

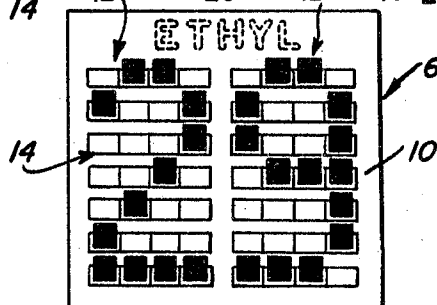
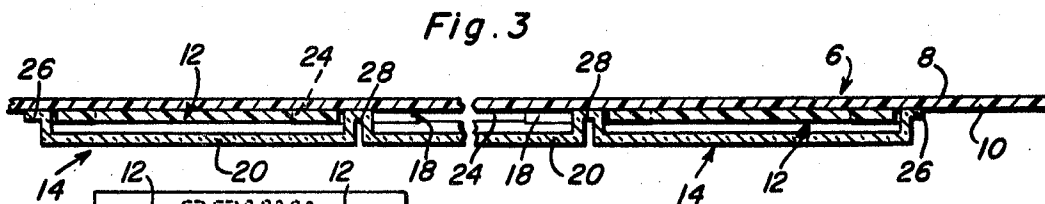
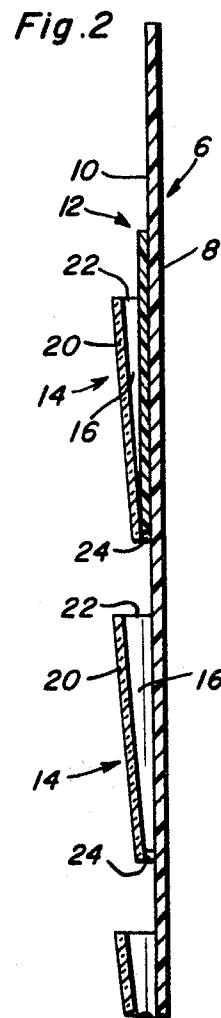
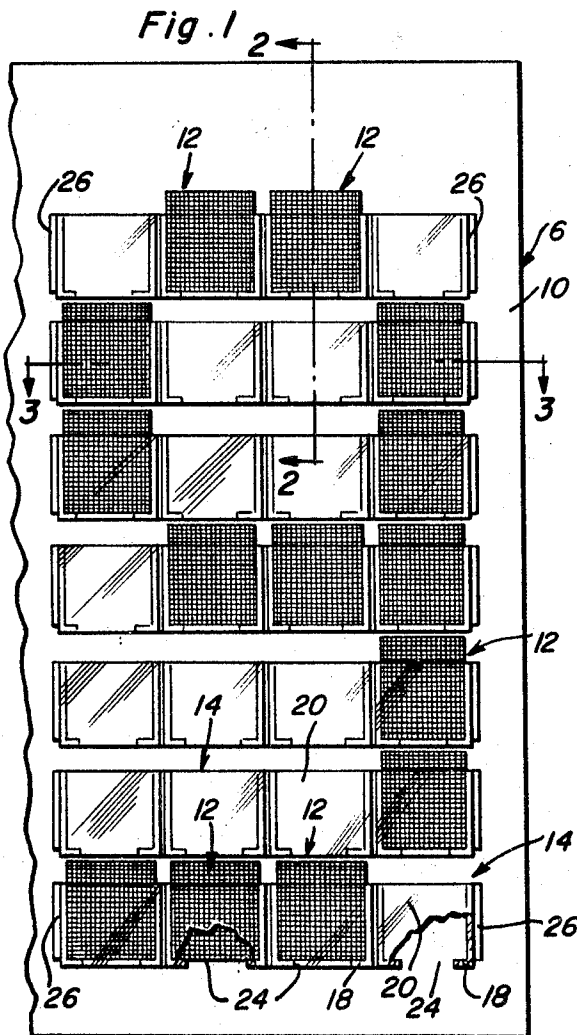
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3,458,944

CHANGEABLE SIGN CONSTRUCTION

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CHANGEABLE SIGN CONSTRUCTION

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4 Claims

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A sign, with or without a source of illumination, for filling stations, food markets and business establishments. It obviates the need to store a huge reserve of lettered and numbered sign building components and saves time and labor by providing a backing panel with distributive rows of pockets. This checker-board-style multiple pocket effect enables the user to place blank inserts in predetermined pockets, to outline or delineate letters and numerals (indicia generally speaking) and make up an on-the-spot message-conveying sign.

This invention relates to certain new and useful improvements in a changeable sign which is such in construction and adaptability that it can be used to acceptably replace advertising signs such as are commonly being used, for example, at gasoline filling stations, food markets, and roadside places of business. To the ends desired, the herein disclosed adaptation employs simple blank inserts in lieu of specially lettered and numbered blocks and makes it unnecessary to stock up with and haphazardly store countless laboriously selected word and numeral blocks of one type or another for sign building needs.

Persons conversant with signs, billboards, and the like for use indoors or outdoors are aware that signs using lettered and numbered blocks and inserts which are selectively put together to provide a display or to convey a message or advertise service are of many and varied types. One typical example of the prior art is the patent to Evans 1,117,360 showing a lampbox-type illuminable sign whose front wall has systematized holders for racking the sign building plates or blocks. The use of lettered as well as blank elements on a backing panel is shown in a patent to Holt 1,598,525. The patent to Kip 2,062,094 represents additional but rather non-analogous art.

An object of the present invention is to remove upon the above named prior patents and, in so doing, to advance the field of invention having to do with quick-change, simplified advertising signs.

Briefly, the herein disclosed improvement is characterized by a suitably supported panel having an indicia presenting, supporting and displaying surface, a plurality of individual indicia laying out and delineating elements, all of said elements being alike in form, selectively usable and interchangeable, said elements being readily applicable and removable and susceptible of on-the-spot manual grouping and assembling in an orderly systematic manner to make up and delineate predetermined alphabetical letters, numerals or words constituting and presenting a message or ad, and means on said indicia display surface capable of supporting said elements in coordinating readable relationship.

These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part hereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a fragmentary view with parts in section and elevation showing a substantial end portion of a change-

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able advertising sign constructed in accordance with the principles of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is an enlarged view taken on the plane of the section line 2—2 of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary horizontal section on a suitably enlarged scale taken on the plane of the section line 3—3 of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is a view on a small scale showing the complete sign in elevation and showing how the put-together selectively usable block-like inserts have been appropriately fitted into the receiving and retaining pockets to delineate the numeral 29.

By way of introduction to the description of the details it is to be reiterated that the concept has to do with an adaptation which may be considered as an illuminable sign panel, that is, a cover for lampbox or the like (not shown) or, alternatively, a non-illuminated sign. The sign proper or panel may be manufactured either in sheet plastic or sheet metal if desired but for purposes of the present explanation it is desirable to stress the transparent feature. On the front or forward face 10 of the panel, means is provided for attachably and detachably supporting and temporarily retaining the multiplicity of inserts 12. More specifically, the means preferred comprises a plurality of horizontal and vertical rows of properly proportioned plastic pockets each of which is denoted by the numeral 14. Each pocket is of a shape and depth to receive the insertable and removable quick-change insert 12. Each pocket has vertical spaced parallel end walls 16, a bottom wall 18 (FIG. 1) and a main flat-faced front wall 20. The upper end of the pocket is open as denoted at 22. It will also be noted in FIG. 2 that the median portion of the bottom wall is provided with a slot 24 to facilitate drainage if and when water or moisture should accumulate within the confines of the receiver portion of the pocket. When the insert is in place as illustrated in FIG. 2 the upper portion thereof projects above, that is, through and beyond the mouth 22 to facilitate catching hold of insert when applying and removing the same. It will also be noted that the end walls 16 are substantially wedge-shaped in configuration. It follows that the main or front wall 20 of the pocket slopes upwardly and outwardly to provide sufficient space to facilitate the step of applying and removing a given indicia insert 12. It is important to note that the insert is not equipped with letters or numerals or any other equivalent inscription. This is to say each insert is plain or of blank form.

It is also to be noted that each row of pockets is made from an elongated strip of moldable plastic material which as shown in FIG. 1 has attaching flanges 26 at the respective ends which are superimposed on and bonded to the surface 10. The intermediate portions are formed into channel-shaped ribs which are denoted at 28 and which not only facilitate attachment of the pocketed strip but also define the vertical end walls of each pocket. The cross-sectional dimension of the bottom wall 18 of the pocket can be substantially equivalent to the cross-sectional thickness of the insert so that the insert will stay substantially in the vertical position illustrated in FIG. 2. On the other hand, it will be understood that even if the insert leans forwardly to the left (FIG. 2) there will be no objection inasmuch as the walls of the pocket are transparent and consequently the insert is visible therethrough.

It will be noted in the invention disclosed that the sign-board or sign construction is characterized by a delineation, laying out, or outlining of letters and numbers through the medium of inserts which are plain and placed in selected pockets in the manner shown in FIG. 4. It follows that by referring to FIG. 4 it will be seen that the user has pre-planned the character which is to be displayed. Accordingly, selected inserts have been placed in pre-

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determined pockets so that they coact with each other in defining the two numerals 2 and 9 and which together form the price of gasoline which in the instance shown is 29¢ per gallon.

It is also to be noted that in the construction shown the inserts do not have to be surface ornamented or pre-
designed inasmuch as they are all alike and interchangeable and when properly pocketed in the manner shown in the views of the drawing the inserts, pockets and panel cooperating in providing the desired sign.

The foregoing is considered as illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

1. A manually variable readily changeable sign for use at filling stations, food markets and the like and employable with or without a source of artificial illumination comprising, in combination, a supported panel made of rigid transparent sheet material having an indicia presenting, supporting and displaying surface, a plurality of individual indicia delineating elements, all of said elements being alike, selectively usable, and interchangeable, said elements comprising flat-faced relatively small panel-like inserts of corresponding size, shape and color, each insert being blank and adapted to provide a component part of a composite letter, numeral or design and being selectively applicable and removable and susceptible of on-the-spot grouping and assembling in an orderly systematic manner to conjointly make up and delineate predetermined alphabetical letters, numerals or words, and means on said indicia display surface capable of supporting said inserts in coordinating readable relationship.

2. The sign according to claim 1, and wherein the supporting means on said panel comprises a multiplicity of adapters fixed in oriented and coordinating horizontal and vertical checkerboard rows on the front face of said panel.

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3. The sign defined in claim 2, and wherein each adapter comprises a fixed pocket defining a receiver and holder for the insert which is inserted and held therein in a letter-building position, said pockets made of clear transparent plastic material and being component portions of an elongated one piece strip of plastic material having end flanges superimposed upon and bonded to the display surface of said panel.

4. The sign defined in and according to claim 3, and wherein each pocket is open at an upper end, has wedge-shaped end walls and a main flat-faced front wall which is slanted and flared forwardly at said upper end, and has a slot in its bottom providing for drainage of water that would otherwise accumulate in the receiver portion of said pocket, said insert being of a dimension relative to the depth of the pocket that a portion of the upper edge protrudes upwardly through and beyond said open upper end to facilitate the step of applying and removing said insert, and also wherein said insert is opaque and colorably distinctive that it is easy for an observer to not only see the grouped inserts but to interpret the character which is being displayed for viewing.

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40—140