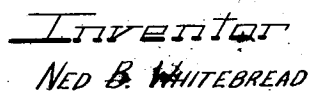


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COMBINATION ADVERTISING SIGN AND
ILLUMINATING DEVICE

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The present invention relates to improvements in advertising signs and more particularly concerns improvements in advertising signs that can also be utilized for illuminating purposes.

An important object of the present invention is to provide an improved advertising sign device in which provisions are made for not only an advertising sign display of more or less permanent character, but also an advertising sign display of temporary and quickly and conveniently replaceable character.

Another object of the invention is to provide an advertising sign device in which a common source of illumination transmitted directly through one sign bearing member also illuminates a second sign bearing member.

Still another object of the invention is to provide in a display sign device improved means for replaceably mounting temporary sign cards.

Yet another object of the invention is to provide an improved display sign device which will serve not only as an advertising medium but also as a lighting fixture.

It is also an object of the invention to provide in an advertising display sign device an improved casing and sign supporting structure.

Other objects, features and advantages of the present invention will be readily apparent from the following detailed description of a preferred embodiment thereof taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a front elevational view of an advertising display sign device embodying the features of the invention;

Figure 2 is a rear elevational view of the device, with certain parts broken away and in section for clarity of illustration; and

Figure 3 is a vertical, fragmental sectional view on an enlarged scale, taken substantially on the line III—III of Figure 2.

As shown on the drawings:

The device according to the present invention, described generally, is so constructed and arranged that a hidden source of illumination, such as a fluorescent lighting tube 5 supported within a housing 6 is completely concealed from view at the front of the device, but affords illumination for a sign-carrying plastic panel 7 supported by the housing 6 and located in spaced edgewise parallel opposition to the fluorescent tube 5. At the same time, light from the light source of fluorescent tube 5 escapes from and is directed rearwardly from the housing 6 for illumination of a space behind the device or a merchandise display or other advertising device or sign or the

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like. For example, the rearwardly directed illumination may be utilized to illuminate the interior of a store as a night light.

Within the housing 6, the fluorescent lighting tube 5 is supported in a more or less conventional way replaceably carried by electrical contact end brackets 8 projecting from base structure 9 associated with the usual ballast, etc., connected to a source of electricity. The base structure 9 is supported by a carrying panel 10 forming part of the housing structure and preferably of channel shape extending the length of the housing and having right angularly disposed parallel side flanges 11 and 12.

As the principal component of the housing 6, a sheet metal body member 13 is provided having a front panel 14 from one edge of which extends right angularly rearward horizontal panel 15 having a terminal panel 17 extending in spaced parallel relation to the front panel 14 and adapted to receive the carrying panel 10 therebetween. From the opposite edge of the front panel 14 extends a preferably diagonal panel 18 projecting generally rearwardly to oppose the forward portion of the fluorescent tube 5 on the side opposite to the supporting panel 10 and terminating in a display panel supporting flange 19 extending parallel to the front panel 14 and projecting away from the fluorescent tube 15.

End closure panels 20 at the respective opposite ends of the housing assembly are constructed to fit within the confines of the body member 13 and respectively include an intumed front flange 21 engaging the approximate end margin of the front panel 14, an intumed marginal flange 22 engaging the rearwardly extending panel 15, a rear attachment flange 23 engaging the rear panel 17, and an attachment flange 24 engaging the adjacent margin of the panel 18. The several attachment flanges of the end panels 20 are secured to the housing panels in any appropriate manner, as by welding. This provides a sturdy housing structure within which the illuminating source assembly is adapted to be supported in a concealed relation with respect to the front of the sign device.

At the rear of the housing, a substantial light escape opening is afforded by having the rear panel 17 substantially narrower than the front panel 14 and preferably not much wider than the side flanges 11 and 12 of the supporting panel 10. This leaves a relatively large horizontal space back of the front panel 14 between the edge of the back panel 17 and the rearwardly extending sign supporting panel 18 from which light from

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the illuminating tube 5 can escape rearwardly for illumination purposes.

In order to support the light source assembly removably within the housing 6, the supporting panel 10 is preferably detachably secured therein. To this end, the rear flange 12 of the supporting panel is detachably secured to the back panel 17 of the housing by means of screws 25.

As a retainer to prevent unauthorized removal of the light tube 5 and also as additional support for the advertising panel 7, strap members 27 are provided at the respective opposite ends of the housing 6, such members being connected at one of their respective ends between the flange 12 and the rear panel 17 as by means of the screws 25, while the opposite end portions of the strap members are formed with forwardly and diagonally outwardly extending intermediate panel portions 28 terminating in respective advertising panel engaging flanges 29. As best seen in Figure 3, the general shape of the strap members 27 may conform to that of the front panel 14 and the rearward panel 18 of the housing main body casing and with the terminal flange 29 extending in spaced parallel relation to the terminal flange 19 so as to receive the margin of the advertising panel 7 therebetween. Bolts 30 secure the margin of the advertising panel 17 between the flanges 19 and 29 with the adjacent edge of the advertising panel in parallel closely spaced relation adjacent to and medially longitudinally of the illuminating tube 5.

The plastic panel 7 may be formed from the plastic material which is sold under the trade name of "Lucite," which is a material that has the property of freely passing light therethrough. An appropriate permanent sign may be applied to the back side of the plastic panel 7 as by painting the same thereon, applying decalcomania, or the like, such sign showing through the plastic during the daylight hours or when the source of illumination is turned off but being illuminated by the light passing through the plastic panel when the light source is turned on. Merely by way of illustration, the word "sign" has been shown as applied to the back of the plastic panel 7 which in the present instance is indicated as formed from clear plastic, but it will be understood that any appropriate wording, symbols, pictures or other illustrations may be applied to the back of the panel as desired.

The sign on the back of the panel 7 is caused to stand out prominently by securing an opaque sheet or panel 31 to the back of the panel 7. For example, the opaque backing sheet or panel 31 may comprise a thin metal panel of identical dimensions as to width and length so as to register with and appear from the front to be a part of the advertising panel. Along the attached edge of the panel 7, the screws 30 serve as the means for connecting the backing panel 31 in place. Adjacent to the opposite edge of the advertising panel assembly additional screws 32 may be employed for securing the advertising or indicia carrying panel assembly together.

While the panel assembly comprising the plastic panel 7 and the backing panel 31 are adapted to provide a permanent type of sign, temporary sign facilities are adapted to be provided by a replaceable card or other sheet 33 adapted to be held on the advertising panel assembly by means of spring clips 34 carried by the backing panel 31 adjacent to the free longitudinal edge thereof as best seen in Figures 2 and 3. The clips 34 may comprise sheet metal resilient strips having base

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portions 35 welded onto the backing panel 31 and with the card gripping portions of the clips directed toward the edge of the panel 31, so that rearwardly flaring lips 37 thereon afford entry mouths for ready slipping of the temporary advertising card 33 between the clips 34 and the adjacent margin of the backing panel 31. In this manner, the temporary advertising card 33 is adapted to be supported with the major portion thereof projecting beyond the edge of the permanent advertising panel 7 so that light emanating from the edge of the plastic panel 7 will fall upon the face of the temporary advertising sign card 33 and illuminate the same so that in the dark appropriate wording or other indicia on the card 33 will be prominently visible. Merely by slidably disengaging the temporary advertising card 33 it can be changed or replaced by another card which is adapted to be assembled with the permanent advertising display by sliding it into place between the clips and the margin of the backing panel 31 where it will be held by the clips until it is desired to remove the same.

In order to improve the illuminating qualities of the device rearwardly of the housing 6, the interior of the housing assembly insofar as the surfaces thereof opposing the light tube 5 are concerned may be finished in a light shade such as white for reflecting purposes. It will be observed, for example, that the inner surface of the panel 14, the inner surface of the rearwardly extending panel 18 and the tube opposing surface of the supporting panel 10 all provide effective reflecting surfaces.

The front surface of the backing panel 31 may be finished in any appropriate manner. In one practical form this front surface has been finished in black so that the sign indicia on the back surface of the plastic panel 7 comprising contrasting colors will stand out prominently. In the illuminated condition of the device, the black surface of the backing panel being absorptive of light therefore affords a very neutral background to make the indicia on the plastic panel stand out quite prominently.

As shown, the device is adapted to be suspended in use as, for example, in the show window of a store. For this purpose the unit is provided with a pair of hanger brackets 38 which may be secured as by means of screws 39 medially to the outer face of the upper housing panel 15 adjacent to the ends of the housing 6. Apertures 40 in the brackets are adapted to receive a suspending medium such as wire, chain, hooks or the like for hanging the device where desired.

On the other hand, the device may just as well be adapted for use standing upon a support with the panel 15 at the bottom and with the advertising panels extending upwardly.

It will, of course, be understood that various details of construction may be varied through a wide range without departing from the principles of this invention and it is, therefore, not the purpose to limit the patent granted hereon otherwise than necessitated by the scope of the appended claims.

I claim as my invention:

1. In combination in a device of the character described, a housing comprising a front wall, a rearwardly extending panel having a terminal panel extending parallel to the front wall but narrower than the front wall, a rearwardly extending panel at the margin of the front wall opposite the first mentioned rearwardly extending panel and terminating in an outwardly ex-

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tending flange parallel to the front wall, a light tube supporting structure including a supporting panel having parallel flanges receptive between said front wall and said back panel, end panel members having flanges attached to said front wall and said opposite panels extending rearwardly from the front wall, means for securing said supporting panel rear flange to the rear panel, and a light transmissive panel secured to said terminal flange for receiving illumination from the light source through the adjacent edge of the light transmissive panel.

2. A device as defined in claim 1 including in addition supporting straps extending between the back face of the attached margin of said light transmissive panel and said back panel to afford additional support for the light transmissive panel.

3. In a housing structure for a sign device of the character described, a housing member formed from a single piece of sheet metal and including a front panel, opposite generally rearwardly extending panels, one of which is formed with a rear panel extending generally parallel to the front panel, said rear panel being narrower than the front panel so as to afford a rearward opening from the housing, the remaining rearwardly extending panel having an outwardly extending terminal flange generally parallel to the front panel, a light transmissive panel carried by said terminal flange and having its edge exposed in said housing, end panels having flanges attached to the end margins of the front panel and said opposite panels, a carrying and reflector panel supported between the front and rear panels, an illuminating source supported within the housing by said carrying and reflector panel opposite the opening afforded at the back of the housing and in position to illuminate the edge of the light transmissive panel carried by the terminal flange.

4. In an advertising device of the character described, a housing comprising a sheet metal housing member having a front panel, opposite rearwardly extending panels one of which has a back panel turned angularly thereto and generally parallel to the front panel but substantially narrower than the front panel, a channel

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shaped sheet metal carrying panel structure, an illumination source carried by the said carrying panel structure, means for detachably securing the channel shaped carrying panel structure between said back panel and the front panel and with the illumination source disposed in the housing but exposed at the back of the housing, and a light transmissive sign-carrying panel attached to said remaining one of said rearwardly extending panels and with an edge of the sign-carrying panel exposed to the illumination source.

5. In an advertising and illuminating device including an edge-lit, light-transmitting transparent panel having light reflective indicia on a face thereof, and a light source housing having light-obscuring and light-emitting portions on one side thereof, all other sides of said housing obscuring the passage of light, means for supporting said transparent panel along the light-obscuring portion of said one side of said housing to receive light therefrom, a first opaque panel coextensive with said transparent panel disposed therebehind and thereagainst, and a second opaque panel supported by said first opaque panel along an edge of said transparent panel remote from said light source, whereby said light source may simultaneously illumine the indicia-bearing transparent panel by reflection, a face of the first opaque panel by direct light, and a face of the second opaque panel by edge-delivered light through said transparent panel.

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