COUNTER STRUCTURES FOR MACHINES—TOOLS OR THE LIKE USED FOR DIRECT WHILE-YOU-WAIT SERVICES

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A service counter for direct while-you-wait services. The service counter includes a counter front which separates customers from machine operators, and also conceals unsightly machines and affords protection to the customers. The service counter is characterized by a unitary frame on which are mounted the operating machines, the counter front and seats for customers.

This invention relates to a counter structure or installation for machines, tools or the like used for direct while-you-wait services. Such machines or tools hitherto had two main features:

(a) They are in the form of a separate unit for each category or service, for example a shoe healing machine, a key making machine, a skate sharpening machine, etc.

(b) They are completely separated from the counter behind which the service is performed and the machine is situated.

The space required for such services is of course very important and must be as small as possible. Irrespective of whether the services are carried out in department stores or small shops the machines are designed so as to occupy a minimum of space.

The appearance of such machines is also an important factor since they are visible to the public.

Designers have therefore been previously concerned with reducing the size and improving the external appearance of the machines considered individually.

This invention relates to a structure and/or installation whereby a single unit occupying little space enables a plurality of different type services to be performed where separate machines and possibly separate counters were hitherto required.

According to the invention, this installation is characterized in that a common paneling is provided for the various machines or the like, said paneling providing separation from and protection for the public and forming the counter and also being so designed that the operator or operators occupy positions facing the public, the machines or the like being supported by baseplates or the like resting on the ground.

According to the present invention there is provided a service counter comprising a plurality of posts supported by base plates, machines for use by at least one operator providing said service mounted upon said posts, a counter front comprising a plurality of upwardly extending partition elements each carrying a counter shelf extending from the element on that side away from the posts and seats on that side of the counter front from which the counter shelf extends, base plates for the seats and the posts, the base plate and the counter front forming a single unit to one side of which customer accommodation is provided and to the other side of which at least one operator can provide a service by means of said machines while facing the customer accommodation.

In practical performance of the invention, the paneling comprises protective elements disposed polygonally and so juxtaposed as to form a continuous partition which constitutes the counter.

In order that the invention may be more readily understood, one example or embodiment will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings wherein:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a counter according to the invention.

FIG. 2 is a plan view thereof.

FIG. 3 is a section on the line III—III in FIG. 2.

FIG. 4 relates to a variant.

In an installation according to the invention, the tools, machines, or equipment (reference 1 in FIG. 3) are mounted separately and generally detachably on posts 2 each provided with a baseplate 3 resting on the ground.

The various machines etc. are protected from the public by paneling made up of vertical elements 4 juxtaposed to form a polygonal contour in the example illustrated, and forming a continuous partition which constitutes the counter.

At the top, the various elements are each connected to horizontal panels 5 forming a continuous outer peripheral shelf which is also formed from elements each provided with a substantially rectangular protective panel 7 disposed vertically in a forwardly offset plane with respect to the elements 4. The juxtaposed panels 7 make up the top of the counter. As will be more apparent from FIG. 2, the posts 2 are each set back along the extended line of intersection 8 between the outer shelf elements 6.

The protective partition elements 4 are conventionally secured to the posts 2 by appropriate means, such as lugs, through the agency of screws, bolts, clips, etc. (reference 9—FIG. 3) but an important feature is that the parts disposed in front of the counter are connected by their bases to the machine baseplates 3.

To this end, the bottom end of the post 11 bearing the seat 12 is connected by radial struts 13 to a ring 14 provided with three vertical legs 15 resting on the ground, two of the legs being connected to the baseplates 3 via struts 16.

Those legs 15 of a stool which have a connecting strut 16 are connected to different but successive baseplates 3. If required, the connections 9 may be dispensed with if the panels 7 are sufficiently retained with respect to the ground, but a novel feature is that the various machines are combined in a single paneling which results in a substantially self-contained unit comprising the counter, the tool posts and the base plates for the latter, and the seats or stools.

If desired, each element 4 can be split into two juxtaposed panels to conceal adjacent machines performing the same operations and this results in a larger stand which can accommodate a plurality of operators.

The bottom surface of each panel 4 may comprise partitioning elements to receive or store tools, articles of use for the operations it is required to perform, or articles requiring repair or which has already been repaired.

The fact that the operator or operators face the public is an important feature as regards public relations because previously the operator always had to turn his back to the customer, who could see the machines which, despite the designer’s attempt to the contrary, were not always very pleasant to look at.

FIG. 4 relates to a variant in which two machines 1 and 1’ are mounted on a single post 2 in superposed relationship.

Machine 1 is directly supported by the post 2 while machine 1’ is supported by a U-section for example, which is mounted at the top of the post 2.
What I claim is:

1. A service counter comprising a plurality of base plates, a plurality of posts supported on said base plates, work machines mounted atop said posts, a counter front comprising a plurality of upwardly extending partition elements, said partition elements being secured to the posts, a plurality of counter shelf elements, each of said counter shelf elements being perpendicularly disposed with respect to the partition elements, a protective panel atop each of said shelves, said protective panels being substantially parallel to the partition elements and offset therefrom in a direction away from the posts, a plurality of seating arrangements placed adjacent the counter front and separated thereby from the posts, each of said seating arrangements comprising a seat post upon which the seat is mounted, a plurality of struts extending radially from the seat post, a ring connected to the struts, a leg extending downwardly from the ring and each of said struts and connecting struts securing each of two legs of each of the seating arrangements to successive base plates.

2. A service counter as claimed in claim 1, wherein each seating arrangement comprises three of the first said struts and three legs and wherein each base plate is also secured to one leg of each of two successive seating arrangements.

3. A service counter as claimed in claim 1 comprising means connected to said posts for mounting more than one machine atop each post.

4. A service counter as claimed in claim 3, wherein the means for mounting more than one machine is a U-section.

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