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Amended claims in accordance with Rule 86 (2) EPC.

(54) **Label-holding system**

(57) A label-holding system, made up of a shelf (2) with a longitudinal edge formed so as to receive a C-shaped profile (1), an extension (18) fixed to said profile and optionally a display (10).

The profile (1) has an upper lug (3) on an upper arm (16); the extension (18) has two lower lugs (4, 5); and the shelf (2) has an upper lip (6) and a lower lip (7).

By using both lips (6, 7), the upper lug (3) and one or the other of the lower lugs (4, 5) in one or the other of the lips (6, 7), a label supported on the label-holding system is made to be optimally visible for users located at the same height, or above or below the height of the shelf (2).

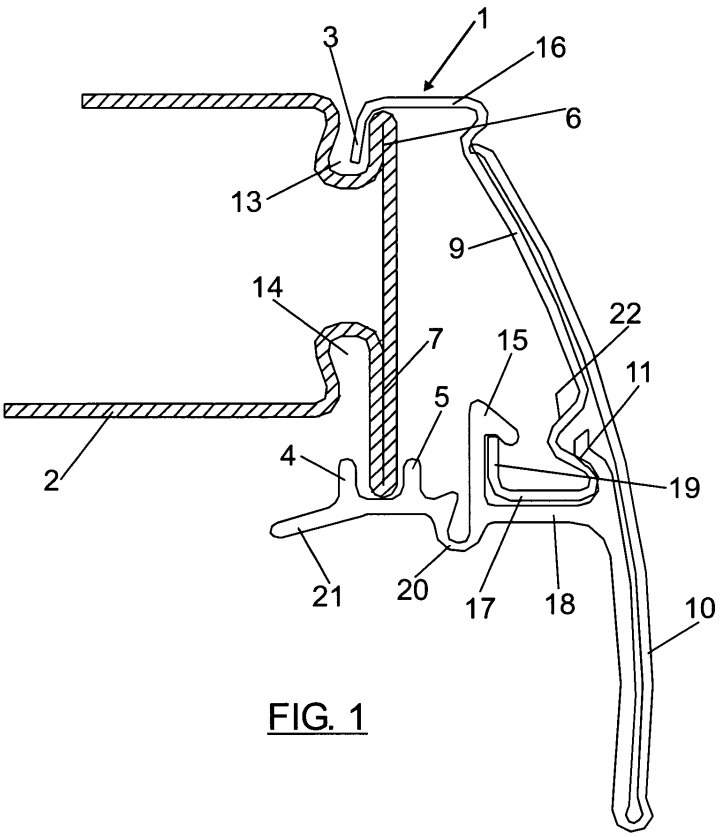

FIG. 1

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Description

Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention refers to a label-holding system for its use on shelves. These label-holding systems are mainly used in warehouses, shops, supermarkets,... to indicate data about the object located on the shelf, mainly price, content, reference,...

State of the Art

[0002] The field of the art which the invention belongs to is that of exhibiting data on objects placed on shelves, whether in industrial warehouses or in shops.

[0003] Document ES 2232284 A1 discloses a label-holding profile capable of arranging labels in two positions: a substantially vertical position and an oblique one, such that it can be read from a higher position. This arrangement does not facilitate seeing this profile with this shelf on higher levels.

Description of the Invention

[0004] The present invention refers to a label-holding system which may be arranged at all shelf levels, whether at the height of an average user, below said height or above it, resulting especially visible from each one of them.

[0005] To this end the label-holding system comprises a simple profile and with a more resistant structure which eliminates the risk of breaking.

[0006] The system is made up of a preferably rigid profile, an extension, a shelf with a longitudinal shelf edge configured especially for receiving the profile and extension assembly, and a display. Within the present specification, the edge or front shown to the shelf user will be called the longitudinal edge, regardless of the depth and width of the shelf.

[0007] The profile has a general tilted C-shape, with an upper arm, a lower arm and a central section.

[0008] Both arms are approximately parallel, whereas the central section is oblique to both arms, the upper arm remaining in an advanced position with respect to the lower arm.

[0009] An upper lug, approximately perpendicular to the arm and arranged downwards is arranged on the free end of the upper arm.

[0010] The central section of the profile forms a support surface, on the outer surface of which the labels will be fixed either directly, for example by means of adhesive, or by means of a transparent display, tilting or not, attached to the profile. A reading direction is thus defined, perpendicular to the support surface, which corresponds to the direction from which the label is read with most ease.

[0011] The extension is arranged fixed and parallel to the lower arm of the profile and projecting with respect to the free end of the lower arm. The union between the extension and the lower arm may be detachable or not.

[0012] The extension has two lower lugs, both perpendicular to said extension and directed upwards. The first lower lug is arranged in the immediacy of the free end of the extension, whereas the second lower lug is placed at a certain distance from the first lower lug.

[0013] It is convenient for the first lower lug to be vertically aligned with the upper lug.

[0014] For its part, the shelf has two lips on a longitudinal edge facing the user, an upper lip and a lower lip where the profile lugs are fixed.

[0015] The upper lip is made on the upper larger side of the shelf, followed by a first recess parallel to the longitudinal edge.

[0016] As for the lower lip, it is made vertically aligned with the upper lip, and on the lower larger side of the shelf. This may or may not be accompanied by a second longitudinal recess. This second recess would have as secondary functions the housing or clipping of indicating exhibitors, signage... sized so as to fit in said recess.

[0017] In order to achieve good fixing of the profile, the distance between the upper point of the upper lip and the lower point of the lower lip must be greater than the distance between the upper lug and the furthest of the lower lugs of the extension, which will often be the second lower lug.

[0018] With this profile, extension and shelf construction, it is possible to carry out several assembly configurations:

- A first configuration in which the reading direction is positioned obliquely and upwards, which is called the lower position because it corresponds to the optimal situation of a label arranged at a height that is below the eyes of an average user.
- A second configuration in which the reading direction is positioned close to horizontal, which is called the vertical position, and which corresponds to the optimal situation of a label arranged approximately at the same height as the eyes of an average user.
- A third configuration in which the reading direction is positioned obliquely and downwards, which is called the inverted position because it corresponds to the optimal situation of a label arranged above the eyes of an average user, and in which the profile is fixed to the shelf in an inverted position with respect to the previous ones.

[0019] The vertical position is achieved by fixing the upper lug onto the upper lip and the second lower lug on the lower lip. The profile and extension assembly is slightly tilted, and this tilting allows placing the support surface in a virtually vertical position.

[0020] The lower position corresponds to the situation in which both arms of the profile are in an approximately horizontal position. In this position, the upper lug is fixed onto the upper lip and the first lower lug onto the lower lip.

[0021] In the inverted position, the arms are also in a horizontal position, although in this case the upper arm is placed below the lower arm and the extension. The first lower lug is fixed onto the upper lip, whereas the upper lug is held in the lower lip.

[0022] According to dependent embodiments, the extension may form a single part with the display or with the profile. In the first case, a first flexible section can be advantageously assembled between the display and the second lower lug to absorb the bending moments and prevent material fatigue.

[0023] It is possible to add a second flexible section, located on the display, and allowing the latter to deform and tilt if dragged from the shelf by a user removing a product from it.

[0024] In said first embodiment, in order to fix the display and extension assembly to the profile, said profile can be provided with a projection on the lower arm directed upwards, and a notch on the lower portion of the support surface. For its part, the extension has two prongs, a first prong to be introduced in the notch, and a second prong for holding the projection.

[0025] Anchoring of the display to the profile can be carried out in several manners, the situation of a triangular section between the support surface and the lower arm of the profile being one example. Said triangular section has two sides parallel to the support surface and the lower arm, between which remains an opening through which a wide end of the profile is introduced.

[0026] A secondary feature of the present invention is that the profile described in the first claim may, when having a projection on the free end of its lower arm, be independently attached to the shelf, defining a simple trim which labels can be adhered to.

Description of the Drawings

[0027] To better understand the invention, an embodiment of the invention is briefly described below as an illustrative and non-limiting example thereof. To this end reference is made to the attached drawings, in which:

Figure 1 shows a first embodiment of the label-holding system in the lower position, corresponding to a shelf located below the eyes of the user.

Figure 2 shows the first embodiment of the label-holding system in the vertical position, in which it is approximately at user eye level.

Figure 3 shows the first embodiment of the label-holding system in the inverted position, arranged on a shelf above the eyes of the user. This figure shows a variant of the first flexible section.

Next, Figure 4 shows a profile according to the first embodiment, fixed directly on the shelf, in a particular position of this embodiment.

Finally, Figure 5 shows a second embodiment of the system of the invention.

Description of the Embodiments

[0028] As can be seen in Figures 1 and 2, the system of the invention is made from a profile (1) made with a general shape similar to a C. That is, the profile (1) comprises a central section, an upper arm (16) and a lower arm (17). The arms (16, 17) are approximately parallel and the central section is in an oblique position to both arms (16, 17), the upper arm (16) remaining more advanced than the lower arm (17).

[0029] The profile (1) has a support surface (9) corresponding to the central section of the C, where the corresponding labels (not shown) are fixed, either directly or by means of a transparent display (10) fixed to the profile (1). This display (10) can indistinctly have a lesser, greater or equal width than the support surface (9), being generally greater.

[0030] The profile (1) section has an upper lug (3) located on the free end of the upper arm (16) of the profile (1) and directed downwards, and may comprise a projection (19) on the free end of the lower arm (17) and directed upwards.

[0031] The system further comprises an extension (18) having one end in contact with the lower arm (17) of the profile (1) which it is parallel and fixed to. This extension (18) projects from the lower arm (17) and has two lower lugs (4, 5) on the projecting part:

- A first lower lug (4) located near the free end of the extension (18), directed upwards.
- A second lower lug (5) located near the edge of the extension (18), behind the first lower lug (4). This second lower lug (5) is also directed upwards.

[0032] Between the first lower lug (4) and the free end of the extension (18) there is a tab (21) which facilitates removal of the extension (18), and of that which it is attached to, from the shelf (2).

[0033] For its part, the shelf (2) has two lips (6, 7), an upper one and a lower one, that the upper lug (3) and a lower lug (4, 5) or, where appropriate, the projection (19) grip onto.

[0034] The upper lip (6) is located on the upper larger side of the shelf (2) and is aligned with the longitudinal edge of said shelf (2). Behind it there is a first longitudinal recess (13) where the corresponding lug (3, 4) will be introduced, as will be described below.

[0035] The lower lip (7) is located on the edge of the lower larger side of the shelf (2). This lower lip (7) has to project from its own base a distance greater than the height of the lugs (3, 4, 5) or the projection (19). To that end the lower lip (7) may or may not have before it a second longitudinal recess (14), depending on how much it projects from the lower larger side of the shelf (2).

[0036] It is convenient that the lower lip (7) projects from the rest of the lower larger side of the shelf (2), such that when the second lower lug (5) is fixed to the lower lip (7) the first lower lug (4) does not hit the shelf (2)

causing deformation of the extension (18), and over time the breaking of said extension (18) due to material fatigue.

[0037] The width of each lip (6, 7) will be less than the distance between the first and second lower lugs (4, 5) and less than the length of the upper arm (16). For its part the width of the first recess (13) is greater than the width of the upper lug (3) and the first lower lug (4), whereas the depth of the first recess (13) is greater than the height of both lugs (3, 4).

[0038] Finally, the distance between the upper end of the upper lip (6) and the lower end of the lower lip (7) will be greater than the distance between the lower end of the upper lug (3) and any of the upper ends of the lower lugs (4, 5) or the projection (19).

[0039] Three possible manners of fixing the profile (1) and the extension (18) on the shelf (2) are achieved with this configuration by combining the lips (6, 7) with the upper lug (3) and one of the two lower lugs (4, 5), as shown in Figures 1, 2, 3 and 5.

[0040] Figure 2 shows a first embodiment of the system in a vertical position, in which the support surface (9) and the display (10) are located approximately vertically so that a possible user may comfortably read the content of the labels which are approximately at user eye level, in an almost horizontal reading direction (8). In this case the upper lug (3) is fixed to the upper lip (6), whereas the second lower lug (5) is fixed to the lower lip (7).

[0041] Figures 1 and 5 show two embodiments of the system, both located in a lower position in which the display (10) is obliquely placed so that a possible user may comfortably read the content of the labels below his or her eyes. The upper lug (3) is supported on the upper lip (6), whereas the first lower lug (4) is fixed on the lower lip (7).

[0042] A third position of the first embodiment, called the inverted position for greater clarity, is shown in Figure 3, where the lower lip (7) supports the upper lug (3), whereas the upper lip (6) is fixed to the first lower lug (4). In this configuration, the support surface (9) facilitates reading of the label contents when the shelf (2) is higher than the eyes of the user, given that the reading direction (8) is directed downwards.

[0043] According to the different embodiments shown, the extension (18) may form a single part with the display (10), as can be seen in Figures 1 to 4, or with the profile as can be seen in Figure 5.

[0044] The first embodiment, shown in Figures 1 to 4, has a fourth manner of arranging the profile (1) on the shelf (2), shown in Figure 4. In this embodiment the profile (1) is fixed to the shelf (2) by means of the upper lug (3) and the projection (19), neither the display (10) nor the extension (18) being assembled. In this manner the profile (1) performs decorative functions for the longitudinal edge of the shelf (2) while the support surface (9) can serve as a support for a label adhered by any known means.

[0045] Several methods can be used to fix the display (10) and extension (18) assembly to the profile (1). Thus, according to the fixing manner shown in Figures 1 to 3, the lower arm (17) of the profile (1) is introduced in a space carried out in the extension (18), having on its edges two prongs (11, 15) for gripping the profile (1).

[0046] The first prong (11) is slightly oblique to the extension (18) in order to be introduced in a notch (22) made on the base of the support surface (9) of the profile (1), whereas the second prong (15) is finished in a sort of spear in order to grip the projection (19).

[0047] In this embodiment, the extension (18) advantageously has a first flexible section (20) to facilitate its temporary deformation during assembly of the profile (1) set and the extension (18) and display (10) assembly. The first flexible section may be carried out as a half-circumference with reduced thickness (see Figures 1 and 2) between the display (10) and the second lower lug (5) or as a hanging arm (20') on which the lower lugs (4, 5) and the tab (21) rest (see Figure 3).

[0048] Figure 2 also shows a second flexible section (24) which allows tilting of the display (10) if it is accidentally dragged when taking a product off one of the shelves (2).

[0049] The second embodiment combines the extension (18) with the profile (1) forming a single part, as shown in Figure 5.

[0050] In this second embodiment the profile does not have the projection (19). Therefore this embodiment only has the three basic forms of arranging the profile (1) and extension (18) assembly on the shelf (2), the placing of the display (10) being optional in all cases.

[0051] (These three basic forms correspond to the aforementioned inverted, vertical and lower positions).

[0052] Fixing of the display (10) to the profile (1) and extension (18) assembly can be performed in many ways, one of them being the one shown in Figure 5.

[0053] This Figure shows an anchoring (12) carried out by means of a section with the shape of a triangle open at one angle. Said angle is adjacent to two sides of said triangle that are parallel to the lower arm (17) and the support surface (9) and its opening is directed outwards from the profile (1). A wide end (23) of the display (10) may be introduced in a dovetail-like manner into this anchoring (12). As the display (10) remains fixed on one end it may be deformed if necessary if the display (10) is accidentally dragged when removing an object from the shelf (2).

Claims

1. A label-holding system of the type made up of a profile (1) and a shelf (2) with a longitudinal edge formed such as to receive said profile (1), **characterised in that**:

   the profile (1) section is C-shaped and comprises:

an upper arm (16) having on a free end an upper lug (3), arranged downwards;
a lower arm (17), substantially parallel to the upper arm (16); and
a central section forming a support surface (9) arranged obliquely to both arms (16, 17) such that the upper arm (16) is advanced with respect to the lower arm (17) and defining a reading direction (8) perpendicular to said support surface (9);

an extension (18) fixed and parallel to the lower arm (17), projecting with respect to the free end of the lower arm (17) and comprising on the projecting part:

a first lower lug (4) located near a free end of the extension (18); and
a second lower lug (5) located behind the first lower lug (4), both lugs (4, 5) being arranged perpendicularly to the extension (18) and facing the inside of the C-shape of the profile (1);

a transparent display (10) for placing the labels located near and parallel to the support surface (9); and **in that**
the shelf (2) has on its longitudinal edge:

an upper lip (6) on the upper larger side of the shelf (2) followed by a first recess (13); and
a lower lip (7), made under the upper lip (6), the distance between the upper point of the upper lip (6) and the lower point of the lower lip (7) being greater than the distance between the lower end of the upper lug (3) and the furthest end of the lower lugs (4, 5);

and **in that** the profile (1) and extension assembly can be fixed to the shelf in at least three positions:

a vertical position, in which the reading direction (8) is close to horizontal;
a lower position, in which the reading direction (8) is directed obliquely and upwards;
an inverted position in which the reading direction (8) is directed obliquely and downwards.

2. A system according to claim 1, **characterised in that**:

the vertical position is achieved by fitting the upper lug (3) on the upper lip (6) and the second lower lug (5) on the lower lip (7);
the lower position is achieved by fitting the upper lug (3) on the upper lip (6) and the first lower lug (4) on the lower lip (7); and
the inverted position is achieved by fitting the upper lug (3) on the lower lip (7) and the first lower lug (4) on the upper lip (6).

3. A system according to any of claims 1 or 2, **characterised in that** the profile (1) and the extension (18) form a single part.

4. A system according to claim 3, **characterised in that** the profile (1) has, in the union between the lower arm (17) and the support surface (9), a triangle-shaped section open at one angle, the sides of which are parallel to the lower arm (17) and to the support surface (9), and **in that** said angle is oriented outwardly from the profile (1), allowing introducing and anchoring of a wide end (23) of the display.

5. A system according to any of claims 1 or 2, **characterised in that** the display (10) and the extension (18) form a single part.

6. A system according to claim 5, **characterised in that** the extension (18) comprises a first flexible section (20) between the display (10) and the lower lugs (4, 5) in order to allow the fast assembly and disassembly of the label-holding system.

7. A system according to any of claims 5 or 6, **characterised in that** the display (10) comprises a second flexible section (24) in order to allow the tilting of said display (10).

8. A system according to any of claims 5 to 7, **characterised in that** the profile (1) comprises on its lower arm (17) a projection (19) perpendicular to said lower arm (17) and directed upwards and a notch (22) on the lower part of the support surface (9); and **in that** the extension (18) comprises two prongs (11, 15), the first prong (11) being configured to be introduced in the notch (22) and the second prong (15) being configured to hold the projection (19).

Amended claims in accordance with Rule 86(2) EPC.

1. A label-holding system of the type made up of a profile (1) and a shelf (2) with a longitudinal edge formed such as to receive said profile (1), **characterised in that**:

the profile (1) section is C-shaped and comprises:

an upper arm (16) having on a free end an upper lug (3), arranged downwards;
a lower arm (17), substantially parallel to

the upper arm (16); and
a central section forming a support surface (9) arranged obliquely to both arms (16, 17) such that the upper arm (16) is advanced with respect to the lower arm (17) and defining a reading direction (8) perpendicular to said support surface (9);

an extension (18) fixed and parallel to the lower arm (17), projecting with respect to the free end of the lower arm (17) and comprising on the projecting part:

a first lower lug (4) located near a free end of the extension (18); and
a second lower lug (5) located behind the first lower lug (4), both lugs (4, 5) being arranged perpendicularly to the extension (18) and facing the inside of the C-shape of the profile (1);

a transparent display (10) for placing the labels located near and parallel to the support surface (9); and **in that**
the shelf (2) has on its longitudinal edge:

an upper lip (6) on the upper larger side of the shelf (2) followed by a first recess (13); and
a lower lip (7), made under the upper lip (6), the distance between the upper point of the upper lip (6) and the lower point of the lower lip (7) being greater than the distance between the lower end of the upper lug (3) and the furthest end of the lower lugs (4, 5);

and **in that** the profile (1) and extension assembly can be fixed to the shelf in at least three positions:

a vertical position, in which the reading direction (8) is close to horizontal;
a lower position, in which the reading direction (8) is directed obliquely and upwards;
an inverted position in which the reading direction (8) is directed obliquely and downwards.

2. A system according to claim 1, **characterised in that** the profile (1) and the extension (18) form a single part.

3. A system according to claim 2, **characterised in that** the profile (1) has, in the union between the lower arm (17) and the support surface (9), a triangle-shaped section open at one angle, the sides of which are parallel to the lower arm (17) and to the support surface (9), and **in that** said angle is oriented outwardly from the profile (1), allowing introducing and anchoring of a wide end (23) of the display.

4. A system according to claim 1, **characterised in that** the display (10) and the extension (18) form a single part.

5. A system according to claim 4, **characterised in that** the extension (18) comprises a first flexible section (20) between the display (10) and the lower lugs (4, 5) in order to allow the fast assembly and disassembly of the label-holding system.

6. A system according to any of claims 4 or 5, **characterised in that** the display (10) comprises a second flexible section (24) in order to allow the tilting of said display (10).

7. A system according to any of claims 4 to 6, **characterised in that** the profile (1) comprises on its lower arm (17) a projection (19) perpendicular to said lower arm (17) and directed upwards and a notch (22) on the lower part of the support surface (9); and **in that** the extension (18) comprises two prongs (11, 15), the first prong (11) being configured to be introduced in the notch (22) and the second prong (15) being configured to hold the projection (19).

8. A method for using the system according to claim 1, **characterised in that**:

the vertical position is achieved by fitting the upper lug (3) on the upper lip (6) and the second lower lug (5) on the lower lip (7);
the lower position is achieved by fitting the upper lug (3) on the upper lip (6) and the first lower lug (4) on the lower lip (7); and
the inverted position is achieved by fitting the upper lug (3) on the lower lip (7) and the first lower lug (4) on the upper lip (6).

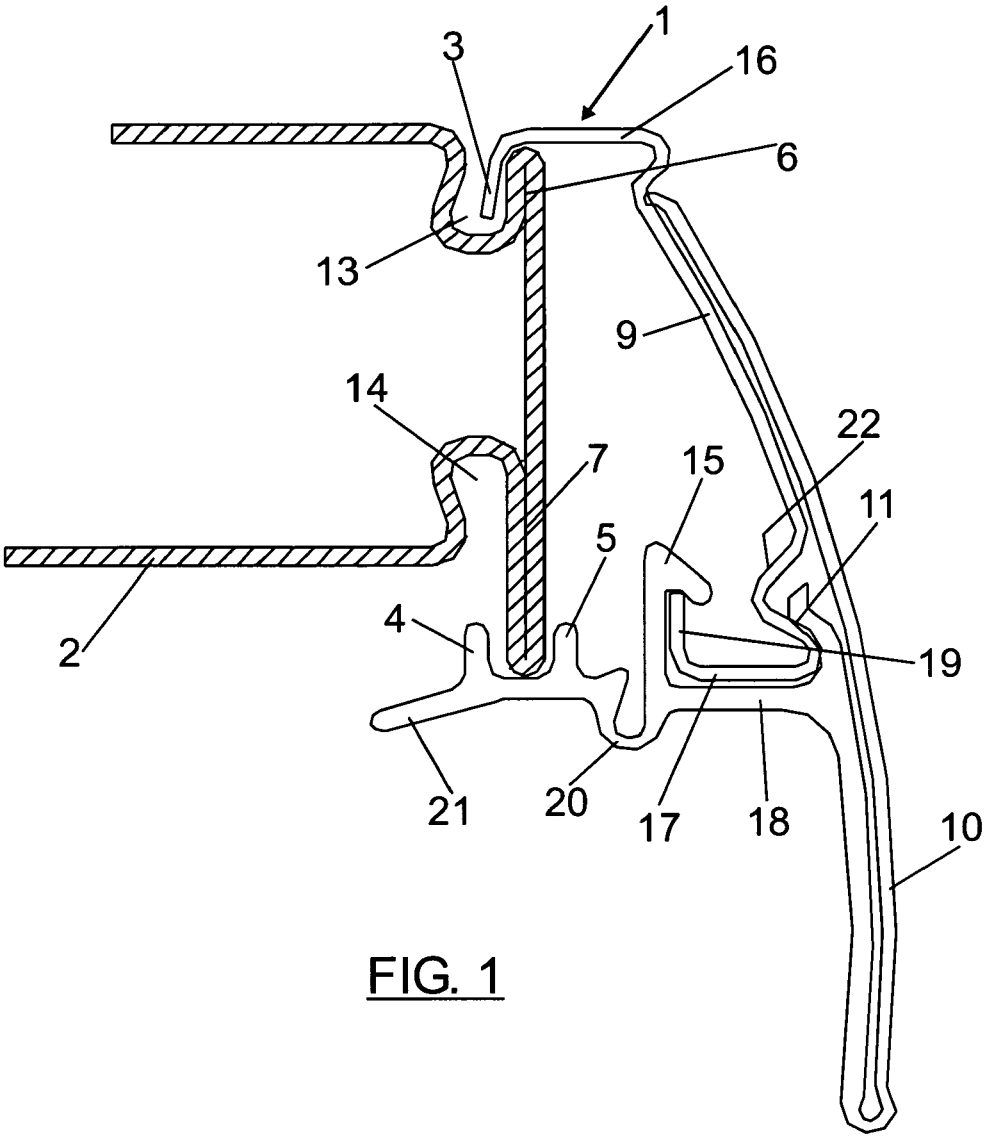

FIG. 1

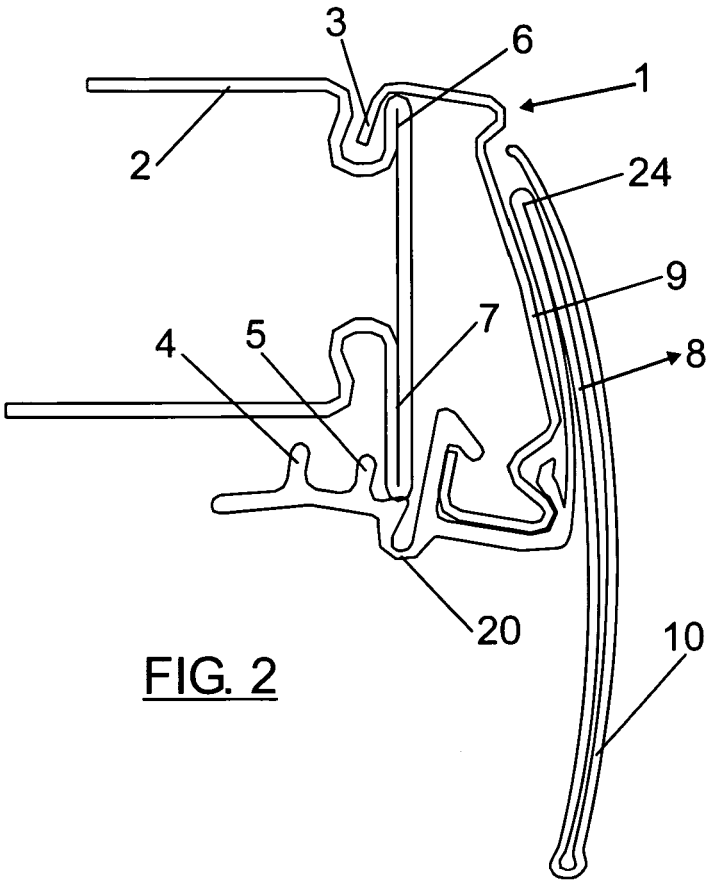

FIG. 2

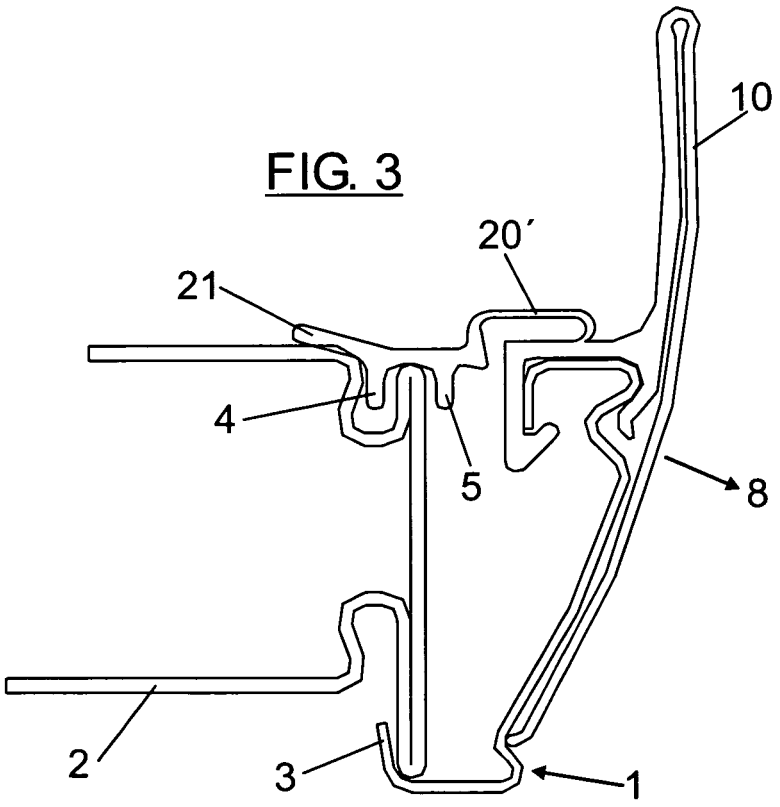

FIG. 3

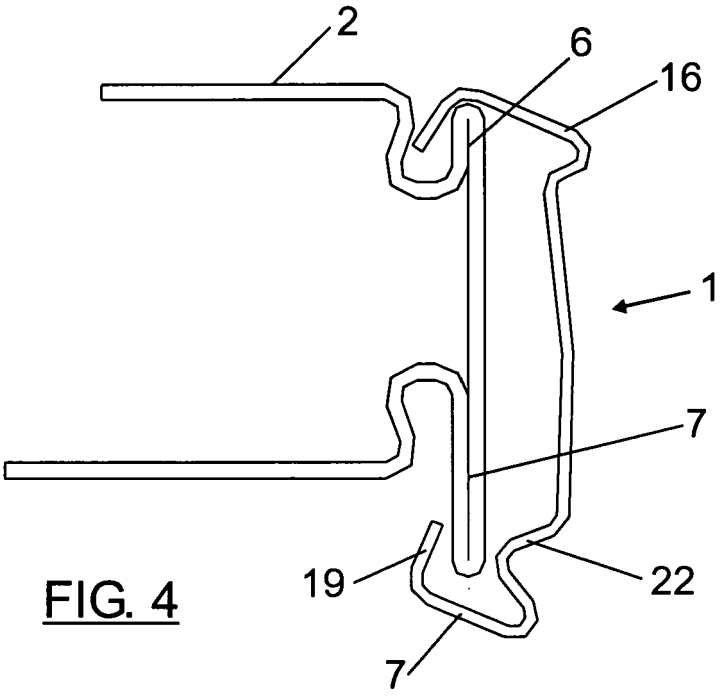

FIG. 4

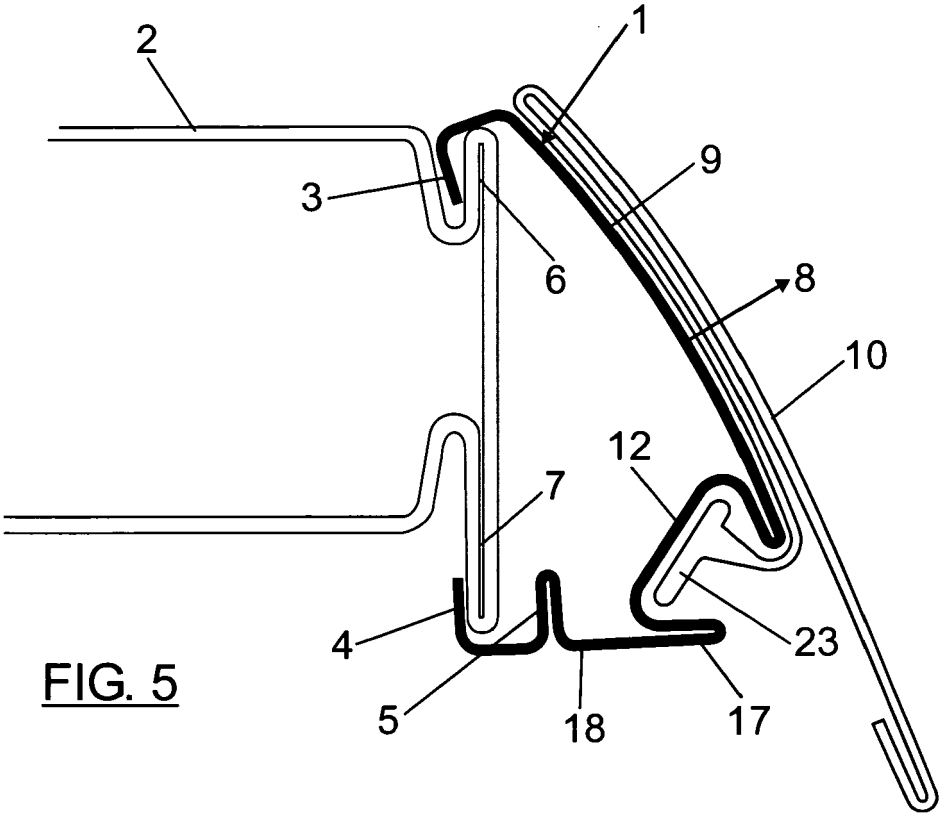

FIG. 5

European Patent Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 05 38 0199

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
D,A	WO 2004/102510 A (YUDIGAR S.L; ARTERO RUIZ, FERNANDO) 25 November 2004 (2004-11-25) * abstract; figure 1 *	1-8	G09F3/20
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A	DE 38 04 894 A1 (KUNSTSTOFF-VERARBEITUNG GMBH DIRK A. BRUEGMANN, 5800 HAGEN, DE; AUGUST) 31 August 1989 (1989-08-31) * the whole document *	1-8	

TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)

G09F

The present search report has been drawn up for all claims

Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
Munich	15 February 2006	Pavlov, V

CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS

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ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO. EP 05 38 0199

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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15-02-2006

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REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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Patent documents cited in the description

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