Dec. 13, 1938. R. J. SHAW ET AL 2,140,033

INTERCHANGEABLE SIGN

Filed Feb. 14, 1938

Fig. 1.

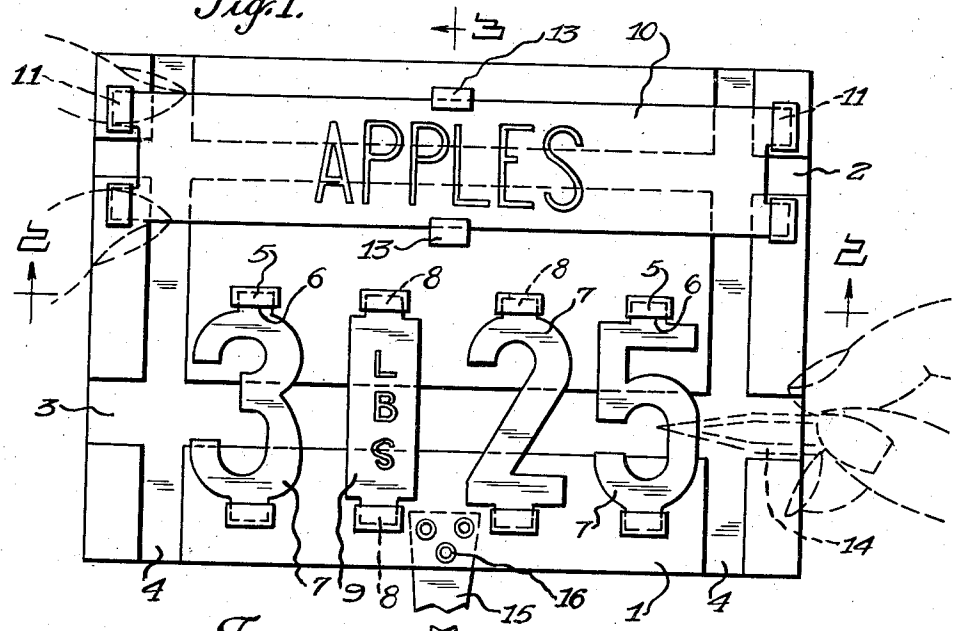


Fig. 2.

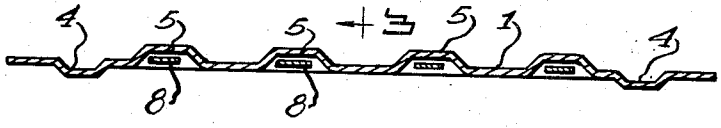


Fig. 3.

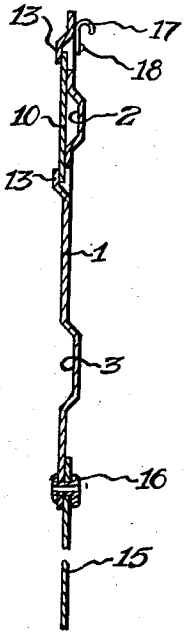
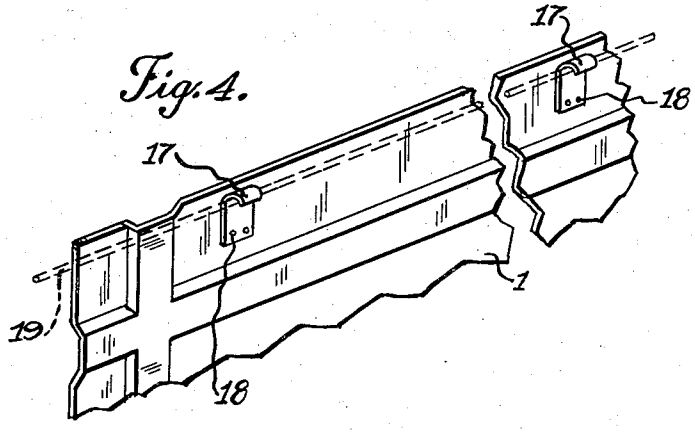


Fig. 4.



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INTERCHANGEABLE SIGN

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3 Claims. (Cl. 40—5)

The present invention pertains to a novel price tag or sign having interchangeable numerals and legend strips. The principal object of the invention is to provide such a device having a body consisting of sheet Celluloid.

Sheet Celluloid is well adapted for use as the backing or body member inasmuch as it is washable, durable, and lends itself well to die work to form slit pockets for receiving the end tabs of the interchangeable characters. Signs thus made of sheet Celluloid are now in common use up to a size of about four inches on each edge. Beyond this size, sheet Celluloid of practical and economical thickness does not maintain a flat and rigid condition.

One of the objects of the present invention is to enable the use of sheet Celuloid in considerably larger dimensions without resorting to an extravagant or uneconomical thickness of material. This object is accomplished generally by forming the material with channels or grooves which reinforce the material to prevent bending thereof. Moreover, the grooves are so arranged as to be crossed by the interchangeable parts applied to the backing, with the result that a pointed instrument or pencil may readily be inserted beneath the interchangeable parts by way of the grooves or channels for removing the parts when they are to be replaced.

The invention also provides for a legend strip running the entire length of the backing. This strip, like the removable characters and the backing, is preferably made of Celluloid having end tabs receivable in pockets formed in the backing. The strip must be bent while inserting the tabs in the pockets and it has been found that Celluloid of the length and character here employed acquires a bowed or bulging shape if bent frequently, especially if exposed to moist air or a mist spray such as that used for vegetables.

In this connection the invention provides means for avoiding the deformation of the elongated strip under the conditions described above. For this purpose, two tabs are stamped out of the backing member and are positioned to overlap the upper and lower edges of the strip at the center thereof. In addition to performing the function already described, the tabs serve as a guide beneath which the strip is first inserted and by means of which the strip is guided for inserting the first end into the corresponding pockets. This operation is considerably easier than first inserting one end of the strip directly into the pockets. Although the strip must be bent for inserting the other end into the pockets, the bulge resulting therefrom tends to distribute itself over the entire length of the strip but is checked by the tabs formed in the backing member and engaging the edges of the strip. The tabs also prevent the strip from sagging and hold it in a perfectly aligned position.

The invention is fully disclosed by way of example in the following description and the accompanying drawing, in which

Figure 1 is an elevation of the device;

Figure 2 is a section on the line 2—2 of Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a section on the line 3—3 of Figure 1, and

Figure 4 is a detail perspective view of a modification.

Reference to these views will now be made by use of like characters that are employed to designate corresponding parts throughout.

In the several figures the numeral 1 designates the backing or body of the sign. It is made of Celluloid in approximately the thickness now used for the common sizes but is of greater length and breadth, for example five by seven inches, or larger. The usual thickness of Celluloid will not retain its stiffness in these dimensions but will bend or warp, especially in a moist atmosphere.

In order to overcome this difficulty without resorting to thicker and more expensive Celluloid, we provide a number of grooves or channels running the length and breadth of the material to reinforce the same.

The grooves are formed in the face of the sheet 1 and are here illustrated as a longitudinal pair 2 and 3 near and parallel to the upper and lower edges respectively and a transverse pair 4 near and parallel to the side edges. This particular arrangement, although preferable, is not essential; and the grooves may be arranged in any other manner suitable for providing the desired reinforcement.

For retaining the individual character, pockets 5 are stamped out from the back of the material so that they lie on the face of the sheet 1 as may be seen in Figures 1 and 2. The pockets are arranged in pairs consisting of one above and one below the groove 3 and in vertical alignment. The inner horizontal edge 6 of each pocket is open or in the form of a slit, for a purpose which will presently appear. The individual characters 7 are cut out of similar Celluloid material and carry tabs 8 at the upper and lower ends for insertion in the aligned pockets. In like manner,

a small legend strip 9 may be held, instead of a character, in a pair of pockets.

The principal legend strip 10 running nearly the full length of the member 1 is, in the present instance, mounted horizontally above the members 7, 9, although it may be mounted in other positions if desired. The strip is inserted in the backing 1 in substantially the manner described in connection with the members 7, 9. The strip 10 is formed with a pair of projecting tabs 11 at each end receivable in pockets 12 similar to the pockets 5, formed at opposite sides of the groove 2 which is substantially covered by the strip 10 as clearly shown in Figures 1 and 3.

A pair of integral tabs 13 are struck out of the backing member 1 at opposite sides of the groove 2, pointing towards each other and spaced apart sufficiently to receive an edge of the strip 7 beneath each tab. The strip is applied by first having one end inserted beneath and between the tabs 13 and is then slid towards the pair of pockets 12 at one end of the backing member 1. The end of the strip 10 is more easily inserted beneath the tab 13 than directly into the pair of pockets 12 and is guided by means of the tabs towards the pockets so that insertion in the latter is facilitated. Next, the remaining end of the strip 10 must be inserted in the other pair of pockets 12, and such insertion requires flexing of the strip.

It has been repeatedly observed that frequent bending of a Celluloid strip imparts a permanent bend or bulge which detracts from the appearance of the sign. This bulging is still more likely to occur if the member is exposed to damp air or a mist spray. This condition is avoided in the present construction by the provision of the tabs 13 which hold the center portion of the strip 10 against the backing member 1, as illustrated in Figure 3. Although the strip must be bent for inserting the second end in the pockets 12, as previously described, this bend tends to distribute itself over the entire length of the strip but is corrected and eliminated by the action of the tabs 13. In addition to serving as a guide and a bend eliminator for the strip 10, the tabs 13 prevent the strip from sagging as a result of its suspension at its ends.

The grooves 2, 3 and 4 serve another purpose in facilitating removal of the members 7, 9 and 10. Inasmuch as the grooves are formed in the face of the member 1, a pencil or other pointed member 14 may be inserted beneath any of these parts, whereby the part is readily pried out of its pockets. The members 7, 9 and 10 can even be removed in this manner by the fingertips without the use of a pointed member. In the case of the strip 10, with the groove 4 exposed at opposite edges thereof, these edges may be grasped by the thumb and forefinger inserted in the groove. Without some such means of gripping the strip, which is held flat against the member 1 by the tabs 13 as previously described, it would be a cumbersome operation to remove the strip.

The sign may be supported by a prong 15 of rustless steel secured to the lower edge thereof by a number of eyelets 16, and the prong inserted in the merchandise. Where the sign is to be suspended over the merchandise rather than inserted therein, the modification shown in Figure 4 is used. Here, a pair of hooks 17 are secured to the back of the member 1 near the upper corners thereof by eyelets 18. By means of the hooks the sign is suspended from a wire 19 as illustrated.

Although a specific embodiment of the invention has been illustrated and described, it will be understood that various alterations in the details of construction may be made without departing from the scope of the invention, as indicated by the appended claims.

What we claim is:

1. In a sign, a Celluloid backing member having a groove formed in its face, tabs formed on the face of said member at opposite sides of said groove and pointing towards each other, an elongated sign element adapted to cross said groove and slidably receivable between and beneath said tabs, said face being formed with another groove angular to the first named groove and extending beyond at least one edge of said element, whereby said element may be engaged by means inserted in the last named groove, and pockets formed on said face at the ends of the first named groove and adapted to receive the ends of said element by a lengthwise movement of said element.

2. In a sign, a Celluloid backing member having grooves formed in its face and extending substantially from edge to edge of said member, a tab formed on the face of said member at one side of one of said grooves, an elongated sign element adapted to cross the last named groove and slidably receivable beneath said tab, the other groove extending beyond the edges of said element, whereby said element may be engaged by means inserted in the said other groove, and pockets formed on said face at the ends of the first named groove and adapted to receive the ends of said element by a lengthwise movement of said element.

3. In a sign, a Celluloid backing member having grooves formed in its face and extending substantially from edge to edge of said member, tabs formed on the face of said member at opposite sides of one of said grooves and pointing towards each other, an elongated sign element adapted to cross the last named groove and slidably receivable beneath and between said tabs, the other groove extending beyond the edges of said element, whereby said element may be engaged by means inserted in the said other groove, and pockets formed on said face at the ends of the first named groove and adapted to receive the ends of said element by a lengthwise movement of said element.

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