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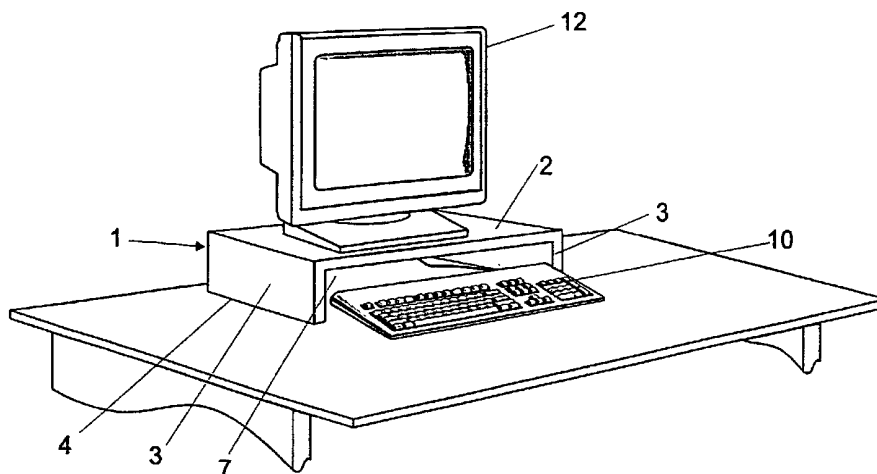
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(54) Title: **COMPUTER MONITOR STAND; COMPUTER CASING; AND COMPUTER EMBODYING SAME**



(57) Abstract: A computer monitor stand is provided which has an elevated and generally horizontal support platform for supporting a computer monitor. The platform is supported in its elevated position relative to a desktop in free-standing manner at two opposite lateral sides by means of free-standing desktop engaging supports conveniently in the form of side walls. The spacing between supports is greater than the length of a standard keyboard for a computer and the stand has in its operatively front face an access opening communicating with a keyboard accommodating space formed below the platform at substantially desktop level. The keyboard accommodating space is dimensioned to receive therein, for intermittent temporary storage purposes, at least a standard keyboard for a computer. The monitor stand can optionally have a power distributing series of power outlet sockets and/or a UPS, and may also be formed as a computer casing housing a set of computer components.

COMPUTER MONITOR STAND; COMPUTER CASING; AND COMPUTER EMBODYING SAME

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FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to a computer monitor stand; a computer casing; and a computer embodying same and, more particularly, to such items which are adapted to enhance available work space on a desk top or other work area as well as to provide optional additional auxiliary functions.

BACKGROUND TO THE INVENTION

Computer monitors are frequently found to be uncomfortably or even ergonomically too low for a user if placed directly on a desk top. As a result, all sorts of different expedients are regularly used to raise the level of the monitor to a comfortable height above the supporting desk top. Various inappropriate items are commonly used for this purpose including inverted filing trays, bricks, telephone and other thick books and vertical style computer units laid on their side each being interposed between the relevant desk top and the base of the computer monitor. This gives rise not only to a relatively untidy situation but also to one which can tend to be dangerous if the item interposed between the base of the monitor and desk top is not adequately stable having regard to the relatively considerable weight of a computer monitor which, in the case of a twenty one inch monitor can be as much as thirty-five kilograms.

Apart from this difficulty, the keyboards of computers often prove to be in the way when operations other than computer based ones are being carried out by a person using a particular work station. In consequence, keyboards are often placed on top of the computer; on top of the monitor; or, are often

poised precariously on some other item on a desk top whilst such other operations are being carried out at the work station in a space usually occupied by the keyboard.

- 5 In the case of special custom made computer furniture, usually made to accommodate the various units of a computer in a confined space, the keyboard is sometimes supported on a base in the form of a drawer which slides in and out of a built-in storage volume on drawer sliders. These items of computer furniture are invariably small, are costly, and utilise the drawer
10 facility as an absolute necessity. The arrangement is unsatisfactory in that the support offered by drawer sliders is often, if not always, insufficiently stable and if the keyboard is used whilst on the base, it usually rattles around to a disturbing extent. As a result the tendency is to take the keyboard off the base and place it on the desk with the base being pushed back into its
15 storage volume.

It is to be noted that these items of computer furniture are generally totally inappropriate to an office environment and the typical office thus continues to exist with the disadvantages outlined above.

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It is to be understood that in this specification the term "computer" is intended to mean any electronic device operated with the aid of a keyboard and having a free-standing monitor for displaying work being processed or viewed.

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OBJECT OF THE INVENTION

- It is an object of this invention to provide a computer monitor stand; a computer casing; and computers embodying same which will enable the
30 aforementioned disadvantages to be overcome in a normal office environment, and with conventional office furniture, such as flat topped desks, at least to some extent.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with one aspect of this invention there is provided a computer monitor stand comprising an operatively elevated and generally horizontal support platform for supporting a computer monitor, the platform being supported in its elevated position relative to a supporting desktop in free-standing manner at two opposite lateral sides by means of free-standing desktop engaging supports, the computer monitor stand being characterised in that the spacing between the desktop engaging supports is greater than the length of a standard keyboard for a computer, and in that the stand has in its operatively front face, an access opening to a space formed below the platform at substantially desktop level and between the supports, the space being dimensioned to receive therein, for intermittent temporary storage purposes, at least a standard keyboard for a computer.

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Further features of the invention provide for the space to have a width somewhat greater than the length of a standard keyboard and a depth at least equal to the depth of a keyboard; for each desktop engaging support to assume the form of a downwardly extending side wall operatively supported on a desk surface optionally through the medium of desk engaging feet; for a rear wall to form, together with the side walls, three sides to the space beneath the platform with the access opening defining a fourth side; and for at least a part of a lowermost edge of the rear wall to be spaced from the desktop by a distance sufficient to enable communications cables, in particular those connected to a keyboard or mouse, to pass under the rear wall.

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Still further features of the invention provide for the monitor stand to have an electrical power distribution facility having a plurality of power outlet sockets electrically connected to a single power inlet cable; for the power outlet sockets to be located at the rear of the monitor stand and/or the rear portions of the side walls of the monitor stand; for the monitor stand to support

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internally, at the rear of said space, an uninterruptable power supply (UPS) connected to at least selected and designated power outlet sockets provided on the monitor stand body.

- 5 In accordance with another aspect of the invention the platform, rear wall and side walls form outer boundaries of a casing for a computer, some components of which are located behind said space, and some of which may optionally be located above said space.
- 10 Further features of this aspect of the invention provide for the computer casing to be formed basically as two intercommunicating compartments, a first of which is located at the rear of the keyboard accommodating space, and a second of which is located between the keyboard accommodating space and the platform to extend forwards to the front of the monitor stand;
- 15 for the components to include a motherboard carried on the under side of the platform in which instance the side walls and/or rear wall are configured to provide access to input and output sockets and plugs provided on the motherboard and printed circuit boards which may be plugged into connecting slots therefor on the motherboard; for the casing to have a
- 20 removable cover forming the top of the keyboard accommodating space (and the bottom of the second compartment), the bottom of the first compartment of the casing and also optionally the rear of the keyboard accommodating space; and for installation sites for front fed disk drives to be provided at the front of the second compartment (between the platform and cover which
- 25 forms the top of the keyboard accommodating space) with front access apertures for receiving at least selected disk drives accessible from a front wall of the casing above the access opening to the keyboard accommodating space.
- 30 In all cases the platform may be adjustable in height such as by providing extensible height end walls; height adjustable feet; or any other height adjustable desk top engaging support means.

The invention also provides, as an article of commerce, the combination of a computer monitor stand and a keyboard having compatible, and preferably matching, aesthetic features, and wherein the stand has a keyboard accommodating space as defined above.

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In order that the above and other features of the invention may be more fully understood various different embodiments thereof will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

10 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the drawings, all of which are schematic in nature:-

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a monitor stand according to the invention in its simplest form together with an associated computer monitor and keyboard;

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Figures 2a and 2b illustrate, in plan view, a desk top with a computer monitor stand and computer monitor thereon and with the keyboard in the operative and stored conditions respectively;

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Figure 3 is a sectional side view of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in Figure 1;

Figure 4 is a front elevation of one variation of monitor stand according to the invention;

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Figure 5 is a rear view of the variation of the invention illustrated in Figure 4;

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Figure 6 is a sectional side view of the embodiment of the invention illustrated in Figures 4 and 5;

Figure 7 is a sectional side elevation of a further embodiment of the invention;

Figure 8 is a front view of an embodiment of the invention in which the stand is formed as a casing for a computer;

Figure 9 is a rear view of the embodiment illustrated in Figure 8;

Figure 10 is a plan view of the embodiment illustrated in Figures 8 and 9 showing in ghosted lines one possible configuration of typical components inside the casing;

Figure 11 is a sectional side view taken along line XI to XI in Figure 10;

Figure 12 is a sectional side view taken along line XII to XII in Figure 10;

Figure 13 is a sectional side view taken along line XIII to XIII in Figure 10; and,

Figure 14 is a plan view of an embodiment substantially the same as that illustrated in Figures 8 and 9 but showing in ghosted lines a slightly different possible configuration of typical components inside the casing which may be preferred if provision is made for a slightly different selection of disk drives.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION WITH REFERENCE TO THE DRAWINGS

In its simplest form, the computer monitor stand according to the invention and generally indicated by numeral (1) assumes the form of a raised platform (2) supported by two lateral side walls (3) located at the lateral extremities of the platform. The lower edges (4) of the end walls are supported on a desk

top (5) in use, preferably through suitable feet (6) (see Figure 3) for protecting the desk surface.

In its simplest form the front (7) of the monitor stand is simply open, as it may
5 be at the rear. However, a rear wall (8) may be provided even in this simple form of the invention for aesthetic reasons. In order that communications cables (9) connecting a keyboard (10) and a mouse (not shown) with a computer (not shown) in a neat manner they preferably pass underneath the platform and out at the back. Whilst many different apertures, with or without
10 closures, can be used, the simplest expedient is to make the lower edge of the rear wall stop short of the desk top by a distance chosen such that it does not apply any pressure to the cables as indicated by numeral (11) in Figure 3.

15 The width of the monitor stand is chosen such that it can receive the full width of a standard or other selected keyboard (10) in the free space between the end walls (3) and a minimum width of free space of approximately 480mm (about 19 inches) is considered to be suitable. On the other hand, if the new format ergonomic keyboards are to be
20 accommodated, then the free space must be chosen accordingly, about 530mm (about 21 inches) being currently required. The maximum free space would generally be about 650mm (about 25½ inches).

The height of the platform above the desk top will be chosen according to
25 requirements but will, in any event, be made ample to receive the height of the relevant keyboard. A minimum height of about 80mm (about 3 inches) and a general height of about 100mm (about 4 inches) is envisaged, although this height could even be made adjustable, as indicated above. A somewhat greater height of about 140 to 150mm (about 5½ to 6 inches) may
30 be required in the case of the embodiments of the invention accommodating the components of a computer if components of currently standard size are to be used .

The depth of the monitor stand is made according to requirements and it is considered that a depth of approximately 300mm will be appropriate for use on rather narrow desk tops, and 350mm to 400mm, conveniently about 380mm, in the case of desk tops of somewhat greater depth. Once again, in the case of embodiments of the invention accommodating the components of a computer, a depth of about 400mm to 450mm (about 16 to 18 inches) may well be required if components of currently standard size are to be used.

As illustrated in Figure 2a, when a computer whose monitor (12) is supported on the stand is in use, the keyboard (10) will be supported on the desk top (5) in an operative position.

However, when the desk top (5) is required for other purposes the keyboard can simply be slid rearwards into the space provided beneath the platform (2) of the monitor stand to provide a condition illustrated in Figure 2b where a very much enhanced desk space (13) is made available for other operations to be conducted at the relevant work station.

As indicated above, numerous variations can be made to the embodiment of the invention described above. One such variation is illustrated in Figures 4, 5 and 6 where a rear wall (14) is provided in which a plurality of conventional power outlet sockets (15) are provided. The sockets are connected to a single power supply cable (16) fitted with a plug (17) for installation in a power outlet socket.

The power outlet sockets (15) in the rear wall (14) of the monitor stand could be switched individually and the switches (18) could conveniently be positioned at the front edge of the monitor stand, for example the upper edge (19) although they may equally well be located next to the appropriate socket at the rear wall in conventional manner. The cross-sectional configuration of this embodiment of the invention is illustrated in Figure 6.

As shown clearly in Figure 6 the sockets (15) may be recessed relative to the rear edge of the platform, as indicated by numeral (20). This enables any plugs (21) engaged therein to be obscured from view by at least the end walls and platform. A hinged flap (22) could also be provided at the rear to
5 obscure the rear of the plugs and sockets.

Referring now to Figure 7, the external appearance of a further embodiment may be the same as that of Figures 4, 5 and 6 but beneath the platform (23) is attached a UPS unit (24) having power outlets in the rear wall as may be
10 required. Depending on the capacity of the UPS unit it may be connected to one or two power outlet sockets in the rear wall which will be clearly identified or otherwise characterised, such as by the well known method of pin configuration, whereas the remainder of the power outlet sockets if indeed
15 any are provided in this case, could be connected directly to the inlet power supply.

In either of the embodiments illustrated in Figures 4, 5 and 6 or Figure 7 there is ample space for receiving the keyboard as only about 170mm to 200mm is required for accommodating the depth of a keyboard. Thus, for
20 example, three standard UPS 12 volt batteries measuring 150x94x65mm (about $6 \times 3\frac{3}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ inches) could be accommodated in a housing in the rear portion together with the necessary electronic circuitry, at least in cases where the depth of the platform is of the order of 380 to 400mm (about 15 to
25 16 inches).

As an alternative to utilising additional space under the support surface for accommodating a UPS the body of the monitor stand could be made into a casing for a computer. Embodiments of this variation of the invention are
30 illustrated in Figures 8 to 14.

In the embodiment of the invention illustrated in Figures 8 to 13, the monitor stand (25) is hollow both in a rear zone forming a first compartment (26) and

in an intercommunicating zone forming a second compartment (27) above the space (28) for accommodating the keyboard.

The internal height of the hollow body in the second compartment (27) is configured to accommodate a standard height of larger format disk drive such as a CD ROM drive indicated by numeral (29); as well as smaller format drives such as a 3¼ inch floppy disk drive or optical drive as indicated by numeral (30). This being so, such drives can be rendered accessible from the front of the monitor stand. Thus, in the schematic embodiment illustrated the front edge (31) has apertures (32) for accommodating the access end of the 3¼ inch floppy disk drive (30) and the CD ROM drive (29).

In the proposed arrangement illustrated, the computer's motherboard (33) and plug-in cards (34) are accommodated in the first compartment (26) of the hollow body so that the usual communications plugs and sockets generically indicated by numeral (35) (see Figure 9) can be positioned at the rear face (36) of the body. However in this case, those sockets for connection to a keyboard and mouse could be located in the rear wall of the keyboard accommodating space as indicated by numeral (35a) in Figure 8.

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In an effort to accommodate the motherboard in the most space effective manner it is considered to be advantageous to secure it to the under side of the platform (37) in an upside down orientation. The motherboard can then project to some extent in to the second compartment (27), as illustrated whilst its processor, if of the upstanding type, can project downwards in the first compartment.

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In this embodiment of the invention if components of currently standard size are to be used the overall height of the platform (37) will be determined by the sizes of the various components and it is envisaged that a height of about 130mm (about 5 inches) should be adequate. As an alternative, but a more expensive one, small sized components of the general nature utilised

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in laptop computers or so-called notebooks, could be employed, in which case the overall height could be decreased appreciably.

5 In the case of a monitor stand of 600mm (about 24 inches) in width, a power supply (38) may be located at the side opposite the motherboard and two hard disk drives (39) will be accommodated between these two components.

10 In the event that a second large format disk drive (40) is to be accommodated this could be arranged sideways with access from the side (as indicated by numeral (41)), as shown in Figures 10 and 11, in order to save space and avoid increasing the depth of the monitor stand solely for this purpose. If, on the other hand a second small format disk drive is required, such as an optical drive (42), then access could be from the front as shown in Figure 14.

15 Of course the usual on/off switch (43) and reset button (44) would also be positioned in the front face (see Figure 8).

20 The usual removable cover will be provided for access to the computer components and, where the motherboard is attached to the underside of the platform the cover (45) can conveniently be a single cover defining the lower wall of both the first and second compartments as well as the rear wall of the keyboard receiving space (28) as indicated in Figure 13.

25 Numerous variations may be made to the embodiments of the invention of the invention described above without departing from the scope of the invention. In particular, the front opening may be provided with a closure in the form of a door or flap conveniently movable between a storage position beneath the front portion of the platform and a position in which it hangs
30 down over the opening.

Also, the rear portions of one or both side walls may have power outlet sockets therein instead of, or as well as, in the rear wall, where such sockets are indeed provided. Such sockets could also be recessed so that the tops of plugs accommodated therein are at least flush with the remainder of the surface of the side wall.

Furthermore, the sockets could be provided in a movable unit either hinging outwards or releasably clipping into its position in which it serves as a rear wall.

It will be understood that the invention therefore provides an extremely simple yet highly effective expedient for elevating a computer monitor, computer casing and computers embodying same and an effective expedient for enhancing available work space on a desk top when operations not involving use of the computer are being carried out at a work station and still further, for enabling smaller but efficient workstations to be designed.

CLAIMS:

1. A computer monitor stand comprising an operatively elevated and generally horizontal support platform for supporting a computer monitor, the platform being supported in its elevated position relative to a supporting desktop in free-standing manner at two opposite lateral ends by means of free-standing desktop engaging supports, the computer monitor stand being characterised in that the spacing between the desktop engaging supports is greater than the length of a standard keyboard for a computer, and in that the stand has in its operatively front face, an access opening to a keyboard accommodating space formed below the platform at substantially desktop level and between the supports, the keyboard accommodating space being dimensioned to receive therein, for intermittent temporary storage purposes, at least a standard keyboard for a computer.
2. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 1 in which the keyboard accommodating space has a width somewhat greater than the length of a standard keyboard and a depth at least equal to the depth of a keyboard.
3. A computer monitor stand as claimed in either of claims 1 or 2 in which each desktop engaging support has the form of a downwardly extending side wall operatively supported on a desk surface optionally through the medium of desk engaging feet.
4. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 3 in which a rear wall forms, together with the side walls, three sides to the keyboard accommodating space beneath the platform with the access opening forming a fourth side to the space.

5. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 4 in which of a lowermost edge of the rear wall is spaced from the desktop by a distance sufficient to enable communications cables to pass under the rear wall.
- 5 6. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the monitor stand has an electrical power distribution facility having a plurality of power outlet sockets electrically connected to a single power inlet cable.
- 10 7. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 6 in which for the power outlet sockets are located at the rear of the monitor stand and/or the rear portions of the side walls of the monitor stand.
- 15 8. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the monitor stand supports internally, at the rear of said space, an uninterruptable power supply (UPS) connected to at least one designated power outlet socket provided on the monitor stand body.
- 20 9. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the platform, a rear wall and side walls form outer boundaries of a casing for a computer, at least some components of which are located behind said keyboard accommodating space, and some of which may optionally be located above said space.
- 25 10. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 9 in which the computer casing is formed basically as two intercommunicating compartments, a first of which is located at the rear of the keyboard accommodating space, and a second of which is located between the keyboard accommodating space and the platform to extend forwards to the front
30 of the monitor stand.

11. A computer monitor stand as claimed in either one of claims 9 or 10 in which the components include a motherboard carried on the under side of the platform in which instance the side walls and/or rear wall are configured to provide access to input and output sockets and plugs provided on the motherboard and any printed circuit boards which may be plugged into connecting slots therefor on the motherboard.
12. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of claims 9 to 11 in which the casing has a removable cover forming the top of the keyboard accommodating space (and the bottom of the first compartment), the bottom of the first compartment of the casing and also optionally the rear of the keyboard accommodating space.
13. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of claims 9 to 12 in which installation sites for front fed disk drives are provided at the front of the second compartment with front access apertures for receiving at least selected disk drives accessible from a front wall of the casing above the access opening to the keyboard accommodating space.
14. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the platform is adjustable in height.
15. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the spacing between the desktop engaging supports is at least 480mm and the overall dimensions of the stand are from 480mm to 650mm in width; from 300 to 450mm in depth; and, from 80 to 150mm in height.
16. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 15 in which the overall dimensions of the stand are about 600mm in width; from 300 to 400mm in depth; and, from about 100 to 140mm in height.

17. An article of commerce comprising the combination of a computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims and a keyboard having compatible aesthetic features.

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AMENDED CLAIMS

[received by the International Bureau on 02 November 2000 (02.11.00);
original claims 1 amended; remaining claims unchanged (4 pages)]

CLAIMS (after amendment under Article 19):

1. A computer monitor stand comprising an operatively elevated and generally horizontal support platform for supporting a computer monitor,
5 the platform being supported in its elevated position relative to a supporting desktop in free-standing manner at two opposite lateral ends by means of free-standing desktop engaging supports having a spacing greater than the length of a standard keyboard for a computer to provide an access opening to a keyboard accommodating space
10 formed below the platform at substantially desktop level between the supports, the keyboard accommodating space being dimensioned to receive therein, for intermittent temporary storage purposes, at least a standard keyboard for a computer, the monitor stand being characterised in that it forms a casing for housing at least one of a
15 computer and an uninterruptable power supply (UPS) for a computer, the components of which are located in, or are locatable in, at least one of a compartment located above said keyboard accommodating space and a compartment formed behind said keyboard accommodating space .
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2. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 1 in which the keyboard accommodating space has a width somewhat greater than the length of a standard keyboard and a depth at least equal to the depth of a keyboard.
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3. A computer monitor stand as claimed in either of claims 1 or 2 in which each desktop engaging support has the form of a downwardly extending side wall operatively supported on a desk surface optionally through the medium of desk engaging feet.
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4. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 3 in which a rear wall forms, together with the side walls, three sides to the keyboard

accommodating space beneath the platform with the access opening forming a fourth side to the space.

- 5 5. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 4 in which the lowermost edge of the rear wall is spaced from the desktop by a distance sufficient to enable communications cables to pass under the rear wall.
- 10 6. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the monitor stand has an electrical power distribution facility having a plurality of power outlet sockets electrically connected to a single power inlet cable.
- 15 7. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 6 in which for the power outlet sockets are located at the rear of the monitor stand and/or the rear portions of the side walls of the monitor stand.
- 20 8. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the monitor stand supports internally, at the rear of said space, an uninterruptable power supply (UPS) connected to at least one designated power outlet socket provided on the monitor stand body.
- 25 9. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the platform, a rear wall and side walls form outer boundaries of the casing for a computer, at least some components of which are located behind said keyboard accommodating space, and some of which may optionally be located above said space.
- 30 10. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 9 in which the computer casing is formed basically as two intercommunicating compartments, a first of which is located at the rear of the keyboard accommodating space, and a second of which is located between the keyboard

accommodating space and the platform to extend forwards to the front of the monitor stand.

- 5 11. A computer monitor stand as claimed in either one of claims 9 or 10 in which the components include a motherboard carried on the under side of the platform in which instance the side walls and/or rear wall are configured to provide access to input and output sockets and plugs provided on the motherboard and any printed circuit boards which may be plugged into connecting slots therefor on the motherboard.
- 10 12. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of claims 9 to 11 in which the casing has a removable cover forming the top of the keyboard accommodating space (and the bottom of the first compartment), the bottom of the first compartment of the casing and
- 15 also optionally the rear of the keyboard accommodating space.
13. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of claims 9 to 12 in which installation sites for front fed disk drives are provided at the front of the second compartment with front access apertures for receiving at
- 20 least selected disk drives accessible from a front wall of the casing above the access opening to the keyboard accommodating space.
14. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the platform is adjustable in height.
- 25 15. A computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims in which the spacing between the desktop engaging supports is at least 480mm and the overall dimensions of the stand are from 480mm to 650mm in width; from 300 to 450mm in depth; and, from 80
- 30 to 150mm in height.

16. A computer monitor stand as claimed in claim 15 in which the overall dimensions of the stand are about 600mm in width; from 300 to 400mm in depth; and, from about 100 to 140mm in height.
- 5 17. An article of commerce comprising the combination of a computer monitor stand as claimed in any one of the preceding claims and a keyboard having compatible aesthetic features.

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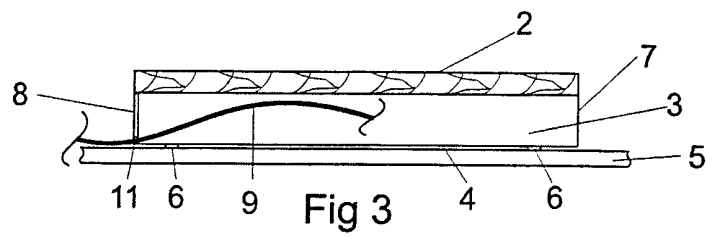
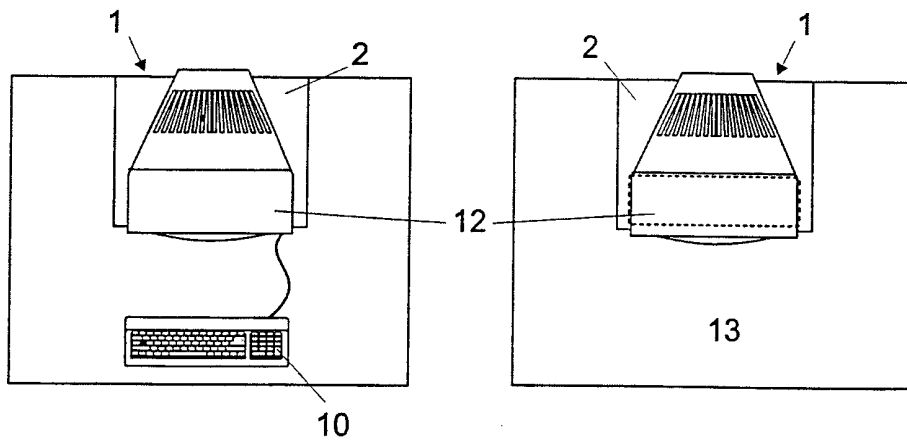
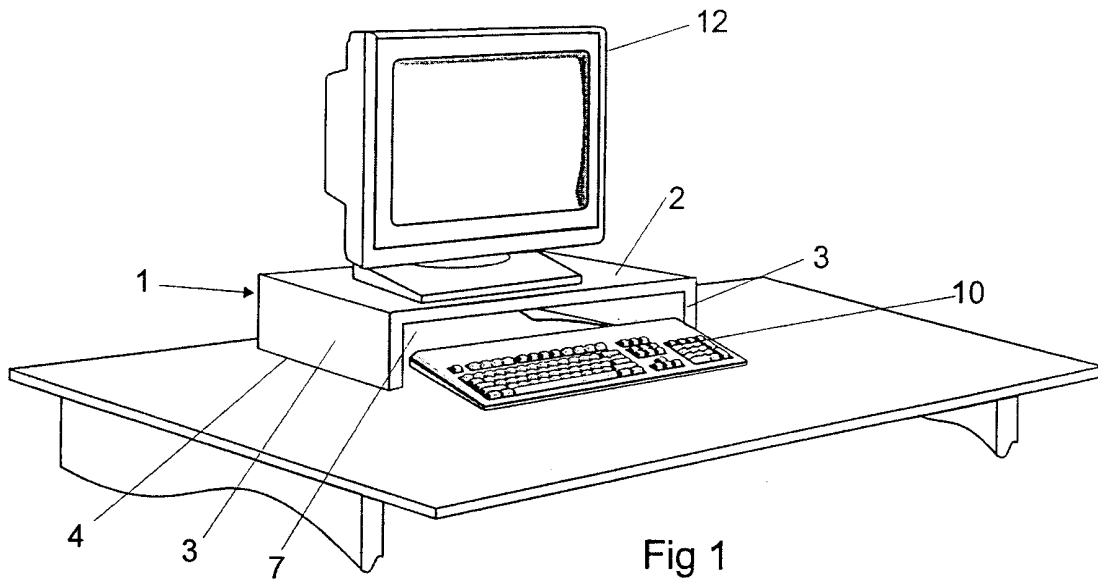
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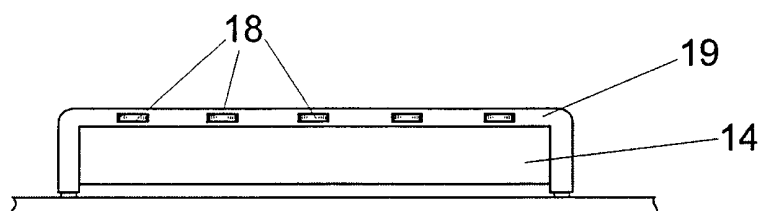


Fig 4

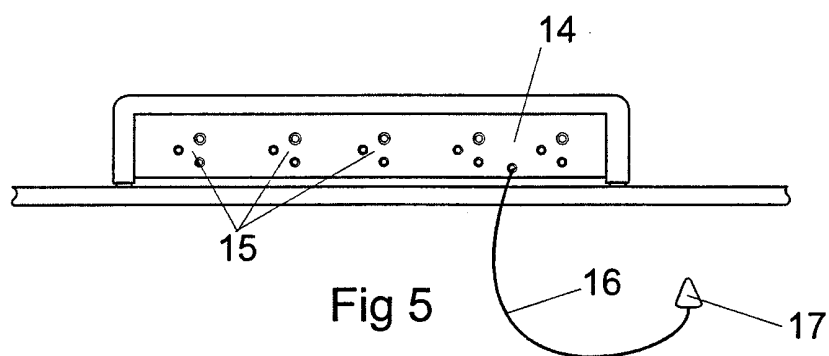


Fig 5

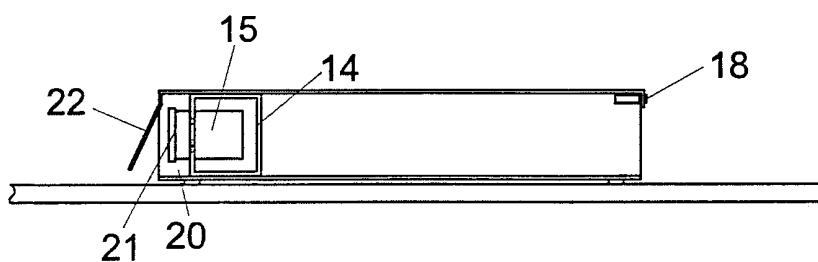


Fig 6

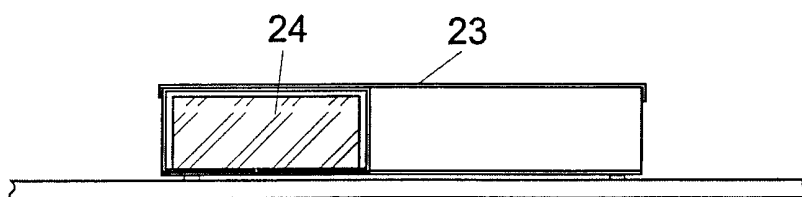
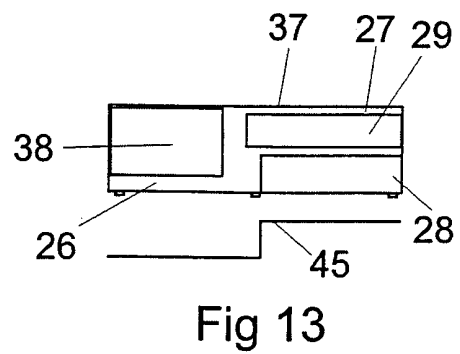
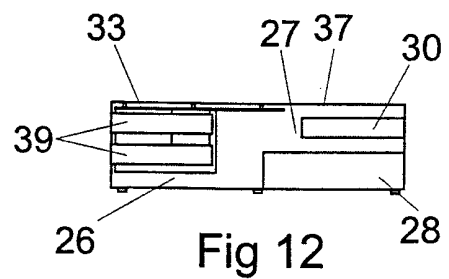
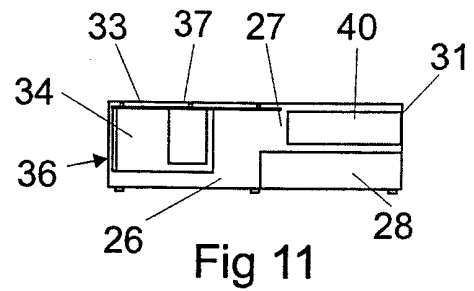
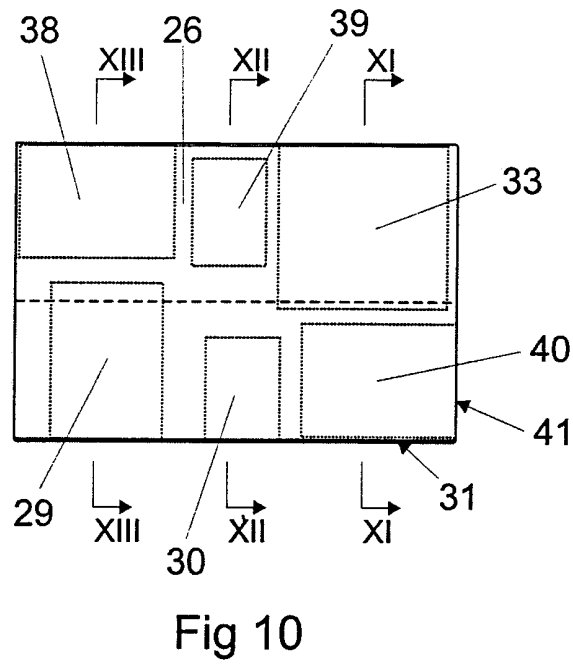
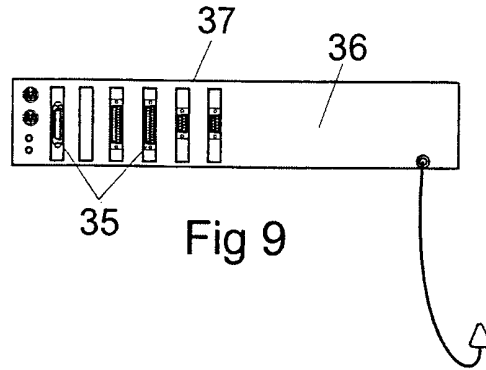
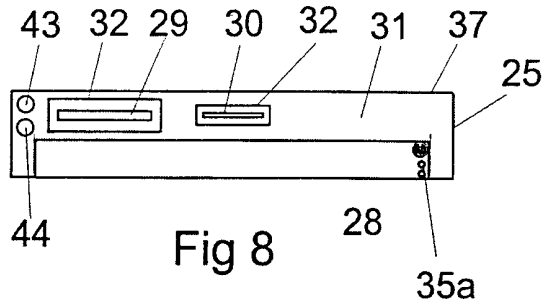


Fig 7

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/ZA 00/00097

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 A47B21/03

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 A47B

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 4 931 978 A (RING KING VISIBLES) 5 June 1990 (1990-06-05) the whole document	1, 2, 4-7, 9
A	EP 0 710 456 A (EXPONENT ITALIA SRL) 8 May 1996 (1996-05-08) figures 1-8	1
A	GB 2 166 943 A (LATHAM) 21 May 1986 (1986-05-21) the whole document	1

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

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"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

28 August 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

05/09/2000

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

Internal Application No

PCT/ZA 00/00097

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 4931978 A	05-06-1990	NONE	
EP 710456 A	08-05-1996	IT PN940039 U CA 2147387 A US 5588727 A	03-05-1996 04-05-1996 31-12-1996
GB 2166943 A	21-05-1986	NONE	