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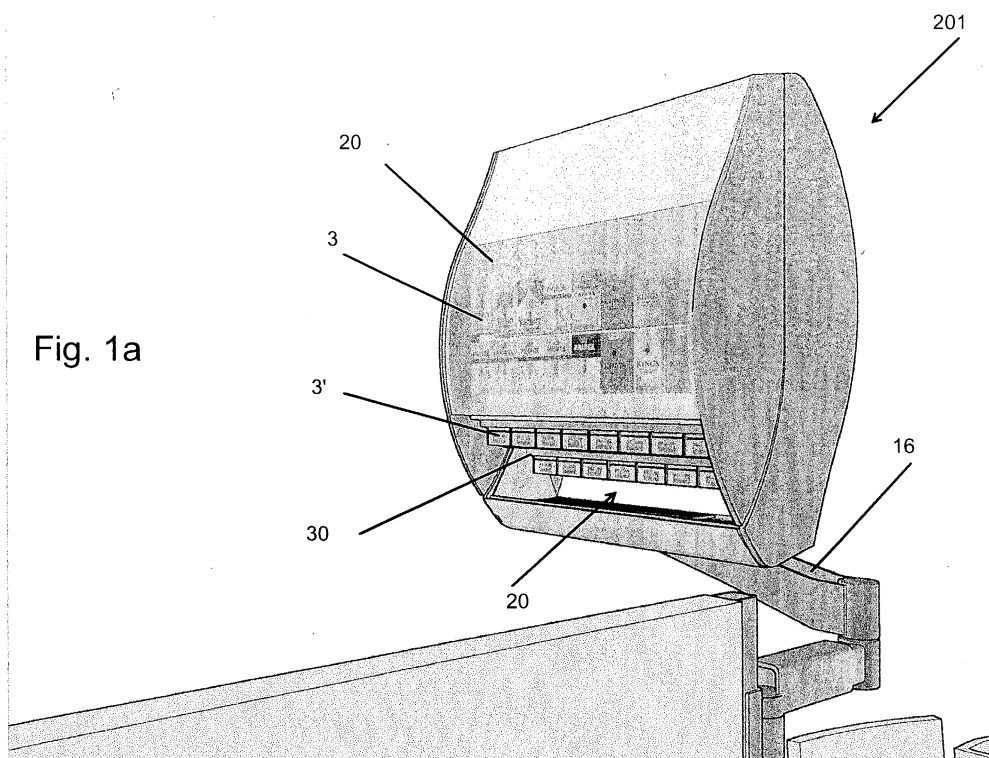
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(54) **A dispenser**

(57) The invention relates to a dispenser (1) for products packaged in flat, box-shaped packages (3, 3') and comprising a housing with a front wall (20, 22) and a rear wall (18), a dispensing opening (2) for individually dispensing packages (3') in the dispenser (1), at least one storage container (30) that is configured for temporarily storing the packages (3') in a position, wherein a number said box-shaped packages (3') containing a giv-

en product rests in down position on top of each other in a stack, wherein the storage container (30) allows dispensing of the box-shaped package (3') at the bottom of the stack. The invention is characterised in that the dispenser (1) also comprises a holder (352) configured for holding one or more packages (3) of the same kind and intended for the same contents as the down packages (3') in the dispenser (1); however in an upright position.

Fig. 1a



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Fig. 1b

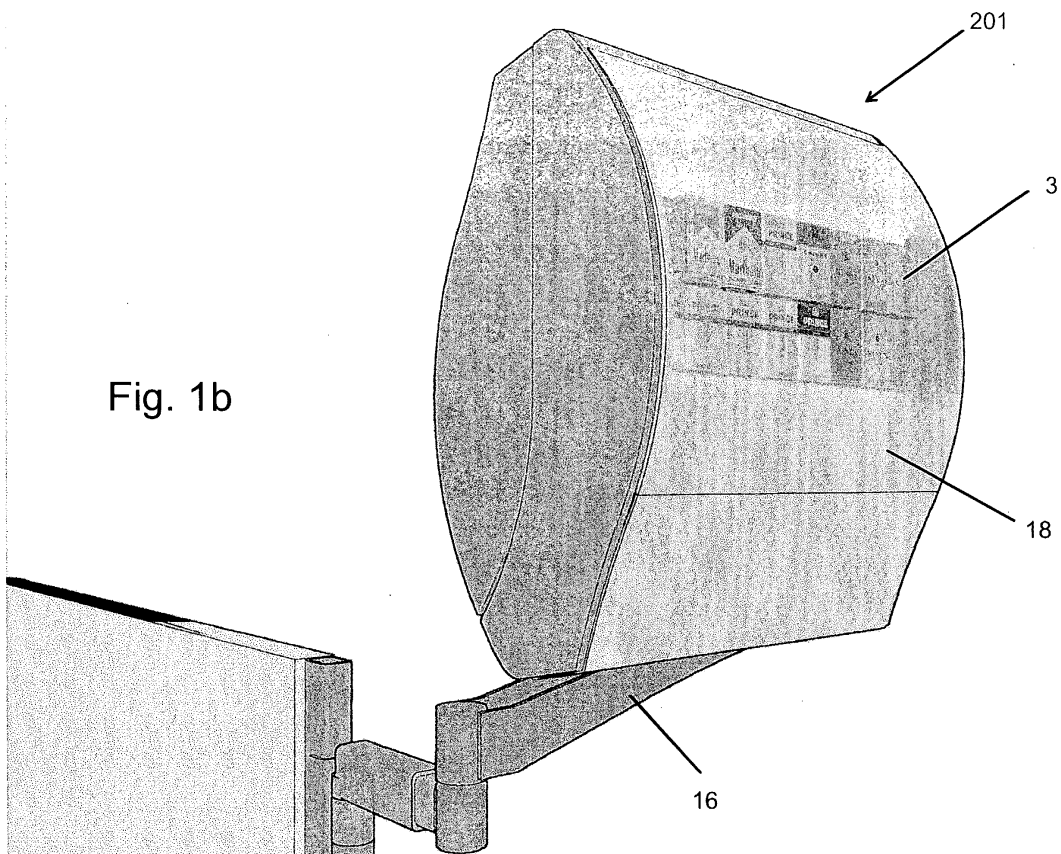
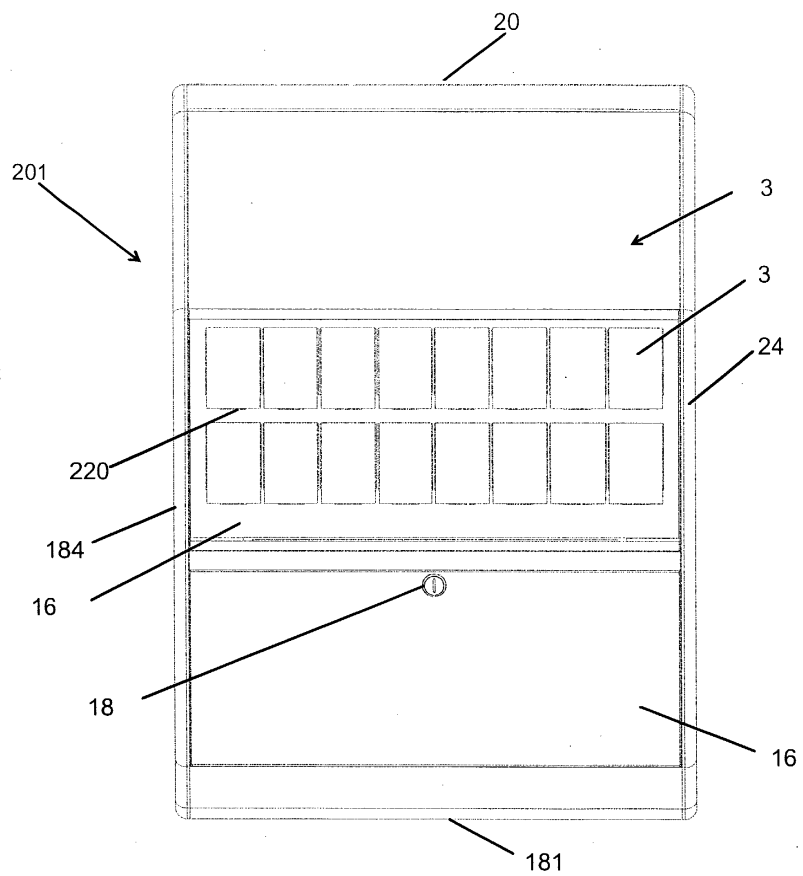


Fig. 1c



Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a dispenser for products packaged in flat, box-shaped packages and comprising a housing with a front wall and a rear wall, a dispensing opening for dispensing packages individually from the dispenser, at least one storage container configured for temporarily storing the packages in a position in which a plurality of said box-shaped packages containing a given product rest in down position on top of each other in a stack, wherein the storage container allows dispensing of the box-shaped package at the bottom of the stack. Storage of the packages in down position enables storage of a comparatively large number of packages in such dispensers, the height of the dispenser being in that case decisive to the storage capacity.

[0002] European patent application No. 662,295 teaches a dispenser of the type described in the introductory part of claim 1, wherein the dispenser has on its one side a display panel. The display panel is of conventional type and is assumed to feature a printed advertising poster with a message. It is a problem with dispensers of this type that, when the product range of the dispenser is changed, the entire advertising poster must be changed and replaced by a new advertising poster showing the new contents of the dispenser. Thereby, in some cases, it may be costly and thus undesirable to perform in particular small changes in the product range and thus the invention seeks to provide a dispenser, whereby it becomes more attractive to perform changes in the product range without ensuing high costs, while simultaneously the customers in the sales outlet where the dispenser is located are at any time aware of the current product range.

[0003] This is achieved in accordance with claim 1, in that the dispenser also comprises a holder configured for holding one or more packages of the same kind and intended for the same contents as the packages located in the dispenser; however, in an upright position.

[0004] It is particularly preferred to configure the dispenser as a closable unit, wherein the front wall or rear wall of the dispenser has a transparent panel through which said packages carried in the holder located interiorly of the dispenser can be seen. Hereby it is possible to avoid theft of all the packages without, however, sacrificing the need for visible display of the product to be sold.

[0005] By the invention it is thus possible to use one package item containing the product to be sold for advertising purposes, other package items being dispensed individually from the dispenser as needed when a sale is performed. In this manner it is possible to avoid costs for printing separate advertising material.

[0006] The holder carrying the packages on display may preferably be releasably mounted interiorly of the dispenser, whereby it is possible - when the product range is to be changed - to readily perform a replacement

ment of the packages on display.

[0007] The invention will now be explained in further detail with reference to an exemplary embodiment shown in the drawing.

5 Figures 1a, 1b and 1c show the dispenser according to the invention, seen in a slanted view from the front, in a slanted view from behind and directly from the front; Figures 2a, 2b, 2c and 2d show the dispenser in various in-use modes;

10 Figure 3a is a cross sectional view of the dispenser in its empty state, while Figures 3b and 3c show a storage container for storing packages containing the product to be sold from the dispenser and a cassette for storing packages containing the product with a view to displaying the dispenser contents, respectively; and
15 Figure 4 is a cross sectional view of the dispenser with both two cassettes and two storages.

[0008] Figures 1a and 1b use the reference numeral 1 to show a dispenser according to the invention in a perspective view. The dispenser 1 is configured for allowing storage and dispensing of packages containing a product to be sold in a sales outlet; the packages being typically dispensed from the dispenser by the shop assistants. The product contained therein can be of any kind, including, however, preferably cigarettes, candy or food products. Preferably the packages or containers are comparatively flat box-shaped ones, the thickness of which is somewhat smaller than the height and width. One example of such packages includes conventional cigarette cases, but boxes containing eg liquorice pastilles could also be stored in the dispenser 1.

[0009] More specifically the dispenser 1 is configured as a housing intended for being mounted visible to the customers in the sales outlet and to this end the dispenser may either be supported from below by means of the shown pivot arm 5 that allows adjustment of the position of the dispenser, or the dispenser may be suspended from the ceiling, optionally by means of a pivot arm corresponding to the pivot arm 5.

20 **[0010]** The front wall of the dispenser 1 is visible in Figure 1a, while the rear wall 18 of the dispenser 1 is shown in Figure 1b. The front wall of the dispenser 1 is characterised in that it allows dispensing of the stored packages via a closable dispensing opening 2, the reference numeral 3' referring to stored packages that are arranged in a down position with a view to dispensing. The reference numeral 3 refers to package items arranged in an upright position.

[0011] As will be explained below, the packages 3 that are to be dispensed from the dispenser with a view to sale are preferably stored in cassettes and are stacked on top of each other in the down position. The packages 3 are stored in the dispenser 1 to show what is sold from the dispenser 1 and are stored visibly in the upright position, where the main surface of the package 3 is visible. In Figure 1a the dispenser contains two storage containers 30, of which one is located behind the other, which allows dispensing of the lower package 3' of a

stack or pile of packages 3' containing a given product; only the narrow end face of the package 3' being visible. The location and construction of the storage containers will be explained in further detail.

[0012] Figure 1c shows the front wall of the dispenser 1, reference numerals 10, 12, 14, 16 indicating the two side walls of the dispenser and the top wall and bottom wall of the dispenser, respectively. The front wall of the dispenser comprises a lower part 22 that is configured for being movable from the position shown in Figure 1a, in which there is access to the stored product, to the position shown in Figure 1c, in which the lower part 22 can be locked by means of a key-operated lock 220. The lower part 22 is hingedly connected to the side walls 10, 12.

[0013] The front wall of the dispenser also comprises an upper part 20 that has a transparent surface portion 201 and being at the top hingedly connected to the side walls 10, 12. The upper part 20 is configured for carrying the packages 3 in the upright position behind the transparent portion 201; the main surface of the packages being visible to persons in the sales outlet. To this end the upper part 20 preferably comprises a removable cassette with holders 352 for the individual packages 3. The cassette, which is visible through the transparent portion 201, will be shown in further detail below.

[0014] Figures 2a and 2b show the dispenser with the lower part 22 in the closed and the open positions, respectively. Figure 2c shows the dispenser in a state where the upper part 20 has been turned outwards to a position that allows replacement or replenishing of the cassette-shaped storage container 30 for the product 3', while Figure 2d shows the dispenser in a state where two storage containers 30 have been removed from the dispenser.

[0015] Figure 3a is a cross sectional view through the empty dispenser as shown in Figure 2d. The side walls 10, 12 of the dispenser 1 has, on the inside, oppositely arranged suspension pegs 11 for carrying the storage containers 30, and the upper part 20 is provided with fittings for supporting a cassette with upright packages 3 that are to be visible through the transparent portion 201. The side walls 10, 12 are also provided with articulations 24, 225 for hinging the upper part 20 and the lower part 22, respectively, in place and a damper mechanism 25 for keeping the upper part 20 in the shown position during replenishing of the dispenser 1. Figure 3a also shows how the rear wall 18 of the dispenser 1 also comprises a transparent surface portion 181, whereby it is possible to look, from the outside, into the dispenser 1. This is also shown in Figure 1 b. Like the upper part 20 of the front wall, the rear wall 18 also comprises fittings for carrying a cassette with holders 352 for upright packages 3, whereby it is possible, also from the rear side of the dispenser, to visually determine the contents of the dispenser 1 and thus to see which product can be bought. It is noted that the dispenser according to the invention can be provided with a transparent

portion in both the front wall and the rear wall 18, or in only one of the two walls. This depends on whether the customers in the sales outlet are able to see the dispenser 1 both from the front and from the back or merely from only one side. Besides, it is not absolutely necessary to enclose the packages 3 behind a transparent portion as shown, but this is typically preferred to avoid unintentional removal of the packages 3 that - as will be understood - primarily serve as displays, but typically contain the product in question.

[0016] Figure 3b shows one of the storage containers 30 illustrated in Figure 2d, and it will appear that, at the top of each vertical side, the storage container 30 has a hook-like device 308, by which the storage container 30 can be mounted on the suspension pegs 11. The storage container 30 has a hinged-on front panel 301 with such expanse that, in the closed position of the front panel shown in Figure 2d, an elongate slot will appear that allows dispensing of a package 3' from the storage container 30. The storage container also comprises a number of parallel partition walls 302 with a mutual distance corresponding to the width of the packages stored in the dispenser. It will be understood that hereby it is possible to adjacently arrange a number of stacks of packages 3' and that, once the front panel 301 is closed and the storage container 30 is introduced into the storage container 1, it is possible at any time to take out the lowermost package 3' via said elongate slot and through the dispensing opening 2.

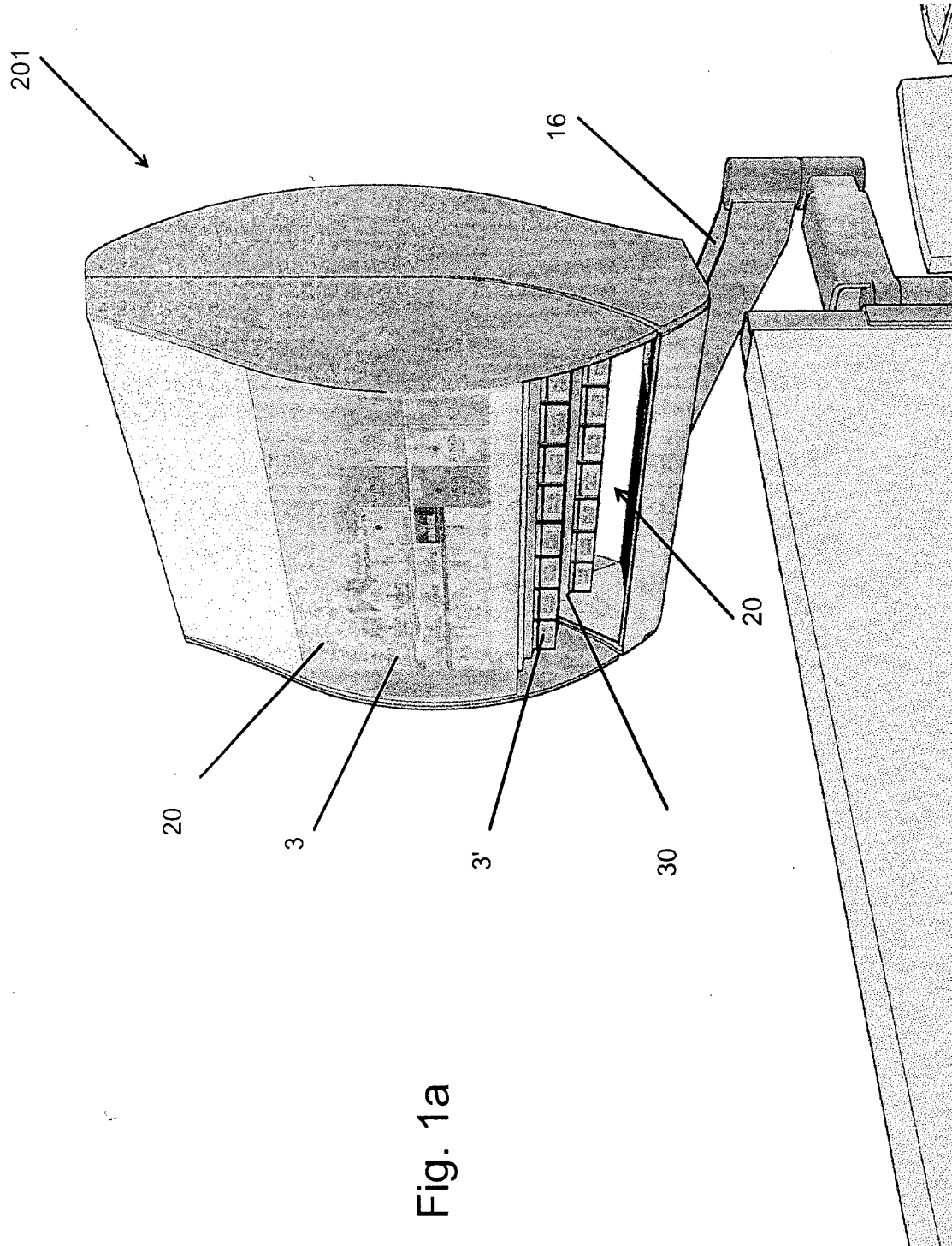
[0017] Figure 3 uses the reference numeral 35 to more specifically illustrate an example of the configuration of the above-mentioned cassette with holders 352 for upright packages 3. As will appear the cassette 35 is preferably configured as a plate element with individual holders 352 and with a mounting portion 354, whereby the cassette 35 can be secured in the desired position in the dispenser 1 following filling. It will appear in closer detail from Figure 4, which shows the dispenser in a cross sectional view corresponding to Figure 3a, but with both two storage containers 30 and two cassettes of the general type shown in Figure 3c, how the cassettes are supported by fittings on the upper portion 20 and the rear wall 18, respectively; locking means 36 being an option for releasably securing the cassettes. To the upper part 20 of the front wall a cassette 35' is used that essentially corresponds to the storage container 35, but being, however, adapted to the geometry of the upper part 20. Figure 4 also shows how the packages 3', 3 are arranged in down position in the storage containers 30 with the end faces visible and upright in the cassettes 35, 35' with the two storage containers 30 resting against each other, respectively. The lowermost package 3' in the stack of packages 3' can be extracted by hand; the storage container 30 being configured such that the stacks of packages 3 are located at a certain distance. By gravity, a package 3' will at all times be presented at the bottom of the storage container 30.

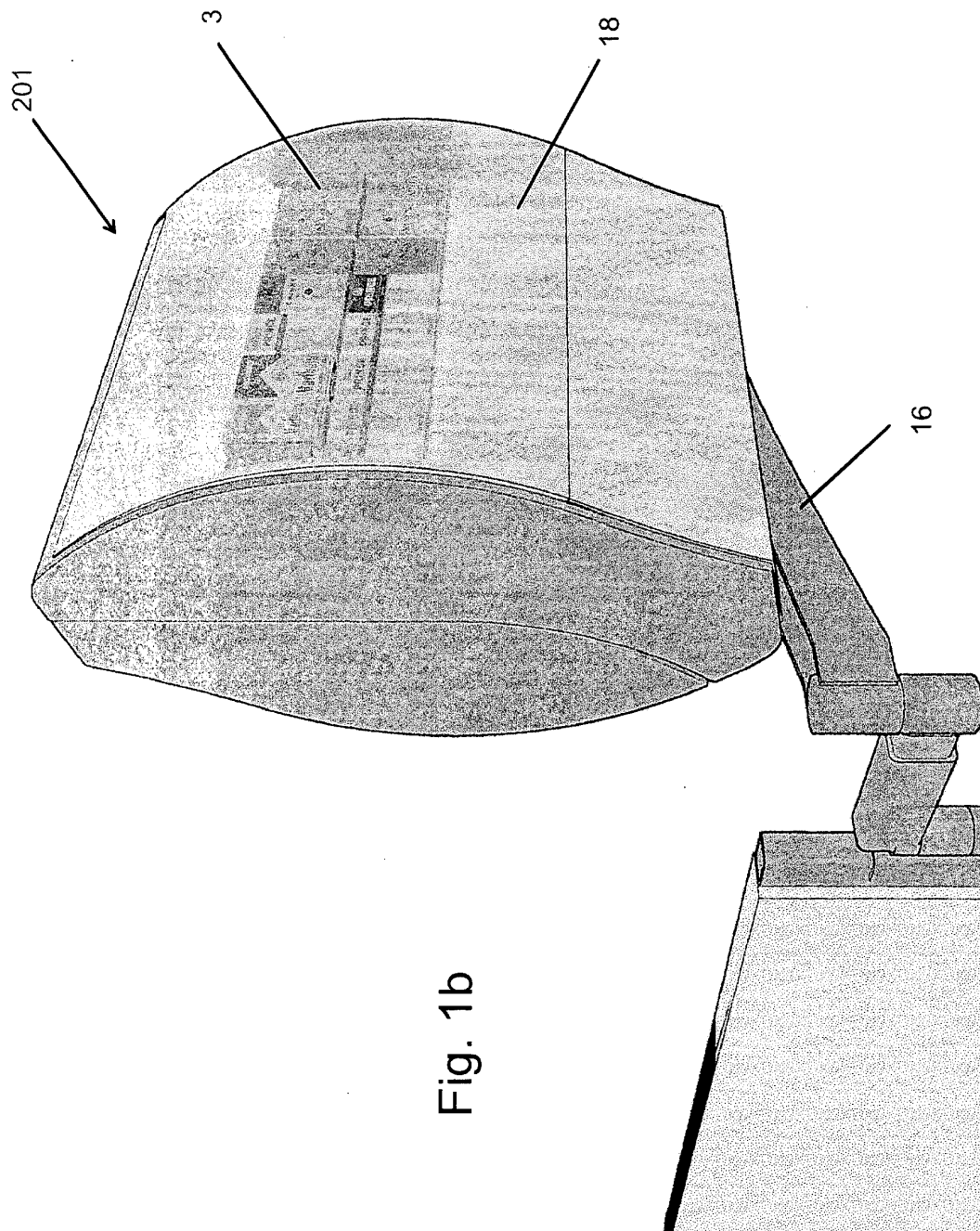
[0018] It is noted that, particularly advantageously,

the packages 3 can be organised as shown in Figure 1a in such a manner that a given package 3 corresponds to the packages in a rear stack in a storage container 30, whereby it is particularly easy for the shop assistants to determine from which storage container 30 and from which stack a desired package 3' is to be taken.

Claims

1. A dispenser (1) for products packaged in flat, box-shaped packages (3, 3') and comprising a housing with a front wall and a rear wall (18), a dispensing opening (2) for individually dispensing packages (3') from the dispenser (1), at least one storage container (30) that is configured for temporarily storing the packages (3') in a position, in which a plurality of said box-shaped packages (3') containing a given product rests in down position on top of each other in a stack, wherein the storage container (30) allows dispensing of the box-shaped package (3') at the bottom of the stack, **characterised in that** the dispenser (1) also comprises a holder means (352) configured for holding one or more packages (3) of the same kind and intended for the same contents as the down packages (3') in the dispenser (1); however, in an upright position.
2. A dispenser according to claim 1, **characterised in that** the front wall and/or rear wall (18) of the dispenser (1) comprises a transparent panel (181, 201); and that the holder (352) is located visibly behind the transparent panel (181, 201) interiorly of the dispenser (1).
3. A dispenser according to claim 1 or 2, **characterised in that** the holder (352) is configured as a cassette (35) which is configured for supporting the packages (3) side by side; and that the dispenser (1) enables removal of the cassette (35) with a view to replacement of the packages (3).
4. A dispenser according to the preceding claim, **characterised in that** the cassette (35) is supported by the front wall or the rear wall (18).
5. A dispenser according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the storage container (30) is releasably secured in the dispenser (1); and that the dispenser (1) is configured for allowing removal of the storage container (30).
6. A dispenser according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the front wall comprises said dispensing opening (2); and that a lower part (22) of the front wall is able to block the dispensing opening (2).
7. A dispenser according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the front wall or the rear wall (18) is pivotally journalled to allow access to the dispenser (1) interior.
8. A dispenser according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the stack of the packages (3') is vertical and that the dispenser comprises two storage containers (30), the one being located behind the other.
9. A dispenser according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterised in that** the dispensing opening (2) is elongate and extends between two side walls (10, 12) of the dispenser (1); that the storage container (30) for the down packages (3') is configured for delimiting a number of adjacently located stacks of the packages (3'); and that the cassette (35) is configured for carrying, side by side, a number of packages (3) corresponding to the number of stacks.





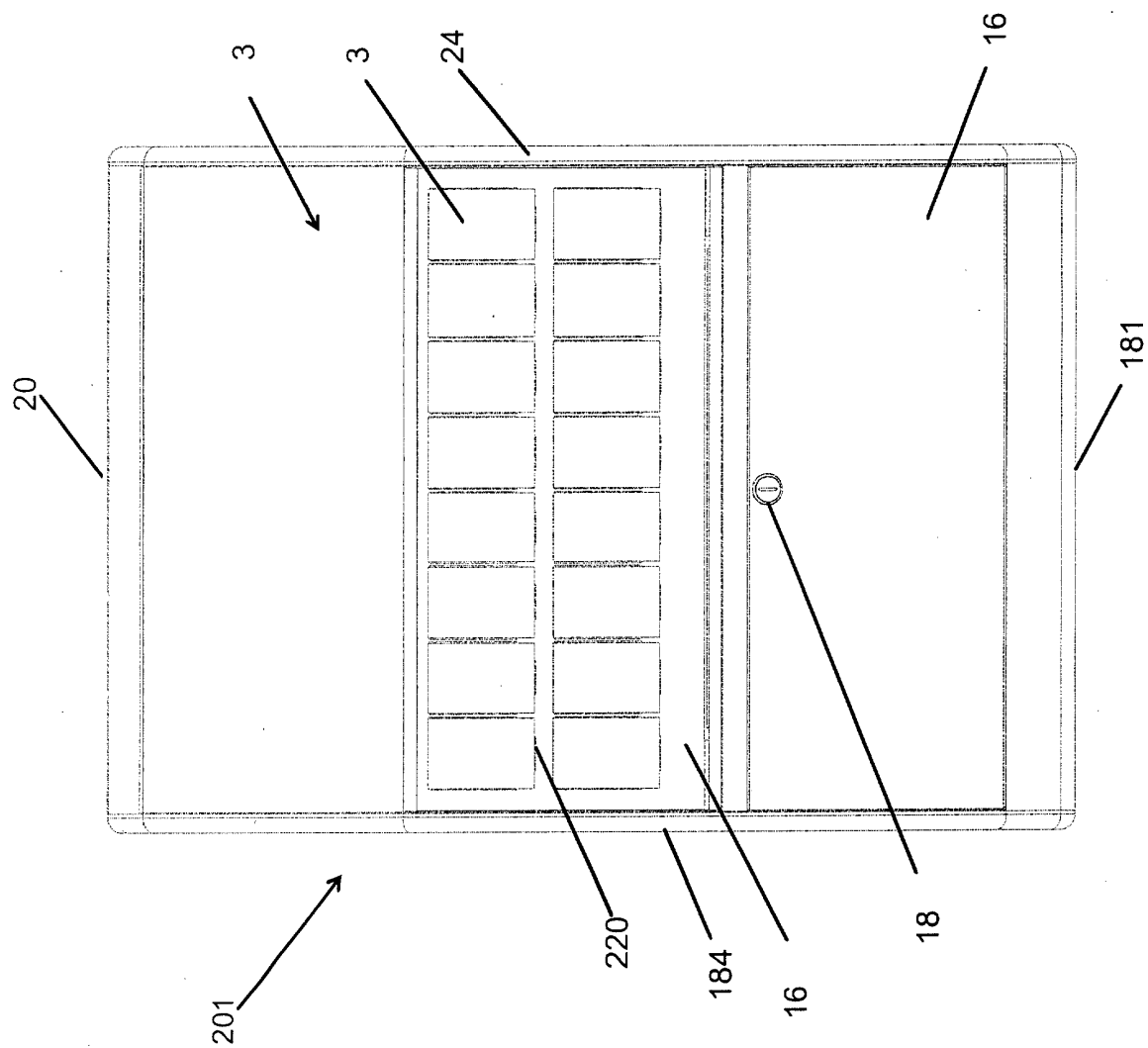


Fig. 1c

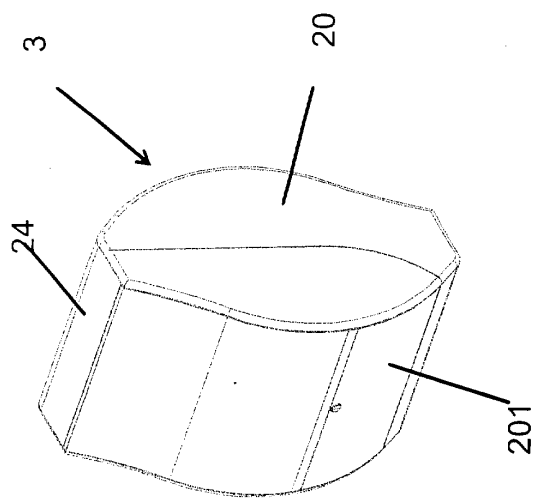


Fig. 2a

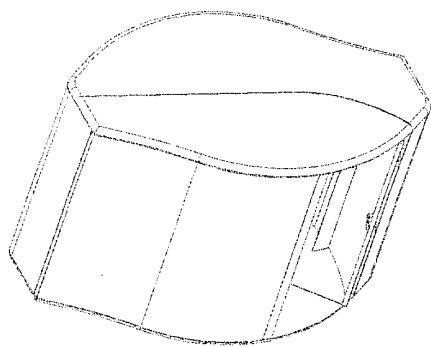


Fig. 2b

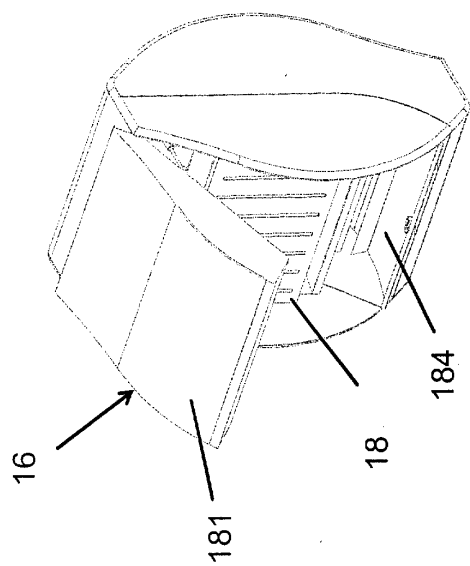


Fig. 2c

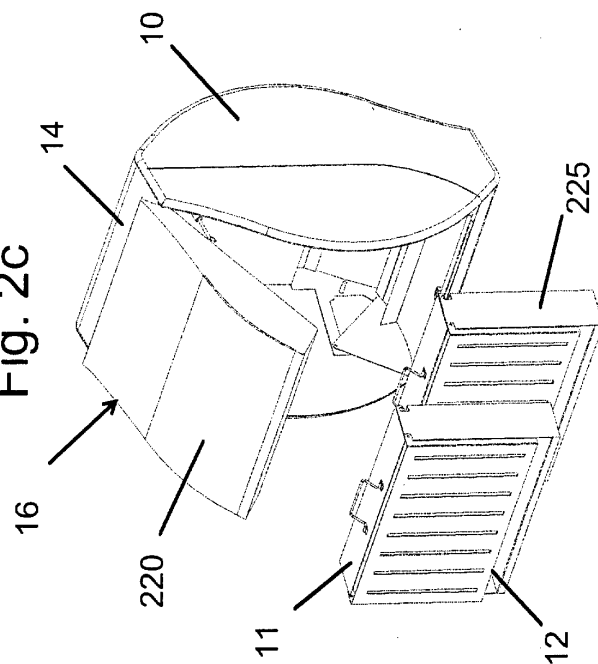


Fig. 2d

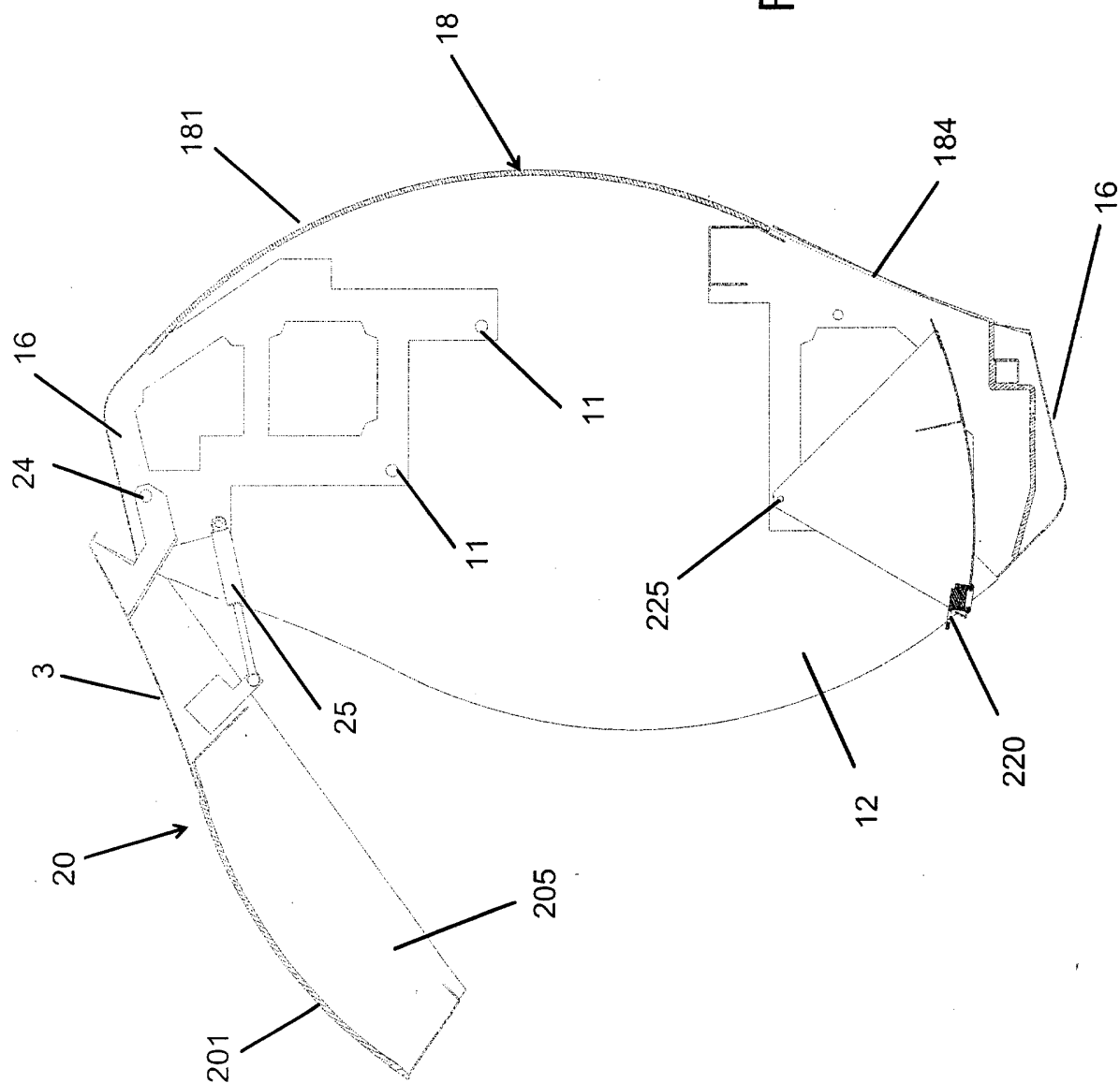


Fig. 3a

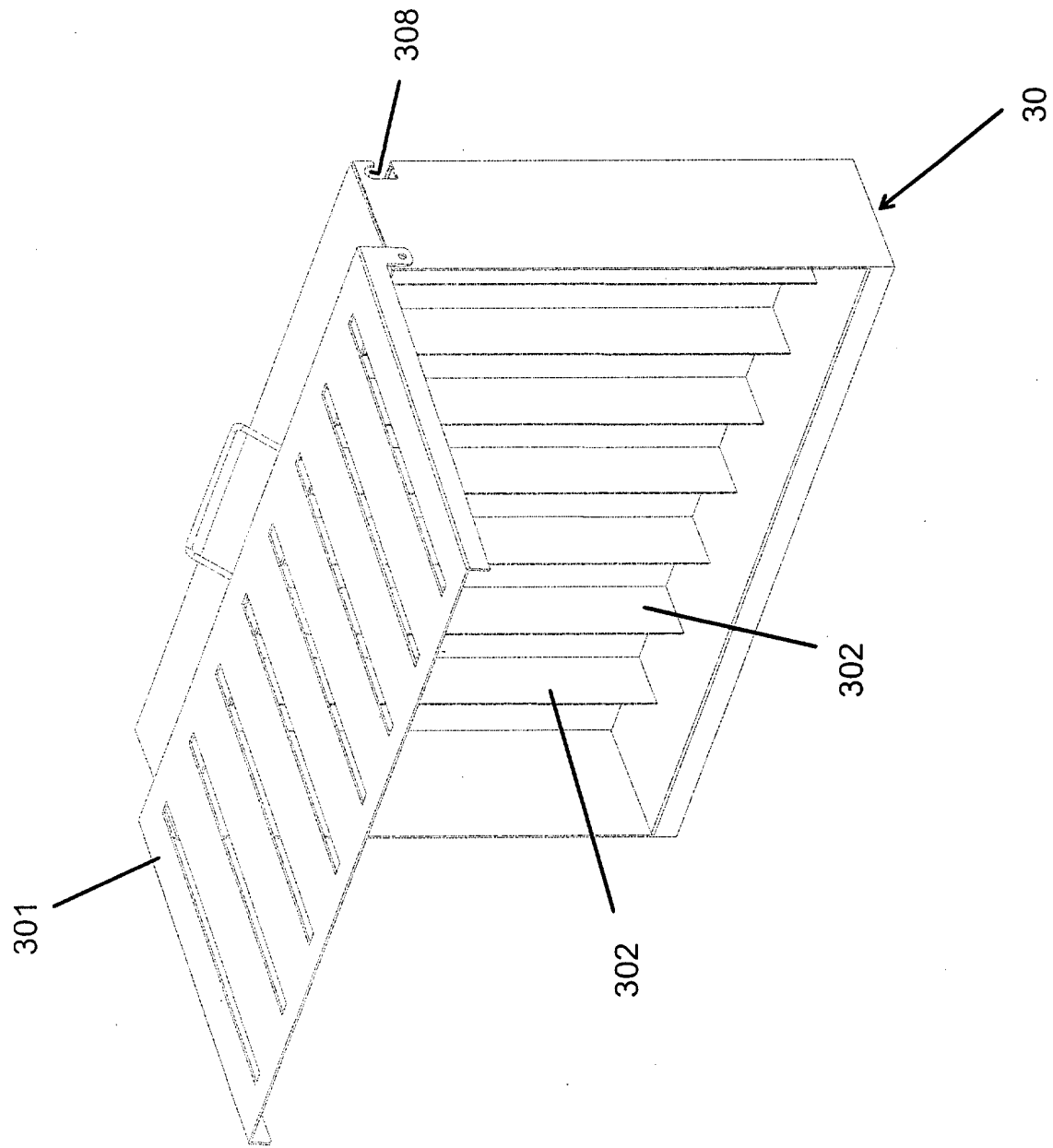
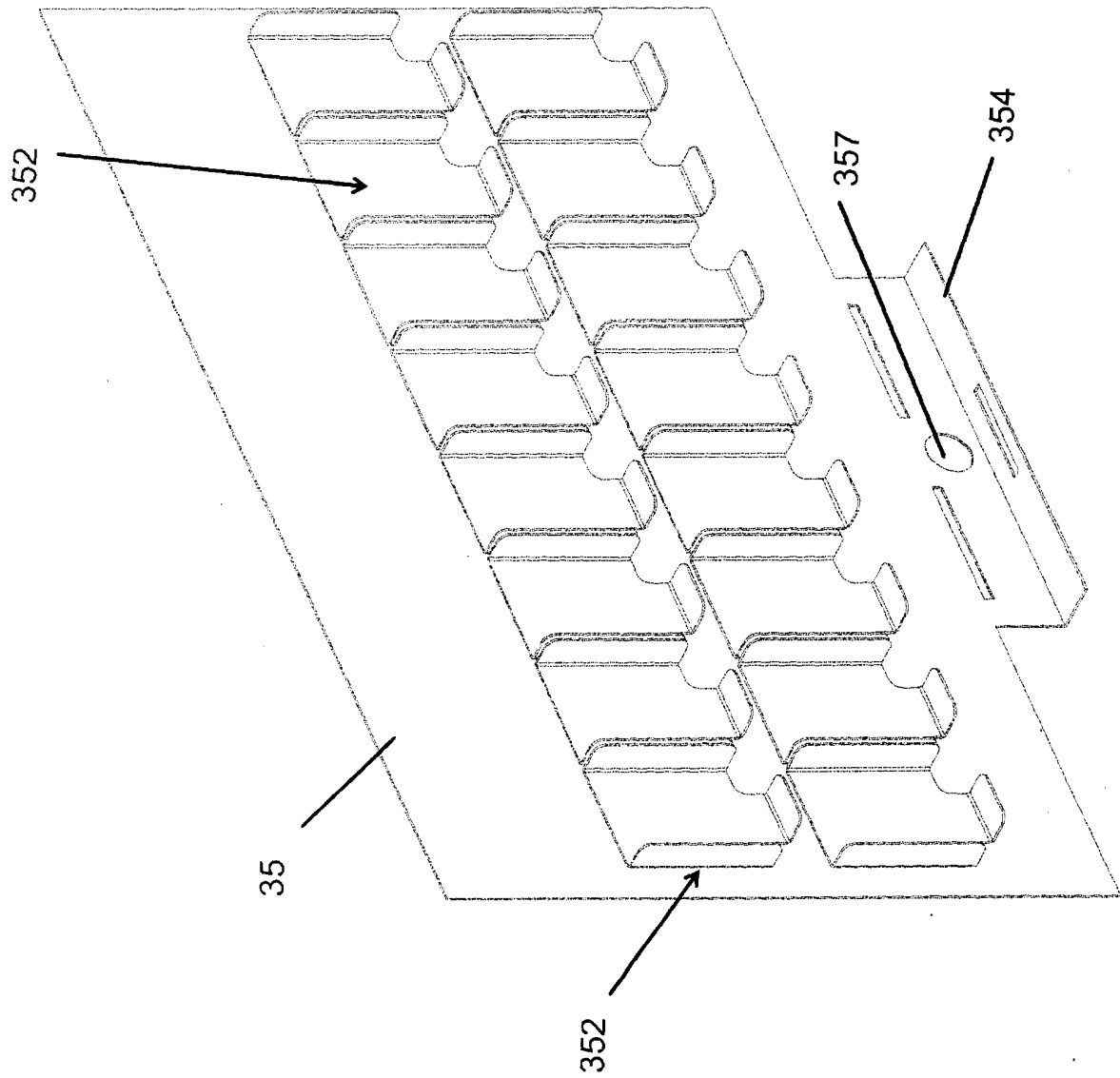


Fig. 3b

Fig. 3c



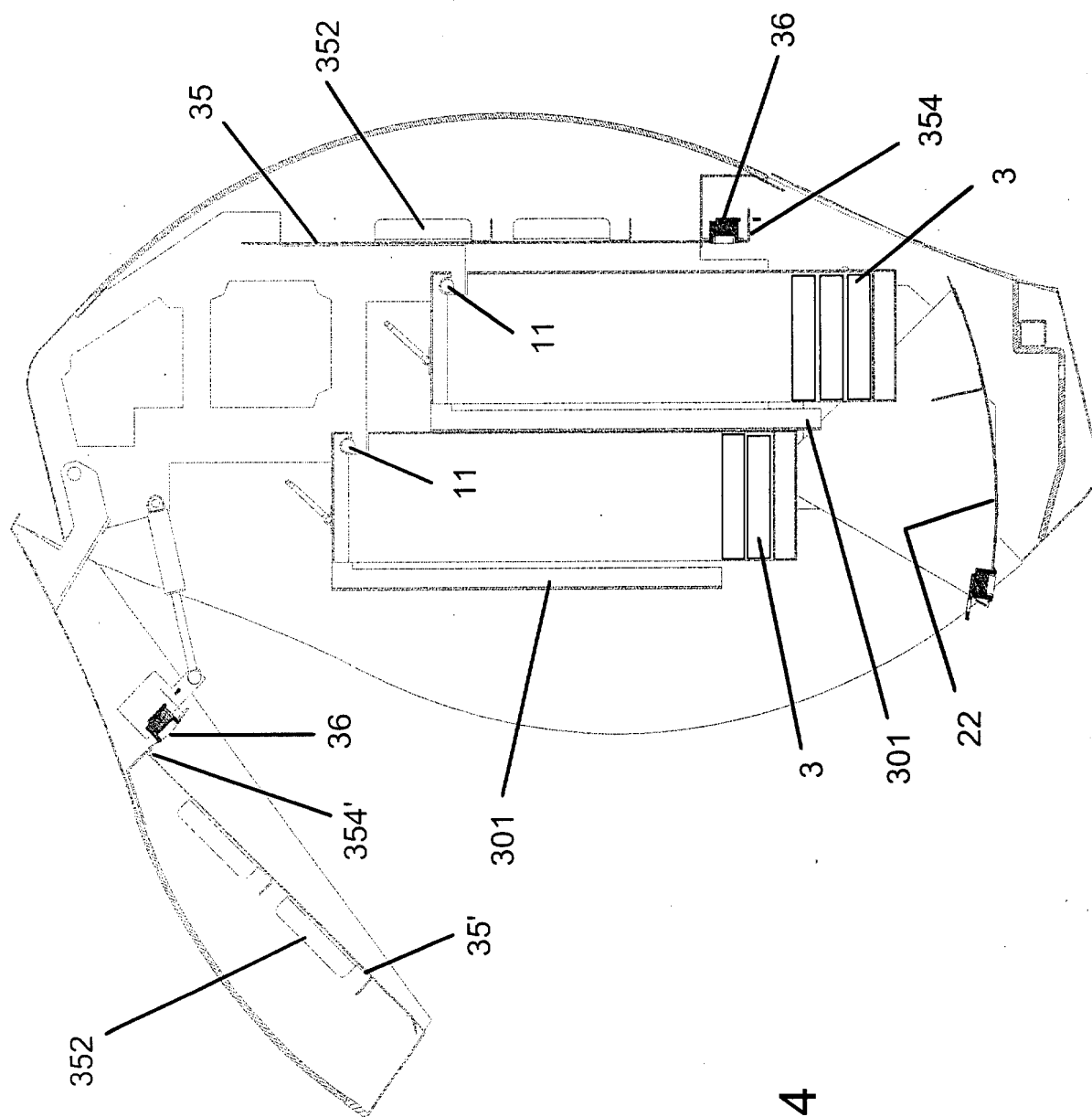


Fig. 4