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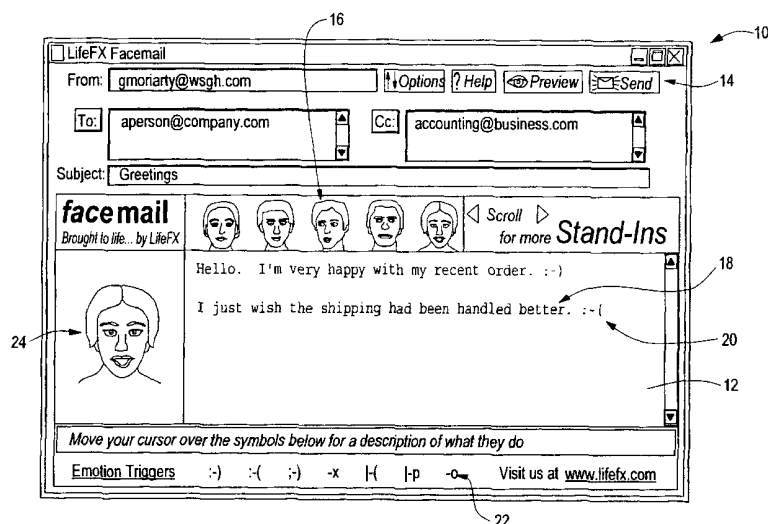
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Declarations under Rule 4.17:

- as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii)) for all designations
- as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii)) for all designations

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: VIRTUAL REPRESENTATIVES FOR USE AS COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS



(57) Abstract: A system and method for enabling the use of photo-realistic, three-dimensional virtual representatives in a variety of communications settings is disclosed. A first module is employed for selecting a virtual representative to be used for communicating with a user, for defining text to be voiced by the selected virtual representative, and for inserting emotion cues (20) into that text. A second module responds to data from the first module by generating an image (16) of the virtual representative, then controls changes in the image in accordance with the text to be voiced and the corresponding emotion cues. A third module is employed for defining virtual representatives and the response of virtual representatives to emotion cues associated with text to be voiced. The modularity of the presently disclosed invention lends itself to the integration into a variety of settings, including Web pages, email and PC games.



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US01/14034

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) : G06T 15/00

US CL : 345/419

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 345/419, 418, 473, 728, 854, 848

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

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

Please See Continuation Sheet

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

| Category * | Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages | Relevant to claim No. |
|------------|---|-----------------------|
| Y,P | US 6,144,388 A (BORNSTEIN) 07 NOVEMBER , (col. 3, lines 4-20; col. 15, lines 16-38; col. 18, lines 31-39; col. 14, lines 15-52; col. 15, lines 16-45 lines16-45; col. 19, line 59 to col. 20, line 10). | 1-6 |
| Y | US 5,748,191 A (Rozak et al.) 05 May 1998, see entire document. | 1-6 |
| Y | Microsoft Wold 2000, Daryl Lucas, 1987 Microsoft office user specialist-expert. | 1-6 |



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

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| * Special categories of cited documents: | |
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| "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed | |

Date of the actual completion of the international search

14 January 2002 (14.01.2002)

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US01/14034

Continuation of B. FIELDS SEARCHED Item 3:

Text search: East and West; Search term: virtual representatives, module face expression, transmit, voice, appearance, software program, characterize, data.