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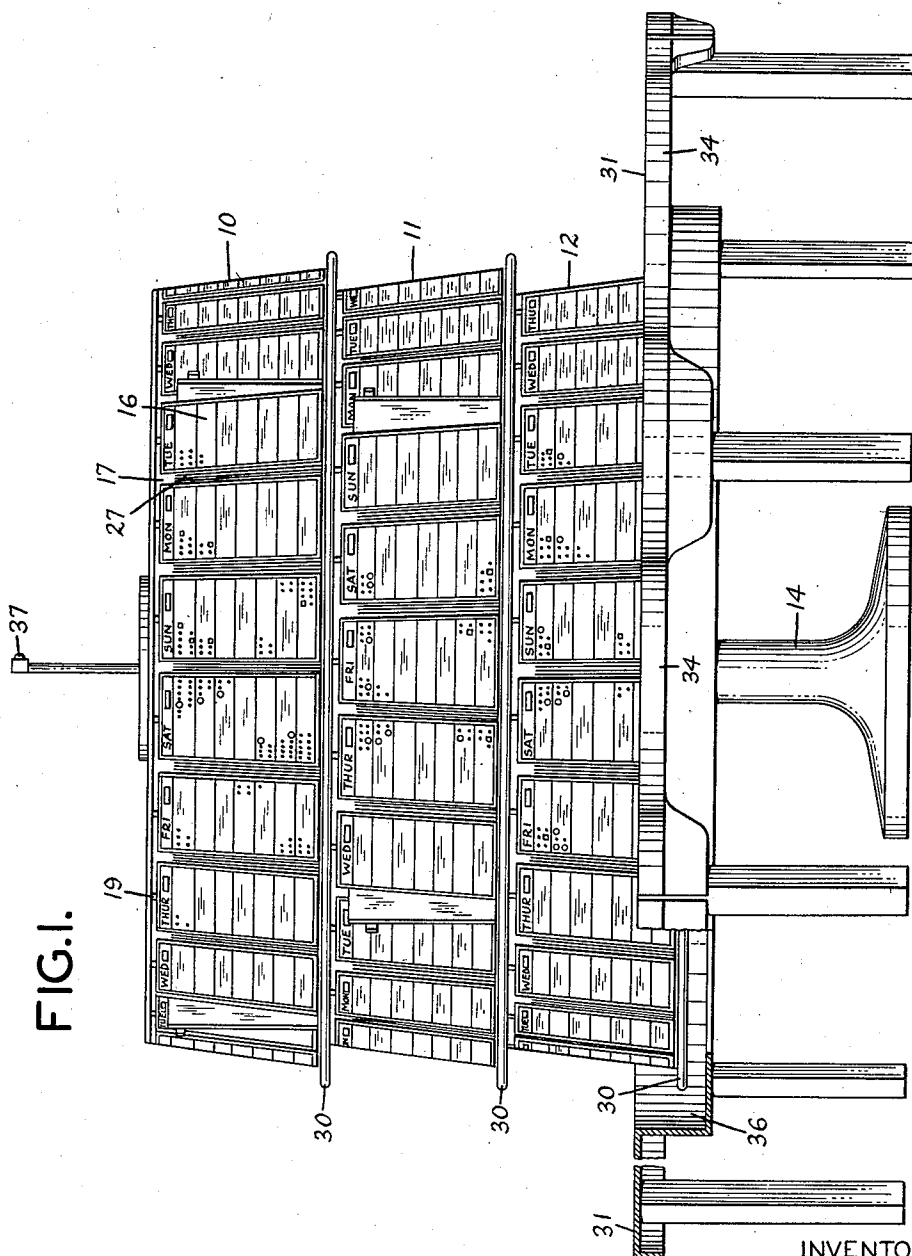
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RESERVATION CONTROL APPARATUS

Filed May 29, 1948

2 Sheets-Sheet 1



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FIG. 2.

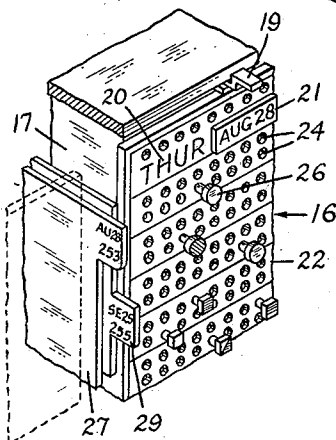
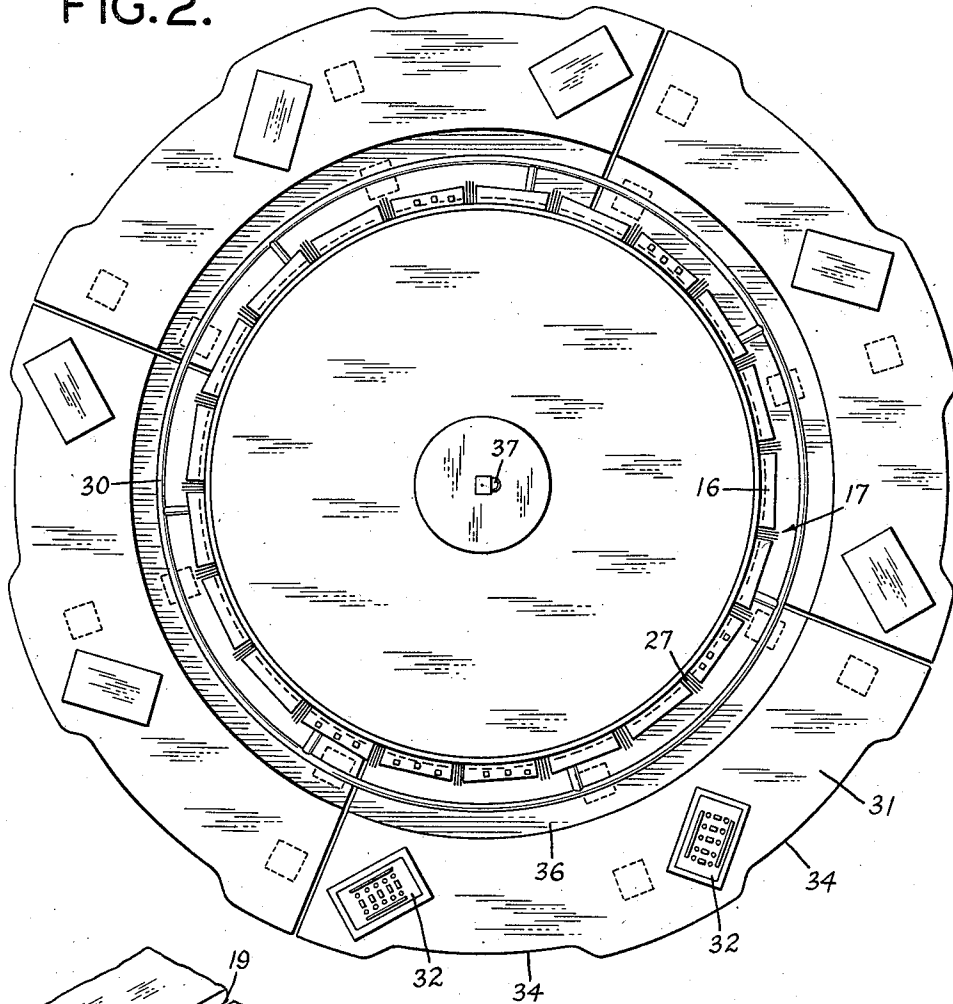


FIG. 3.

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RESERVATION CONTROL APPARATUS

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1 Claim. (Cl. 116—136)

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The present invention relates to a reservation control apparatus for maintaining a visible running check on the type and availability of accommodations in railroad trains and the like.

Despite a persistent and urgent demand for a simple and effective means of maintaining up to the minute information on available accommodations, particularly on railroad trains, it is common knowledge that the existing means of reservation control are antiquated and extremely wasteful of time and energy on the part of both the employees of the railroads and the public in general. Thus, for example, a request for the reservation of a lower berth on a train scheduled to depart at some future date requires a ticket agent to select one group of car charts from a large number of groups and then to go through an average of say seven or eight of the car charts of a particular train to determine whether the requested space is available. This results in long lines at ticket windows, exasperating delays on the telephone, last minute cancellations due to duplication of reservations by ticket agents, unsold space in spite of demand therefor, and the loss of good will by the railroads.

It has now been found that the difficulties and inconveniences that are now practically taken for granted in making and extending reservations for accommodations in railroad trains and the like can be avoided completely by the use of a central reservation office equipped with a reservation control apparatus operable as hereinafter described. It will be evident from the description that the control apparatus of this invention is applicable to uses in all industries that are concerned with the reservation of accommodations. It is to be understood, therefore, that although the invention will be described in detail only as it may be applied to the control of train reservations, it is not intended to limit the applicability of the invention solely to such use.

In the accompanying drawings:

Figure 1 is a side view in elevation of a preferred embodiment of the reservation control apparatus of this invention;

Figure 2 is a plan view of the apparatus illustrated in Figure 1; and

Figure 3 is a detailed view showing a portion of the apparatus illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

The apparatus illustrated by way of example in the drawings includes three individually rotatable drum members 10, 11, and 12 having a common and vertical axis of rotation centered on a standard 14. The periphery of each of the drum members 10, 11 and 12 is provided with a plurality

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of peg boards 16 separated from one another by recesses or pockets 17.

The peg boards 16 are attached to the peripheries of the drum members 10, 11 and 12 by any suitable means such as clips 19. At the top of each peg board 16 there is provided a space for suitable identification markers such as a day marker 20 and date marker 21, as shown in Figure 3. The remainder of each peg board is divided into a plurality of horizontally elongated areas 22 and each such area is provided with a pair of horizontal rows of perforations 24 adapted to receive indicator pegs 26. The number of areas 22 in each peg board 16 is preferably made at least equal to the number of cars having reserved accommodations on any single train.

Each peg 26 has a head portion marked by its shape, color, printed designation, or any combination thereof to indicate the type and/or availability of a given accommodation. Thus, for example, upper berths, lower berths, bedrooms, compartments, drawing rooms and roomettes may be represented by pegs having white, yellow, green, lavender, blue and pink heads, respectively. Alternatively, or in addition, the heads may be labeled with the letters "U," "L," "B," "C," "D," and "R," respectively. Furthermore, the shape, color or printed designations on the heads of the pegs may be varied to indicate the reservation status of a particular accommodation, i. e., until what time the accommodation is being reserved, the cities between which the accommodation remains available, and the like.

It is to be understood, of course, that the foregoing illustrations relative to the shape, color and printed designations of or on the heads of the pegs are merely suggestive and that the invention is not limited to any particular identification code or system.

Each pocket 17 is of a depth, width and length sufficient to accommodate a visible card index 27 comprising preferably a series of car charts, one chart for each car in a particular train. Each car chart is provided with a tab 29 and the tabs in each series of car charts are staggered relative to one another so that each tab will be opposite a different area 22 of the peg board 16. Each tab 29 is labeled with a car number and date of departure as shown in Figure 3.

Each individually rotatable drum member is provided at its base with a hand rail 30 that can be grasped by an operator for the purpose of rotating the drum member to which it is attached.

An annular table 31 is provided with eight

switchboards 32 and eight indentations 34, one for each operator. A well 36 is provided between the periphery of the lowest drum member 12 and the top of the table 31 so that the peg boards 16 on both the highest and the lowest drum members 10 and 12, respectively, will be within easy reach of the operators. Suitable telephone connections are provided for each operator and a signal light 37 is provided at the top of the standard 14 for the purpose of signalling an incoming call.

The operation of the reservation control apparatus of this invention is extremely simple and provides an instantaneous, visible record of the number, type, location and reservation status of all available accommodations on a particular train for weeks in advance. Thus, for example, if the apparatus is provided with three rotatable drum members each having twenty-one panels, as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2, and each panel is utilized for a particular train scheduled to depart on a particular date, the apparatus will provide an instantaneous, visible record of the number, type, location and reservation status of all accommodations for three or nine weeks in advance, depending upon whether each drum element is used for a different train or all three drum elements are used for the same train.

The designations on the tabs of the car charts provide means for instantly selecting and removing from any particular pocket the car chart for a given car and minimize the possibility of misfiling the car charts after any required entries have been made thereon. The staggered positions of the tabs opposite successive horizontally elongated areas on each peg board serve to identify said areas with the tabs opposite them with the result that a tab marked "Car 253," for example, not only provides a ready means for removing the car chart for car 253 but also identifies the area opposite it on the peg board as representing the accommodations in that car. The number, location and type of pegs on each peg board will, at all times, correspond with the number, type and location of spaces available. Whenever a space on a particular car of a particular train is sold, the peg corresponding to that space is removed, the car chart of the car in question is removed, suitably marked and replaced in the pocket 17 (see Figure 3). Thus, for example, if compartment number 4 on car 253 leaving Thursday, August 28, is unsold, a peg 26 designating the type of space will be struck in the fourth perforation from the left and opposite the tab of the car chart for car 253. When that space is sold, the peg 26 will be removed and the car chart for car 253 will be suitably marked. Thus, the fact that that particular space is no longer available for reservation will become apparent immediately to all of the operators. By the same token the operators can tell immediately whether a particular train leaving on a particular day has any more spaces of any particular type available for reservation and, if so, the car number in which that space is located as well as the location of the space within the car.

It is to be understood that the perforations 24 in the various horizontally elongated areas 22 may be used in whatever manner is most suitable to the accommodations involved. Thus, for example, if the car represented by a particular area is one having only upper and lower berths, the perforations in the upper row may be used to designate upper berths and the perforations in the lower row may be used to designate lower berths. If, on the other hand, the car contains roomettes, compartments, bedrooms or drawing rooms or any combination thereof, only one of the rows of perforations of any pair need be used to designate particular spaces. The type of reservation, that is, whether a space is a compartment, roomette, bedroom, drawing room or berth, is indicated by the shape and color of the peg inserted into the perforation reserved for that space.

It is also to be understood that the number of rows of perforations in each area 22 need not necessarily be two. If it is desired to use the apparatus of this invention to indicate the reservation status of coach seats, for example, wherein the seats are disposed four abreast, it is advantageous to have four rows of perforations in the area 22.

It is manifest that many modifications and alterations in the details of the apparatus of this invention will suggest themselves to those skilled in the art upon reading the description of this invention and it is to be understood that all such alterations and modifications as come within the scope of the appended claim are intended to be included within the invention.

I claim:

Reservation control apparatus comprising, in combination, a rotatable drum member having a vertical axis of rotation, a plurality of peg boards on the periphery of the drum member, each peg board having a plurality of horizontal rows of perforations, a recess in the drum member at one side of each peg board, and a visible card index in each recess, each card in the visible card index having a tab in staggered relation to the tabs of the other cards in said index and each tab being substantially opposite at least one horizontal row of perforations in the adjacent peg board for which the card is a record, and a plurality of indicator pegs adapted to be removably inserted into the perforations in said peg boards.

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