

The invention relates to a container for storing a pile of pictures, having the features mentioned in the preamble of patent claim 1 or 2 or 3.

The device disclosed in NL-A-7 809 570 (Fig. 9) has these features. This known device is constructed as a picture changer, that is to say, the pile is cyclically rearranged on every movement of the slider member backwards and forwards in that an individual picture is removed at one end of the pile and added to the other end of the pile again. The known device is so constructed that the individual picture remains behind in the container while the remainder of the pile is transported out of the housing by means of the slider member. The separating elements are controlled by the movement of the slider member such that the picture supported by them beneath the window is able to drop back onto the pile when the slider member has been pulled out. That is why the separating elements are in the form of curved wire springs or pivoted levers. In order to remove the pile, the container is opened at one end, after which the pictures can be shaken out.

A simple picture carrier without the described change-over function is disclosed in FR-A-2 440 902 (Fig. 21). A picture supported by an intermediate floor lies behind a viewing window, and on the other side of the intermediate floor there is a compartment for receiving further pictures. To remove this pile, the compartment floor can be swung down backwards; the picture presented behind the window can also be exchanged manually for the lowermost picture in the pile by opening the relevant compartment at one end and pressing against the rear of the lowermost picture a manually rolled roller on the compartment floor, so that the picture is ejected by frictional engagement.

In both the known containers it is evident that the removal at least of the presented individual picture

is inconvenient and awkward, and it is the aim of the invention to produce a container in which it is possible to exchange both the individual picture and the remainder of the pile even with limited manual dexterity.

According to patent claim 1 this problem is solved in that the intermediate floor is so integrated with the slider member that even in the pulled-out position of the slider member the intermediate floor supports the picture viewed through the viewing window, and *the slider member in this pulled-out state is free on its two faces lying opposite the floor* so that both compartments separated by the floor are accessible for the picture exchange. The user is therefore able, as he chooses, to remove just the individual picture, just the pile or even both wherein, even when the slider member is pulled, the compartments still remain separated by the floor unlike, therefore, the arrangement in the type of construction described in the introduction having separating elements that move away. The slider member is provided with sufficient dimensional stability by the floor.

The solution according to patent claim 2 differs from the first solution in that the slider member carries a change-over driver member which carries with it either the individual picture or the pile as the slider member is pulled. It is possible, of course, to empty in succession first the one and then the other compartment.

The solution according to patent claim 3 permits access to both compartments when the slider member is pulled, in that the separating elements are so arranged

..... There appears to be an error in the German text. The faces do not lie opposite the floor, but adjacent to it, one on each side of the floor - translator.



that they can be folded away; the individual picture is therefore much easier to remove than in the case of the picture holder according to the above-mentioned FR-A-2 440 902.

The embodiment forms according to the invention are explained in detail below with reference to the accompanying drawings, which illustrate preferred examples.

- Fig. 1 shows a perspective view of a first container according to the invention,
Fig. 2 is a section through a container of the construction shown in Fig. 1, for instance in the plane "2-2" in Fig. 1.
Fig. 3 is a perspective view of a slider member for a container of the type shown in Fig. 1 in a modified form,
Fig. 4 is a section analogous to Fig. 2 for the last-named container,
Fig. 5 and 5a show a container of a second type in the closed and opened state respectively, which also makes use of the inventive concept, and
Fig. 6 shows a perspective view of a fragment of the free end of the window component of Figs 5/5a.

Fig. 1 shows a housing 100 made of plastics material, for example opaque plastics material, with a viewing window 102 in its upper side. A slider member 104, which is here slideably moved by means of its lateral faces 106 in corresponding guides of the housing, is movable relative to the housing and parallel to the plane of the window 102. At the periphery of the slider member, from a divider plate 108 forming an intermediate floor, a narrow edge 110 extends upwards, that is to say, in the direction towards the viewing window, and a wider edge 112 extends downwards to a housing floor. The slider member is illustrated



partially broken away, in order to show both edges clearly, and their different height. Between the divider plate 108 and the window 102 there is accordingly formed a very shallow compartment in which an individual picture to be presented lying flat against the window is accommodated, while beneath the divider plate, between this and the housing, a deeper compartment provides room for a correspondingly thick pile of pictures. When fewer pictures than the maximum the second compartment is able to hold lie in this second compartment, these pictures are simply loose, but this does not matter as a picture presented at the top always lies flat. This also applies to all the other forms of embodiment. In order to remove the individual picture from the upper compartment, the slider member is pulled right out and the picture is picked up by its edge, where it can be grasped through a cut-out 114 in the edge 110. In order to remove the pile from the lower compartment, the container is turned over, that is, after the upper shallow compartment has been emptied, and the pile is pressed by a finger from below, through a hole 116 in the divider plate 108, into a position in which its edge may be grasped.

Figures 3 and 4 relate to a variation of the construction comprising housing and slider member, in which the slider member comprises a control button 150, by means of which a driver member 152 can be turned respectively into one or another position in which it carries out the presented picture or the pile. The slider member in this instance comprises virtually only the intermediate floor 154 with the continuous control shaft 156 and an end wall closing off the housing externally. The actual separating elements are constructed fixedly in the housing as lateral ledges 158, and the slider member is guided in lateral slots in the internal wall of the housing.

In the form of embodiment shown in Figures 5, 5a and 6, a housing 160 is again provided with a slider member 163 displaceable parallel to the viewing window 162 of the housing. At the leading end of the slider member there is arranged a hinge 164 about which a picture holder 166 can be pivoted, as illustrated in Figure 5a. Figure 6 shows the free end of the picture holder and it is apparent that separating elements are constructed on it in the form of lateral ledges 168 which separate a picture inserted between the transparent pane 170 and the ledges 168 from the remainder of the pile 172 in the slider member, and press it against the pane. In the position shown in Figure 5a, the container serves as a stand-up frame and if the viewing window 162 itself is also glazed, the pictures in the remainder of the pile will also be protected from dust in this position. Moreover, the picture holder may also be arranged the other way round, that is to say, with the ledges 168 in the closed state (Figure 5) facing towards the viewing window; in this case the upper compartment (between the ledges and the window) is kept separate from the lower compartment through the slider member floor by the pane 170.

Where forms of embodiment have been described above in which the containers consist of two components movable linearly or pivotally relative to one another, it is possible to bias the two parts by means of a spring into one of the end positions provided, and to lock them in the other end position by means of a manually releasable mechanism. Furthermore, with all embodiments it should be noted that it is generally desirable for the picture presented at the window to be completely visible, that is to say, its marginal areas should not be covered over. If, however, for aesthetic reasons, a frame is required around the window, then measures should be taken inside the container using stop

members to ensure that the presented picture lies centred beneath the window and is not able to slip sideways beneath the frame.

In addition, in those embodiments in which this has not expressly been described or illustrated, feet for positioning the container upright and/or eyelets for hanging up the container as a wall frame in upright and/or transverse format can be provided.

Finally, in most of the embodiments described it is also possible to affix a label to one end of the container and to construct the containers in such a manner that in the closed state they can be stacked one on top of the other, with the label then identifying the container contents.

Patent Claims

1. Container for storing a pile of pictures with a viewing window (102) against which a picture is presented lying flat by means of a pressing arrangement, which container has two compartments which are substantially matching in two dimensions and which are separated from one another by an intermediate floor (108) that is parallel to the plane of the window and preferably interrupted (at 116), one of which compartments is defined on the side remote from the intermediate floor by the viewing window and in its dimension between the intermediate floor and the viewing window is matched to the thickness of one picture in such a manner that the intermediate floor (108) simultaneously forms the pressing arrangement, wherein the intermediate floor and the driver elements (110, 112), by means of which all the pictures can be conveyed out of the container, are arranged on a slider member (104) which can be pulled out of the container parallel to the plane of the viewing window, characterized in that the intermediate floor (108) is so integrated with the slider member (104) that the same also supports the picture viewed through the viewing window (102) even in the pulled-out position of the slider member, and the slider member in this pulled-out state is free on its two faces lying opposite* the floor (108) so that both compartments separated by the floor are accessible for the exchange of pictures.

2. Container for storing a pile of pictures with a viewing window against which a picture is presented lying flat by means of a pressing arrangement, which container has two compartments which are substantially

*Cf. Translator's note on page 2.



matching in two dimensions and are separated from one another by separating elements (158), one of which compartments is defined on the side remote from the separating elements by the viewing window and in its dimension between the separating elements (158) and the viewing window is matched to the thickness of one picture such that the separating elements simultaneously form the pressing arrangement, wherein a slider member (104) having a driver arrangement (152) and an intermediate floor (154) can be pulled out of the container parallel to the viewing window, characterized in that the driver arrangement is constructed as a driver element (152), by means of which selectively, when the container is opened, all pictures located in one of the compartments can be brought into a removal position and the slider member in the pulled-out state is free on its two faces lying opposite* the intermediate floor (154) of the slider member so that both compartments separated by the floor are accessible for the exchange of pictures.

3. Container for storing a pile of pictures with a viewing window (162, 170) against which a picture is presented lying flat by means of a pressing arrangement, which container has two compartments which are substantially matching in two dimensions and are separated from one another by separating elements (168), one of which compartments is defined on the side remote from the separating elements by the viewing window and in its dimension between the separating elements and the viewing window is matched to the thickness of one picture such that the separating elements simultaneously form the pressing arrangement,

* Cf. Translator's note on page 2.



wherein on a slider member (163) which can be pulled out of the container parallel to the plane of the viewing window there are arranged the separating elements and also driver elements, by means of which all the pictures can be conveyed out of the container, characterized in that, with the slider member (163) pulled out, the separating elements (168) can be folded away from the compartment remote from the viewing window (162, 170) in such a manner that pictures (172) located in the compartment can be removed.

4. Container according to claim 1, characterized in that at least one of the compartments is provided with a finger grip aperture (114).

5. Container according to claim 3, characterized in that the separating elements (168) are moulded on a plate-like component (166).

6. Container according to claim 5, characterized in that the plate-like component (166) is pivotally attached to the slider member.

