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ADVERTISING DISPLAY SYSTEMField of the Invention

This invention relates to the provision of advertising messages in association with the display of products in a retail shopping environment.

Background of the Invention

Typically in a retail grocer such as a Supermarket, Hypermarket, Convenient Store, Healthy & Beauty store or other retail environment, the number of products carried varies from 1,000 to 50,000 items (or Stock Keeping Units); however, the number of items purchased by shoppers varies from single item for specific needs (filler-gap) to a full basket shopping but averagely no more than 30 items.

To help shoppers make decisions, retailers and marketers provide communication devices to inform, educate and encourage purchases. Examples are posters, digital media such as TVs/LCD display screens, shopping cart posters, hanging mobiles, floor stickers etc. Today, shopping has evolved. Shoppers want information at the time they shop e.g. check out organic products, products that are gluten-free, cholesterol free, low salt etc. The most ideal location to impact shoppers therefore are the shelves/display areas where the products are displayed or along the aisle right in front of where the products are displayed.

Because over 70% of shoppers do not carry a shopping list (over 20 years of research, POPAI - Point-of-Purchase Advertising Institute), the "moment of truth" to help influence a shopper becomes all important for brand marketers.

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For the retailers, helping shoppers buy one more is a strategy to improve the basket size and increase transaction value.

Furthermore, it takes 3 - 5 seconds to attract a shopper (referred to in Shopper Marketing Practices as the "first moment-of-truth") and 7 - 10 seconds to make a purchase decision/choice (the "second moment-of-truth").

For many categories of products, shelf visibility is a challenge. Either the products packaging have small surface areas and cannot effectively communicate the messages or displaying them together (shelf facings) are insufficient due to the proliferation of many brands in the category fighting for shelf facings or they are usually dominated by the market leaders which get the most facings. Aesthetic designs in many categories are also constrained by how shoppers perceive and define them. For example, in the detergent category it is not unusual to find strong colours in red, blue or orange. Hence, making distinction is difficult to get shelf standout and help shoppers locate the products.

Another problem is visibility. The central area of a category as well as products displayed at eye level attracts shoppers. Products displayed out of this critical centre or eye-level suffer from low turnovers as they are missed by shoppers.

As such, advertising media vehicles are important to help shoppers:

- a) locate
- b) provide compelling information/education
- c) develop awareness for new products
- d) provide alternatives

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- e) assist shoppers to make good decision
- f) communicate additional information over and above what is on the packaging etc.

However, in a time-compressed world today, shoppers want shopping to be fast. Most media vehicles available are either not on the shelves and hence cannot help shoppers to effectively make purchase decisions. Also, a shopper walks past 300 items (SKUs) in 10 seconds, hence it is quite difficult for many media such as TV, wall posters, hanging mobiles and the like that are either not located on the shelves or near the shelves where products are displayed or do not flow with the shopper's journey in the shopping aisle. For example, a TV or a poster at the entrance of the store is unlikely to be very helpful.

Also, over 70% of shoppers do not have a shopping list and over 50% do not have a brand in mind, so at the point-of-sale, the medium closest to the displayed products is the most critical.

Most TVs, on or near shelves, also run on loops so are not very useful and effective. It takes more than 10 seconds to develop and deliver the communication, hence it is highly unlikely a shopper would stand waiting to be entertained.

However, placing an advertising medium on the shelves can get in the way of displayed products i.e. difficult to reach out for the products as it may block and create accessibility issues.

Also to be meaningful and deliver a comprehensive brand message, the brand name, the product visual (packaging identity), the advertising medium must be large enough to cater and integrate the different communication needs. However, large size gets in the way and obstructs trolleys

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when they are pushed along the aisle or hurt shoppers if they become barriers. Also, the damage to the advertising medium is extremely costly, requiring not just replacement units but field operating cost for replacing them.

A damaged advertising medium which does not work or poorly maintained leaves a bad impression and damage the advertised product's reputation and the brand's imageries; an extremely costly issue.

The present invention enables advertising material to be presented immediately adjacent to products displayed on shelving for sale to a size and orientation in which it is readily visible so that shoppers can immediately read the advertising message but in a manner which does not get in the way of the displayed products or shoppers.

#### Summary of the Invention.

According to the present invention there is provided product display shelving for supporting products for display at a retail outlet, comprising:

- a shelving structure including a bank of vertically spaced shelves forming open fronted spaces for products to be displayed; and

- one or more advertising panels each attached to the shelving structure at or near the front of one of the shelves so as to be held upright with opposed panel faces extending outwardly from the shelving so as to be readily visible to observers looking along the shelving.

The or each panel may be attached to the shelf structure at or near the front of one of the shelves which is disposed above another shelf or other shelves of the bank of shelves and may hang downwardly from that attachment. Said one shelf may be the upper most shelf of the bank of shelves.

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The attachment may attach an upper part of the panel to the shelf structure and the panel may extend vertically across a plurality of the shelves.

Preferably the attachment permits swinging movement of the panel away from its upright forwardly projecting orientation if knocked by a person or object moving along the front of the shelving.

The attachment may provide a resiliently flexible mounting of the panel to return the panel to its upright forwardly projecting orientation when the interference with a person or object is removed.

The attachment may be provided by attachment means comprising a first attachment member attached to the shelf structure, a second attachment member attached to the panel and a flexible connector connecting the first and second members to permit relative movement between them and said swinging movement of the panel.

The connector may be resiliently flexible so as to bias the panel back to its upright forwardly projecting orientation.

The invention also provides an advertising panel and panel mounting comprising:

- an elongate panel with opposed elongate faces on which to display advertising material, and

- a panel mounting for attaching an end part of the panel to a front part of a shelf structure so as to hold the panel in an upright condition in which its opposed faces extend forwardly from the front of the shelving structure and it hangs downwardly from the attachment.

#### Brief Description of the Drawings

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In order that the invention may be more fully explained some particular embodiments will be described with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 illustrates a shelving structure fitted with advertising panels in accordance with the present invention;

Figure 2 illustrates the form of a panel blank from which panels of the kind illustrated in Figure 1 can be produced;

Figure 3 is a side view of a panel mounting;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of part of the panel mounting; and

Figure 5 is a top view of the panel mounting.

#### Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

Figure 1 illustrates product display shelving comprising a shelving structure 10 including a bank of vertically spaced shelves 11 supported in a supporting framework 12 comprising a series of horizontal bars 13 extending along the front edges of the shelves. These bars can carry the normal pricing and product identification tags relating to the products displayed in the spaces between the shelves. These tags, particularly those mounted along the front of the lower most shelves are not large and their content is not quickly noticed or understood by a shopper walking along the front of the shelves.

In accordance with the present invention a pair of relatively large advertising panels 14 are attached to the shelving structure 10 at the front of the uppermost shelf

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so as to be held upright with their opposed panel faces 15 extending outwardly from the shelving so as to be readily visible to observers looking along the shelving. Each panel 14 is attached to the shelving structure 10 by a mounting 16 which attaches an upper part of the panel to the shelving structure and the panel hangs vertically from the mounting so as to extend vertically across a plurality of the shelves, more specifically across three of the shelves in the illustrated arrangement.

The advertising panels 14 can be large enough to effectively integrate and communicate the marketers brand messages including the brand name, the benefits and attributes of the products, the advertising mnemonics, the brand imageries and/or the packaging of the product. The panels are located in proximity to the displayed products so the shoppers can quickly read the message (typically in two to three seconds) and make a purchase decision (typically in 7 to 10 seconds) without the need to search for the exact location of the products. This advertising medium acts not just as "brand markers" but also helps shoppers identify and locate categories of products and can act as "category markers" also.

Since the advertising panels project forwardly from the shelving, they are readily observed and read from a distance to observers looking along the shelving and can be located to attract shoppers to the product location. Hence, in a typical retail environment with layout of shelves and aisles, shoppers can easily locate the displayed products from the end of the aisle (the main walkways connecting the aisles). This makes for a very effective medium to help the speed of locating products on the shelves.

The advertising panels 14 are of elongate form, being wider at their top than at the bottom so as to maximize

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their exposure area without their lower ends projecting into the space in front of the shelving where they might cause an intolerable obstruction to the passage of shoppers and trolleys. The outer edges of the panels are die cut at 17 to shapes which help reduce the possibility of obstruction and to prevent injuries or damage to shoppers. To further reduce the problem of obstruction the mountings 16 permit the panels 14 to swing away from their upright forwardly projecting orientations if knocked by a person or trolley moving along the front of the shelving and to return to their former positions when the shopper or trolley have passed.

The construction of the mountings 16 is illustrated in Figures 3 to 5. As shown in these figures each mounting comprises an attachment member 22 for attachment to the panel, and attachment member 21 for attachment to the shelving structure and a connector 23 connecting the two attachment members 21 and 22 together in a manner which permits swinging movements of the panel. Connector 23 comprises a helical spring 24 connected to the attachment member 22 and fitting within a tubular socket 25 on the attachment member 21. This form of connector provides a universally flexible connection allowing the panel to swing in a gate-like fashion about a vertical axis through the mounting but also with a flap-like motion about a horizontal axis all by any combination of such swinging movements. The attachment member 22 is a small frame which holds the panel. The panel is attached as a wrapped-around over the small frame. The attachment member 21 can be connected to the shelving structure by a clamp, for example a screw clamp. Alternatively, it can be attached to a shelf of the shelving structure by means of screws driven through holes 26 in the attachment member.

To allow for the display of quite large scale advertising

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material each advertising panel 14 may have a depth in the range 450mm to 750mm and may typically have a depth of the order of 660mm. In order to minimise obstruction the panel width of the bottom of each panel may be in the range 100mm to 150mm and typically of the order 127mm. Each panel may be generally rectangular or may be wider at the top than at the bottom, for example, being generally of inverted L-shape or in a modified inverted L-shape as seen in Figure 1 which can be die cut from a blank as seen in Figure 2. The maximum width of the upper part of the panel may be in the range 150mm to 250mm and typically of the order of 200mm. Variations are possible depending on aisle and shelf space of different retailers.

The illustrated embodiments of the invention have been advanced by way of example only and could be modified. For example, the panel mounting could be attached to the shelving structure in any convenient manner, for example, by adjustable clamps and the attachment to the panels could also be by any convenient means. It is to be understood that many such modifications and variations will fall within the scope of the appended claims.

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## Claims

1. Product display shelving for supporting products for display at a retail outlet, comprising:

a shelving structure including a bank of vertically spaced shelves forming open fronted spaces for products to be displayed; and

one or more advertising panels each attached to the shelving structure at or near the front of one of the shelves so as to be held upright with opposed panel faces extending outwardly from the shelving so as to be readily visible to observers looking along the shelving.

2. Product display shelving as claimed in claim 1, wherein the or each panel is attached to the shelf structure at or near the front of one of the shelves which is disposed above another shelf or other shelves of the bank of shelves and hangs downwardly from that attachment.

3. Product display shelving as claimed in claim 2, wherein the or each panel is attached to the shelf structure at or near the front of the uppermost shelf of the bank of the shelves.

4. Product display shelving as claimed in claim 2 or claim 3, wherein the attachment attaches an upper part of the panel to the shelf structure and the panel extends vertically across a plurality of the shelves.

5. Product display shelving as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the attachment permits swinging movement of the panel away from its upright forwardly projecting orientation if knocked by a person or object moving along the front of the shelving.

6. Product display shelving as claimed in claim 5, wherein the attachment provides a resiliently flexible

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mounting of the panel to return the panel to its upright forwardly projecting orientation when the interference with a person or object is removed.

7. Product display shelving as claimed in claim 5 or claim 6, wherein the attachment permits swinging movement of the panel about a vertical axis through the attachment.

8. Product display shelving as claimed in claim 7, wherein the attachment also permits swinging movement about a horizontal axis through the attachment.

9. Product display shelving as claimed in any one claims 5 to 8, wherein the attachment is provided by attachment means comprising a first attachment member attached to the shelf structure, a second attachment member attached to the panel and a flexible connector connecting the first and second members to permit relative movement between them and said swinging movement of the panel.

10. Product display shelving as claimed in claim 9 wherein the connector is resiliently flexible so as to bias the panel back to its upright forwardly projecting orientation.

11. Product display shelving as claimed in claim 10 wherein the connector comprises a helical spring connected to one of the attachment members and fitting within a socket on the other of the attachment members.

12. Product display shelving as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the or each panel has a depth in the range of 450mm to 750mm.

13. Product display shelving as claimed in claim 12, wherein the width of the or each panel at the bottom of the panel is in the range of 100mm to 150mm.

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14. Product display shelving as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the panel is wider at the top than at the bottom so as to project further from the shelving at the top than at the bottom.

15. Product display shelving as claimed in claim 13 wherein the maximum width of the upper part of the panel is in the range 150mm to 250mm.

16. An advertising panel and panel mounting comprising:  
an elongate panel with opposed elongate faces on which to display advertising material, and  
a panel mounting for attaching an end part of the panel to a front part of a shelf structure so as to hold the panel in an upright condition in which its opposed faces extend forwardly from the front of the shelving structure and it hangs downwardly from the attachment.

17. An advertising panel and panel mounting as claimed in claim 16, wherein the panel mounting is such as to permit swinging movement of the panel away from its upright forwardly projecting orientation if knocked by a person or object moving along the front of the shelving.

18. An advertising panel and panel mounting as claimed in claim 17, wherein the panel mounting comprises a first attachment member for attachment to the shelf structure, a second attachment member for attachment to the panel and a flexible connector connecting the first and second members to permit relative movement between them and said swinging movement of the panel.

19. An advertising panel and panel mounting as claimed in claim 18, wherein the connector is resiliently flexible.

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20. An advertising panel and panel mounting as claimed in claim 19, wherein the connection comprises a helical spring connected to one of the attachment members and fitting within a socket on the other of the attachment members.