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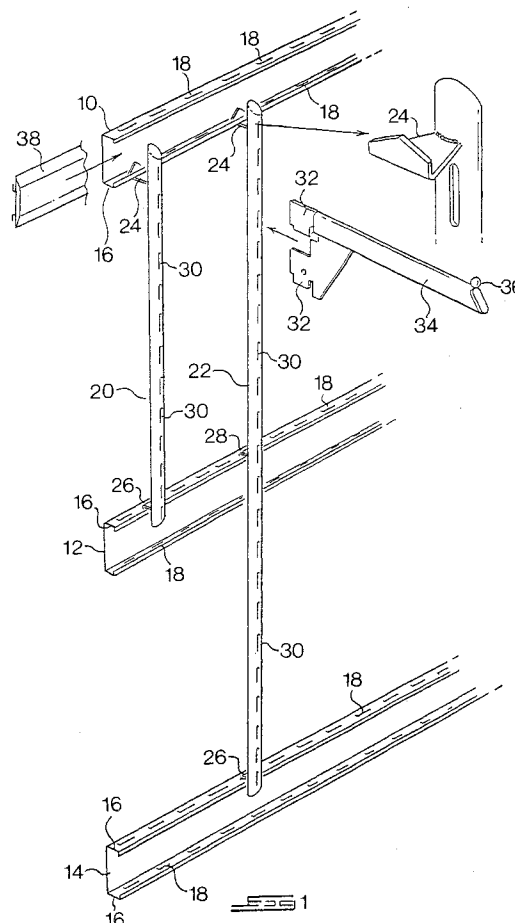
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(54) Merchandise display system

(57) A merchandise display system for a shop which has at least two anchor rails (10,12,14) mounted horizontally on an upright surface such as a wall. The anchor rails (10,12,14) have a row of evenly spaced apart slots (18) which define discrete mounting locations for elongate support elements (20,22). The supports (20,22) include a pair of tongues (24,26) which engage with the slots (18) on the anchor rails (10,12,14). In this way the supports (20,22) are held clear of the wall, preventing marking of the wall. Along the length of the supports (20,22) are a row of slots (30) or notches into which the hook (32) of a display arm (34) can be engaged. This allows the height of a display arm (34), on which shelves, hangers, brackets and the like can be supported, to be adjusted.



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Description

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

THIS invention relates to a merchandise display system.

One problem with conventional fixed merchandise display systems is that they are arranged in such a way that the lateral flexibility of the system is limited. More flexible systems which have been proposed are based on configurations where adjustable hanger elements can be moved along a rail fixed to a wall, but are brought into contact with the wall under load. This can create unsightly marks or deformations in the wall. Further, the loose lateral flexibility of such conventional systems can result in irregular and uneven displays which can detract from the visual appeal of the merchandise on display.

The present invention seeks to address these drawbacks.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to the invention there is provided a merchandise display system comprising:

at least two anchor rails attachable to an upright surface one above the other spaced at a distance apart, each anchor rail having a row of evenly spaced engagement formations defining a series of discrete and regularly spaced mounting locations thereon;

at least one elongate support having engagement means engageable with any one of the engagement formations in each of the anchor rails so that the support can be held fixed between the anchor rails at any one of the mounting locations and away from the upright surface in a substantially vertical orientation; and

a display arm mountable to the at least one support to which shelving, hangers, brackets and the like can be mounted to display merchandise.

The engagement formations may be in the form of holes or grooves formed along the length of each anchor rail.

The engagement means may be in the form of a pair of tongues each provided at a spaced location from the other along the length of the elongate support.

A further intermediate anchor rail of the type summarised above may be provided and the/or each elongate support may be provided with a third tongue for engagement with one or more of the engagement formations in the intermediate rail.

Preferably, two of the tongues are provided at or towards each end of the at least one support. Each of these tongues preferably extends outwardly from the

centre of the support.

The or each support preferably comprises a row of slots or notches extending along its length with the display arm comprising hook means engageable into one or more of the slots so that the height of the display arm can be adjusted in use.

Each anchor rail may have a channel section. The display system may comprise a plurality of price display panels engageable removably in the channel sections of the anchor rails.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will now be described in more detail by way of example only with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which :

Figure 1 shows a pictorial view of a merchandise display system according to the invention; and

Figure 2 shows a side view of the merchandise display system in use.

DESCRIPTION OF EMBODIMENTS

A merchandise display system according to the invention comprises anchor rails 10, 12 and 14 which are mountable to an upright surface such as a wall in a shop, for example. The anchor rails are mountable one above the other at a distance apart from each other. Each anchor rail has a channel section as shown, defined by the opposed arms 16 of each channel in which a row of evenly spaced engagement formations in the form of holes or grooves, or in the illustrated case slots 18, are provided. The slots 18 define a series of discrete and regular mounting locations as described more fully below. Of course, any appropriate section of anchor rail could be utilised. For instance a rail having an L-shape in section could be utilised, or the anchor rail could comprise a length of flat strip in which the slots 18 have been provided.

Each rail is typically formed as a metal extrusion and is of indeterminate length. It could however be made of wood or some other material. In use, each rail is attached to the vertical surface (eg. a wall or partition) in a substantially horizontal disposition thereto at any convenient location. By way of example, the upper rail 10 might be attached to the wall or partition at a location three metres above the floor and the second intermediate rail 12 could be attached between the first rail 10 and the third lowest rail 14 at a location say two metres above the floor, with the lowest rail 14 being provided at a location one metre above the floor. Alternatively, the lowest rail 14 might be provided to run just above a skirting board, for example, or along the floor with the rails above it being positioned as desired.

In Figure 1 of the accompanying drawings, two em-

bodiments of an elongate support for the merchandise display system are shown. The first version 20 (on the left in the Figure) spans only between the upper and intermediate rails 10 and 12, respectively. The second longer version 22 (on the right in the Figure) spans between all three rails and is supported at an intermediate location by the intermediate rail 12. In both cases, however, each support is provided with rail engagement means in the form of a pair of tongues 24 and 26 at or towards each end of the illustrated support. The tongues extend outwardly from the centre of each support towards each end of their respective support to engage at upper and lower mounting locations defined by the slots 18 in the anchor rails. For the version of the support 22, an intermediate tongue 28 is provided which engages in the corresponding slot 18 in the intermediate rail 12. In this way, the supports can be mounted to the rails only at discrete and regular locations in a substantially vertical orientation to be held away and clear of the upright wall to which the anchor rails are attached. The invention thus provides a display system which is capable of providing lateral adjustment and yet which ensures that upright supports can be spaced only at regular intervals to ensure a visually pleasing display of merchandise. Further, as the supports are held clear of the wall, marking of the walls is prevented.

The supports 20 and 22 can be fitted to the rails in the following manner. First, the upper tongue 24 is engaged in a chosen hole 18 in an upper rail. (The version 20 of the support could, of course, be fitted to span between the rails 12 and 14, rather than the rails 10 and 12, as shown). Once engaged into an upper chosen slot 18, the tongue 24 is pushed upwardly to allow the lower tongue 26 (and in the case of the support 22, the tongue 28 as well) into a position vertically above a corresponding slot 18 in the lower rail 12 (or 14). The support is then dropped so that the lower tongue 26 (and 28 as the case may be) can be engaged into position so that the support is held fast in an upright orientation to span between two or more of the anchor rails on the wall. An enlarged view of the upper tongue 24 is given in Figure 1 of the accompanying drawings.

In being mounted in this way, each support 20 and 22 can accept a large weight of merchandise. The supports 20 and 22 are of hollow or solid elongate construction and are typically formed as metal extrusions. Along their length, a row of slots or notches is formed into which hook means 32 on the display arm 34 can be engaged. This allows the height of the display arm, on which shelves, hangers, brackets and the like can be supported (as shown in the pictorial side view of Figure 2), to be adjusted. A stop formation 36 is optionally provided at the operatively outer end of the display arm 34 to prevent shelves or hangers mounted on the display arm from falling off the end.

With a series of display arms mounted to the display system in the manner illustrated above, a regular display of merchandise can be constructed. Adjacent each sup-

port or display arm, one of a series of pricing, size or "look" display panels 38 of appropriate material, such as a tough plastics, wood or PVC material, can be inserted into the channel sections of the anchor rails, as appropriate, to present the prices or other salient details of the merchandise on display.

Claims

1. A merchandise display system comprising :

at least two anchor rails attachable to an upright surface one above the other spaced at a distance apart, each anchor rail having a row of evenly spaced engagement formations defining a series of discrete and regularly spaced mounting locations thereon;

at least one elongate support having engagement means engageable with any one of the engagement formations in each of the anchor rails so that the support can be held fixed between the anchor rails at any one of the mounting locations and away from the upright surface in a substantially vertical orientation; and

a display arm mountable to the at least one support to which shelving, hangers, brackets and the like can be mounted to display merchandise.

2. A merchandise display system according to claim 1 wherein the engagement formations are provided in the form of holes or grooves formed along the length of each anchor rail.

3. A merchandise display system according to claim 2 wherein the engagement means comprise a pair of tongues each provided at a spaced location from the other along the length of the elongate support.

4. A merchandise display system according to any one of the preceding claims comprising a further intermediate anchor rail having a series of discrete engagement formations, and wherein the/or each elongate support is provided with a third tongue for engagement into any one of the engagement formations in the intermediate rail.

5. A merchandise display system according to claim 4 wherein two of the tongues are provided at or towards each end of the at least one support.

6. A merchandise display system according to claim 5 wherein each of the remotely spaced tongues extends outwardly in a direction away from the centre of the support

7. A merchandise display system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the or each support comprises a row of slots extending along its length with the display arm comprising hook means engageable into one or more of the slots so that the height of the display arm can be adjusted in use. 5
8. A merchandise display system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein each anchor rail has a channel section. 10
9. A merchandise display system according to claim 8 wherein the display system comprises a plurality of price display panels engageable removably in the channel sections of the anchor rails. 15

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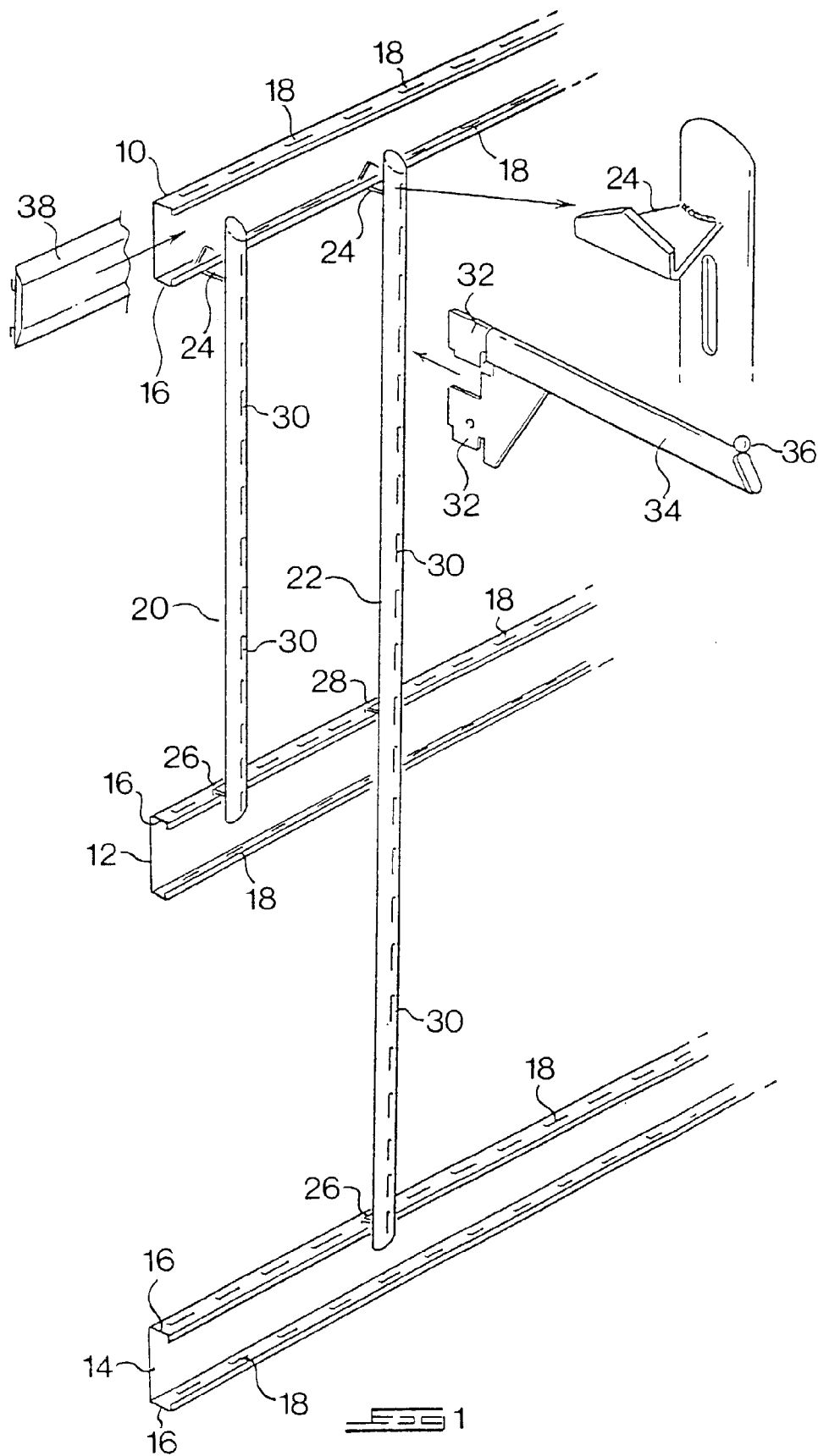
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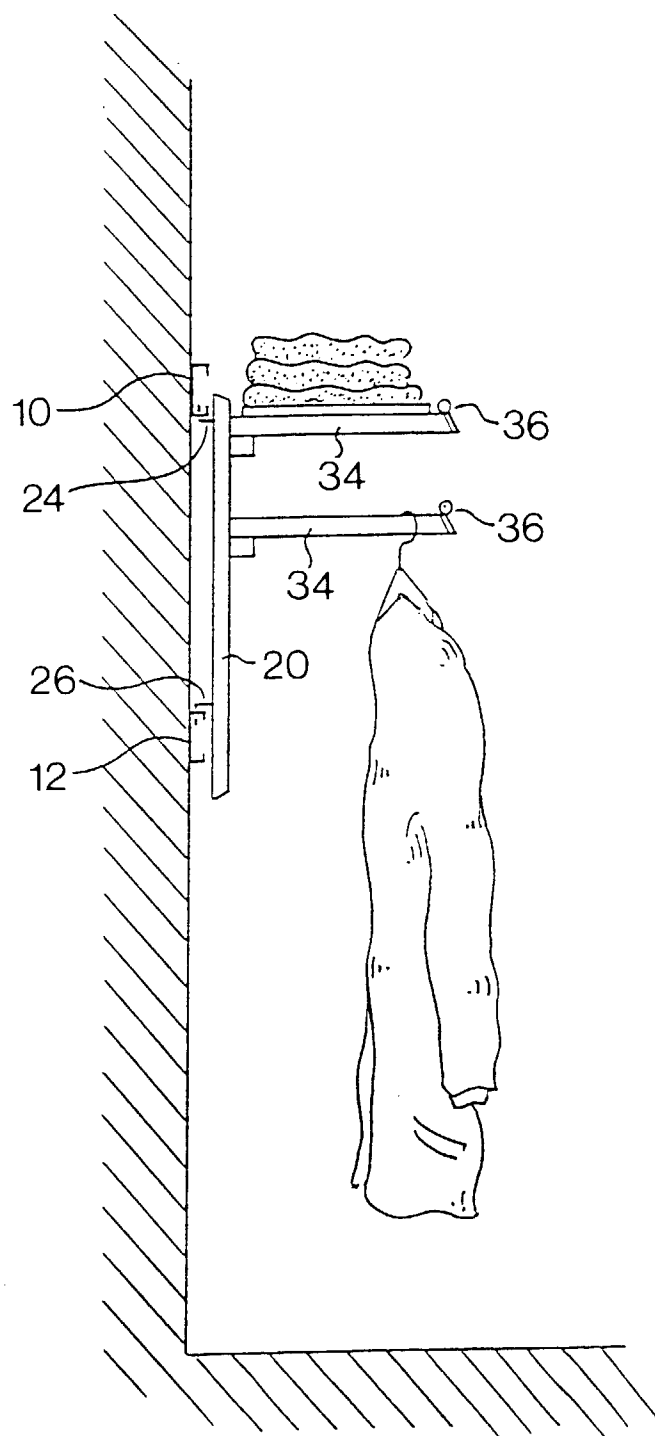


Fig 2



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			EP 98305797.7
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 6)
X, P	EP 0786220 A2 (BLASS) 30 July 1997 (30.07.97), the whole document.	1-3, 5-8	A 47 B 96/14 A 47 F 5/08
X	GB 2284745 A (DEACON, P.) 21 June 1995 (21.06.95), the whole document.	1-3, 5	
Y	--	7, 8	
Y	US 3993002 A (STROH, A.L.) 23 November 1976 (23.11.76), the whole document.	7, 8	
A	--	1-3, 5	
A	WO 95/29612 A1 (L&P PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANY) 09 November 1995 (09.11.95), page 11, line 3 - page 12, line 2, page 15, lines 11-19, fig. 2, 3.	1-3, 5, 7	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl. 6) A 47 B 77/00 A 47 B 96/00 A 47 F 5/00
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search VIENNA		Date of completion of the search 10-09-1998	Examiner VELINSKY-HUBER
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS 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	

EPO FORM ISO 03.82 (PC901)