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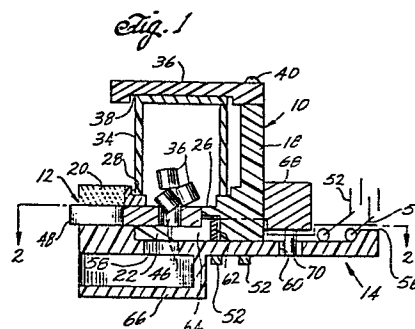
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54 Product dispensing device and method.

57 A product dispenser includes a storage station (34) for storing items of a product to be dispensed, an exit from the dispenser (58), and an intermediate station (46) inaccessible from the exit except during delivery of an item to the exit. A transport member (12) carries one item or a predetermined number of items of the product at a time from the storage station to the intermediate station. An item or the predetermined number of items at the intermediate station are delivered to the exit through a gate (14) movable between an open position and a closed position. A perceptual indication of the presence of an item or the predetermined number of items at the intermediate station is given by a window (20) in the dispenser or other means so the user may know when to open the gate. A latch (70) enables and disables the gate responsive to a timer at prescribed time intervals and another latch (62) disables the transport member when the gate is open so delivery of the prescribed number of items to the exit may not be exceeded.





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0039004

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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. ³)
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	
X	US - A - 3 871 551 (BENDER) * columns 4 to 7, complete; column 8, lines 1 to 62; figures 1-9 *	1,5,7, 8,19, 21	A 61 J 7/00/ B 65 D 83/04
Y A		9-11 22,23	
A	US - A - 2 683 554 (MULHAUSER) * column 3, lines 45 to 75; column 4, lines 1 to 35; figures 7-11 *	1,7,8, 10-12, 20-22	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl. ³)
	US - A - 3 369 697 (GLUCKSMAN)		A 61 J B 65 D G 04 F G 04 G
Y	* column 1, lines 25 to 37; column 2, lines 48 to 71; column 3, complete; column 4, lines 1 to 39; figures 2-6,8;	2	CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS
A	column 4, lines 40 to 75; column 5, lines 1 to 33; figure 7 *	3	
Y	US - A - 3 395 829 (COGDELL) * column 3, lines 73 to 75; column 4, lines 1 to 52; column 5, lines 38 to 67; figures 1,3,4,6;	2	
A	column 4, lines 53 to 75; column 5, lines 1 to 37; figure 2 *	15	X: particularly relevant if taken alone Y: particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A: technological background O: non-written disclosure P: intermediate document T: theory or principle underlying the invention E: earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D: document cited in the application L: document cited for other reasons
		./.	&: member of the same patent family, corresponding document
X	The present search report has been drawn up for all claims		
Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 26-03-1982	Examiner MAROSCIA



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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	
Y	<p><u>US - A - 2 330 256</u> (ASHTON)</p> <p>* page 1, column 1, lines 24,55; column 2, lines 1-27; figures *</p> <p>-----</p>	9-11	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl. ³)