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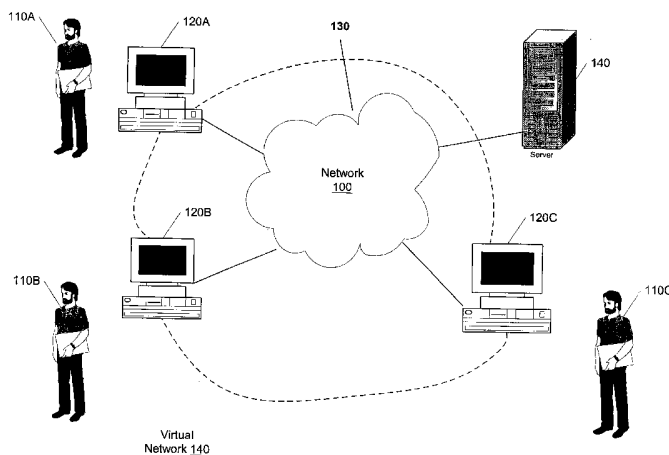
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(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR ESTABLISHING AN ON-LINE DISCUSSION GROUP



(57) Abstract: A system and method for establishing an on-line discussion group provides a mechanism for emailing the on-line discussion group to one or more participants. According to the present invention, an on-line discussion group may be customized by a user. Once a server creates the on-line-discussion group in accordance with parameters specified by the user or otherwise, the server emails the newly created on-line discussion group to the user. After receiving the email, the user may forward the email with the on-line discussion group included therein to other users to participate in the on-line discussion group. Recipients may participate in the on-line discussion group by "clicking on" the email. Preferably, the active on-line discussion group operates within a message portion of the email upon opening the email. The on-line discussion group may include various types of communication discussion groups including, for example, an on-line chat room, an on-line message board, a teleconference, a video teleconference, an auction, etc.



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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 G06F17/60

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 G06F

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)

EPO-Internal, IBM-TDB

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
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X	US 5 790 793 A (HIGLEY THOMAS) 4 August 1998 (1998-08-04) the whole document	1-41, 50-58, 60-79
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Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

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