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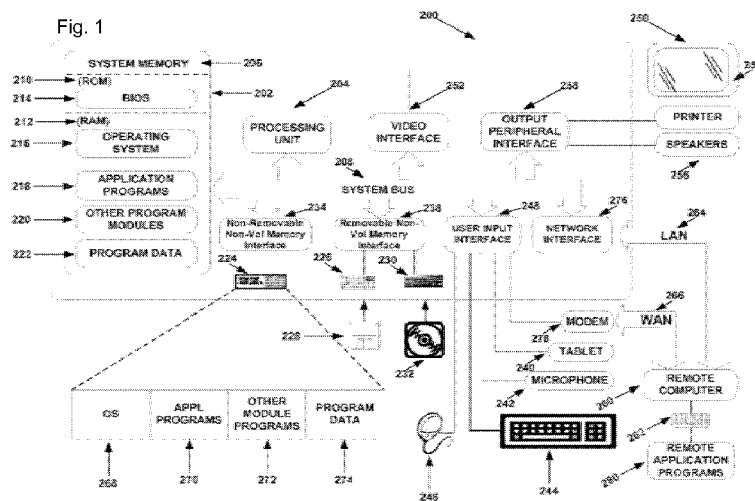
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(54) Title: INTERACTIVE METRO GUIDE MAP AND PORTAL SYSTEM, METHODS OF OPERATION, AND STORAGE MEDIUM



(57) Abstract: A system, method, and storage medium for an interactive metro guide map, including a computer connected to a remote computer via a network connection, and capable of transmitting a map with color coded markers representing points of interest ("POI"). Each color is indicative of a particular category or genre of attraction and is situated on the map in approximate correlation to the POI actual geographic location. In response to a user's action, additional information on the particular POI is provided which can include both basic and detailed information. Additionally, the user can both manipulate the map to view a different geographic area and/or restrict the POI displayed on the map to one or more particular categories or genres.

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**INTERACTIVE METRO GUIDE MAP AND PORTAL SYSTEM,  
METHODS OF OPERATION, AND STORAGE MEDIUM**

**FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

5 [0001] This invention pertains generally to interactive mapping systems providing metro guide information.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

10 [0002] Mapping systems providing directions or general geographic location information for a specific address are well known in the art. For example, the most common mapping system is one where the user enters an address and the system returns a graphical view of the area including surrounding streets (see [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com), [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com), etc.). Some mapping systems even integrate aerial imagery to give the user an enhanced view of the subject location and surrounding area. These mapping systems generally allow the user to zoom in and out and pan from side to side. Most of these mapping systems also will provide driving directions to the user after the user has provided both the starting location and the destination location. However, the mapping systems require the user to already know the user's destination and provide limited, if any, information about the final destination short of its location relative to surrounding streets. Furthermore, the mapping systems provide no information on alternate venues or other points of interest ("POI") nearby.

20 [0003] Similarly, general city guide information is available from other providers (e.g. [www.citysearch.com](http://www.citysearch.com)). Generally, these city guides and portals are an online version of the more traditional paper yellow pages. They provide very general listings such as name, address, phone number, etc. As discussed, these city guide systems generally provide very little information about the venue and deliver the information in a "list" style view. The "list" style view fails to relate surrounding venues in a geographical context thereby making it significantly more difficult for a user to determine what other venues may be convenient to visit. This lack of information and "list" style view make locating a desirable alternate/additional close venue difficult, cumbersome, and frustrating.

25 [0004] The prior art does not deliver comprehensive city guide information superimposed on an interactive user friendly graphical map.

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**BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

[0005] There is a need for a system that delivers comprehensive city guide information through a user friendly graphical interface that presents the information in a geographically related manner. For example, a web page showing a graphic representation of restaurants in a neighborhood that is superimposed on a map and provides not only general information such as phone number, location, and name, but also information such as type of food, relative price range, reviews, user comments, "star" rating, menu options, hours of operation, specials, links to other websites, etc. This information would be aggregated and supplemented by local insiders with particular familiarity with the POI, city, neighborhood, and category of POI.

5 [0006] The disclosed subject matter provides a graphical user interface (“GUI”) that allows a user to easily navigate a familiar map of the particular area the user is interested in and easily obtain additional information on many of the points of interest (“POI”) available in the geographic area. The POI could include: restaurants, stores, museums, parks, recreational areas, theaters, points of interest, and other venues.

10 [0007] The disclosed subject matter also provides the user the ability to see any or all of the POI broken into category (e.g. restaurants, hotels, parks, etc.) superimposed on a map as individual graphical “markers” (e.g. hotels could be a certain color, icon, and/or image). This allows easy identification by the user of a particular POI with reference to the geographical area (e.g. a particular street, or another point of interest).

[0008] The disclosed subject matter additionally provides the user the ability to select any marker to obtain additional information about that particular POI. This additional information provides first hand, insider insight into the POI.

15 [0009] These and other aspects of the disclosed subject matter, as well as additional novel features, will be apparent from the description provided herein. The intent of this summary is not to be a comprehensive description of the claimed subject matter, but rather to provide a short overview of some of the subject matter’s functionality. Other systems, methods, features and advantages here provided will become apparent to one with skill in the art upon examination of the following **FIGURES** and detailed description. It is intended that all such additional systems, methods, features and advantages that are  
20 included within this description, be within the scope of the accompanying claims.

#### **BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE DRAWINGS**

25 [0010] The novel features believed characteristic of the invention are set forth in the claims. The invention itself, however, as well as a preferred mode of use, further objectives, and advantages thereof, will best be understood by reference to the following detailed description of an illustrative embodiment when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0011] **FIGURE 1** illustrates a computer system and related peripherals that may operate with the interactive metro guide of the present embodiment.

30 [0012] **FIGURES 2** and **2a** depict graphical representations of the main graphical user interface (“GUI”) of the present embodiment.

[0013] **FIGURE 3** depicts the main GUI with the categories tab expanded.

[0014] **FIGURES 4** and **4a** depict the main GUI with reference to several individual points of interest (“POI”).

[0015] **FIGURES 5** and **5a** depict the in-depth information window.

35 [0016] **FIGURE 6** depicts the GUI displaying a particular category of POI.

[0017] **FIGURE 7** depicts a graphical screenshot of the dashboard concept of the disclosed subject matter.

[0018] **FIGURE 8** depicts an exemplary graphical depiction of a compiled invitation.

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS**

[0019] A technical advantage of the present invention is superimposing markers representing venues, cultural information, or POI on a map thereby giving the user the ability to evaluate multiple POI by geographic relation to one another.

5 [0020] An additional technical advantage of the present invention is providing comprehensive city guide and POI information about venues which may include: name, hours of operation, schedules, performances, events, menus, reviews, awards, prices, user comments, directions, amenities, services, accommodations, specialties, etc.

[0021] Yet an additional technical advantage of the present invention is providing first hand,  
10 insider insight into the POI, neighborhood, and city.

[0022] An additional technical advantage of the present invention is providing itineraries.

[0023] Another technical advantage of the present invention is providing access to the city guide and POI information via an interactive map.

[0024] An additional technical advantage of the present invention is providing community  
15 building.

[0025] Yet another technical advantage of the present invention is providing all of the above via an intuitive and easy to use graphical user interface (“GUI”).

[0026] Unless the context clearly discloses an alternate meaning, the words marker, image, and icon are used interchangeably throughout this disclosure. Similarly, unless the context clearly discloses  
20 an alternate meaning, the words category and genre are used interchangeably throughout this disclosure. Finally, unless the context clearly discloses an alternate meaning, the words venue, attraction, and point of interest are used interchangeably throughout this disclosure.

[0027] With reference to **FIGURE 1**, an exemplary system within a computing environment for implementing the invention includes a general purpose computing device in the form of a computing  
25 system **200**, commercially available from Intel, IBM, AMD, Motorola, Cyrix and others. Components of the computing system **202** may include, but are not limited to, a processing unit **204**, a system memory **206**, and a system bus **236** that couples various system components including the system memory to the processing unit **204**. The system bus **236** may be any of several types of bus structures including a memory bus or memory controller, a peripheral bus, and a local bus using any of a variety of bus  
30 architectures.

[0028] Computing system **200** typically includes a variety of computer readable media. Computer readable media can be any available media that can be accessed by the computing system **200** and includes both volatile and nonvolatile media, and removable and non-removable media. By way of example, and not limitation, computer readable media may comprise computer storage media and  
35 communication media. Computer storage media includes volatile and nonvolatile, removable and non-removable media implemented in any method or technology for storage of information such as computer readable instructions, data structures, program modules or other data.

**[0029]** Computer memory includes, but is not limited to, RAM, ROM, EEPROM, flash memory or other memory technology, CD-ROM, digital versatile disks (DVD) or other optical disk storage, magnetic cassettes, magnetic tape, magnetic disk storage or other magnetic storage devices, or any other medium which can be used to store the desired information and which can be accessed by the computing system **200**.

**[0030]** The system memory **206** includes computer storage media in the form of volatile and/or nonvolatile memory such as read only memory (ROM) **210** and random access memory (RAM) **212**. A basic input/output system **214** (BIOS), containing the basic routines that help to transfer information between elements within computing system **200**, such as during start-up, is typically stored in ROM **210**. RAM **212** typically contains data and/or program modules that are immediately accessible to and/or presently being operated on by processing unit **204**. By way of example, and not limitation, an operating system **216**, application programs **220**, other program modules **220** and program data **222** are shown.

**[0031]** Computing system **200** may also include other removable/non-removable, volatile/nonvolatile computer storage media. By way of example only, a hard disk drive **224** that reads from or writes to non-removable, nonvolatile magnetic media, a magnetic disk drive **226** that reads from or writes to a removable, nonvolatile magnetic disk **228**, and an optical disk drive **230** that reads from or writes to a removable, nonvolatile optical disk **232** such as a CD ROM or other optical media could be employed to store the invention of the present embodiment. Other removable / non-removable, volatile / nonvolatile computer storage media that can be used in the exemplary operating environment include, but are not limited to, magnetic tape cassettes, flash memory cards, digital versatile disks, digital video tape, solid state RAM, solid state ROM, and the like. The hard disk drive **224** is typically connected to the system bus **236** through a non-removable memory interface such as interface **234**, and magnetic disk drive **226** and optical disk drive **230** are typically connected to the system bus **236** by a removable memory interface, such as interface **238**.

**[0032]** The drives and their associated computer storage media, discussed above, provide storage of computer readable instructions, data structures, program modules and other data for the computing system **200**. For example, hard disk drive **224** is illustrated as storing operating system **268**, application programs **270**, other program modules **272** and program data **274**. Note that these components can either be the same as or different from operating system **216**, application programs **220**, other program modules **220**, and program data **222**. Operating system **268**, application programs **270**, other program modules **272**, and program data **274** are given different numbers hereto illustrates that, at a minimum, they are different copies.

**[0033]** A user may enter commands and information into the computing system **200** through input devices such as a tablet, or electronic digitizer, **240**, a microphone **242**, a keyboard **244**, and pointing device **246**, commonly referred to as a mouse, trackball, or touch pad. These and other input devices are often connected to the processing unit **204** through a user input interface **248** that is coupled to the system bus **208**, but may be connected by other interface and bus structures, such as a parallel port, game port or a universal serial bus (USB).

**[0034]** A monitor **250** or other type of display device is also connected to the system bus **208** via an interface, such as a video interface **252**. The monitor **250** may also be integrated with a touch-screen panel or the like. Note that the monitor and/or touch screen panel can be physically coupled to a housing in which the computing system **200** is incorporated, such as in a tablet-type personal computer. In addition, computers such as the computing system **200** may also include other peripheral output devices such as speakers **254** and printer **256**, which may be connected through an output peripheral interface **258** or the like.

**[0035]** Computing system **200** may operate in a networked environment using logical connections to one or more remote computers, such as a remote computing system **260**. The remote computing system **260** may be a personal computer, a server, a router, a network PC, a peer device or other common network node, and typically includes many or all of the elements described above relative to the computing system **200**, although only a memory storage device **262** has been illustrated. The logical connections depicted include a local area network (LAN) **264** connecting through network interface **276** and a wide area network (WAN) **266** connecting via modem **278**, but may also include other networks. Such networking environments are commonplace in offices, enterprise-wide computer networks, intranets and the Internet.

**[0036]** For example, in the present embodiment, the computer system **200** may comprise the source machine from which data is being migrated, and the remote computing system **260** may comprise the destination machine. Note however that source and destination machines need not be connected by a network or any other means, but instead, data may be migrated via any media capable of being written by the source platform and read by the destination platform or platforms.

**[0037]** The central processor operating pursuant to operating system software such as IBM OS/2<sup>®</sup>, Linux<sup>®</sup>, UNIX<sup>®</sup>, Microsoft Windows<sup>®</sup>, Apple Mac OSX<sup>®</sup> and other commercially available operating systems provides functionality for the services provided by the present invention. The operating system or systems may reside at a central location or distributed locations (i.e., mirrored or standalone).

**[0038]** Software programs or modules instruct the operating systems to perform tasks such as, but not limited to, facilitating client requests, system maintenance, security, data storage, data backup, data mining, document/report generation and algorithms. The provided functionality may be embodied directly in hardware, in a software module executed by a processor or in any combination of the two.

**[0039]** Furthermore, software operations may be executed, in part or wholly, by one or more servers or a client's system, via hardware, software module or any combination of the two. A software module (program or executable) may reside in RAM memory, flash memory, ROM memory, EPROM memory, EEPROM memory, registers, hard disk, a removable disk, a CD-ROM, DVD, optical disk or any other form of storage medium known in the art. An exemplary storage medium is coupled to the processor such that the processor can read information from, and write information to, the storage medium. In the alternative, the storage medium may be integral to the processor. The processor and the

storage medium may also reside in an application specific integrated circuit (ASIC). The bus may be an optical or conventional bus operating pursuant to various protocols that are well known in the art.

**[0040]** **FIGURES 2 and 2a** depict graphical representations of the main GUI of the present embodiment. After the user connects to the system, for example, via the Internet, the user is presented with the main GUI. The main GUI depicts different POI superimposed onto a map. In the preferred embodiment, the map is a street map of a particular geographic area and the POI represent different attractions or activities. POI are positioned in approximate correlation on the street map as their real location. However, the street map is not an all inclusive street map. It does not list every available attraction, or even every single street. The street map is a heavily editorialized street map where a team of insiders familiar with the area and culture handpick POI to include on the street map. By editorializing the street map, users receive a far richer and gratifying experience because the user can rest assured that people knowledgeable with the area have personally taken the time to become familiar with the POI and by adding the POI to the map, have given their recommendation to it. Referring to both **Figures 2 and 2a**, the POI are grouped by category or genre such as: restaurants **300**, museums **302**, parks **304**, bars **306**, hotels **308**, shopping **310**, event centers **312**, and theaters **314**. This geographic representation of multiple POI provides a significant enhancement over existing city guides because it allows users to immediately assess other POI in close proximity to each other. This allows users to find additional or alternative POI that compliment and supplement a user's outing in a quick and efficient manner. Although the foregoing specifically itemizes certain categories, this disclosure is intended to include other categories of POI as would be clear to one with skill in the art, including, but not limited to: clubs, music venues, nightclubs, stores, recreation areas, sporting venues, churches, historical buildings, historical markers, and other POI. Further, subcategories of each of the foregoing can also be foreseen such as: art museums, history museums, state history museums, dance clubs, night clubs, different musical styles of dance clubs, live music venues, types of sporting venues, etc.

**[0041]** Returning to **Figures 2 and 2a**, each POI is represented on the map with an indicator or marker. In the preferred embodiment, the marker is a circle that is color coded to a particular category of POI (see **Figure 4**). This functionality aides the user in quickly identifying both similar and dissimilar categories of POI. However, the marker could be any image or icon capable of identifying a location on a map. The main GUI also has navigation controls **316**. These navigation controls allow the user to zoom in or out, pan the map North, South, West, or East, and reset the map to show all POI. The user will also be able to move the map in any direction by "grabbing" and moving the map. For example, a user could move the map by clicking, holding, and moving the map with a mouse. Referring to **Figure 2**, the GUI also provides fields for users to sign up for a newsletter **320**, including the user's name **322** and email address **324**, and a way to submit the information **326**. Finally, there is also a tab to expand the categories to show all POI listed under each category **318**. Referring to **Figure 2a**, additional functionality is shown. Specifically, the "this week" **317**, "coming" **319**, and "recent" **321** buttons provide insider information on upcoming events. The "sign up" button allows users to subscribe for a newsletter and other opportunities. The local/visitor **327** switch customizes the content delivered to the

user based on whether the user identifies themselves as a local or a visitor. The content customization is based on insider information and general insight into what most locals or visitors would enjoy seeing and doing. Additionally, a search **328** box is provided to permit users to search for specific POI and/or events. Finally, current local “headline” style information is provided **329**.

5 **[0042]** **FIGURE 3** depicts the main GUI with the categories tab **318** expanded. When the categories tab **318** is expanded, a listing of all POI under each category is shown **330**. Therefore, if a user looked under restaurants, the user would see a list of all the restaurants displayed as POI on the GUI. This provides the user an alternate way of locating a particular POI. If the user clicked on one of the listed POI, the map would automatically center itself on the POI. Further, in the preferred embodiment,  
10 the marker corresponding to the selected POI would change such that the user could easily identify which marker correlated to the selected POI. For example, the marker could: change color, change shape, move slightly, pulsate, blink, etc.

**[0043]** **FIGURES 4** and **4a** depict the main GUI with reference to several individual POI. As discussed previously, each POI is represented by some image or icon superimposed on a map. Further,  
15 each POI image, icon, or marker is color coded to a particular category of POI. Referring to **Figure 4**, for example, restaurants could be yellow **340**, museums – purple **330**, parks – green **334**, bars – light blue **342**, hotels – red **332**, shopping – dark blue **336**, event centers – dark green, and theaters – pink **338**. This functionality aides the user in quickly identifying both similar and dissimilar categories of POI. Although the foregoing is discussed with reference to particular colors being correlated to particular  
20 categories of POI, this disclosure is intended to encompass any color being assigned to any category or sub-category of POI. Therefore, by merely glancing at the GUI, a user could immediately determine there is a theatre **338** at the intersection of Richmond and Wesleyan **344**. Referring to both **Figures 4** and **4a**, when a user moved their cursor over one of the POI (commonly referred to as “rolling over”), a small pop-up could list basic information about that particular POI. For example, when a user moved a cursor  
25 over the POI **332**, a small pop-up appears giving the name of that particular POI – in this case, the name of the hotel “ZaZa” **346**. This basic information could include, but is not limited to: name, address, phone number, and category of attraction. Therefore, referring back to **Figure 4**, if the user were staying at the ZaZa hotel **346**, the user could immediately identify what other POI are in close proximity to the hotel by scanning the GUI and noting the color of the markers in close proximity to the hotel. In this  
30 example there is a museum **330** and a park **334** close to the hotel. The user would need only to scroll over the close markers to get additional basic and/or in-depth information.

**[0044]** **FIGURES 5** and **5a** depict the in-depth information window. When a user selects a particular POI, additional in-depth information is provided. For example, referring to **Figure 5**, if a user clicked on the POI for the hotel Americas, the in-depth information window **350** for Americas would be  
35 displayed. The name and category **352** of the user’s selection is displayed as is the color coded icon, image, or marker assigned to that particular category **358** to assist in quick identification of the category. Referring to both **Figures 5** and **5a**, one or more pictures, videos, or other visual identifications of the POI could be displayed **354**. This provides an opportunity to deliver significant information on the



selected POI that would otherwise be tedious to convey. For example, a picture or video could quickly depict the relative dress or sophistication of a restaurant, the general layout of a hotel, amenities, or other features. Additional in-depth information **356** would be provided below the picture/video **354**. This additional in-depth information **356** could include, but is not limited to: name, address, phone number, email, genre of attraction, fax number, specials, reviews, ratings, awards, events, hours, schedule, background, website links, menus, food style, prices, photos, specials, coupons, and store listings. Finally, the user is provided the ability to browse to the previous **358** or next **360** POI. An important feature of the present invention is this additional information will come from local insiders who are familiar with the particular POI, the city, and neighborhood characteristics. This provides a far richer and informative experience for users. In the preferred embodiment, the user would be able to browse to the previous or next POI in alphabetical order within the category. In an alternative embodiment, the user would be able to browse to the next closest POI in the category. In yet another embodiment, the user could browse to the next closest POI in any category. Referring now to **Figure 5a**, the category **366** could be displayed separate from the name of the attraction **368** without use of the image or icon associated with that particular category. Additionally, usability buttons **362** and **364** could provide extended functionality such as: email the information, print the information, view the information in a different format (e.g. portable document format – “PDF”), make the text larger, make the text smaller, and return to the default view.

**[0045]** **FIGURE 6** depicts the GUI displaying only a particular category of POI. The user has the ability to only show POI within certain categories. For example, **Figure 6** shows the GUI after a user has selected to display only restaurants **300**. This allows the user to tailor the GUI to only display markers for categories of POI the user is particularly interested in. Therefore, if the user was looking for a restaurant to start an outing, the user could select to view only restaurants without the other POI interfering. After selecting a restaurant, the user could return to the main listing to see all of the POI and evaluate what other attractions to visit. For example, a user may only want to see a play or movie after dinner. After identifying the restaurant the user wanted to visit, the user could select to only view theatres on the GUI and then look at theatres close to their chosen restaurant. Although only shown with respect to restaurants, this could also be done for any other category, sub-category, or combination of categories and/or sub-categories.

**[0046]** In addition to providing a feature rich editorialized street map showing POI, the disclosed subject matter also provides users with suggested itineraries. These itineraries can be broken into different categories similar to the particular POI discussed previously. Specifically, as a way of illustration and not of limitation, the itineraries could be divided into: residents, out of town guests, time of the outing, theme of the outing (romantic, fun, first date, imaginative, educational, outdoors, indoors, athletic, etc.), specific neighborhood or other geographic location, complimenting a particular activity or event (opera, theater, movie, dinner, drinks, museum, etc.), and others.

**[0047]** In the preferred embodiment, local insiders would assemble activities that compliment one another into suggested itineraries and make those itineraries available to users. Users then have the

ability to experience new locations and activities, compliment and expand a particular event, or otherwise spice up there day or night life. In an alternative and/or complimentary embodiment, users would be invited to suggest itineraries which would then be reviewed by the local insiders to ensure accuracy, credibility, and general applicability to the overall concept prior to releasing to all users. In yet another

5 embodiment, the system can automatically create itineraries based on user's activities. For example, if several users go to the theater and then a particular after hours club, the system could create an itinerary (this is an incredibly simple example, and the system is capable of creating for more complex itineraries from users actions and preferences). The variety of available options to include in any particular itinerary are limitless.

10 **[0048]** Additionally, users would be able to invite other users to participate in the itineraries through an "e-invitation" feature. By adding multiple users to an invitation, each invited user would receive notice of the invite and could then get additional information on the chosen itinerary. This enables groups of people to set up and distribute complex itineraries in a convenient, quick, and informative way. Finally, user created itineraries could be made public or private. If made private, only

15 the selected users could access the itinerary.

**[0049]** By integrating suggested itineraries into the other offerings described herein, the disclosed subject matter offers an additional dimension to assisting users explore a particular location in an easy, simplified, content rich environment which enables users to better explore, participate, and experience what a particular area has to offer.

20 **[0050]** **FIGURE 7** depicts a graphical screenshot of the dashboard concept of the disclosed subject matter. The dashboard **400** is similar to an online magazine that is specific to a geographic area and represents the single viewer that the user would be presented with. However, the dashboard has a much broader ability. The dashboard is more like an online operating system in that it is designed to be incredibly flexible (modular based design) with a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) module

25 editor and broad information processing and aggregation abilities. Integrating many of the other aspects of the disclosed subject matter into a magazine like format provides an additional way for the user to stay informed about upcoming events and happening in their region while quickly accessing other features of the disclosed subject matter. Only some of the features of the dashboard **400** will be discussed herein and are intended only as a brief sampling of information that could be contained and not an exhaustive list.

30 The dashboard **400**, would include localized information including items such as: top news story **402**, excerpts from blogs **404**, upcoming events and reviews **406**, best of, previously disclosed editorialized map **408**, music highlights **410**, music reviews **412**, local weather **414**, and other local news items **416**.

**[0051]** The dashboard **400** would provide a snapshot of the cultural community in a particular geographical area. Highlighting the areas cultural attractions, exhibits, and general happenings. In the

35 preferred embodiment, the dashboard **400** encompasses news, information, commentary, and reviews on art, music, theatre, fashion, and the influential people making up those communities as well as general information such as weather and local headlines. Within these realms, the dashboard **400** would provide content rich features such as pictures, audio, and video in a magazine format. In the preferred

embodiment, each portion of the dashboard **400** would link or otherwise provide access to more in depth related coverage. Again, the dashboard **400** would be heavily editorialized by local insiders familiar with the cultural happenings of a geographic area.

**[0052]** The dashboard **400** creates a locally focused lifestyle, social, and cultural portal that can be expanded to include wide ranging content from multiple providers. The system achieves this through a unique modular, web-based operating system. By allowing a variety of contributors to port their content into the system, easily edit, store, and distribute various forms of data, the dashboard **400** has the ability to deliver a comprehensive set of customized content to a user. The dashboard **400** differentiates itself from existing web-dash or “start page” products by its strong local focus and editorial voice.

**[0053]** While existing models provide for a user customizable interface, content from multiple outside sources, and even user community derived content, they fall short in several respects. Chief amongst these are the ideas of user accountability, locally focused content, content that is sufficiently specific yet relevant to a defined set or sets of demographics, a fresh editorial voice, and cutting edge technology.

**[0054]** The dashboard **400** enables any number of contributors to port content to the system and then allow the user to display that content in a single viewer in any number of customizable ways, while retaining the benefit of local insider editorial on the ported content.

**[0055]** A verification system is utilized whereby users supply verifiable data to ensure their authenticity. This verification could be achieved through a number of resources such as: PayPal, credit card verification, public records search, etc. This verification system helps to substantiate an additional aspect of the dashboard **400**, which is to enable community-building. By providing locally focused and verified information, the credibility and reliability of the information increases the user’s confidence in, reliance on, and ultimate use of the provided content.

**[0056]** Keeping with the locally driven core, the users will be able to interact with other users with similar interests while having confidence in the knowledge that everyone participating has been verified and is therefore a “real” person (at least to the extent that the verification process allows). Also, keeping with the editorial review, the administrators ensure the validity and relevance of contributors to the overall pool of information provided to the system. In the preferred embodiment, contributors would not be able to directly add content to the dashboard **400**. This editorial review differentiates the disclosed subject matter from existing services.

**[0057]** The user can define or customize the content that is displayed by category, interest, or other attribute. These filtering choices would be stored in the user’s preferences and relevant content would be delivered once the user logged into the system.

**[0058]** As briefly discussed earlier, the community-building aspects of the disclosed subject matter are unique through their local focus and emphasis on accountability. By integrating a verification process, virtual identities are linked to actual users. Therefore, the individual user can be held accountable by the greater community for their content, actions, and views. This further enhances the ability of the system to be self-policing.

**[0059]** One of the unique features of disclosed subject matter is its ability to cross-reference and link the mapping, itinerary, and dashboard functionality together. For example, users could create an itinerary and/or invitation with the help of the mapping feature and link multiple pieces of content from different providers together to add reviews and other pertinent information. This linking could be accomplished through using known hypertext markup language (“HTML”) links, actually inserting the chosen content into the invitation (e.g. picture, video, text, etc.), or other means. Then, using the invitation feature, invite other users to participate and/or attend the customized itinerary.

**[0060]** **FIGURE 8** depicts an exemplary graphical depiction of a compiled invitation. The invitation **420** provides pertinent information about the night’s activities. A title and the time **422** are provided. Next, the user has chosen to integrate content regarding the specific opera **424** the group will see. This could be reviews, back-story, or other information regarding the opera. Next, a general overview of the itinerary is provided **426** including more integrated content regarding the nights events and stops including a restaurant **430** and a wine bar **432**. Again, this additional integrated content could be reviews, comments, menus, special events, or other information. Also, the invitation shows other people who have been invited **428** and provides a means to RSVP **434**. Although this example invitation included specific items, the user could provide less, more, or different information or content than is shown in this example.

**[0061]** Additionally, the system is able to track user behavior and actions. This usage data could be mined, conglomerated, or otherwise evaluated and analyzed to provide custom and/or targeted content based on the particular user’s interests or even based on other users having similar interests. Not only could this data be used to provide individual users a more focused and applicable experience, but also to provide more targeted advertising and editorial content.

**[0062]** Although described with particular reference to personal computers, the claimed subject matter can be implemented on any device capable of communicating via a network, including, but not limited to: personal digital assistants, mobile digital assistants, kiosks, cellular and mobile phones, etc. Furthermore, though described with particular reference to the Internet, the claimed subject matter can be implemented via any communication medium.

**[0063]** Those with skill in the arts will recognize that the disclosed embodiments have relevance to a wide variety of areas in addition to those specific examples described below.

**[0064]** All references, including publications, patent applications, and patents, cited herein are hereby incorporated by reference to the same extent as if each reference were individually and specifically indicated to be incorporated by reference and were set forth in its entirety herein.

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A system for an interactive metro guide map, the system comprising:  
a computer communicably coupled to a remote computer via a communication medium,  
said remote computer being operated by a user;  
5           said computer transmitting information via said communication medium to said remote  
computer;  
          said information including a map of a geographic area, said map having at least one icon,  
wherein each said icon:  
          represents an attraction;  
10           is color coded to a particular genre of attraction; and  
          is positioned on said map in a manner such that said icons are displayed on said  
map in approximate correlation to said attractions actual geographic location;  
          said computer transmitting basic attraction specific information to said remote computer  
in response to said user rolling over said icon;  
15           said computer transmitting in depth attraction specific information to said remote  
computer in response to said user activating said icon;  
          said computer allowing a user to define which genre of attractions are displayed;  
          said computer allowing said user to reposition said map; and  
          said computer allowing said user to zoom in or out of said map.
- 20           2. The system of claim 1, wherein said genre of attractions include at least one of the  
following:  
          restaurants;  
          bars;  
          clubs;  
25           hotels;  
          shopping centers;  
          stores;  
          theatres;  
          event centers;  
30           museums;  
          recreation areas;  
          sporting venues;  
          parks;  
          historical sites; and  
35           other points of interest.

3. The system of claim 2, wherein said basic attraction specific information includes at least one of the following:

- name;
- address;
- 5 phone number; and
- genre of attraction.

4. The system of claim 3, wherein said in depth attraction specific information includes at least one of the following:

- name;
- 10 address;
- phone number;
- email;
- genre of attraction;
- 15 fax number;
- specials;
- reviews;
- ratings;
- awards;
- 20 events;
- hours;
- schedule;
- background;
- website links;
- menus;
- 25 food style;
- prices;
- photos;
- specials;
- coupons; and
- 30 store listings.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein said communication medium is the Internet.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein said genre of attractions include at least one of the following:

- 5 restaurants;
- bars;
- 5 clubs;
- hotels;
- shopping centers;
- stores;
- 10 theatres;
- event centers;
- museums;
- recreation areas;
- sporting venues;
- 15 parks;
- historical sites; and
- other points of interest.

7. The system of claim 6, wherein said basic attraction specific information includes at least one of the following:

- 20 name;
- address;
- phone number; and
- genre of attraction.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein said in depth attraction specific information includes at least one of the following:

- 25 name;
- address;
- phone number;
- email;
- genre of attraction;
- 30 fax number;
- specials;
- reviews;
- ratings;
- awards;
- 35 events;
- hours;
- schedule;

background;  
website links;  
menus;  
food style;  
5 prices;  
photos;  
specials;  
coupons; and  
store listings.

10 9. A computer readable storage medium having a program for an interactive metro guide map, the program comprising the steps of:

allowing remote communication between a server and a user via a communication medium;

15 displaying a map of a geographic area, said map having at least one icon; wherein, each said icon represents an attraction and each said icon is color coded to a particular genre of attraction;

displaying said icons on said map in a manner such that said icons are displayed on said map in approximate correlation to said attractions actual geographic location;

20 displaying basic attraction specific information when said icon is rolled over;  
displaying in depth attraction specific information when said icon is activated;  
allowing a user to define which genre of attractions are displayed;  
allowing said user to reposition said map; and  
allowing said user to zoom in or out of said map.

25 10. The storage medium of claim 9, wherein said genre of attractions include at least one of the following:

restaurants;  
bars;  
clubs;  
hotels;  
30 shopping centers;  
stores;  
theatres;  
event centers;  
museums;  
35 recreation areas;  
sporting venues;  
parks;



historical sites; and  
other points of interest.

11. The storage medium of claim 10, wherein said basic attraction specific information includes at least one of the following:

5 name;  
address;  
phone number; and  
genre of attraction.

12. The storage medium of claim 11, wherein said in depth attraction specific information includes at least one of the following:

10 name;  
address;  
phone number;  
email;  
15 genre of attraction;  
fax number;  
specials;  
reviews;  
ratings;  
20 awards;  
events;  
hours;  
schedule;  
background;  
25 website links;  
menus;  
food style;  
prices;  
photos;  
30 specials;  
coupons; and  
store listings.

13. The storage medium of claim 9, wherein said communication medium is the Internet.

14. The storage medium of claim 13, wherein said genre of attractions include at least one of the following:

restaurants;

5 bars;  
 clubs;  
 hotels;  
 shopping centers;  
 stores;  
 theatres;  
 event centers;  
 museums;  
 recreation areas;  
 10 sporting venues;  
 parks;  
 historical sites; and  
 other points of interest.

15 15. The storage medium of claim 14, wherein said basic attraction specific information includes at least one of the following:  
 name;  
 address;  
 phone number; and  
 genre of attraction.

20 16. The storage medium of claim 15, wherein said in depth attraction specific information includes at least one of the following:  
 name;  
 address;  
 phone number;  
 25 email;  
 genre of attraction;  
 fax number;  
 specials;  
 reviews;  
 30 ratings;  
 awards;  
 events;  
 hours;  
 schedule;  
 35 background;  
 website links;  
 menus;

food style;  
prices;  
photos;  
specials;  
coupons; and  
store listings.

5

17. A method of using an interactive metro guide map, the method comprising the steps of:  
allowing remote communication between a server and a user via a communication  
medium;

10

displaying a map of a geographic area, said map having at least one icon; wherein, each  
said icon represents an attraction and each said icon is color coded to a particular genre of  
attraction;

displaying said icons on said map in a manner such that said icons are displayed on said  
map in approximate correlation to said attractions actual geographic location;

15

displaying basic attraction specific information when said icon is rolled over;  
displaying in depth attraction specific information when said icon is activated;  
allowing a user to define which genre of attractions are displayed;  
allowing said user to reposition said map; and  
allowing said user to zoom in or out of said map.

20

18. The method of claim 17, wherein said genre of attractions include at least one of the  
following:

restaurants;

bars;

clubs;

25

hotels;

shopping centers;

stores;

theatres;

event centers;

30

museums;

recreation areas;

sporting venues;

parks;

historical sites; and

35

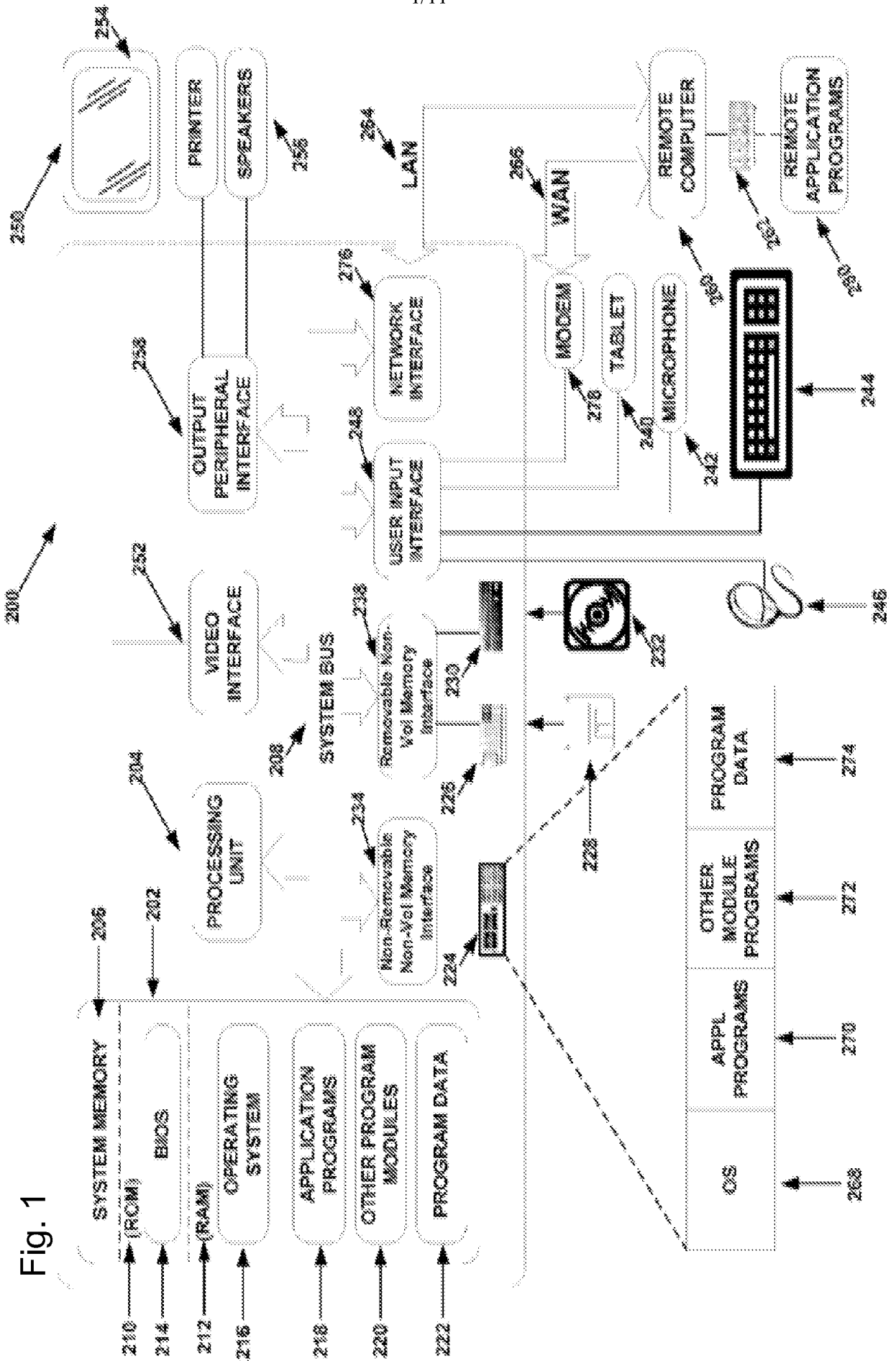
other points of interest.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein said basic attraction specific information includes at least one of the following:

- name;
- address;
- 5 phone number; and
- genre of attraction.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein said in depth attraction specific information includes at least one of the following:

- name;
- 10 address;
- phone number;
- email;
- genre of attraction;
- 15 fax number;
- specials;
- reviews;
- ratings;
- awards;
- events;
- 20 hours;
- schedule;
- background;
- website links;
- menus;
- 25 food style;
- prices;
- photos;
- specials;
- coupons; and
- 30 store listings.



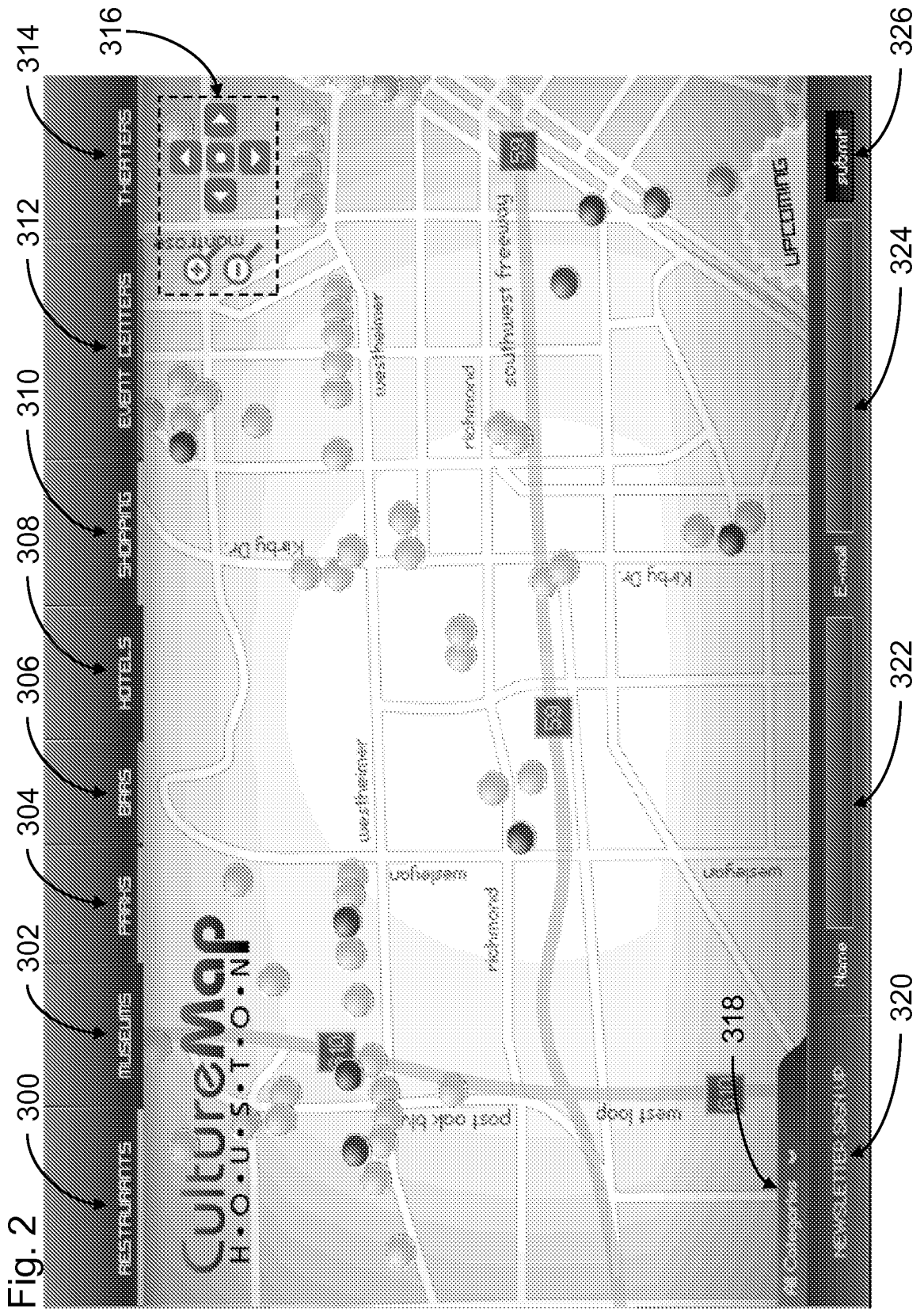




Fig. 2a

Fig. 3

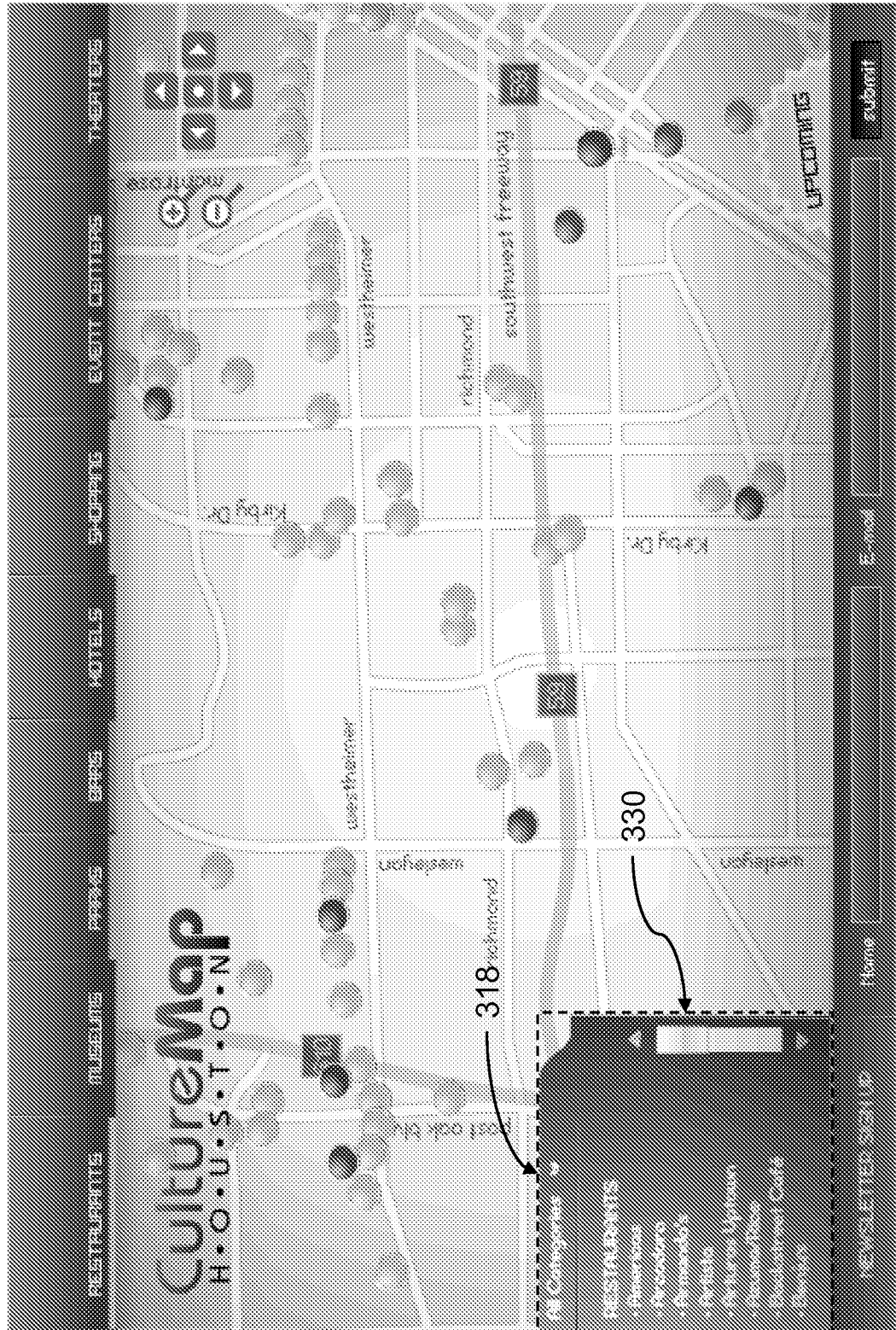




Fig. 4

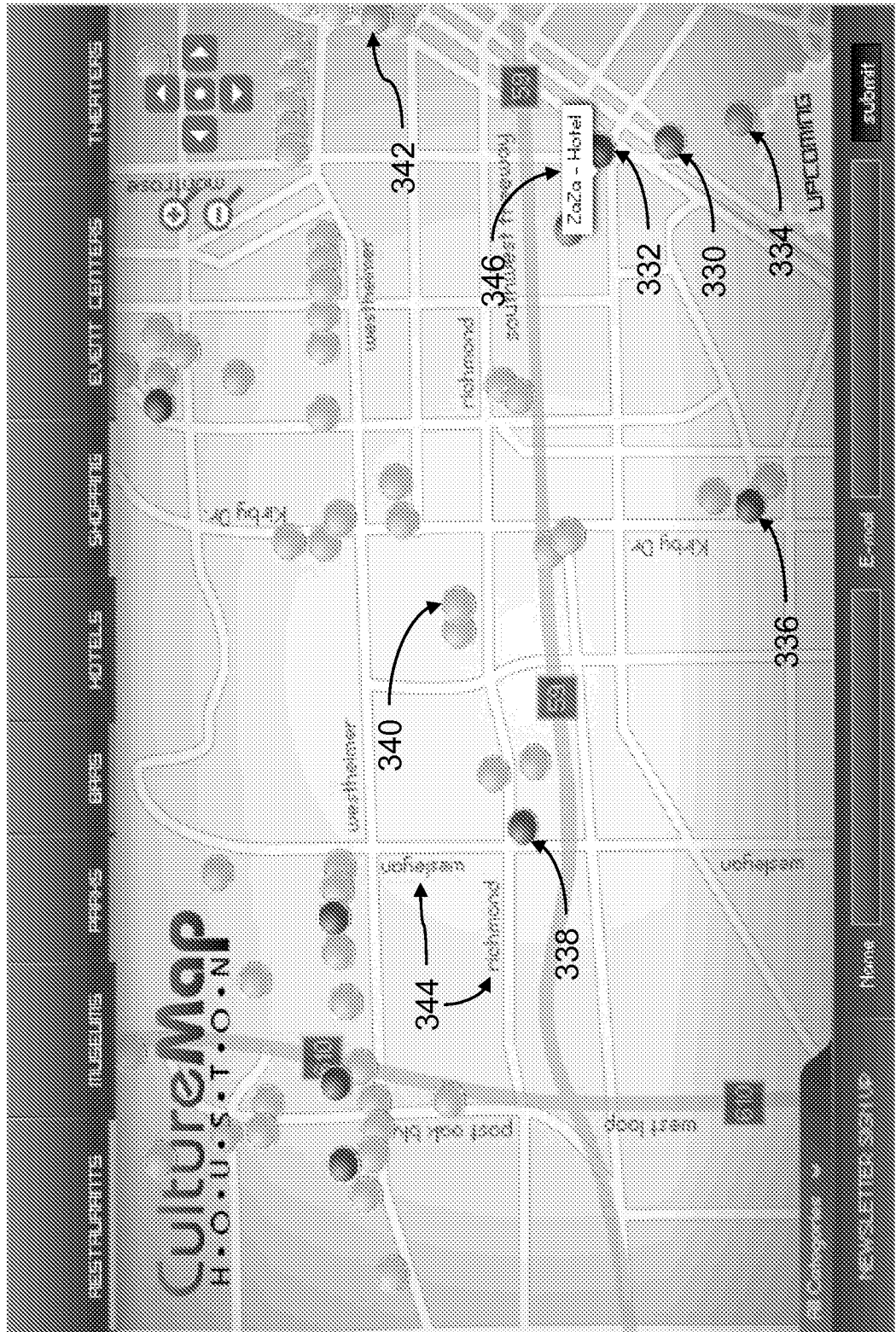


Fig. 4a

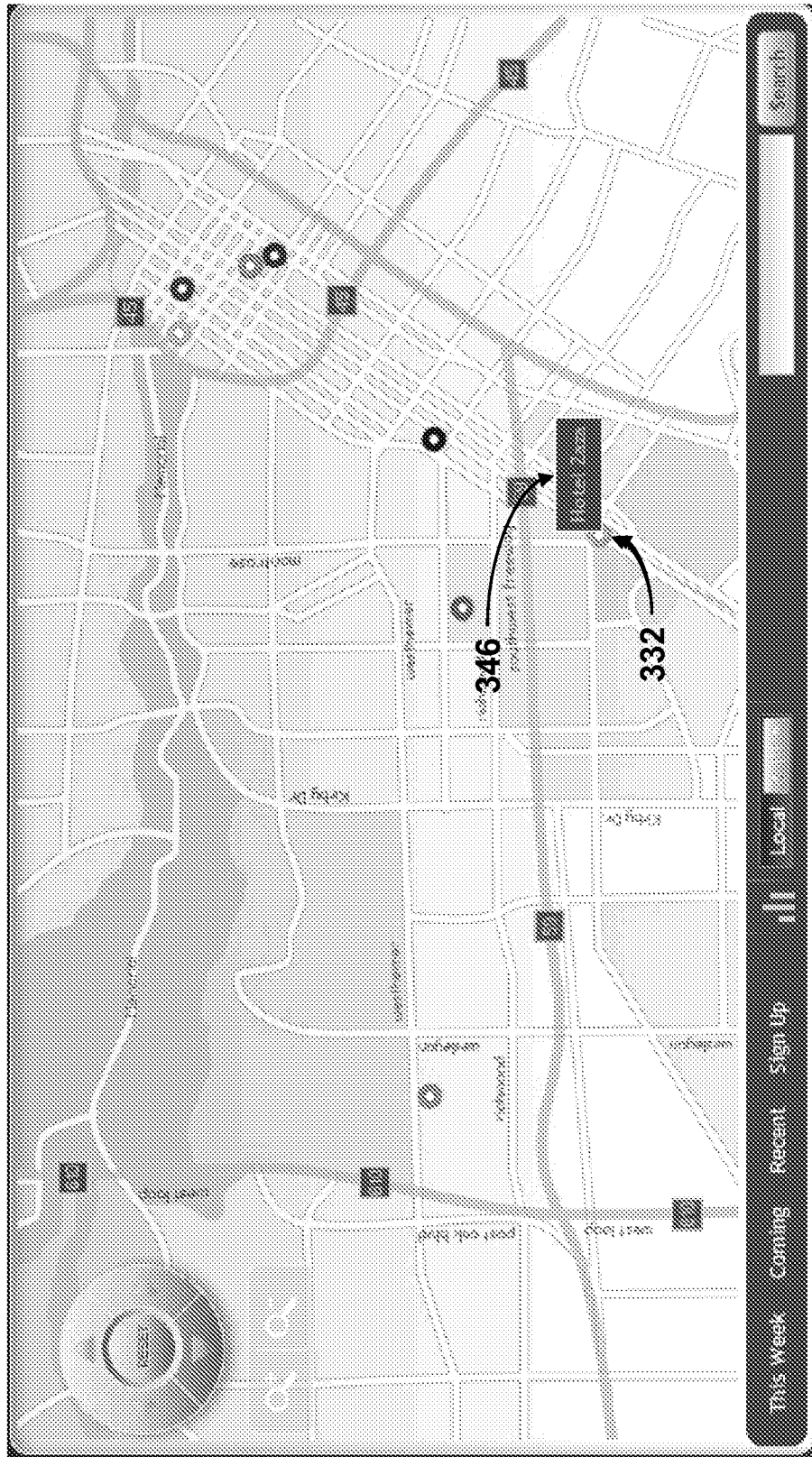
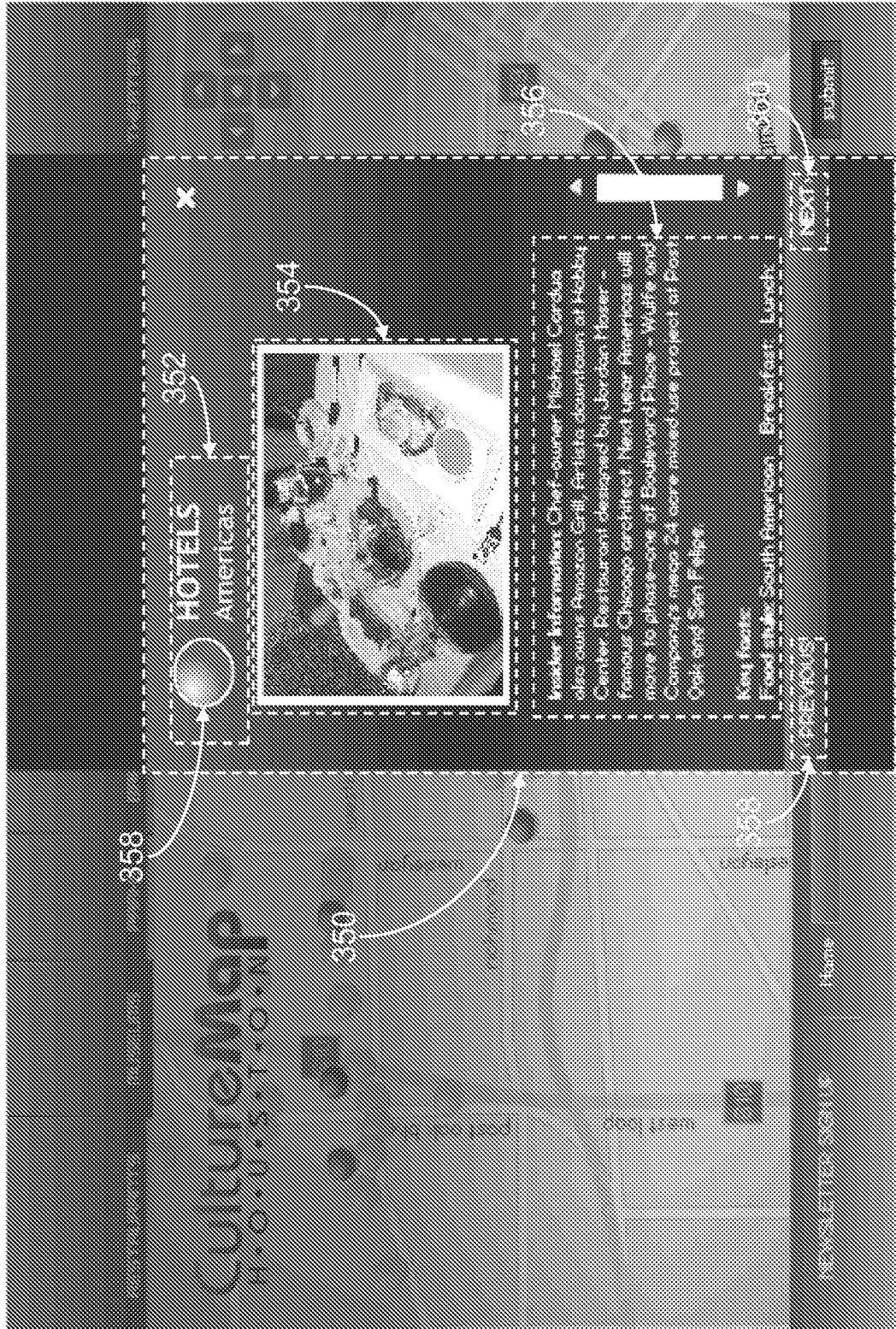


Fig. 5



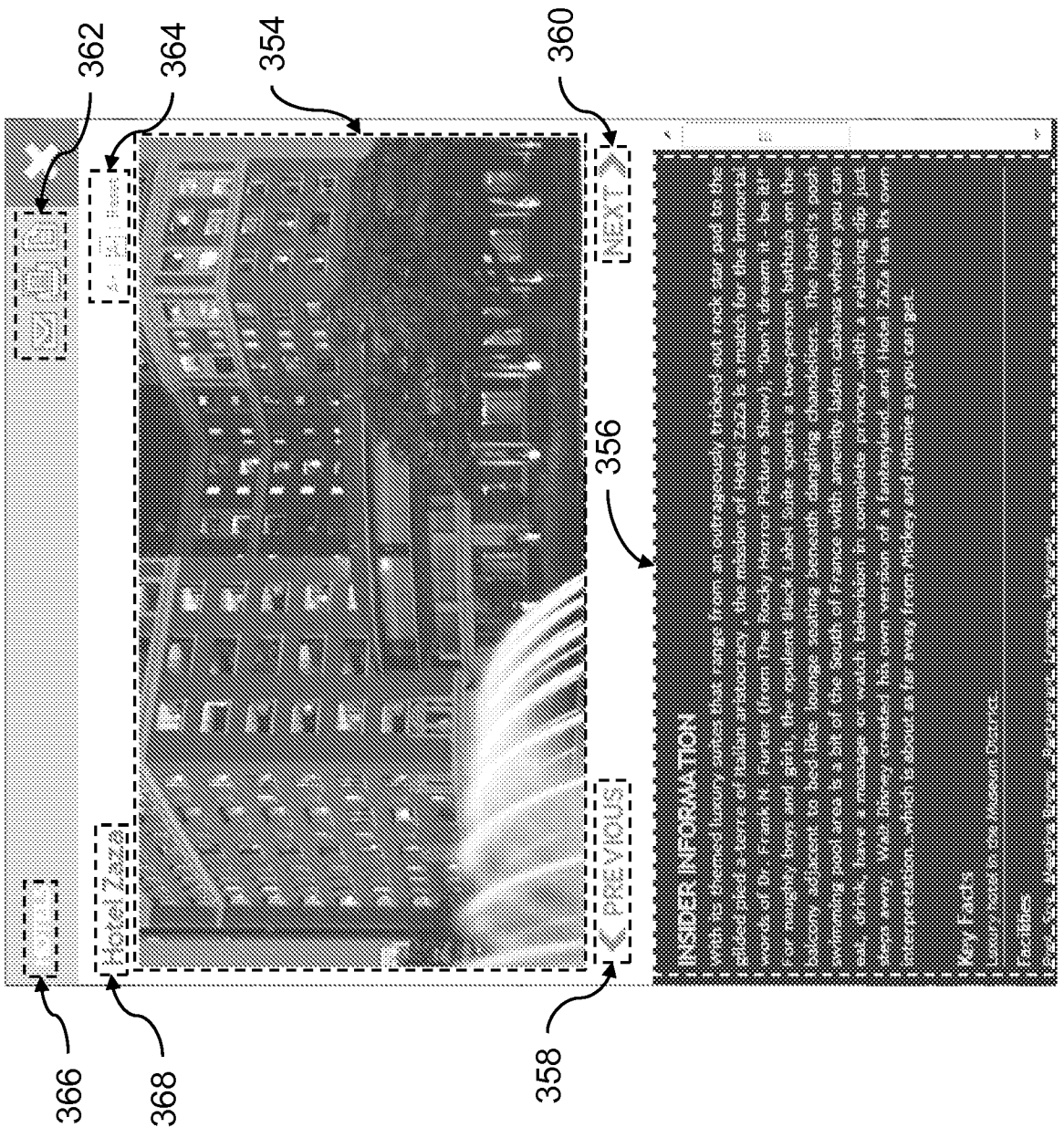


Fig. 5a

Fig. 6

300

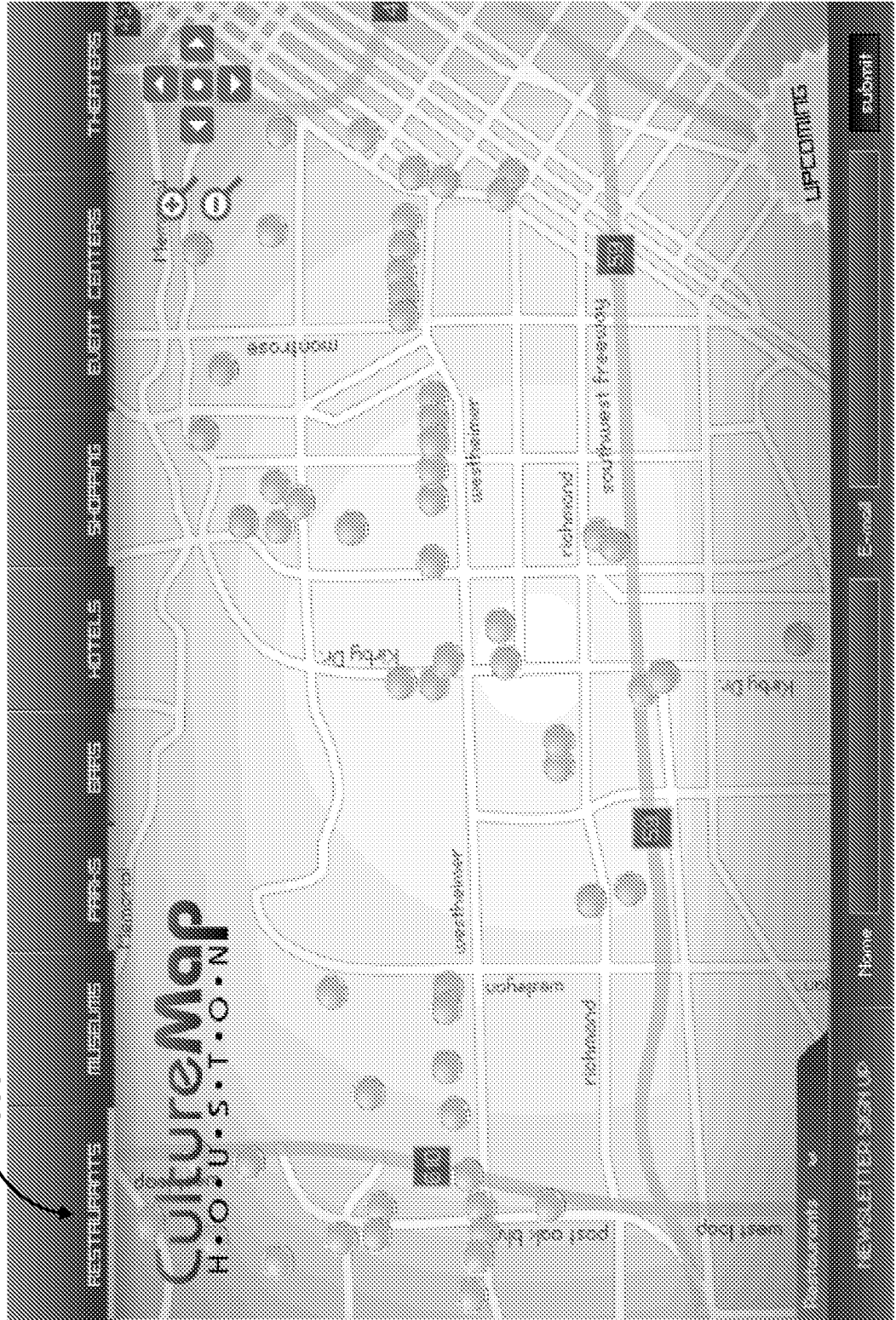
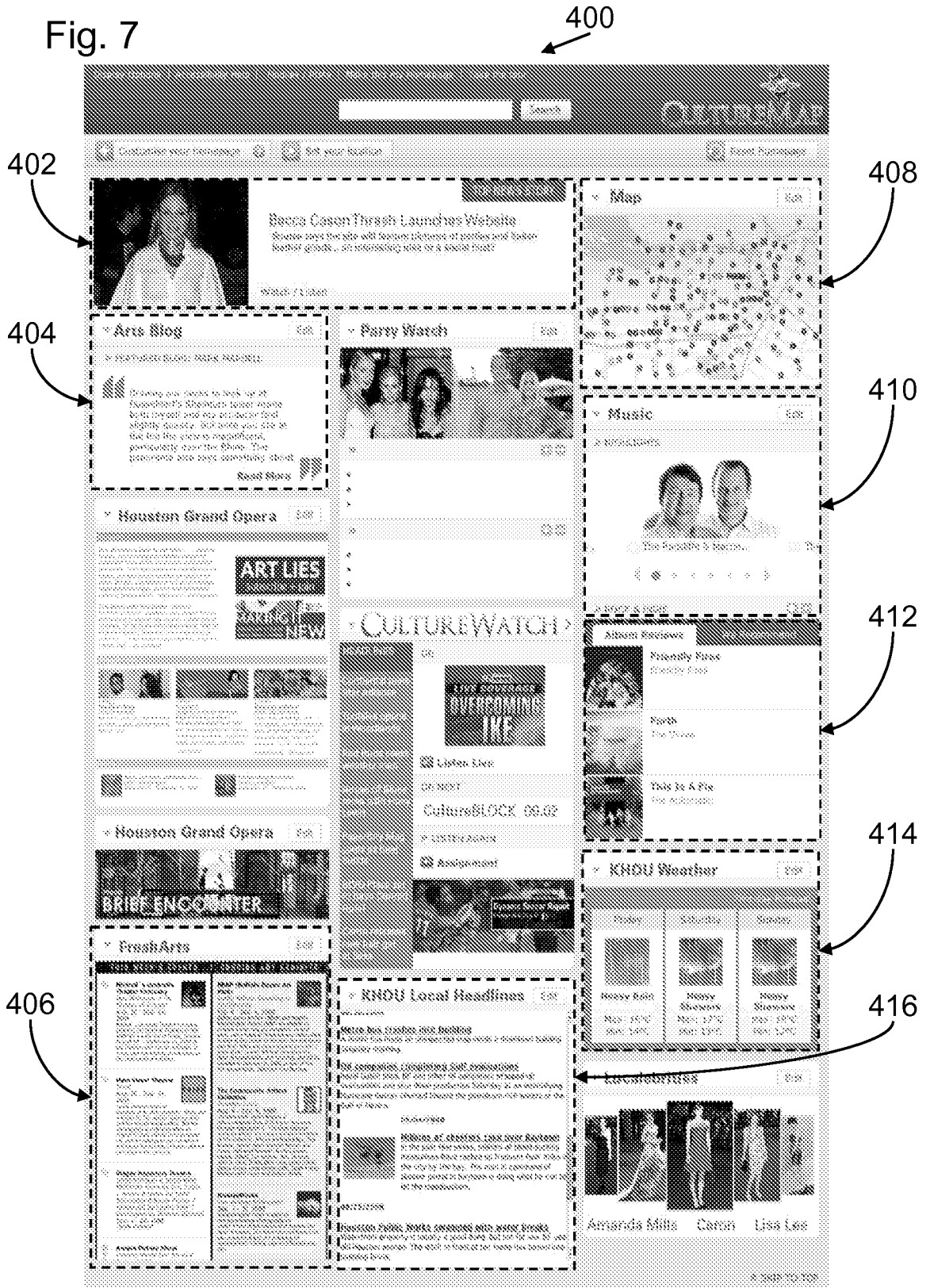


Fig. 7



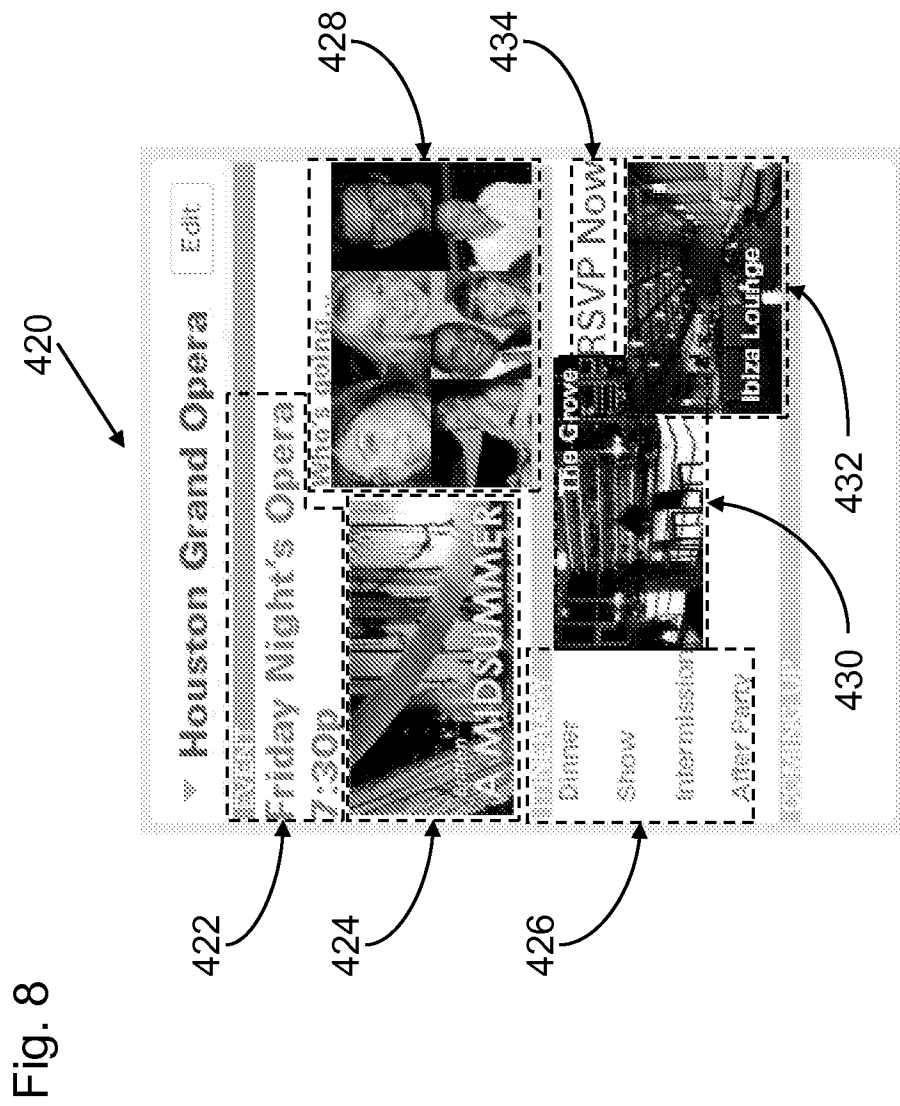


Fig. 8

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US 09/60013

<b>A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER</b> IPC(8) - G06F 15/16 (2010.01) USPC - 709/217 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
<b>B. FIELDS SEARCHED</b> Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) USPC - 709/217 Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched USPC: 707/103R, 104.1; 709/204, 205, 217-219; 715/205, 207, 233, 273, 275 Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used) Dialog Classic (Chinese Pat Abstr; Derwent Index, EPFT, French Pat, Jap Abstr, USPFT, WIPO/PCT PFT); Google Scholar; Terms searched: ADDRESS, ASSOCIAT, ATTRACTION, CLICK, COD, COLOR, COMPUTER, CORRELAT, DATABASE, DEFIN, DISPLAY, DISTANT, ENLARG, ENLARGE, GENRE, GEOGRAPH, GRAPHIC, ICON, IMAGE, INTERACTIVE, INTERNET, MAGNIF, MAP...		
<b>C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT</b>		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2003/0182052 A1 (DeLorme et al.) 25 September 2003 (25.09.2003); entire document, especially: fig 1P, 2A; para [0017], [0042]-[0043], [0047]-[0048], [0050]-[0051], [0057], [0073], [0075], [0079], [0082], [0099], [0114]-[0115], [0136], [0144], [0149], [0159], [0187], [0252]	1-20
A	US 2001/0030667 A1 (Kelts) 18 October 2001 (18.10.2001); entire document	1-20
A	US 2004/0073538 A1 (Leishman et al.) 15 April 2004 (15.04.2004); entire document	1-20
A	US 2006/0026170 A1 (Kreitler et al.) 02 February 2006 (02.02.2006); entire document	1-20
A	US 2006/0242605 A1 (Kim et al.) 26 October 2006 (26.10.2006); entire document	1-20
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input type="checkbox"/>		
* Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "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 "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art "&" document member of the same patent family		
Date of the actual completion of the international search 10 January 2010 (10.01.2010)		Date of mailing of the international search report 20 JAN 2010
Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US, Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. 571-273-3201		Authorized officer: Lee W. Young PCT Helpdesk: 571-272-4300 PCT OSP: 571-272-7774