiment of my invention. To provide that such a change of odors be simple and easy to accomplish, the trough 86, together with its operating parts 88, 90 and 92, is constructed as a single replaceable unit. The same replaceable technique applies to the take-up storage roller 84 and to the pouch strip storage magazine 72. Thus when a particular odor, such as the odor of fresh-baked pizza pie, has been provided as aforedescribed for an elapsed time period of two weeks, the apparatus 60 can be quickly converted
to provide for another desired odor during a subsequent two week time period. Odor-producing liquids such as the previously alluded to odor of freshly baked pizza pie, as well as other odors produced and compounded to order, are obtainable from the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Corporation, St. Paul, Minn., and from other leading producers of such odor essences and odor producing liquids. Said odor essences or odor producing liquids being composed of both natural and synthetic odor elements, or by a suitable combination thereof.

As will be appreciated by referring to FIG. 7, mechanical power is supplied for the purpose of driving the fan 98 from the motor designated 102. For the purpose of powering the drive roller 78 and the take-up roller 84, power is supplied from the motor designated 94. In effectuating the travel of the flexible pouch strip 68, mechanical power from the motor 94 is coupled to the drive roller 78 through the medium of gear box 96. Mechanical power is also supplied to the take-up roller 84 through this gear box, using proper gear reductions and power transfers, and a suitable slip-clutch action as is well known to those skilled in such art. Operation of the fan 98 is effected by a direct drive from the motor 102.

In order to automatically control the aforesaid apparatus 60, a master timing means is provided to regulate operation of the various components so as to have them perform in their proper order and for their proper duration of time. Said master control timing device 104 is a clockwork-type mechanism such as is well known to those skilled in the art. Power for operating said master timing device is supplied from an independent power source (not shown). The master timer control 104 is programmed by setting on its clockwork face the day and time when the arrangement and proper position of the apparatus 60 is accomplished adjacent to the display of desired consumer goods, and actuating its independent power source. However, either less or more sophisticated timing controls may be useful in regulating the operation of the apparatus 60 should it be found necessary or desirable.

Such positive control and regulation for the automatic operation of the aforesaid apparatus relieves store personnel of any need to pay attention to, or spend time supervising or adjusting, the workings of the device.

It is important to point out that this retail store aspect or embodiment of my invention is intended to be normally enclosed within a three dimensional point of sale display piece which could be in the image of the concerned goods as prepared and presented for use of consumption when served in the home. For example, when my invention in this retail outlet embodiment is concerned with stimulating the desire to purchase and consume pizza pie, it could be enclosed in a three dimensional display piece illustrating a heated and prepared pizza pie as it usually appears when presented for consumption in the home, such display technique being well known to those skilled in the art of advertising and sales promotion.

Accordingly, in the use and practice of this multipletcycle embodiment of my invention, the apparatus 60 is set up adjacent to certain consumer goods presented for display and sale at a retail outlet or store or the like.

The apparatus is programmed so as to provide a desired odor characteristic of such goods, said odor being recognizable within a predetermined area immediately adjacent to such display. Upon approaching within a reasonable proximity to the display of goods and the apparatus as aforesaid, a prospective customer is unobtrusively and without any conscious act on his part, made simultaneously aware of the combined senses of sight and characteristic odor of said goods. Such unexpected combination of sensory recognitions serving to stimulate the desire to purchase and enjoy such goods, and thus to enhance the sale and use or consumption of goods so presented and displayed.

What I claim:

1. A method of advertising or promoting the sale of consumer goods by accompanying the visual display or presentation of the goods with an odor characteristic of the goods comprising: providing a visual display of the goods; and in a controlled area in immediate proximity to the display location, over a predetermined extended, controlled time period, providing an odor characteristic of the goods of predetermined controlled strength so as to stimulate and heighten the sensations of prospective customers in the immediate vicinity of said controlled area with respect to enhancing their desire to purchase and use or enjoy the goods, the step of providing the odor over the extended time period being carried out by providing a plurality of sealed containers each individually capable of being cut open to discharge by gravity a predetermined, uniform, fixed quantity of an odor producing liquid and cutting open said containers serially to cause a one-time action with respect to each said container whereby a fixed quantity of liquid in said container flows by gravity onto an absorbent material and vaporizing the odor essences from said absorbent material into the atmosphere at a predetermined regulated rate so as to provide a sustained effect and presence of said odor.

2. Apparatus for advertising or promoting the sale of consumer goods by accompanying the visual display or presentation of the goods with an odor characteristic of the goods comprising: a housing, a strip within said housing, means for driving said strip, a plurality of flexible sealed pouches spaced apart on said strip, each said pouch being capable of being cut open and containing a predetermined quantity and strength of odor producing liquid, knife-like means mounted along the path of travel of said strip for cutting open each said pouch as said pouch passes by said knife-like means so as to release said liquid and absorbent means located below the level of said knife-like means to receive the liquid released from said pouch and flowing by gravity and to retain said liquid and vaporize said odor from said absorbent means at a predetermined rate and means to blow a controlled amount of odor out of said housing and into a controlled area in the immediate vicinity of said housing.

3. Apparatus as defined in claim 2 further including timing means for activating and de-activating said means for driving said strip.

4. Apparatus as defined in claim 3 further including timing means for activating and de-activating said fan means.