${\bf (19)}\ World\ Intellectual\ Property\ Organization$

International Bureau





(10) International Publication Number

WO 2008/104642 A1

Date P(

(43) International Publication Date 4 September 2008 (04.09.2008)

(51) International Patent Classification:

G06F 19/00 (2006.01) **G06Q 30/00** (2006.01) **G06F 15/16** (2006.01) **A63F 13/00** (2006.01)

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/FI2008/050095

(22) International Filing Date:

28 February 2008 (28.02.2008)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data: PCT/FI2007/050111

28 February 2007 (28.02.2007) FI

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(81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AO, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DO, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KN, KP, KR, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RS, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, SV, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MT, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

with international search report

(54) Title: METHOD FOR GAMING AND GAMING SYSTEM

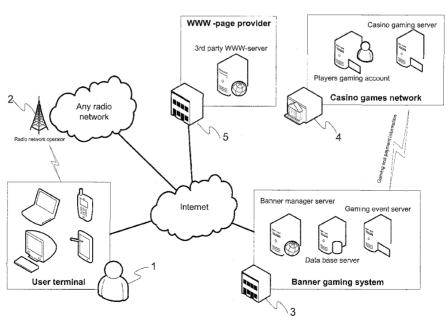


Figure 1

(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to a method for gaming and for a gaming systemfor playing a networked game on WWW pageor Internet-transmitted application con- taining a banner associated withthe game, wherein the game content is run or shown on the banner area. The game content is provided directly from the client system, from host pages/system, from banner game service provider s pages/gaming system, from casino company s pages/system or the like.



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Method for gaming and gaming system

Field of the invention

The present invention relates to a method for gaming and for a gaming system. More particularly the present invention relates to networked or mobile gaming on WWW page, Internet-transmitted application or other digital image content with a terminal.

Background of the invention

As the use of the Internet and other network technologies has become daily life, gaming and gambling have also been implemented to that environment. Several types of Internet-based games and gaming methods are generally known. In one field of such gaming a link to a game is provided on a WWW page. Such link may be in the form of a banner which is associated with an advertisement. Generally a person clicks the advertisement link or banner ad with mouse and is redirected to a Web page where the game is provided. The user may be redirected to a new site, but usually one or more new windows are opened, which may irritate the person interested only in the game. Also the redirection from the original WWW page may confuse the user and the original page may be lost or at least extra actions are required by the user to get back to the original content and/or to close the extra windows. Sometimes a pop-up blocker application may prevent the window from opening and the gaming is not possible. In many cases user has to specifically register to the gaming system and type in personal information and for example payment information.

Therefore simple and more reliable solutions for providing such gaming are required.

Summary of the invention

The present invention provides a method for playing a networked game on WWW page, Internet-transmitted application or other digital image content containing a banner associated with the game, wherein the game content is run or shown on the banner area, wherein the game content is provided directly from the client sys-

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tem, from host pages/system, from banner game service provider's pages/gaming system, from casino company's pages/system or the like.

The present invention also provides a gaming system comprising a client system, an application provided in the client system containing a gaming section banner area, and the gaming system arranged to run or show the game content on the banner area, wherein the game content is provided directly from the client system, from host pages/system, from banner game service provider's pages/gaming system, from casino company's pages/system or the like. The gaming system is arranged to carry out any method of the present invention.

An advantage of the present invention is that the game is provided in the client system, such as an advertiser's system, without a need to further go to the game provider's WWW pages or other system. All gaming events occur directly on the same WWW page where the game is shown without redirecting the player to another web site or opening new pages or windows. This makes the gaming very simple.

Another advantage of the present invention is that gaming service providers such as Internet casinos can now directly benefit from other WWW sites. For example all WWW sites using this technology become also gaming/gambling sites of mentioned Internet casino.

Still another advantage of the present invention is that no separate registration to gaming system is necessarily needed for playing. This will lower the threshold to start playing, i.e. impulsive playing is easily possible.

Still another advantage of the present invention is that no payment information for paying the prize is necessarily needed prior to playing.

One aspect of the present invention refers to a method described herein for playing a banner game.

Another aspect of the present invention refers to a gaming system for playing the banner game as described in the method above.

Still another aspect of the present invention refers to a server or device arrangement for providing the banner game as described in the method above.

Next the present invention will be described in detail. Reference will be made to the following figures.

Brief description of the drawings

- Figure 1 shows a schematic drawing of an example of a system according to present invention.
- Figure 2 shows a schematic structure of a Web page containing banners, the upper banner area being associated with the game.
- Figure 3 shows the same page wherein the game banner will expand when the mouse cursor is moved over the banner.
- Figure 4 shows a flow chart of the server processes.
- Figure 5 shows another flow chart of the server processes.

Detailed description of the invention

The present invention relates to gambling and gaming within WWW page, Internet application or other content shown within Internet browser or the like in a banner or other dedicated area. Such games are arranged so that the system provides necessary game or games and any or all of the following: means of gaming, player identifying, game payment and cash-out arrangements, from a server and embeds them to another WWW page or the like that comes either from a third party server or from the gaming provider.

The present invention provides a method and system for playing a networked game on WWW page or Internet-transmitted application. The "WWW page" refers to any known Web pages, such as HTML-based pages, XML-based pages, WWW pages containing Java or any other inter- or intranet-transmitted content suitable for the purpose of showing and/or delivering programmed content over the Internet or other suitable network. This also includes socalled fullscreen browser applications or active desktops or the like. Generally such pages are available on the Internet or similar network. The "Internet-transmitted applications" relate to Java, Ajax, Flash or SWF, SVG, ActiveX, MAME or any such means of showing and running programmable content. The "digital image content" refers to any other suitable content where the banner may be located, such as TV or other video image or the like.

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The embodiments provided herein referring to WWW pages may also be applied to other similar embodiments, such as to Internet-transmitted applications, digital video or TV content or the like.

The WWW page, the Internet-transmitted application or other suitable digital image content contains a banner area associated with the game. The association may be a hyperlink, directly embedded to the presenting layer, e.g. WWW page, runtime loadable program module, one-time disposable application or any other means of transferring or placing content to the carrier WWW page or the Internet-transmitted application.

The "banner" refers to a separate section or area on a hypertext page, Internet application, Java application, video or TV picture or the like such as a WWW page. A banner may be embedded in a WWW page as a commercial or the like. It may contain one or more areas of specific size and shape, such as rectangular, square or other shapes. Generally a banner is associated with a link to specific information. In the present invention the banner is associated with game content which is run or shown on the banner area itself, not e.g. on a separate WWW page. The banner may also be an area embedded in other digital image content, such as TV picture or display of digital TV. The banner can be fixed in size or it can alter its size according to user actions, e.g. the banner area may be resized bigger when the user moves mouse pointer or other pointing device over it (Figures 2 and 3).

In the method and system of the present invention the game content is run or shown on the banner area. The "game content" refers to a specific application item or the like which is run or shown in the banner itself. It may be the game application itself or it may contain or be associated to an application of the client system which fetches or runs the games/game events outside the system. Such application may show the game either partially or as a whole. If only a part of the game is shown, the whole application may be shown (Figure 3) e.g. by placing mouse or other cursor on the game and possibly by pressing one or more buttons or the like or by any other suitable way.

Suitable games to be provided in the banner according to the present invention include virtually any game which can be applied to be played in the banner. Non-limiting examples of such games include casino games or other traditional money games, any entertainment game, quiz show, scratch ticket, any game providing the gaming event instantly or providing a sum of several gaming events, such as an adventure or platform game wherein wins are collected, e.g. a Mario Bros -type

of game, games providing the wins in a sustained way, such as an online Formula game wherein the wins are delivered after certain time, or the like.

The game is run or shown in the client system prior to loading, during the WWW page load time or after it. It may also start after user intervention such as moving or clicking a pointing device or interacting with the content using touch screen, video captured movements or any means of communicating with the host system.

In one embodiment the game content is provided directly from the client system, from host pages/system, from banner game service provider's pages/gaming system, from a casino company's pages/system or the like. The host system refers to a server, such as a WWW page server which provides the initial content, such as WWW pages in which the banner or banners are then attached or embedded.

The client system generally comprises a hardware and software arrangement that can visually show and run Internet-related or other suitable content. This kind of system typically runs on an operating system such as Windows, Mac OS, Symbian, Linux, Unix or the like. The actual content may be shown in a separate browser application such as Internet Explorer, Mozilla, Firefox, Safari, Opera or any other program capable of presenting such content. The content may be also shown as a part of visual desktop or windowing system either in a window or a frame or directly as part of the actual application desktop. Typically this kind of embedding is done in active desktop, transparent or partially transparent fullscreen browser windowing, Mac Dashboard applications, Windows gadget applications, or the like.

In still another embodiment the game event takes place in the client system, host pages/system, banner game service provider's pages/gaming system, a casino company's pages/system or in combinations thereof.

In another embodiment the game content contains an application of the client system which fetches or runs the games/game events outside the client system. The applications may then notify the host system of these events. The gaming events are sent and received by the gaming system, e.g. the game is run in the gaming system and the graphical output or user interface is shown in the banner.

The present invention furthermore provides a method wherein in the gaming session the game is provided in the client system, the player is individualized to the system, one or more gaming events are run, the player is charged directly or indirectly for the gaming event before, during or after the event, win or lose is deter-

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mined and reported and arrangements of the payments in case of a win are carried out.

In one embodiment the user is individualized by an existing user identifier or other means without a specific registration to the gaming system. The "individualizing" or "identifying" as used herein refers to any means for distinguishing a specific user from other users rather than finding out user identity. However, eventually the true user identity or gaming account nickname or the like may be revealed, especially in the case of win and/or prize payment. In this embodiment the user has an existing identifier which is not originally related to the game, such as already existing gaming account and password, Internet browser cookie or the like, phone number, social security number, bank security code, biometric ID, national or international digital ID, trusted device identification, credit card number, IMEI code, SIM code, other trusted account identification, digital television terminal ID code, network address, such as a logical address (e.g. IP address) or a link layer address (e.g. MAC address), any other suitable code, number or other means of identifying, determining or otherwise separating and uniquely identifying players from each others, which identifier already exists before starting the gaming session. As no separate registration is needed, fewer actions are required, the game can be started immediately and the threshold to start playing is very low. Also the prize payment information can easily be provided only afterwards in the case of a win as the player is individualized automatically

This existing identifier does not have to be provided by the gaming service provider and this is why the user does not necessarily have to actively register to the gaming service but the service will recognize said existing identifier and use it to identify the user. The gaming service provider may register said existing user identifier on a database or the like, send a cookie to user application or WWW browser, but in the present invention this is not considered as registration for the game by the user, since the identifier is given without any separate active action by the user. In a case where the gaming service provider is also a telephone operator or the like, the existing identifier may be provided by the same service provider, but substantially for other purposes than playing. A general example of such identifier is a phone number, which is originally given for operating a telephone, not for gaming purposes. Another example is a cookie set to user's browser for identifying the user and reclaiming the wins in another or 3rd party system.

Said existing user identification may be provided to the gaming system by any suitable means. In one embodiment the identification is provided as a phone num-

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ber within a text message. In another embodiment the identification is provided as entering the user name and password or entering credit card information in suitable fields within the banner. In another embodiment the identification is provided by using a specific reader associated with the terminal used for playing, which reader may read information from the identification means. Such reader may be remote or wireless type of reader or a reader in contact with the identification means. Examples of such readers are a card reader, such as bank or credit card or identification card reader, a smart card reader, a conax payment reader, a Bluetooth or wireless USB connection to contact the identification means, such as a mobile phone or the like which contains the user identification, or an optical reader, such as bar code reader.

The user may also register or apply for a gaming or payment account using the banner application.

Generally the system of the present invention may include the end user of the service (player), the network or mobile phone operator, the WWW page content provider, gaming service provider and the payment systems.

The "end user" of the service refers to a user, or the player, who plays the game according to the invention. The end user, or user or player as referred herein, generally uses a terminal for personal computing needs, Internet browsing, as a communication device or entertainment. In the method and the system of the present invention the terminal provides the client system. Generally said terminal may be any known computer or a mobile terminal, such as an Internet or network-connected PC, digi-TV, set-top-box (such as a digi-tv-set-top-box), game console, mobile phone or any other mobile device, e.g. "communicator" or personal digital assistance type of device. Such terminal is capable of communicating on suitable network, such as on the Internet, a wireless network or the like, for example on a cellular phone network, wi-fi-network, or satellite network. The user messages according to the invention are generally sent by the user with said terminal to the service provider.

The "network or mobile phone operator" refers to the service provider, who provides the wireless or wired network services, such as mobile phone services or Internet services to enable the network or mobile phone communication between its clients. Said operator may also debit the costs of games and/or win prizes or intermediate such payments.

The "gaming service provider" refers to the gaming operator, who provides the gaming service. Generally said gaming service provider utilizes the services of the network, Internet or mobile phone operator. The gaming service provider may also be a network, Internet, cable TV, terrestrial or satellite operator for analog or digital television networks, closed gaming network operator such as gaming console networks or cable TV operator networks, iMode network or other operator-controlled private network, digital radio, mobile phone operator or any other suitable operator network or the like. The "gaming system" refers to the system or systems of the gaming service provider needed to enable the playing of the game according to the invention. The gaming system may contain one or more servers, networks, data bases and other suitable device and software arrangements. Generally such gaming system works substantially automatically without any user intervention by the gaming operator. In some gaming forms the gaming operator may assist or control the gaming system. Typical example of this may be officially drawn lottery games, other draws or the like.

The "payment systems" refers to any suitable payment system to be used in the method of the present invention. Such payment systems include the systems of a bank or other monetary institution or the like. Payment can also be made in advance by purchasing or otherwise paying for credits that can be used to pay for gaming events (prepaid systems, payment systems for digital television etc., credit or debit cards, premium payment systems, payphone systems, existing gaming account debit/credit, one-time scratch cards etc.

In one embodiment the gaming service provider gives the player one or more free games, for example the first game(s) to introduce the player to the game. This will make the gaming more tempting since the player can try the game immediately for free. The system may recognize the player's existing user identification, network address or the like and restrict the amount of free games based on that.

The prize (or prizes), such as money or other goods, of the game may or may not be predetermined or the prize may be associated with the profit, revenues, number of players, number of gaming events or other measurable or non-measurable quantities of the service.

The prize may be delivered to the winner directly during the gaming event, such as a gaming session, it can be delivered indirectly to an institution, such as a bank or other monetary institution assigned by the player by any suitable means, or any other notification or proof of wins that can be claimed after the gaming event such

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as showing receipt of win to a trusted 3rd party. Examples of such means are bank transfer, existing gaming accounts on 3rd party gaming providers, other suitable account providers, money order notes, tokens or jetons, gaming chips, payment order, giro transfer, cheque or any other generally known means or method for transferring money or other goods,

The prize may be transferred automatically or by the user of the service or representative thereof, immediately or delayed in respect of the gaming event.

The payment of the prize may be secured in any suitable way known in the art. One example of such secure system is to provide a verification code, which must be sent back to the sender in order to accept the event associated with the verification. For example one embodiment of the present invention provides a system wherein the user sends a message to gaming system to give the user's bank account information for the prize payment. The gaming system will reply with a message containing a complex verification code. Then the user will send back this code to the gaming system to accept the payment, and the gaming system will pay the prize to the bank account given. The user may send back the whole message containing the verification code or only a part of it, such as only said verification code. This method can be utilized with user actions but it can also be partly or completely automated. Another embodiment of the present invention provides a system wherein the user inputs user's existing gaming account information from 3rd party gaming institute, and the wins are directly wired to user's gaming account within this 3rd party system.

The "gaming session" refers to one single gaming event starting from the event wherein the user starts utilizing the gaming system for the first time for that particular game until the end of that gaming event, such as the reporting of the result or the acceptance of the prize payment. If the user starts again another similar gaming event by contacting the gaming system again in the same manner as before, it should be considered as another gaming session, even though the user identification information or payment method could be already recognized by the gaming system.

The present invention also provides a gaming system comprising a client system, as described above, an application provided in the client system containing a gaming section banner area, and the gaming system arranged to run or show the game content on the banner area. In certain embodiments the gaming system is

arranged to carry out any of the methods according to the present invention as described herein.

In one embodiment the gaming system is arranged to get the banner game content from a game service provider. This may for example include a separate banner gaming system containing one or more suitable servers, such as a banner manager server, data base server, gaming event server or any other suitable servers or the like. Further, a casino games network may be included providing the actual game, and it may include a gaming server or other suitable servers which also may take care of the player's gaming account or the like.

An example of such system setup according to the invention is shown on Figure 1. User 1 may use any suitable terminal to connect to Internet and 3rd party WWW page provider 5 provides WWW pages wherein the banner is located. Banner gaming system 3 provides said banner(s) and the gaming content is provided from a casino's 4 gaming server to the banner. User may be connected to Internet by any suitable means, such as by wireless network 2 or by wired network. Separate banner gaming system is not obligatory, but the banners may be provided directly by the casino games network.

In another embodiment the gaming system is arranged to predetermine the output of the gaming session such as win or lose conditions. Generally said gaming system calculates a win/loss value for said user to define if there is a win or loss in the game.

In still another embodiment the gaming system is arranged to accept userprovided payment or withdraw information and to notify other involved systems withdrawing money or paying the winnings.

Now the present invention will be described with examples relating to gaming with Internet-connected terminal such as PC or mobile terminal. These examples are provided only to enlighten the idea of the present invention and they should not be considered as limiting the scope of the invention. A person skilled in the art can figure out several other embodiments which can be applied on different environments, terminals, games and the like within the scope of the attached claims.

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Examples

Example 1. The course of a game

Figures 4 and 5 show an example of the server processes when the banner game is played in the client application.

First the client opens a WWW browser and opens a WWW page provided by 3rd party. The WWW server receives and processes the query and sends the desired content to the client. Client WWW browser receives the content and starts to process it. Additional content may be requested from servers, such as the gaming banner from the banner server. The banner server tags the client, delivers the banner content and selects the appropriate gaming banner to the client.

The user activates the banner game with appropriate means, such as with a mouse click, login, login with an existing user identifier or the like. The banner server registers the gaming event and carries out possible payment processing. The user plays the game, the casino determines the win or loss conditions and sends them back to client. Game account, payment and possible wins are processed. Banner server registers the gaming events and possible other events, such as the win. Finally, the banner game in the client system shows the game result in an appropriate manner.

Claims

1. A method of playing a networked game on WWW page, Internet-transmitted application or other digital image content containing a banner associated with the game wherein the game content is run or shown on the banner area, **characterized** in that the game content is provided directly from the client system, from host pages/system, from banner game service provider's pages/gaming system, from casino company's pages/system or the like.

- 2. The method of claim 1, **characterized** in that the game event takes place in the client system, host pages/system, banner game service provider's pages/gaming system, casino company's pages/system or in combinations thereof.
- 3. The method of any of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that the game content is a game application.
- 4. The method of any of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that the game content contains an application of the client system which fetches or runs the games/game events outside the client system.
- 5. The method of any of the claims 2–4, **characterized** in that the gaming events are sent and received by the gaming system.
- 6. The method of any of the claims 2–5, **characterized** in that the game is run in the gaming system and the graphical output or user interface is shown in the banner.
- 7. The method of any of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that the client system is a computer, digi-TV, set-top-box, game console, mobile phone or any other mobile device or personal digital assistance type of device.
- 8. The method of any of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that in the gaming session
- the game is provided in the client system,
- the player is individualized to the system,
- one or more gaming events are run,
- the player is charged directly or indirectly for the gaming event before, during or after the event,
- win or lose is determined and reported,

- arrangements of the payments in case of a win are carried out.
- 9. The method of any of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that the user is individualized by an existing user identifier or other means without a specific registration to the gaming system.
- 10. The method of claim 9, **characterized** in that said means for individualizing the user is an already existing gaming account, WWW browser cookie or the like, phone number, social security number, bank security code, biometric ID, national or international digital ID, trusted device identification, credit card number, IMEI code, SIM code, other trusted account identification, digital television terminal ID code, network address, such as a logical address (e.g. IP address) or a link layer address (e.g. MAC address), any other suitable code, number or other means of identifying, determining or otherwise separating and uniquely identifying players from each other, which identifier already exists before starting the gaming session.
- 11. The method of any of the preceding claims, **characterized** in that the game is selected from casino games or other traditional money games, any entertainment game, quiz show, scratch ticket, any game providing the gaming event instantly or providing a sum of several gaming events, and games providing the wins in a sustained way, such as an online Formula game wherein the wins are delivered after a certain time
- 12. A gaming system comprising
- a client system, and
- an application provided in the client system containing a gaming section banner area, wherein
- the gaming system is arranged to run or show the game content on the banner area, **characterized** in that the gaming system is arranged to get the banner game content from the client system, from host pages/system, from banner game service provider's pages/gaming system, from casino company's pages/system or the like.
- 13. The gaming system of claim 12, **characterized** in that the gaming system is arranged to predetermine the output of the said gaming session such as win or lose conditions.
- 14. The gaming system of any of the claims 12–13, **characterized** in that the gaming system is arranged to accept user-provided payment or withdraw informa-

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tion and to notify other involved systems withdrawing money or paying the winnings.

- 15. The gaming system of any of the claims 12–14, **characterized** in that the client system is a computer, digi-TV, set-top-box, game console, mobile phone or any other mobile device or personal digital assistance type of device.
- 16. The gaming system of any of the claims 12–15, **characterized** in that the gaming system is arranged to carry out any method of the claims 1–11.

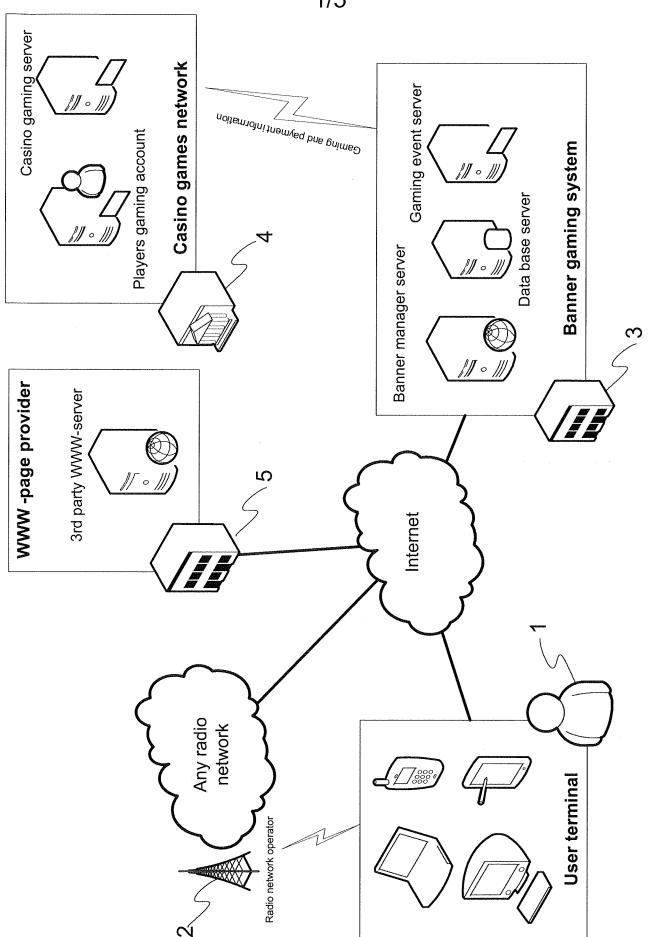


Figure 1

WWW-browser	
Upper banner area	
	sidebanner
Middle banner	Long sidebanner

Figure 2

. F	Resizeable banner this is the n	(mouse activatedormal size	d)
This is the fully re	sized area when ι	iser moves mous	e over the banne

Figure 3

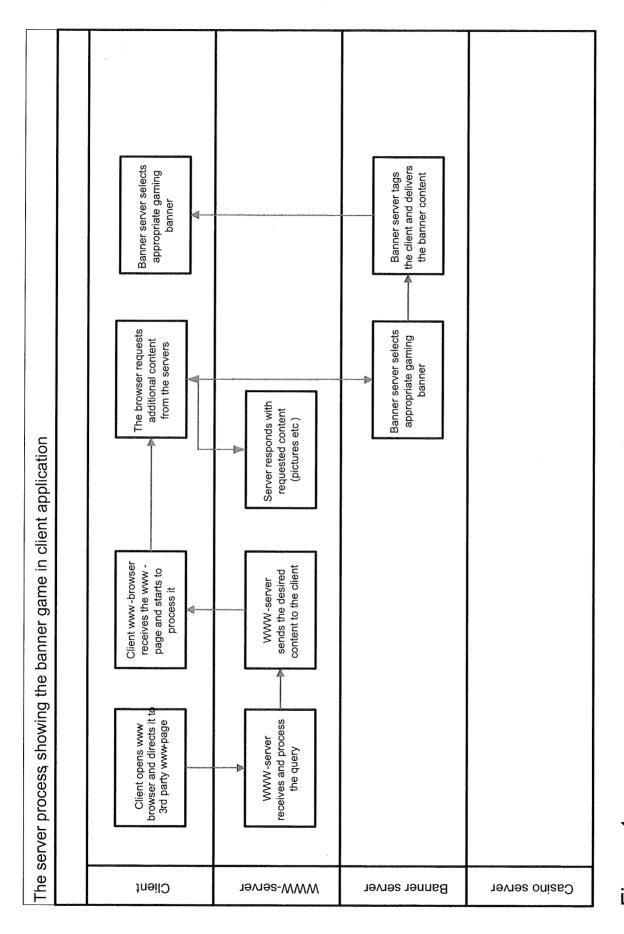


Figure 4

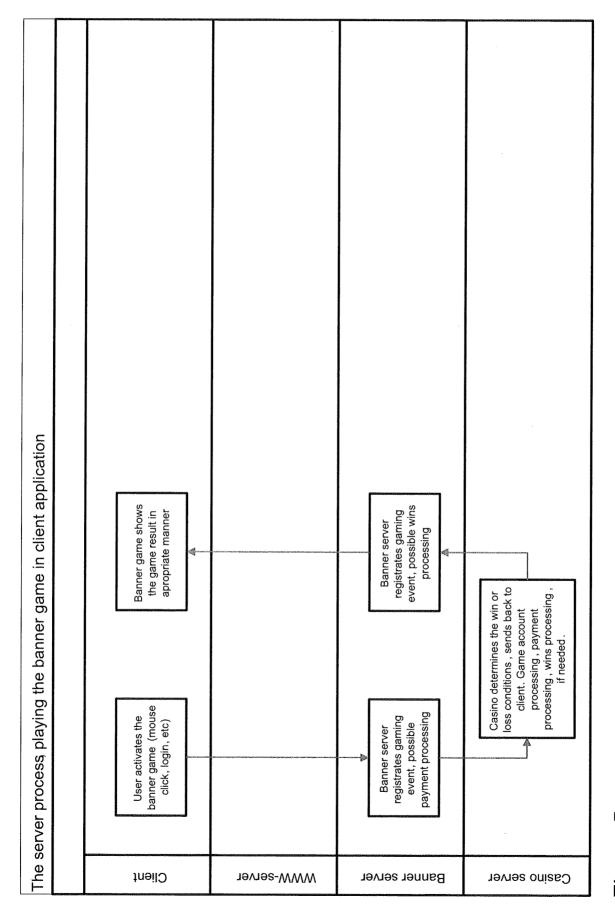


Figure 5

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/FI2008/050095

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

See extra sheet

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)

IPC8: G06F, G06Q, A63F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched FI, SE, NO, DK

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used) EPO-Internal, WPI

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 00/52554 A2 (REALTIME MEDIA INC) 08 September 2000 (08.09.2000), Abstract, Figures 1 and 3	1-16
X	JP 2002351770 A (HAKUFUSHA KK) 06 December 2002 (06.12.2002), EPODOC and WPI abstracts, paragraphs [0004] and [0011] of the English machine translation, Figure 1	1-16
X	US 2005/0160141 A1 (GALLEY, M. et al.) 21 July 2005 (21.07.2005), paragraphs [0009] and [0031], claim 10	1-16
X	US 6379251 B1 (AUXIER, R. et al.) 30 April 2002 (30.04.2002), Abstract; column 1, line 61 - column 2, line 41; claim 1	1-16
X	US 2002/0112033 A1 (DOEMLING, M. F. et al.) 15 August 2002 (15.08.2002), whole document	1-16
X	WO 98/35468 A2 (SLOTZNICK, B.) 13 August 1998 (13.08.1998), page 49, line 27 - page 51, line 5; claim 4	1-16

X	Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.	See patent family annex.
*	Special categories of cited documents:	"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority
"A"	document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"E"	earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date	1 "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive
"L"	document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is	step when the document is taken alone
	cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be
"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other mea	considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination
"P"	document published prior to the international filing date but later tha	1.11
	the priority date claimed	"&" document member of the same patent family
Date	e of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report
	16 May 2008 (16.05.2008)	09 June 2008 (09.06.2008)
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Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (April 2007)

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International application No.

PCT/FI2008/050095

C (Continua	ation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT	
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CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
Int.Cl. G06F 19/00 (2006.01) G06F 15/16 (2006.01) G06Q 30/00 (2006.01) A63F 13/00 (2006.01)