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(54) **METHOD AND DEVICE FOR ORDERING A CUSTOM ORTHOPEDIC DEVICE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

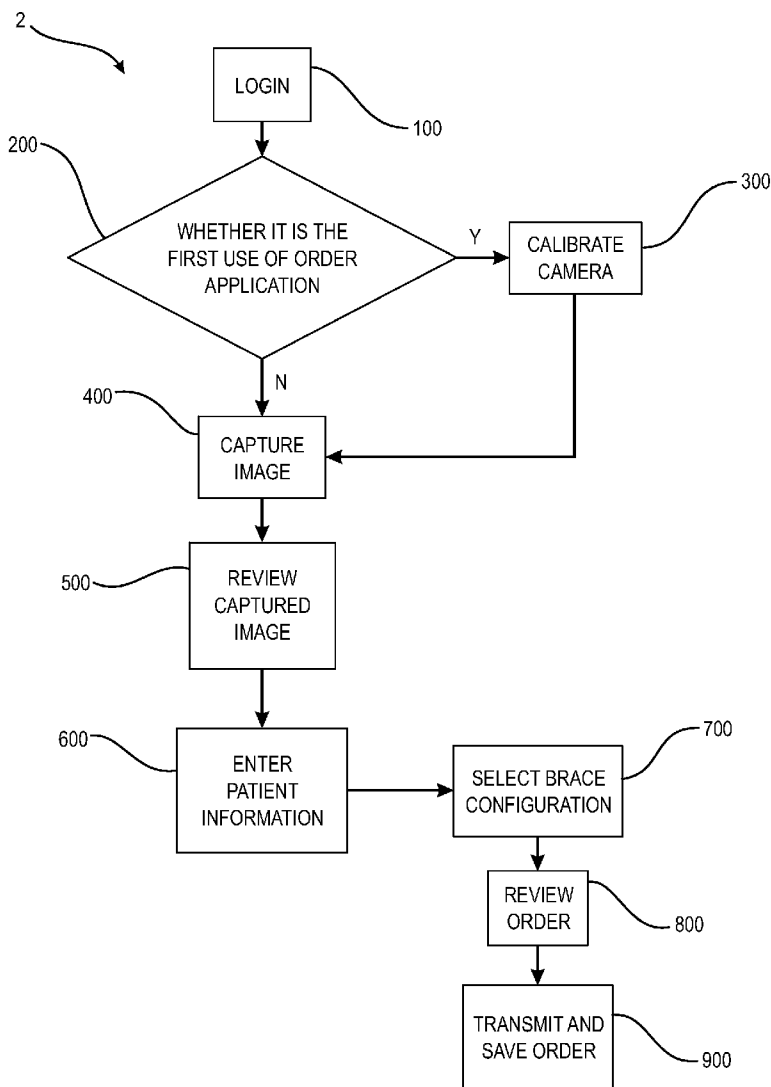
(21) Appl. No.: **14/011,300**

A method and device for digital measuring and ordering a custom orthopedic device includes an interactive method intended to assist clinicians select, measure and submit precise specifications for patients requiring custom orthopedic devices. The method includes a plurality of menus permitting the clinician to input specifications and submit orders electronically with the specifications and other data packaged together. The method and device include visualization indications to appropriately ensure image capture of a limb from various angles, including posterior, anterior, lateral and medial angles.

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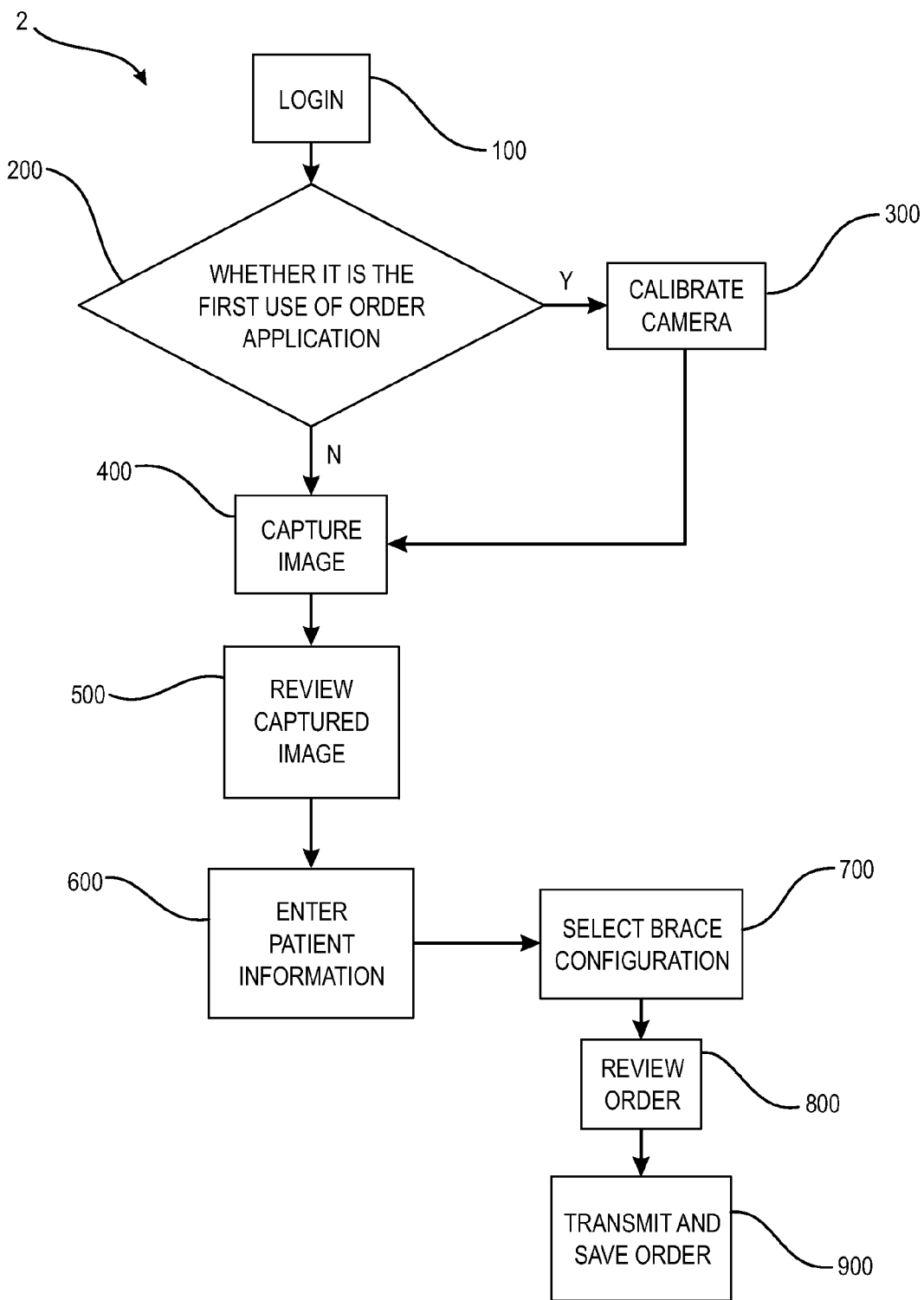


FIG. 1

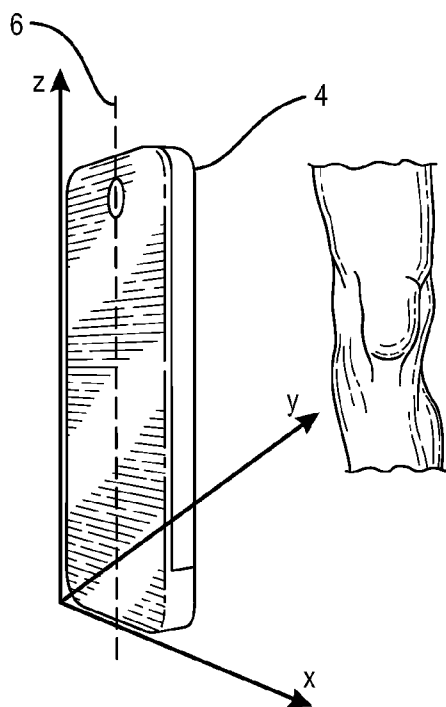


FIG. 2

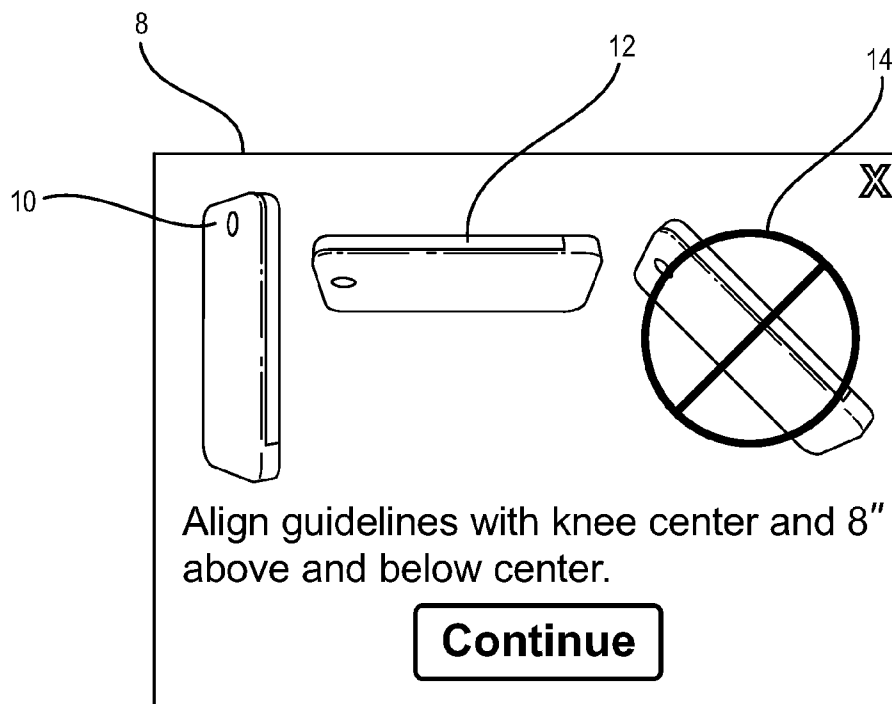


FIG. 3

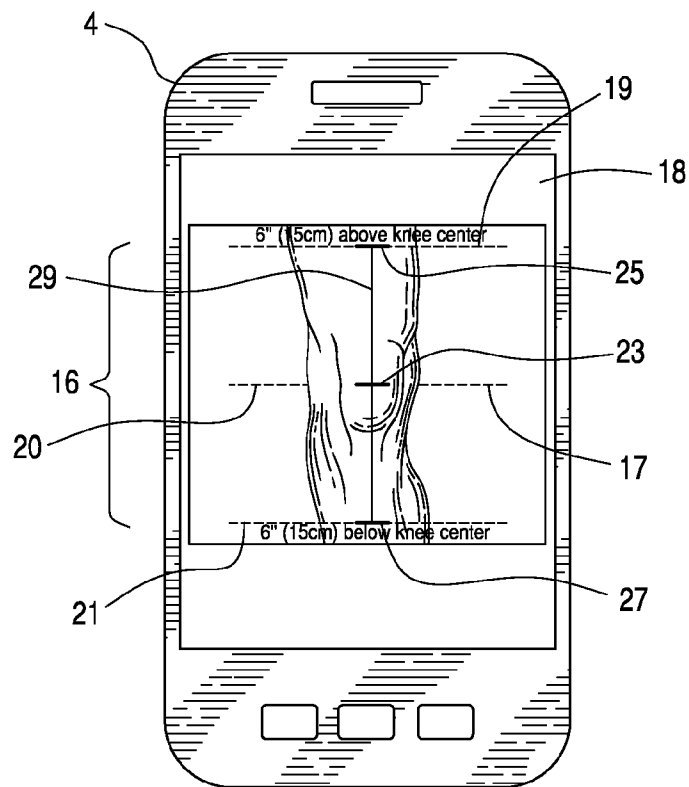


FIG. 4

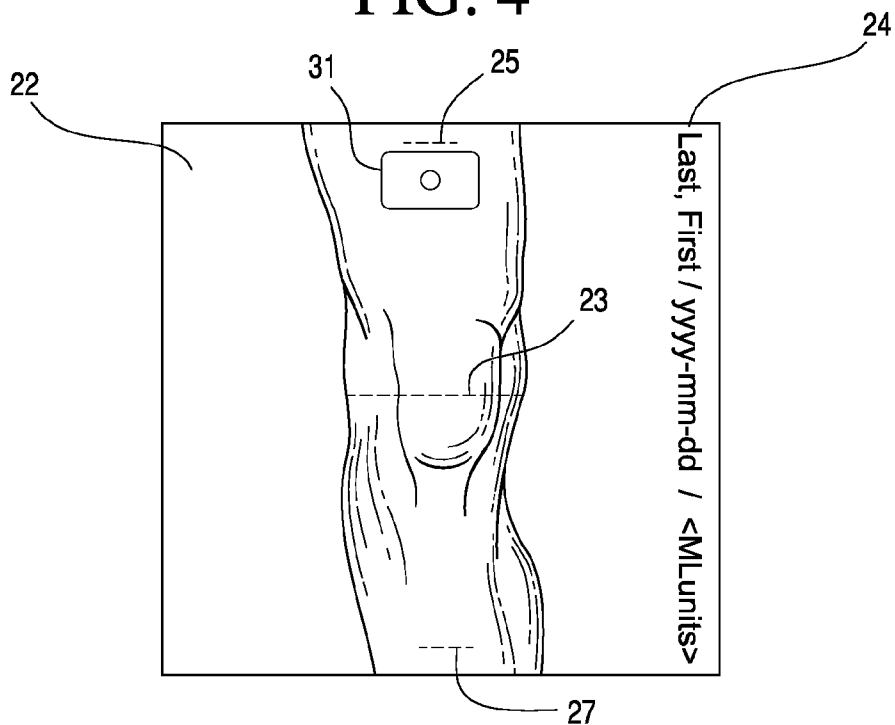


FIG. 5

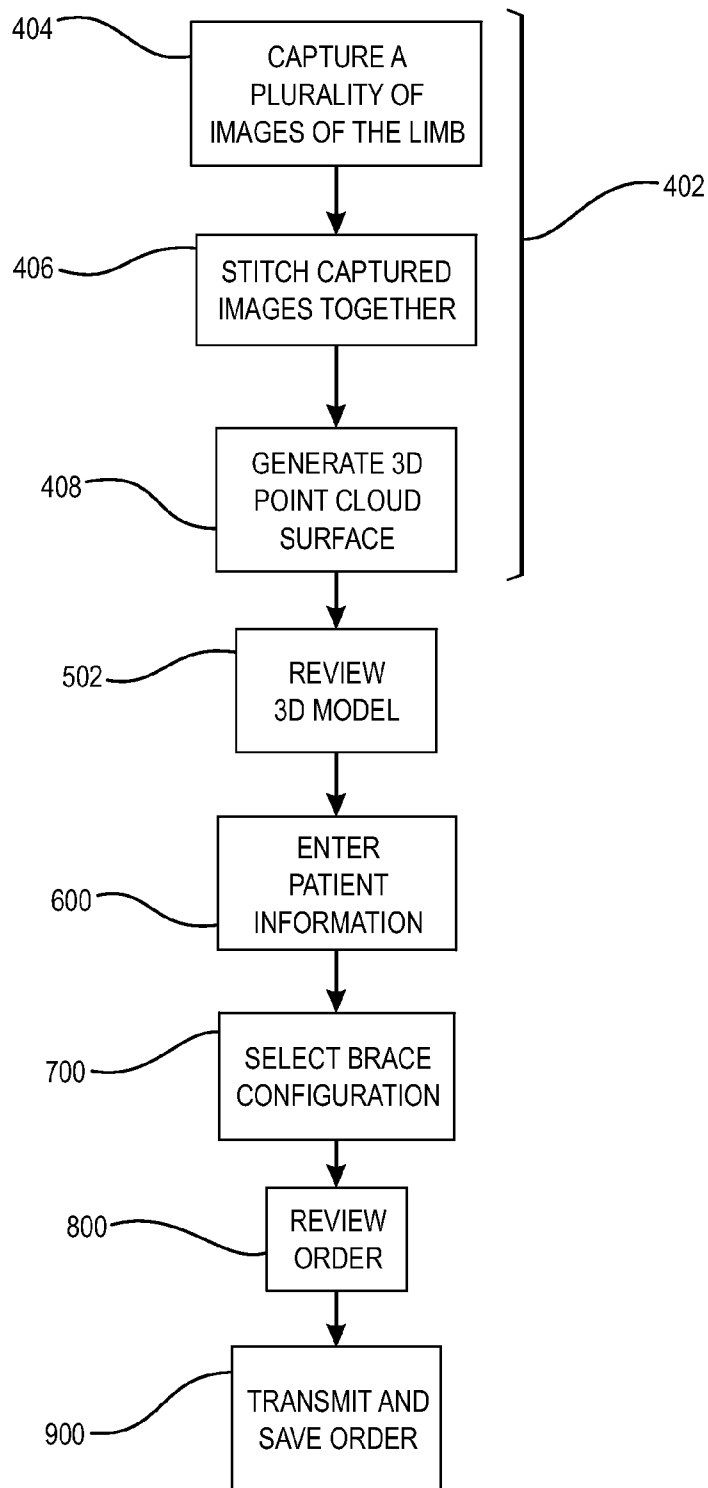


FIG. 6

METHOD AND DEVICE FOR ORDERING A CUSTOM ORTHOPEDIC DEVICE

FIELD OF THE DISCLOSURE

[0001] The present disclosure relates to a method and device for ordering a custom orthopedic device including providing security provisions, receiving measurement information, capturing an image of the appropriate portion of the limb, and submitting ordering requests.

BACKGROUND

[0002] To provide customized support for a joint, a clinician may provide a patient with a custom fitted orthopedic device adapted to the specific anatomical dimensions of the individual patient. A common orthopedic device for customization is a knee brace. A patient will typically obtain a customized brace through a clinician having the expertise to assure that the orthopedic device fits the patient properly.

[0003] A clinician can prepare the brace himself, or order a custom orthopedic device remotely through the mail or by submitting an order over mail, phone, fax or the Internet. During the ordering process, the clinician typically provides the manufacturer or seller (“provider”) with an image of a portion of the limb including the joint and measurements of the limb around the joint. The custom orthopedic brace is produced based on the submitted image of the limb and measurements. The provider may require the image of the limb be captured at a certain orientation, angle, height, and distance relative to the limb to ensure that the captured image accurately portrays the dimensions and proportions of the limb. Appropriate tags, reference indicia and reference markings of anatomy are often placed on the limb to identify the patient, the limb, and any other necessary information if the photo is misplaced from an order form.

[0004] It is undesirable for the picture to be taken when the camera is at an angle relative to the limb (angle normal to the line of progression of the limb) or when the limb is not aligned with the center of the image since such an image would inaccurately portray the dimensions and proportions of the limb. Producing a custom orthopedic brace based on such a misaligned image results in a poorly fitting brace. Likewise, poor resolution or lack of indicia applied on the limb may impede the producer in fully understanding the contours of the patient’s limb.

[0005] Using a conventional camera, the photographer must estimate or otherwise measure the specified distance between the camera and the limb, the specified portion of the limb to capture in the image, and the appropriate orientation of the camera relative to the limb. Since the conventional camera does not provide feedback about the angle or orientation at which the camera is held, it is difficult for the photographer to determine whether the image of the limb being captured meets the requirements of the manufacturer or seller without additional aids.

[0006] The patient may need to use different devices to complete the entire ordering process. If the image of the limb is captured with a conventional digital camera, the image must then be transferred to a computer before the order and image can be uploaded over the Internet to the server of the manufacturer or seller.

[0007] While providing a photo is useful in understanding the patient’s anatomy, dimensional measurements are likewise required. Various forms are required for completion by

the clinician to determine measurement data and patient personal information. Other forms require the clinician to indicate brace models, features, accessories, colors, etc. From the requirement for forms and a photo, the ordering process both complicated and risks a mismatch of documents for the order.

[0008] The features of the disclosure provide a solution to the need to reduce image and limb misalignment and improve the ease of capturing an image of the limb and of ordering a custom orthopedic device without multiple forms.

SUMMARY

[0009] According to a method for ordering a custom orthopedic device for a joint, the method includes aligning a viewfinder image displayed on a screen and generated by an image sensor of a portable device with at least one predetermined portion of a limb including a joint. The method involves capturing and storing at least one image of the portion of the limb using the image sensor of the portable device based on at least one guideline. The at least one captured image is associated with measurements of the limb, and patient information entered into the portable device. The order is transmitted to the provider and contains the at least one captured image, the measurements of the limb, and the patient information from the portable device. The at least one guideline may be a depth of field guideline, a horizontal orientation guideline, a vertical orientation guideline, a tilt guideline, or a limb alignment guideline.

[0010] The at least one image of the limb may satisfy the depth of field guideline, the horizontal or the vertical orientation guideline, the tilt angle guideline, and the limb alignment guideline. The limb alignment guideline is a depth of field guideline overlaid on the viewfinder image. The depth of field guideline may be a reference frame for a first distance above a joint, a second distance below a joint, and a centering of the limb and joint in the captured image.

[0011] According to a variation, the first and second distances are the same and referenced from a knee axis line. The distances above and below the joint may be aligned with the depth of field guideline in the viewfinder image before capturing the image.

[0012] Once the orientation of the portable device relative to the limb satisfies the horizontal angle guideline or vertical angle guideline and the tilt angle guideline, the portable device enables image capture. The method may also include calibrating the image sensor of the portable device.

[0013] The method may include executing an ordering application, determining whether the ordering application has been previously executed. The image sensor may be calibrated upon the determination that the ordering application has not been previously executed. The image of the limb enables capture upon the determination that the ordering application has been previously executed.

[0014] The method may include reviewing the captured image of the limb and selecting a custom orthopedic device configuration. The step of reviewing the captured image of the limb includes viewing the captured image with an overlaid depth of field guideline to confirm the captured portion of the limb satisfies the overlaid depth of field guideline. The method may also include entering basic patient information into the portable device including measurements of the limb at various locations on the limb. The captured image may be overlaid with the basic patient information. The overlaid captured image may be stored in the portable device.

[0015] The method can involve configuring the custom orthopedic device, reviewing the order, and storing the order in a memory of the portable device. At least one previous order may be stored in the memory of the portable device. The order may be transmitted as an e-mail containing the patient information and the saved, captured image of the limb.

[0016] In an embodiment of the device, the device includes an image sensor configured to capture an image, a display, a gyroscope and/or accelerometer, a communication interface, a processor, and a memory. The processor is configured to enable capturing an image of a portion of a limb including a joint using the image sensor based on at least one guideline, and the image of the limb satisfies the at least one guideline. The gyroscope and/or accelerometer is configured to provide orientation data to the processor. The communication interface is configured to transmit an order containing the captured image and patient information from the apparatus over a network to a provider. The at least one guideline is at least one of a depth of field guideline, a horizontal orientation guideline, a vertical orientation guideline, a tilt guideline, or a limb alignment guideline.

[0017] The method may include a login page requiring clinician and patient input. Upon entry of the information on the login page, the user is directed to an order configuration home screen or page. From the home screen, the user may select many pages for making the customized order. The user may first select the image capture and input measurements, followed by entering patient information, orthopedic device (brace) configuration, and any other order information. The user is not limited to a sequence of page use, other than upon entry of all data fields and appropriate image capture, the order is sent to the provider.

[0018] The limb alignment guideline is a depth of field guideline overlaid on a viewfinder image. The depth of field guideline is a reference frame for a first distance above a joint, a second distance below a joint, and a centering of the limb and joint in the captured image. The processor is configured to provide an indication of the orientation of the device on the display. The processor is configured to calibrate the image sensor by setting the image sensor to a first resolution and a first zoom level. At least one image of anatomical landmarks or markings on the limb is captured. A three-dimensional model of the limb is generated from the markings along with circumferential measurements.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0019] The device and method for ordering a custom orthopedic device is described with reference to the accompanying drawings which show preferred embodiments according to the device described herein. It will be noted that the device as disclosed in the accompanying drawings is illustrated by way of example only. The various elements and combinations of elements described below and illustrated in the drawings can be arranged and organized differently to result in embodiments which are still within the spirit and scope of the device described herein.

[0020] FIG. 1 is an overview of the steps in an embodiment of the custom orthopedic device ordering method.

[0021] FIG. 2 shows a portrait orientation of a device for ordering the custom orthopedic device with respect to three axes.

[0022] FIG. 3 is an example of the indication provided to the user of the preferred orientation of the device.

[0023] FIG. 4 shows the device having a viewfinder image overlaid with a depth of field guideline.

[0024] FIG. 5 is an example of the captured image stored with an identification label.

[0025] FIG. 6 illustrates is a flowchart of an embodiment of the custom orthopedic device ordering method using a three-dimensional model of the limb.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF VARIOUS EMBODIMENTS

[0026] A better understanding of different embodiments of the disclosure may be had from the following description read with the accompanying drawings in which like reference characters refer to like elements.

[0027] While the disclosure is susceptible to various modifications and alternative constructions, certain illustrative embodiments are in the drawings and are described below. It should be understood, however, there is no intention to limit the disclosure to the specific embodiments disclosed, but on the contrary, the intention covers all modifications, alternative constructions, combinations, and equivalents falling within the spirit and scope of the disclosure.

[0028] It will be understood that unless a term is expressly defined in this disclosure to possess a described meaning, there is no intent to limit the meaning of such term, either expressly or indirectly, beyond its plain or ordinary meaning.

[0029] Any element in a claim that does not explicitly state "means for" performing a specified function, or "step for" performing a specific function is not to be interpreted as a "means" or "step" clause as specified in 35 U.S.C. §112, paragraph 6.

[0030] The embodiments of the method 2 and device 4 disclosed enable the user to easily capture accurate images of the limb and complete the ordering process on a single device. The method 2 may be implemented in an application executed on a portable device. The application guides the user through the ordering and image capturing process. Such a device and process reduces misalignment issues while integrating picture capturing and ordering into a single device.

[0031] The device used to capture the image and order the custom orthopedic brace may be any device having a display and an image sensor such as a mobile phone (iPhone®, Android® phone, Blackberry®, Windows® phone, etc.), a tablet (iPad®, Android® tablet, Windows® tablet etc.), a personal digital assistant (PDA), a computer, or any other portable device.

[0032] The preferred device 4 has an image sensor, a display, a processor, a gyroscope and/or accelerometer, memory, and a communication interface to allow communication of the order directly from the device over a network to a server of the manufacturer or seller.

[0033] FIG. 1 is an overview of an embodiment of a method 2 for ordering a custom orthopedic device. After the user selects the ordering application, the application is launched, and the application displays a login screen. At step 100, the user logs into an account or creates a new account using a keypad or similar on the device. The login page may include an option for an embedded tutorial including a visual step-by-step discussion stored on the device or available to the device through streaming. The tutorial may provide guidance on patient positioning, making anatomical landmarks on the limb, and taking circumferential measurements.

[0034] At step 200, the application determines whether the current session is the first use of the device 4 to order the

custom orthopedic device. In one embodiment, if the current session is the first use, the application calibrates a camera of the device at **300**. During calibration **300**, the application automatically sets the camera to specific settings such as a specific resolution, zoom, and color setting.

[0035] Alternatively, the calibration **300** of the camera may be omitted. In this embodiment, the preferred camera settings are in text within the application, and the calibration is manually performed by the user by adjusting the settings of the camera. The preferred camera settings may be displayed during the image capturing process and during a review of the captured image. The preferred camera settings can also be displayed and included in a “help” section of the application.

[0036] If the current session is not the first use or calibration of the camera is unnecessary, the application enables capture of an image using guidelines and a specific alignment or orientation at step **400**. In step **500**, the captured image is reviewed by the user to determine whether the captured image meets the specified alignment. At step **600**, patient information is entered, and a brace configuration is selected at **700**. The user is prompted to review the order at **800** before the order is saved on the device and transmitted over a network to a server of the custom orthopedic device manufacturer or seller at **900**.

[0037] The capturing of the image of the limb at step **400** is described in more detail regarding FIGS. **2-4**. Before the application enables capturing of an image, the application ensures the device **4** is properly aligned with the limb. To produce a properly aligned image of the limb, the joint is preferably centered in the image, and the image is captured from a point at the same height as the joint with the plane of the image being parallel to the limb or a vertical axis while the device **4** is in a portrait or landscape orientation. Where the horizontal axis is parallel to the x-axis, the y-axis represents depth, and the vertical axis is parallel to the z-axis, a longitudinal axis **6** of the device would be parallel to the horizontal axis when in a landscape orientation or to the vertical axis when in a portrait orientation.

[0038] In determining whether the device **4** is in an acceptable portrait or landscape orientation, the application uses the gyroscope and/or accelerometer of the device **4** to determine whether the orientation of the device **4** is within a certain degree range whether the longitudinal axis **6** of the device **4** is within five degrees of the horizontal axis or within five degrees of the vertical axis.

[0039] The application provides a visual indication **8** on a display **18** of the device **4** whether the device **4** is properly oriented and allows the user to adjust the device **4** until the orientation requirements are met.

[0040] FIG. **3** shows the device in a portrait orientation **10** followed by a landscape orientation **12** and an unacceptable tilted orientation **14**. When the device is within the five degrees of the landscape or portrait orientation, the display will indicate by highlighting the landscape or portrait orientation in FIG. **3**. If the device is not within five degrees of the vertical axis or the device is otherwise rotated about the vertical or horizontal axes, the cross-out symbol will flash to indicate to the user that adjustment of the device is tilted and adjustment is required.

[0041] Once the orientation requirements are met, the display shows the viewfinder image and enables capture of an image. The display **18** of the device **4** becomes the viewfinder for the camera and a depth of field guideline **16** is overlaid on the viewfinder image. The depth of field guideline **16** pro-

vides the user with assistance in centering the joint in the photo and capturing the appropriate portion of the joint. Before capturing the image of the limb, the limb may be measured and marked at multiple points to indicate specific distances above and below the joint, to aid in alignment with the depth of field guideline, and to provide reference points for circumference measurements of the limb. The markings may be at specific points or at regular intervals along and around the limb.

[0042] FIG. **4** shows an example of the depth of field guideline **16** on the display **18** of the device **4** to assist the user in capturing the appropriate portion of the limb. The portions **25**, **27** of the leg about 15 cm above and below a knee axis **23** should be captured in the image for a custom knee brace. A hash mark **17** is provided at the center of the viewfinder image **20** to assist the user in aligning the joint with the center of the image. An upper guideline **19** is at the top of the viewfinder image **20** indicating that the distance of about 15 cm above the joint is aligned with the upper guideline **19**. Similarly, a lower guideline **21** indicates the distance of about 15 cm below the joint is aligned with the lower guideline **21** in the image. The guideline **16**, inclusive of mark and guidelines **17**, **19**, **21** may include a vertical line **29** on the center of the image to align with the center of the limb. While the depth of field guideline **16** for the knee defines a portion of the knee about 15 cm above and below the knee, the depth of field guideline **16** may define a portion of the limb any distance above and below a certain point.

[0043] To aid the user in correctly framing the limb in the picture, markings may first be placed on the limb indicating specific locations on the limb. An anatomical landmark or marking is placed at the point on the limb about 15 cm below the joint and about 15 cm above the joint which corresponds to the depth of field guidelines. Therefore, the photographer need only align the markings with the upper and lower guidelines and align the center hash mark over the center of the joint.

[0044] The method may require a delay before the image is taken to assure stable and clear focus. Upon alignment with the field guideline, the method requires a steady position before taking the image. A signal may be released, such as a green dot, to prompt the user to capture the image by pressing a button on the device.

[0045] In a variation, the clinician first identifies the medial joint space and marks it appropriately. The clinician then measures approximately 2 cm above the medial joint space and draws a line across the knee, from medial to lateral sides, to define the knee axis line. The clinician then identifies and marks the lateral joint space. The clinician then may measure and mark points both 7.5 cm and 15 cm above and below the knee axis line. The clinician marks the tibial peak below the 15 cm mark and the tibial peak above the 7.5 cm mark, and connects the two with a line.

[0046] Alternatively, the application may directly enable the capture of the image instead of checking the device orientation before enabling the display **18** to function as the viewfinder of the camera. The application may provide on-screen guides as to the current orientation of the device relative to the preferred orientation regarding each of the axes next to or over the viewfinder image.

[0047] In this manner, the application assists and guides the user in capturing the optimal image of the limb for a custom orthopedic device. Through immediate on-screen guidance as to the orientation of the device **4**, the user can easily and

quickly adjust the angle, orientation, and alignment of the device to obtain a well aligned and consistent photograph of the limb. The possibility of misalignment between the image capturing device and the limb is therefore greatly reduced.

[0048] According to a variation, the clinician takes both an anterior view of the limb with the markings, and a lateral view of the limb. In both instances, the depth of field guideline may vary according to the orientation of the limb, which is selected on the device by the clinician. The method may include image capture from any number sides of a patient's limb, including anterior, posterior, lateral and medial views and angles.

[0049] Once an image is captured, the user is prompted to review the captured image. During the review of the captured photograph at step **500**, the captured image with the overlaid guidelines **16** is shown, and the user determines whether the correct portion of the limb is captured within the image and whether the limb is centered within the image. If the limb and the device **4** were not aligned when the image was captured, a new image may be taken. If a new image is captured, the application returns to step **400** to guide the user through the correct orientation and framing of the limb in the image. Once the photograph is confirmed, the user is prompted to enter measurements of the limb. The measurements of the limb may include the medial-lateral (M-L) width measurement of the limb and the circumference of the limb at various points above and below the joint. A measuring device such as a caliper or measuring tape may obtain the measurements of the limb.

[0050] To associate the captured image **22** with the patient, the captured image **22** is stored with an identification label **24**. The identification label **24** may be text overlaid on the captured image **22**. FIG. **5** is an example of a saved image overlaid with an identification label **24**. The information label **24** may include data such as the patient's name, date of the photograph, and the M-L measurement along one side of the image. The image with overlaid information is stored in the memory of the device. The image may be password protected or encrypted in the memory to protect the patient's privacy.

[0051] As shown in FIG. **5**, the system may include a tilt indicator **31** arranged to allow the clinician to correctly orient the camera position. The tilt indicator **31** relies on a determination by the device to measure whether the angle or orientation of the device is proper to assure a successful captured image. In a preferred embodiment, the tilt indicator will display a red color when the device is not in the proper orientation to capture the image, and a green color when the device is in a proper orientation.

[0052] At **600**, additional patient information is entered to fill out the order form. The patient information may include the name of the user, the prescriber of the orthopedic device, and the diagnosis or symptoms of the user with identification of the problem joint. After the patient information is entered, the application can create a partial order on the device in encrypted XML format including the captured photo and patient information. Other security measures may protect the patient's data under HIPAA regulations.

[0053] At step **700**, the user or patient selects the appropriate orthopedic device configuration such as the orthopedic device model and color. The application guides the user through the different orthopedic devices and provides the user with options based on the selected orthopedic device. After selection and configuration of the orthopedic device, the partial order is saved. The user can enter a menu listing all orders saved on the device or continue to a review of the order. The

list also indicates the status of the order such as whether the order has been transmitted to the maker or seller. If the user selects a link for an order not yet transmitted, the user is prompted to review the order.

[0054] At step **800**, the order is displayed for review. The saved image and the collected information are displayed. The user can edit portions of the order with the changes made during the review being saved with the order. The user can also enter the clinician information and payment and shipping information. The user then may save the order or transmitting the order.

[0055] At step **900**, the order is saved and/or transmitted to the server of the custom orthopedic device provider. The application sends the order in an e-mail and automatically populates the fields of the e-mail based on the data in the saved order. The patient information, brace information, and clinician or user information are inserted into the body of the e-mail while the saved image associated with the order is automatically attached to or inserted into the e-mail. When the user elects to send the e-mail containing the order information, the device can send the order directly to a server of the seller through a network. The application and/or the server may display or send a notification to the user to confirm the order.

[0056] While the embodiments described relate to a method and device for ordering a custom orthopedic device which can be accomplished with a single image, in another embodiment the method and device are used with or within a custom orthopedic device production method and system which produces the custom orthopedic device based on a three-dimensional model of the limb generated from a plurality of captured images.

[0057] To generate a three-dimensional model, markers or reference points are placed on the limb and are subsequently captured in the image. The markers or reference points assist in determining the dimensions of the limb from the image by providing information related to the surface of the limb. To place the markers or reference points on the limb, a sock or sleeve having markings may be worn on the limb or the limb may be marked at particular intervals. Markings can be contrasting colored markings in many shapes such as a circular shape, a rectangular shape, a triangular shape, or any combination and are preferably the same size. The distribution and density of the markings over the surface of the sock, sleeve, or limb varies depending on the type of limb and the desired three-dimensional modeling resolution.

[0058] Providing more markings or a higher density of markings in a certain area produces a more accurate three-dimensional model of the limb since more reference points would be provided in the captured image. The markings may be concentrated in areas where there are more variations in the continuity of the limb surface such as around the joint area. Additional references may be added to the limb or the sock. In ordering a custom knee brace, additional markings or references are added to indicate the center of the knee, the angle of the tibia, and the locations of the condyles.

[0059] FIG. **6** shows an image capturing process **402** and a review stage **502** in an embodiment of the method for ordering a custom orthopedic device where a three-dimensional image of the limb is captured. This embodiment follows the same steps as the embodiment in FIG. **1** and differs in the specific steps taken to capture the image at **400** and in the image displayed during the review stage **500** of the embodiment of FIG. **1**. After the three-dimensional model specific

steps of **402** and **502**, the ordering process continues with the remaining general ordering steps **600**, **700**, **800**, and **900** as described with respect to FIG. 1.

[0060] Once the ordering application is executed and before the image capturing step **400**, the user is prompted to select whether to use a three-dimensional model. If the user does not select the three-dimensional model, the method continues as described regarding FIGS. 1-5. If the user uses the three-dimensional option, the image capturing process **402** as shown in FIG. 6 and review process **502** are used.

[0061] Before beginning the image capturing process **402**, markings or reference points are added to the limb in the manner described. In the image capturing process **402** starting with step **404**, the photographer captures at least two images of the limb at various angles or views. Preferably, at least four individual images are captured of the limb with each image capturing a different angle or view of the limb such that the entire circumference of the appropriate portion of the limb is captured within the plurality of images. The application may instruct the user to capture a certain number of images of the limb from different angles, orientations, heights, or different portions of the limb.

[0062] Alternatively, the application may use continuous image capturing where the application automatically captures images at different intervals such that the photographer need only move the device and indicate when images of all views or sides of the limb have been captured.

[0063] During the image capturing process **402**, the application can guide the photographer in capturing the appropriate angles or views of the limb with the appropriate alignment of the limb in the image using accelerometer and/or gyroscope data from the device using the guidelines described. Depending on the depth of field of the images, the application can determine the appropriate number of images, angles, or views needed to generate an accurate three-dimensional model of the limb.

[0064] At step **406**, the application analyzes and processes the plurality of captured images to stitch the images together and form a continuous view of the limb. The application can perform the stitching of the images together automatically or with user assistance. The stitching of the images can also be performed while the images are being captured or with the plurality of individual separately captured images.

[0065] At **408**, from the stitched image, the application generates a three-dimensional model of the limb using the markings on the sock, sleeve, or limb. The model may be a computer-aided design (CAD) point cloud surface where the markings shown in the captured images translate into points in the point cloud surface. The application preferably generates a 360° view of the limb.

[0066] Once the image capturing process **402** is completed, the application prompts the user to review the generated three-dimensional model to ensure that the three-dimensional model accurately depicts the surface shape of the corresponding portion of the limb at **502**. During review of the three-dimensional model, the user can rotate and zoom into the model to view all sides of and different levels of detail of the limb. The user is given the option of approving the generated model or re-capturing the limb to generate a more accurate model.

[0067] If the user performs the image capturing process **402** again, the current generated model may be saved for comparison with later models during the review stage. If the user approves of the generated model, the application continues

with the general ordering process stages **600-900** as described regarding FIG. 1. For the order review at **800** and transmission and saving of the order **900**, the order can include the plurality of images and/or the three-dimensional model of the limb.

[0068] Many of the elements described in the disclosed embodiments may be implemented as modules. A module is defined here as an isolatable element that performs a defined function and has a defined interface to other elements. The modules described in this disclosure may be implemented in hardware, a combination of hardware and software, firmware, or a combination, all of which are behaviorally equivalent. Modules may be implemented using computer hardware in combination with software routine(s) written in a computer language (such as C, C++, Fortran, Java, Basic, Matlab or the like). It may be possible to implement modules using physical hardware that incorporates discrete or programmable analog and/or digital hardware. Examples of programmable hardware include: computers, microcontrollers, microprocessors, application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs); field programmable gate arrays (FPGAs); and complex programmable logic devices (CPLDs). Computers, microcontrollers and microprocessors are programmed using languages such as assembly, C, C++ or the like. Finally, the above mentioned technologies may be used in combination to achieve the result of a functional module.

[0069] The application may be software embodied on a computer readable medium which when executed by a processor of a computer performs a sequence of steps. A computer readable medium may be a floppy disk, a flexible disk, a hard disk, magnetic tape, or any other magnetic medium, a CD-ROM, any other optical medium, a RAM, a ROM, or any other medium from which a computer can read. Various forms of computer readable media may carry one or more sequences of one or more instructions to a processor for execution. The software may be transmitted over a wired or wireless network to the device.

[0070] While the foregoing steps embodiments have been described and shown, alternatives and modifications of these embodiments, such as those suggested by others, may be made to fall within the scope of the invention. A preferred order for the steps in the method of ordering the custom orthopedic device has been described. It is noted that the order of the steps in the method may be rearranged.

1. A method of ordering a custom orthopedic device for a joint, comprising the steps of:

aligning a viewfinder image displayed on a screen and generated by an image sensor of a portable device with at least one predetermined portion of a limb including a joint;

capturing and storing at least one image of the portion of the limb using the image sensor of the portable device based on at least one guideline;

associating the at least one captured image with measurements of the limb, and patient information entered into the portable device; and

transmitting an order containing the at least one captured image, the measurements of the limb, and the patient information from the portable device to a provider;

wherein the at least one guideline is at least one of a depth of field guideline, a horizontal orientation guideline, a vertical orientation guideline, a tilt guideline, or a limb alignment guideline.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the at least one image of the limb satisfies the depth of field guideline, the horizontal or the vertical orientation guideline, the tilt angle guideline, and the limb alignment guideline.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the limb alignment guideline is a depth of field guideline overlaid on the viewfinder image, the depth of field guideline being a reference frame for a first distance above a joint, a second distance below a joint, and a centering of the limb and joint in the captured image.

4. The method according to claim 3, wherein the first and second distances are the same and referenced from a knee axis line.

5. The method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of:

aligning the distances above and below the joint with the depth of field guideline shown in the viewfinder image before capturing the image.

6. The method according to claim 1, wherein once the orientation of the portable device relative to the limb satisfies the horizontal angle guideline or vertical angle guideline and the tilt angle guideline, the portable device enables image capture.

7. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

calibrating the image sensor of the portable device.

8. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

executing an ordering application;
determining whether the ordering application has been previously executed;

upon the determination that the ordering application has not been previously executed, calibrating the image sensor of the portable device; and

upon the determination that the ordering application has been previously executed, enabling capture of the image of the limb.

9. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

reviewing the captured image of the limb; and
selecting a custom orthopedic device configuration.

10. The method according to claim 9, wherein the step of reviewing the captured image of the limb, comprises the steps of:

viewing the captured image with an overlaid depth of field guideline to confirm the captured portion of the limb satisfies the overlaid depth of field guideline;

entering basic patient information into the portable device, wherein the basic patient information includes measurements of the limb at various locations on the limb;

overlaying the captured image with the basic patient information; and

storing the overlaid captured image in the portable device.

11. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

configuring the custom orthopedic device;
reviewing the order; and
storing the order in a memory of the portable device.

12. The method according to claim 11, wherein at least one previous order is stored in the memory of the portable device.

13. The method according to claim 1, wherein the order is transmitted as an e-mail containing the patient information and the saved, captured image of the limb.

14. The method according to claim 1, wherein the joint is a knee joint and the orthopedic device is a knee brace.

15. A device for ordering a custom orthopedic device, comprising:

an image sensor, the image sensor configured to capture an image;

a display;

a gyroscope and/or accelerometer;

a communication interface;

a processor; and

a memory;

wherein the processor is configured to enable capturing an image of a portion of a limb including a joint using the image sensor based on at least one guideline, wherein the image of the limb satisfies the at least one guideline;

wherein the gyroscope and/or accelerometer is configured to provide orientation data to the processor;

wherein the communication interface is configured to transmit an order containing the captured image and patient information from the apparatus over a network to a provider; and

wherein the at least one guideline is at least one of a depth of field guideline, a horizontal orientation guideline, a vertical orientation guideline, a tilt guideline, or a limb alignment guideline.

16. The device according to claim 15, wherein the limb alignment guideline is a depth of field guideline overlaid on a viewfinder image, the depth of field guideline being a reference frame for a first distance above a joint, a second distance below a joint, and a centering of the limb and joint in the captured image.

17. The device according to claim 16, wherein the processor is configured to provide an indication of the orientation of the device on the display.

18. The device according to claim 15, wherein the processor is configured to calibrate the image sensor by setting the image sensor to a first resolution and a first zoom level.

19. The method according to claim 1, wherein at least one image of markings or reference points on the limb is captured.

20. The method according to claim 19, further comprising: generating a three-dimensional model of the limb from the markings.

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