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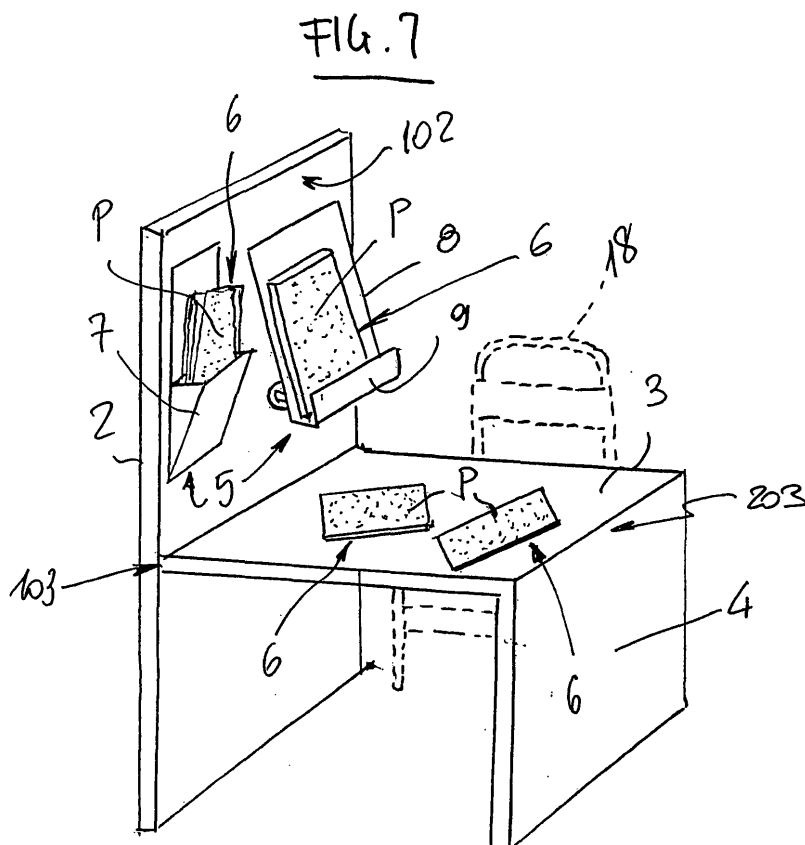
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(54) **Display apparatus**

(57) The display apparatus comprises first wall means (2) equipped with support means (7, 8, 9, 10) for supporting the products (P) to be displayed; substantially horizontal resting surface means (3) for placing and handling

said products (P), said resting surface means (3) and said first wall means (2) being connectable to one another in a removable way and so as to make up a single display, resting and handling station (1) for said products (P).



Description

[0001] The invention refers to a display apparatus, particularly suitable for displaying to the public product samples such as ceramic products and in other materials coordinated with the samples, but also usable in other sectors where the need exists to display to the public products that can be coordinated with one or more complementary elements and build from real various combinations using these products together with their complementary elements.

[0002] In the ceramic industry, inside the manufacturing companies, display areas called showrooms are set up, in which the manufactured ceramic products are displayed directly to the public and industry operators, so that such display makes it possible to directly appreciate all the features of the ceramic products on show, such as, for example, the colours, the matches with other coordinated products, the consistency.

[0003] In the same way, when trade fairs are staged, inside each show hall, showrooms are set up to be able to show visitors the ceramic products and these are identical to those inside the manufacturers' facilities but are necessarily smaller in size.

[0004] Currently, to be able to display a considerable number of ceramic products, archives are set up that comprise a substantially vertical supporting frame onto which is mounted sliding a multiplicity of parallel panels that can be superimposed on each other, so that each panel can slide parallel to the others to be removed from the archive and subsequently be replaced in it.

[0005] On each panel are fixed, normally using adhesive material, the ceramic tiles to be displayed to the public and all the other products coordinated with the tiles, such as, for example, strips, decors, inserts and photographs of possible environments obtained using the ceramic products shown on the panels.

[0006] Another way known for some time of displaying the ceramic products is to use a computer with a special software for creating a virtual environment into which the various tiles and any components coordinated with these can be inserted from time to time: this apparatus is very practical because it enables an observer to directly and very quickly realise the aesthetic effect that can be achieved with each type of tile inserted in the virtual environment created with the computer.

[0007] This state of the art however has a number of drawbacks.

[0008] A first drawback relating to the archives having moving panels is that the ceramic products cannot be combined in enough numbers to represent a surface, albeit of limited dimensions, which, when it is covered with the ceramic products, is large enough to allow an observer to satisfactorily realise the overall aesthetic effect obtained by using a specific type of ceramic product fitted to cover the surface of a floor or of a wall.

[0009] Another drawback is that it is possible to fix only products on the panels that have a substantially flat

shape, so that any overhanging elements do not hinder the reciprocal sliding of the panels.

[0010] Consequently, any complementary coordinated component having a three-dimensional consistency, meaning that when fitted on the panels it protrudes excessively towards the adjacent panel, must be positioned in a place separate from the panels, but which is nevertheless handy, so that it can be easily reached by the sales operators when a panel with attached a type of tile that has been chosen by a potential buyer has to be displayed to the latter.

[0011] This requires the presence of a special resting surface placed near the archives.

[0012] Another drawback is that these panels have to be prepared before being inserted in the archives: this requires the ceramic products to be fixed on panels every time before being put on display and, when the ceramic products exit from the production range, they are removed from the panels.

[0013] All this calls for long and costly work on the part of operators to prepare the panels making up each archive.

[0014] Another drawback is that these panels with the fixed ceramic products are very heavy and their movement, both for fixing in the archives, and for removal, requires a lot of physical effort on the part of appointed operators.

[0015] Furthermore, all the adhesive material used to make the ceramic products adhere to the surfaces of the panels is lost once and for all creating a heavy economic cost due to the periodical updating of the ceramic products to be displayed.

[0016] Display systems that use computers also have a number of drawbacks.

[0017] One of these drawbacks is that the view of the interiors is only virtual and, consequently, it does not allow truly appreciating the mechanical and aesthetic characteristics of the products entered virtually in the computer images.

[0018] Furthermore, another drawback is that these images do not allow satisfactorily reproducing the many colour tones and shades used to colour and decorate the ceramic products.

[0019] Furthermore, another drawback common to both the panel archives and to the images produced on the computer is that they do not allow showing to the public coordinated glazes and paints with which walls, frames and floors can be coloured in combination with a certain type of selected ceramic product.

[0020] A further drawback is that any sales negotiation must be performed using a station complete with a table and a series of chairs and the like, and which must be positioned close to each archive, so that the ceramic products of interest to the buyers and which must be appreciated during the negotiation are constantly available for observation.

[0021] This requires therefore that close to each store a station be positioned comprising a table and a number

of chairs and this, generally speaking, calls for a lot of space in the showrooms.

[0022] In the trade-fair halls which each manufacturer must rent, this requirement produces a considerable increase in rental costs according to the exhibition spaces required inside the trade-fairs which, as is known, have a cost determined above all by the total occupied space.

[0023] The technical aim of the invention is to improve the state of the art.

[0024] One object of the invention is to make a display apparatus that permits creating every type of possible interior directly in the showrooms inside the companies and inside the trade-fair halls and showing the public all the elements that can be coordinated with specific ceramic products, using them all or only part of them to create a real interior and such as to allow direct appreciation and without distortions of the colours and colour shades used to make the ceramic products.

[0025] Another object of the invention is to make a display apparatus that can be adapted to any type of space at disposal.

[0026] Another object of the invention is to make a display apparatus that does not require any special preparation to be able to show the public the ceramic products and all the complementary components coordinated with these.

[0027] Another object of the invention is to make a display apparatus that can be easily and quickly mounted and dismantled.

[0028] According to one aspect of the invention, a display apparatus is provided comprising: first wall means equipped with support means for supporting the products to be displayed; substantially horizontal resting surface means for placing and handling said products, characterized in that said resting surface means and said first wall means can be connected together so as to make up a single display, resting and handling station for said products.

[0029] The display apparatus thus permits displaying products so these are always visible and, at the same time, handy and having at disposal a resting surface suitable for placing the displayed products, taking these from a wall on which they are displayed to be able to handle and place them one alongside the other to create compositions and matches and to be able to conduct business negotiations having at disposal the products to be able to appreciate them for real, together with any coordinated elements or elements that can be coupled with the products.

[0030] Further characteristics and advantages will appear even more evident from the description of an embodiment of a display apparatus illustrated indicatively by way of non limiting example, in the attached drawings wherein:

Figure 1 is a side view of a display apparatus, in a first version;

Figure 2 is a side view of the display apparatus of

Figure 1 in a second version with reduced dimensions;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of a first version of an additional element which can be connected to the display apparatus of Figure 1 or of Figure 2;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of the element of Figure 3 in a second version which has reduced dimensions;

Figure 5 is a perspective view of a further pair of additional elements that comprises a three-dimensional element that reproduces a room and a further wall element that can both be connected together or separately to the display apparatus of Figure 1 or of Figure 2;

Figure 6 is a perspective view of the additional elements of Figure 5 to which another storage element has been further connected which can also be connected separately to the display systems of Figure 1 or of Figure 2;

Figure 7 is a perspective view of the display apparatus of Figure 2, in an operating phase;

Figure 8 is a perspective view of the display apparatus of Figure 7 to which has been connected a three-dimensional element that reproduces a room and to which products to be displayed have been applied;

Figure 9 is a view of the display apparatus of Figure 1 according to a different observation point;

Figure 10 is a view of a possible combination of connection between the display apparatus of Figure 1 and a storage unit of products to be displayed placed on what is considered a rear part of the display apparatus;

Figure 11 is another possible combination of connection between the display apparatus of Figure 1, a further wall panel and a three-dimensional element that reproduces a bathroom area of a house;

Figure 12 is a view of the display apparatus of Figure 2 according to a different observation point;

Figure 13 is a further possible combination of connection between the display apparatus of Figure 2, a further wall panel and a storage element to contain the products to be displayed.

[0031] With particular reference to the Figures 1 and 2, by 1 is indicated a display apparatus that comprises a vertical wall panel 2 to which is connected an end 103 of a horizontal resting surface 3 the opposite end 203 of which has a foot 4 for resting on the ground.

[0032] The connection between the panel 2 and the end 103 of the surface 3 can be either of the irremovable type or of the removable type: in both cases, the usable connection means are known to the technician in the field and for this reason are not described in detail.

[0033] As Figures 1 and 2 show, the height of the panel 2 is such as to extend upwards with respect to the resting surface 3, so as to form a vertical wall that elevates from the latter and which has a face 102 turned towards the

resting surface 3; onto this face 102 support means 5 can be fastened or fixed suitable for supporting the products 6 to be displayed, for example ceramic tiles "P" and all types of elements that can be coordinated with these, such as, for example, soluble colour components "C".

[0034] These support means comprise a large number of types of supports: for example, they can be rigid bags 7, as shown in Figure 7, or flexible bags, or small panels 8 equipped with resting base 9 for the products 6 and which can also be arranged sloping with respect to the face 102, so as to favour the observation of the products 6.

[0035] They can also have box-type elements 9, as shown in the Figures 3 and 4, suitable for containing the products 6 to be displayed without these being fixed onto the face 102, but which can be picked up and placed, if required, on the resting surface 3 to be able to examine them in greater detail, or hooks 10, as shown in the Figures 1 and 2, to which a number of products to be displayed can be hung, such as, for example, blister packs or colour samples.

[0036] The previously indicated types of support 7, 8, 9, 10 are simply non-limitative examples of those that can be used.

[0037] Furthermore, these support means can be fixed in a stable way to the face 102 or can be simply fastened to this in a removable way, for example by means of guides fixed to the face 102 and in which can be engaged hooks fixed to the supports 7, 8, 9, or directly from the hooks 10.

[0038] The display apparatus 1 can be adapted to various display requirements and any display area dimension.

[0039] To the wall panel 2, further wall panels 202 can be connected, as is shown in the Figures 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, placing these side by side so as to make a single wall panel, without interruptions, until the required size is achieved.

[0040] With reference to the Figures 5, 6, 8, besides the further wall panels 202, a three-dimensional element 11 can also be connected to the display apparatus 1 which has a parallelepiped shape and which acts as a model of a room, for example, a room of a house.

[0041] This three-dimensional element defines a floor 12 and perimeter walls 13 the internal faces of which can be covered with the tiles "P" on display on the display apparatus 1, so as to be able to appreciate the real aesthetic effect which can be achieved by combining the two models of tiles "P" that might have different colours and decorations the one from the other.

[0042] The tiles "P" can be attached in a removable way to the walls 13 by means of special hooks that make them easily replaceable, for instance using male hooks fixed to the installation faces and can be engaged to female bases fitted to the walls 13 and to the floor 12.

[0043] The three-dimensional element 11 can also be equipped with furnishing components 17 or photographs "F" fastened to one or more walls 13 which reproduce

the furnishing of a room in a house, so that the tiles "P" mounted on the remaining walls 13 and on the floor 12 can be observed as if they were already finally installed.

[0044] With reference to Figure 6, it can be seen that the display apparatus 1 can also be connected to a further three-dimensional element 14 that comprises a storage unit for ceramic tiles "P" in various colours, models and sizes, which comprises several storage levels 114 one on top of the other: this way a large range of tiles "P" is always available to be displayed to the view of customers.

[0045] With reference to Figures 3 and 4, it can be seen that the further wall panel 202 can be equipped, besides with the supporting box-type elements 9, also with a sloped surface 15 which is completely similar to the small panels 8 indicated before and which, like these, has a bottom resting and containment edge 16: this way, the tiles "P" can be picked up from the box-type elements 9 in which they are kept and be temporarily arranged on the sloped surface 15 to observe their technical characteristics and decorations and to match them with others to also evaluate the aesthetic matching effects.

[0046] The containment edge 16 keeps the tiles "P" stably resting on the sloped surface 15 without these falling on the floor and being damaged.

[0047] The resting surface 3 can be completed with seats or chairs marked 18 with broken line in Figure 7 and with continuous line in Figure 8 to allow a more convenient analysis of the tiles "P" on the part of a sales operator and a potential buyer.

[0048] Furthermore, to the face 102, all the furnishing components can be fastened that can be aesthetically coordinated with the tiles "P" displayed on the display apparatus 1, such as, for example, paints, upholsteries, colour samples, which, this way, are at hand during a negotiation carried out using the resting surface 3.

Claims

1. Display apparatus comprising: first wall means (2) equipped with support means (7, 8, 9, 10) for supporting the products (P) to be displayed; substantially horizontal resting surface means (3) for placing and handling said products (P), **characterized in that** said resting surface means (3) and said first wall means (2) can be connected together so as to make up a single display, resting and handling station (1) for said products (P).
2. Display apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said wall means (2) and said resting surface means (3) can be connected together in a removable/irremovable way.
3. Display apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said wall means (2) are vertical.
4. Display apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said

wall means (2) are sloped with respect to a vertical surface.

5. Display apparatus according to any of the claims from 1 to 4, wherein said support means (7, 8, 9, 10) comprise removable or irremovable support means. 5
6. Display apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said support means comprise at least one container element (7) which can be fastened or fixed with fastening or fixing means to said wall means (2) and suitable for containing the products (P) to be displayed. 10
7. Display apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said removable support means comprise pairs of male elements and female elements which can be engaged or disengaged together, said male elements being applicable onto attachment faces of said products (P) to be displayed and said female elements being correspondingly applicable onto front faces (102) of said wall means (2), and vice versa. 15
20
8. Display apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said support means comprise adhesive substances which can be placed in between front faces (102) of said wall means (2) and opposite attachment faces of said products (P). 25
9. Display apparatus according to any of the claims from 1 to 4, wherein said first wall means (2) can be connected to second extension wall means (202). 30
10. Display apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said second wall means (202) can be equipped with said removable support means (7, 8, 9, 10) of said products (P) and/or of complementary elements (C) of said products (P). 35
11. Display apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said first wall means (2) can be connected to a three-dimensional body (11) suitable for reproducing partially or completely a room with walls (13) and floor (12). 40
12. Display apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said walls (13) and floor (12) can be covered with said products (P). 45
13. Display apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said walls (13) can be covered with photographic elements (F) suitable for reproducing a room of a house. 50
14. Display apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said wall means (2) can be connected in a removable way to a containing archive (14) of said products (P). 55
15. Display apparatus according to any of the claims

from 1 to 14, wherein said products comprise ceramic tiles (P).

16. Display apparatus according to any of the claims from 1 to 15, wherein said products comprise ceramic tiles (P) and decorative elements (C) coordinated/matching with said ceramic tiles.
17. Display apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said decorative elements comprise paints, fabrics, upholsteries, pieces of furniture and furnishing elements.

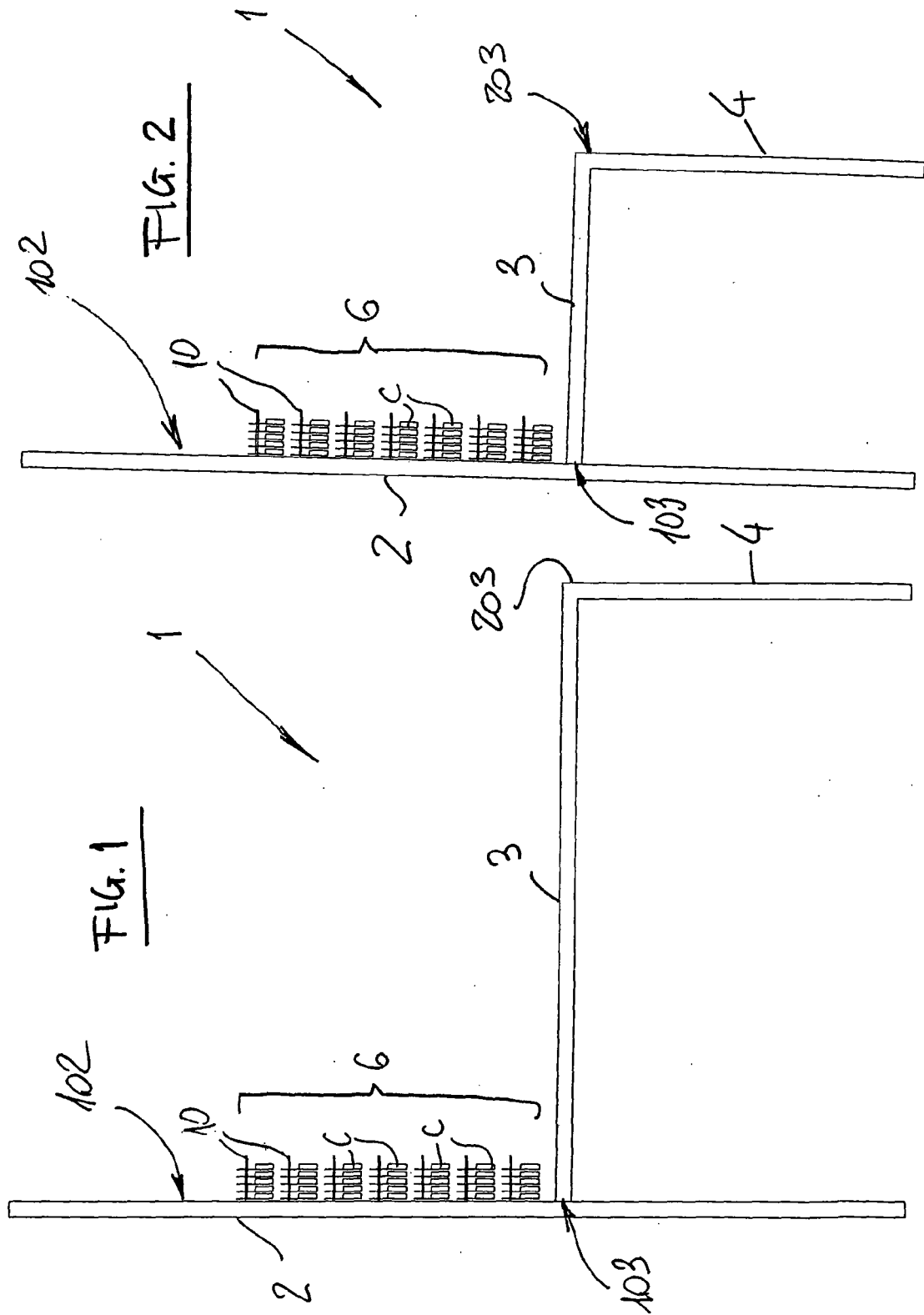


FIG. 3

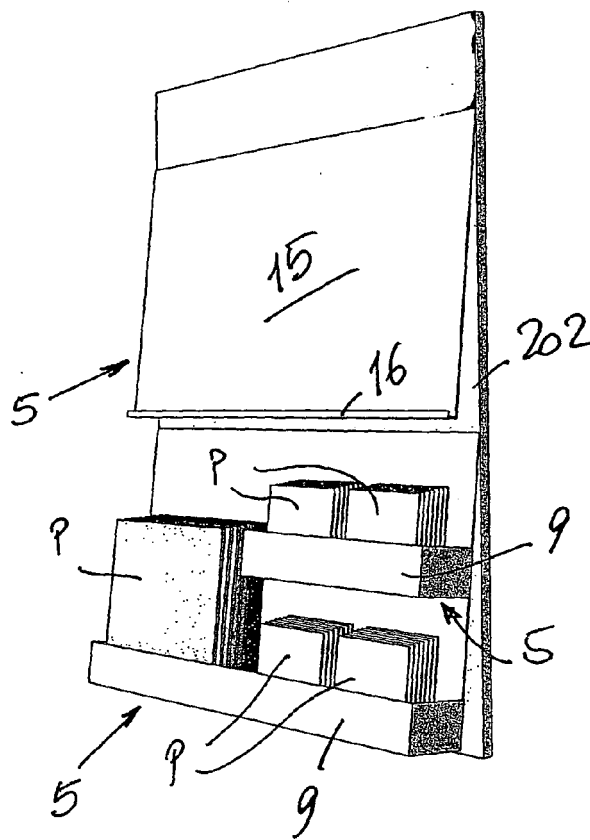
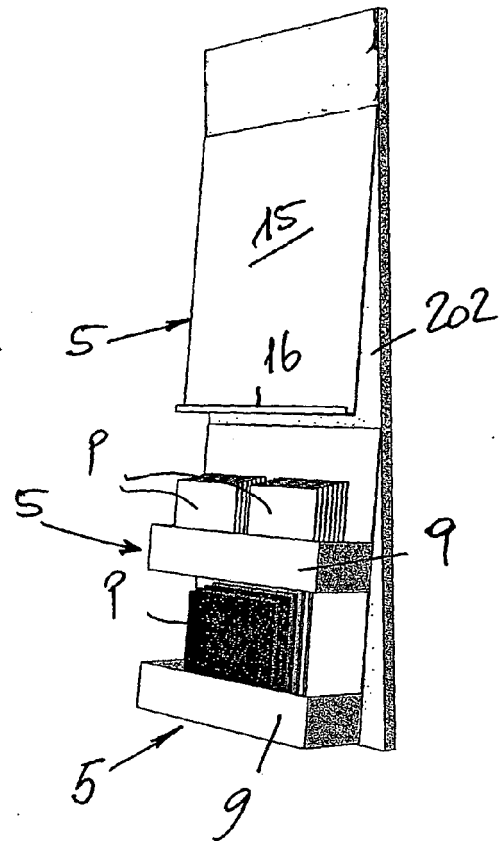
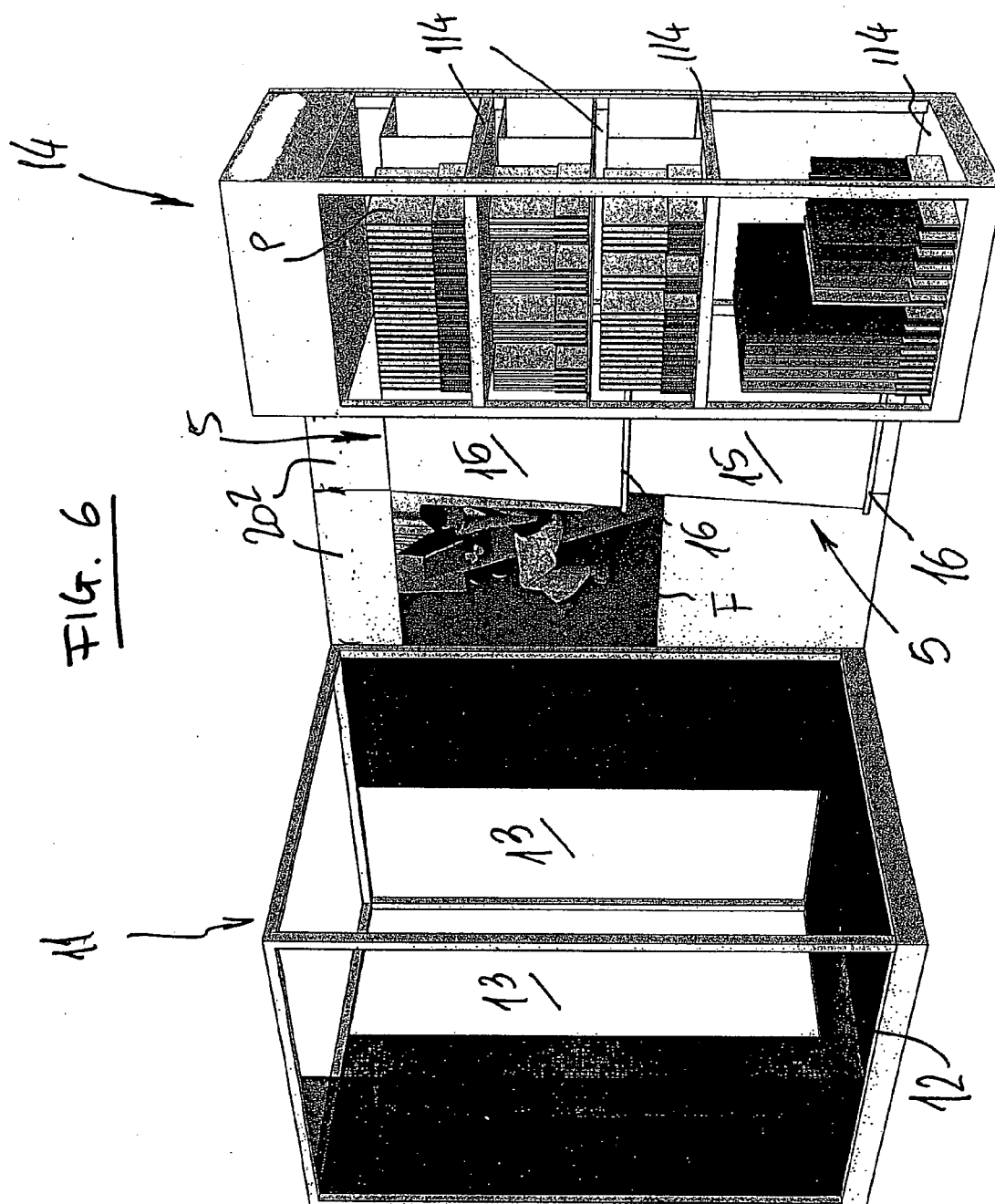
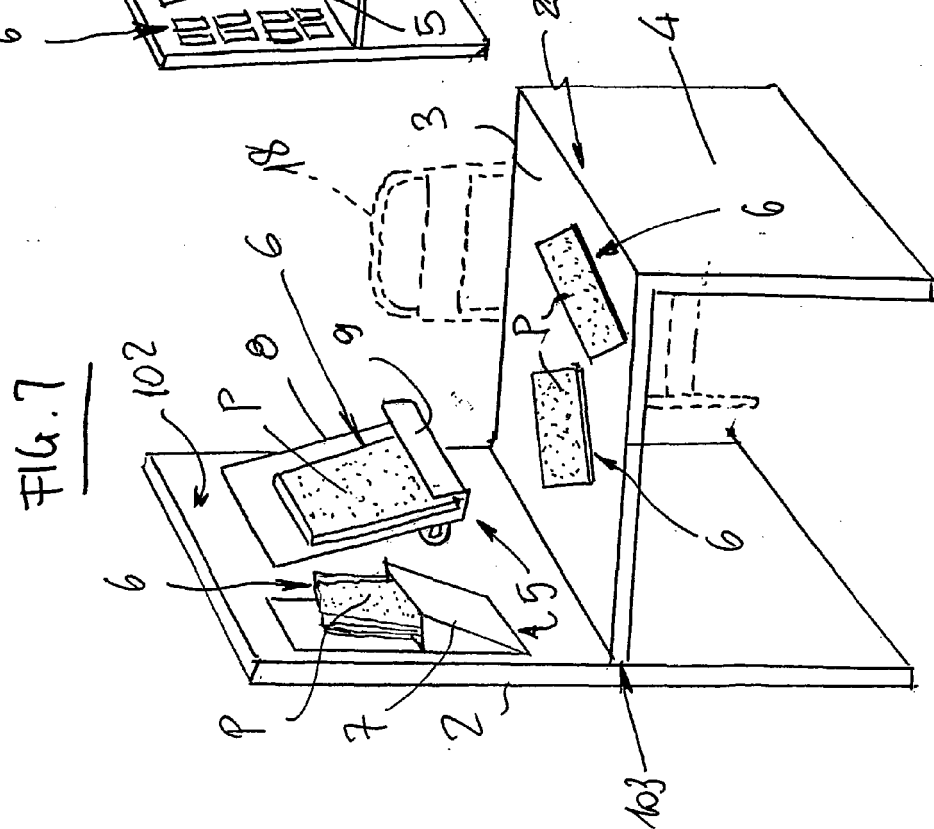
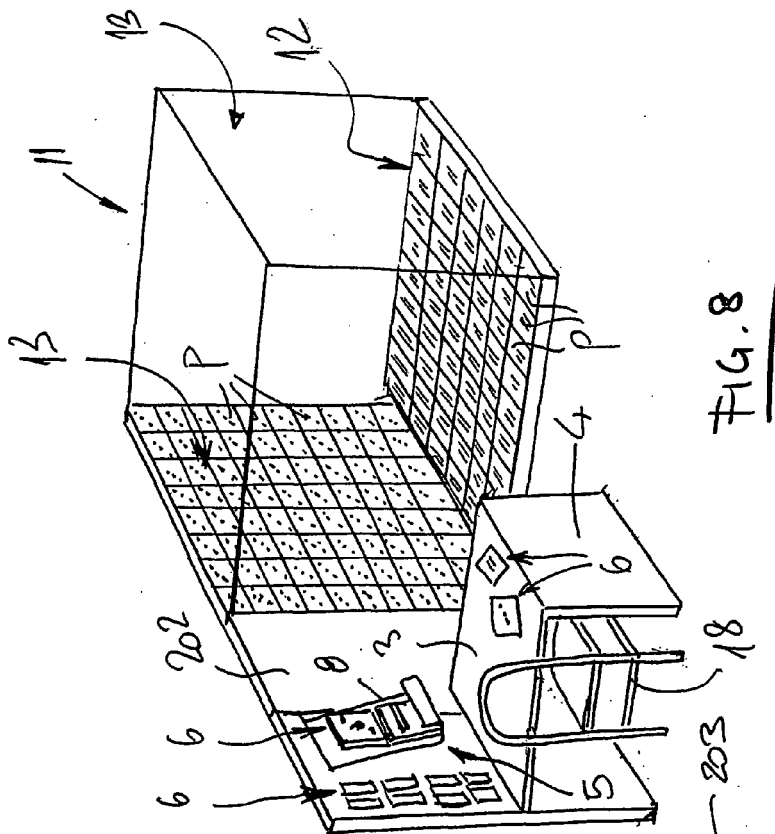
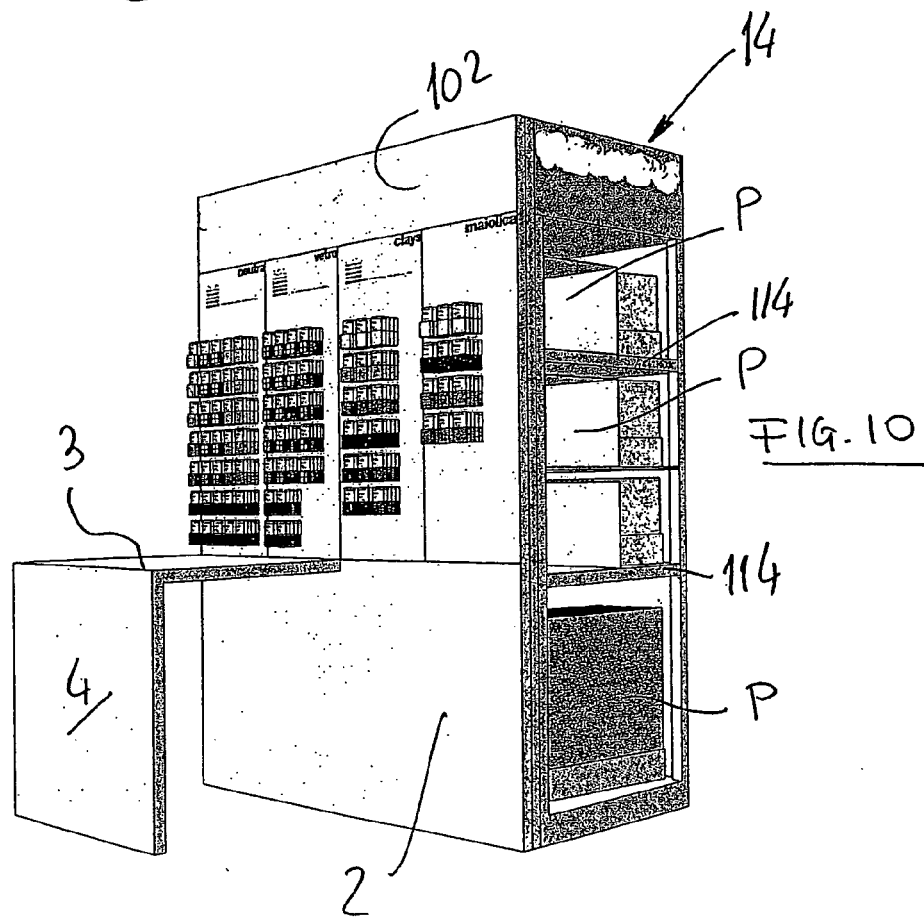
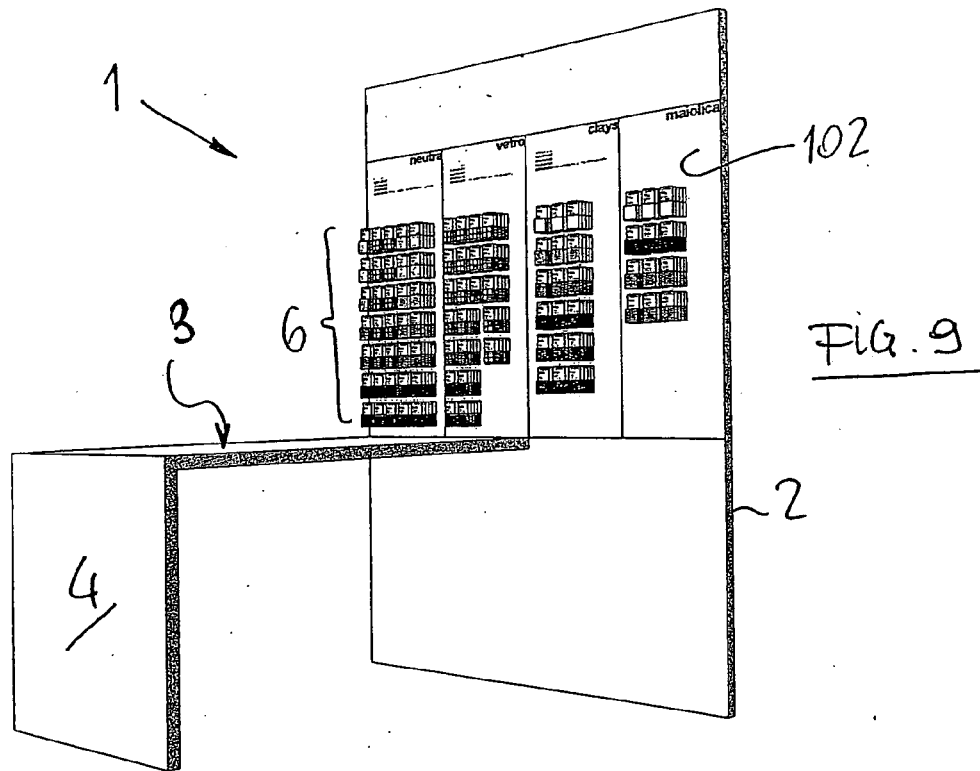


FIG. 4









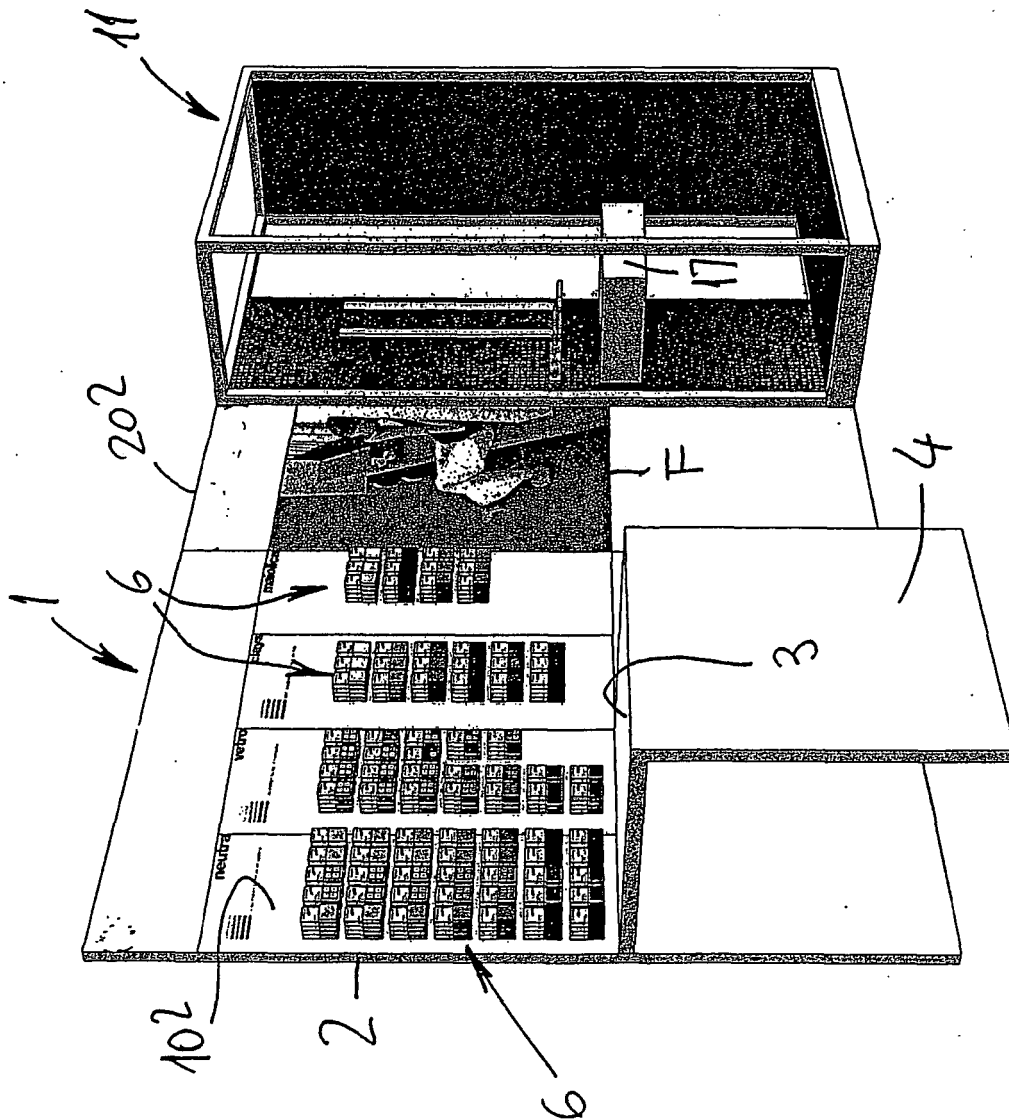


FIG. 11

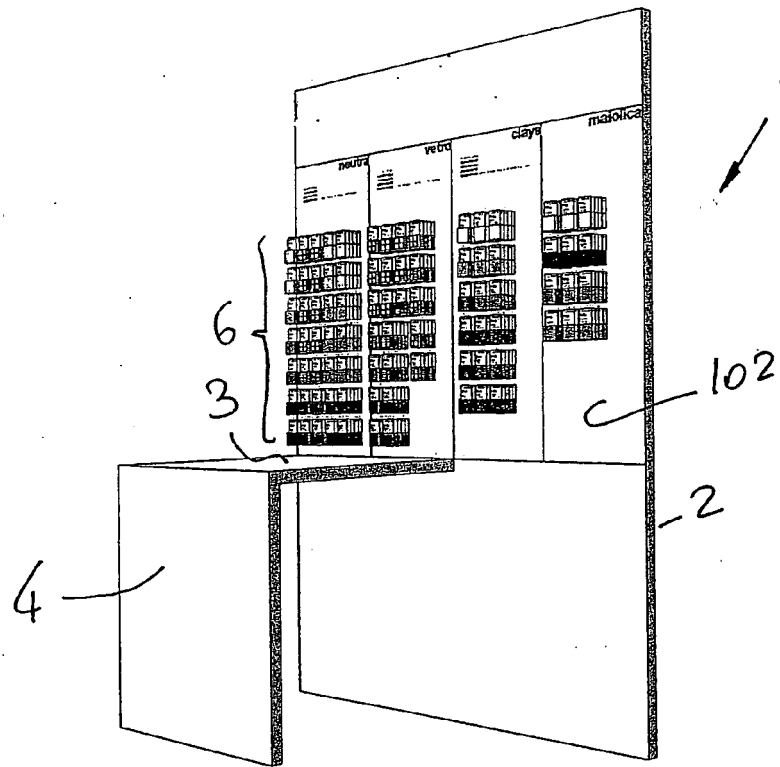


FIG. 12

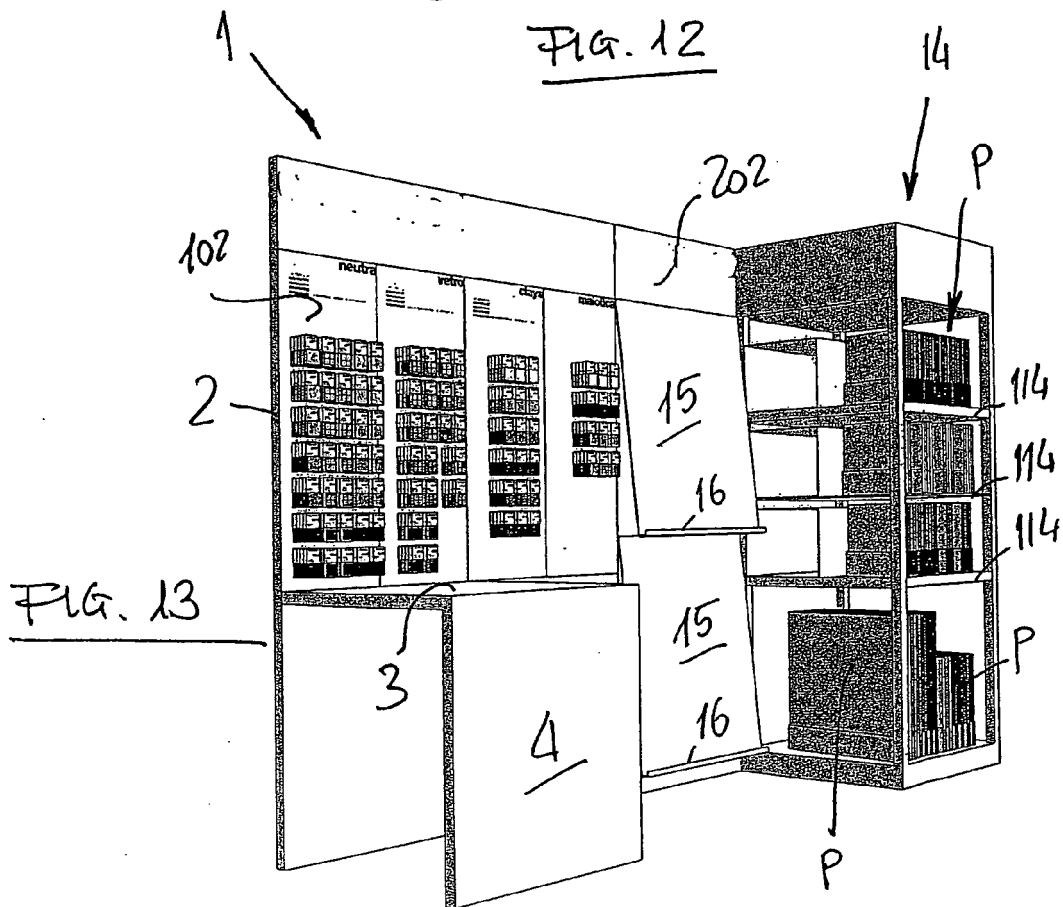


FIG. 13