(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) **International Patent Classification:**
G06F 17/00 (2006.01)

(21) **International Application Number:**
PCT/US2009/040301

(22) **International Filing Date:**
13 April 2009 (13.04.2009)

(25) **Filing Language:** English

(26) **Publication Language:** English

(30) **Priority Data:**
12/112,747   30 April 2008 (30.04.2008)   US

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

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

Published:
— *without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report (Rule 48.2(g))*

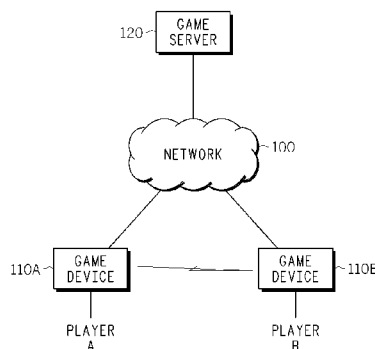(54) **Title:** LIMITING ACCESS TO SHARED MEDIA CONTENT

FIG. 1

(57) **Abstract:** A method and system for limiting access to shared content media items stored in a device. The method establishes a connection with another device and initiates a session with the other device. The method synchronizes the device and the other device by receiving a copy of content media items stored on the other device, and storing the received copy of the content media items as shared content media items on the device. The synchronizing of the device and the other device may include transmitting a copy of content media items stored on the device to the other device. The method allows a user operating the device to access the content media items, but restricts access to the shared content media items based on the status of the session with the other device.

LIMITING ACCESS TO SHARED MEDIA CONTENT

BACKGROUND

Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention relates, in general, to various game systems and game programs such as a trading card game, role playing game, adventure game, and the like. In particular, aspects of the present invention provide a system and method for limiting access to shared content media items stored in a device.

Description of Related Art

[0002] Collectable card games, trading card games, board games, and massively multiplayer online role-playing games are an appealing genre of games because they combine collecting with strategic game play. Modern trading card games utilize a game console or personal computer to simulate collecting cards and playing the trading card game. The Internet provides the ability to play trading card games and board games online and has increased the popularity of trading card games and also rejuvenated the popularity of board games. Online trading card games are available for a multitude of subjects. In massively multiplayer online role-playing games a large number of players interact with one another in a virtual world in which the players assume the role of a fictional character and take control over many of the character's actions.

[0003] Current trading card games for portable platforms, such as the Marvel Trading Card Game, allow a player to purchase cards and build decks of cards that the player will use to play against other players via either a wired or wireless connection. Since these cards are already resident on the game cartridge inserted into the platforms, the same cards are available to both players in a game.

[0004] The Marvel game also supports online play that includes the ability to purchase additional cards that are not part of the baseline game on the cartridge. Each playing card will include a card image and additional text description that explains that specific card's effect, or modification, on the game. These cards may only be used for only play via a game server. The Marvel game allows a player to build a deck of cards offline, but the deck of cards may only be used for play via a game server.

[0005] In massively multiplayer online role-playing games, such as World of Warcraft, players interact with one another in a virtual world. Each player has an avatar that is the player's computer representation of himself or herself, and a description of the player's character. Each player explores the landscape in a persistent digital video game world, fighting monsters, performing quests, building skills, and interacting with non-player characters, and other player characters. The game rewards success with in-game money, items, experience and reputation, which allow the player to improve their skill and power.

SUMMARY

[0006] Embodiments of the present invention provide a method and system for limiting access to shared content media items stored in a device. An exemplary method establishes a connection with another device and initiates a session with the other device. The method synchronizes the device and the other device by receiving a copy of content media items stored on the other device, and storing the received copy of the content media items as shared content media items on the device. The synchronizing of the device and the other device may include transmitting a copy of content media items stored on the device to the other device. The method allows a user operating the device to access the content media items, but restricts access to the shared content media items based on the status of the session with the other device.

[0007] In one embodiment, the user operating the device selects one of the content media items on the device. If the session is a game, the selection by the user plays the selected content media item in the game. The method displays the selected content media item on the device, and sends a request to the other device to display the item in the content media items transmitted to the other game device that corresponds to the selected content media item. In another embodiment, the user operating the device receives a request from the other device to reveal an item in the shared content media items. The device displays the item in the shared content media items based on the request. In yet another embodiment, the user breaks the connection to the other game device and deletes the shared content media items stored in the device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] Embodiments are illustrated by way of example and not limited in the following figures, in which like numerals indicate like elements.

[0009] FIG. 1 is a network diagram that illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the hardware components of a system operable in accordance with the present invention.

[0010] FIG. 2 and FIG. 3 are block diagrams that illustrate, in detail, an exemplary embodiment of the hardware components shown in FIG. 1.

[0011] FIG. 4 is a message flow diagram that illustrates an exemplary embodiment of a method in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0012] For simplicity and illustrative purposes, the principles of the embodiments are described by referring mainly to examples thereof. In the following description, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding of the embodiments. It will be apparent however, to one of ordinary skill in the art, that the embodiments may be practiced without limitation to these specific details. In other instances, well known methods and structures have not been described in detail so as not to unnecessarily obscure the embodiments.

[0013] Before describing in detail embodiments that are in accordance with the present invention, it should be observed that the embodiments reside primarily in combinations

of method steps and apparatus components related to limiting access to shared content

media items in a game between a first player operating a first game device, and a second

player operating a second game device. Accordingly, the apparatus components and

method steps have been represented where appropriate by conventional symbols in the

drawings, showing only those specific details that are pertinent to understanding the

embodiments of the present invention so as not to obscure the disclosure with details that

will be readily apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art having the benefit of the

description herein.

[0014] In this document, relational terms such as first and second, top and bottom, and

the like may be used solely to distinguish one entity or action from another entity or

action without necessarily requiring or implying any actual such relationship or order

between such entities or actions. The terms "comprises," "comprising," or any other

variation thereof, are intended to cover a non-exclusive inclusion, such that a process,

method, article, or apparatus that comprises a list of elements does not include only those

elements but may include other elements not expressly listed or inherent to such process,

method, article, or apparatus. An element preceded by "comprises ... a" does not,

without more constraints, preclude the existence of additional identical elements in the

process, method, article, or apparatus that comprises the element.

[0015] FIG. 1 is a network diagram that illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the

hardware components of a system operable in accordance with the present invention.

The architecture shown in FIG. 1 utilizes a network **100** to connect game devices **110A,**

110B to a game server **120**. In one embodiment, Player A operates a game device **110A** that connects to the game server **120**, via the network **100**, to perform a method embodying aspects of the present invention, and Player B operates another game device **110B** that connects to the game server **120**, via the network **100**, to perform a method embodying aspects of the present invention. In another embodiment, the game device **110A** which Player A operates is connected to the game device **110B** which Player B operates to perform a method embodying aspects of the present invention. The connection between the game device **110A** which Player A operates and the game device **110B** which Player B operates is a peer-to-peer network connection, mobile ad-hoc network connection, wireless ad-hoc network connection, Bluetooth, short range wireless connection, or the like, to either connect the game devices **110A, 110B** directly or via the network **100**. In yet another embodiment, the game devices **110A, 110B** and the game server **120** shown in FIG. 1 utilize distributed processing to perform a method embodying aspects of the present invention.

[0016] The network **100** shown in FIG. **1**, in an exemplary embodiment, is a public communication network that connects and enables data transfer between the game devices **110A, 110B** and the game server **120**. The present invention also contemplates the use of comparable network architectures. Comparable network architectures include the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), a public packet-switched network carrying data and voice packets, a wireless network, and a private network. A wireless network includes a cellular network (e.g., a Time Division Multiple Access (TDMA) or

Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) network), a satellite network, and a wireless

Local Area Network (LAN) (e.g., a wireless fidelity (Wi-Fi) network). A private

network includes a LAN, a Personal Area Network (PAN) such as a Bluetooth network, a

wireless LAN, a Virtual Private Network (VPN), an intranet, or an extranet. An intranet

is a private communication network that provides an organization such as a corporation,

with a secure means for trusted members of the organization to access the resources on

the organization's network. In contrast, an extranet is a private communication network

that provides an organization, such as a corporation, with a secure means for the

organization to authorize non-members of the organization to access certain resources on

the organization's network. The system also contemplates network architectures and

protocols such as Ethernet, Token Ring, Systems Network Architecture, Internet

Protocol, Transmission Control Protocol, User Datagram Protocol, Asynchronous

Transfer Mode, and proprietary network protocols comparable to the Internet Protocol.

[0017] FIG. 2 is a block diagram that illustrates, in detail, an exemplary embodiment of

the hardware components shown in FIG. 1. In particular, FIG. 2 illustrates the hardware

and software components that comprise the game device **110A** which Player A operates

and the game device **110B** which Player B operates.

[0018] As shown in FIG. **2**, the game device **110A** can comprise a general-purpose

computer, such as a mobile telephone, handheld game console, mobile computer, desktop

computer, or the like. A bus **200** is a communication medium that connects a central

processor unit (CPU) **205**, data storage device **210** (such as a disk drive, or flash

memory), input device **215** (such as a keyboard, keypad, or touchscreen), output device **220** (such as a monitor, or graphic display), network adapter **225**, and memory **230**. In one embodiment, the network adapter **225** also connects to the network **100** and is the mechanism that facilitates the passage of network traffic between the game device **110A** and the network **100**. In another embodiment, the network adapter **225** also connects to another game device **110B** and is the mechanism that facilitates the passage of network traffic between the game device **110A** and the other game device **110B**.

[0019] The CPU **205** performs the disclosed methods by executing the sequences of operational instructions that comprise each computer program resident in, or operative on, the memory **230**. The reader should understand that the memory **230** may include operating system, administrative, and database programs that support the programs disclosed in this application. In one embodiment, the configuration of the memory **230** of the game device **110A** includes a game program **232**, player identifier **234**, owned content media items **236**, shared content media items **238**, and browser program **240**. The game program **232** performs the method of the present invention. In one embodiment, the player identifier **234** is stored in a file referred to as a cookie. The game server **120** may assign and send the player identifier **234** to the game device **110A** once when the game device **110A** first communicates with the game server **120**. From then on, the game device **110A** includes the player identifier **234** with all messages sent to the game server **120** so the game server **120** can identify the source of the message. In another embodiment, the player identifier **234** is installed on the game device **110A** by

the manufacturer. The owned content media items **236** and shared content media items **238** include trading cards, character roles, or the like. In one embodiment, the owned content media items **236** store the content media that Player A either purchases from the game server **120** or obtains in a trade with the game server **120** or another player, and the shared content media items **238** store the content media that that game device **110A** receives from another game device during a game synchronization process. Since Player A is the owner of the owned content media items **236**, Player A has full access rights to use the owned content media items **236**, including viewing, playing, manipulating, trading, and deleting the owned content media items **236** either before, during, or after a game. Since Player A is not the owner of the shared content media items **238**, Player A has limited access rights to the shared content media items **238**. The limited access rights include no viewing or manipulation without the consent of the owner or the game device operated by the owner of the shared content media items **238**, and deleting only when there is no connection to the owner's game device. In addition, a connection needs to exist between the game device **110A** that stores the shared content media items **238** and the game device operated by the owner of the shared content media items **238** to enable viewing or manipulation. However, for faster game setup and reduced data exchange, the shared content media items **238** would typically remain on the game device **110A** even after the session/connection has been broken. The player identifier of the owner of the shared content media items **238** is stored with the shared content media items **238**, and the level of access would depend on connection to the game device operated by the owner of the shared content media items **238**. For example, Player A may be able to look

at the number of cards stored in the shared content media items **238**, but cannot view

individual items until establishment of a connection and game session. In another

embodiment, the owned content media items **236** and the shared content media item **238**

are stored together and each item is associated with an identifier, such as the player

identifier **234**, to identify the owner of the item, and determine the rights that Player A

has to use the item. The browser program **240** displays web pages on the output device

220. These computer programs store intermediate results in the memory **230**, or data

storage device **210**. In another embodiment, the memory **230** may swap these programs,

or portions thereof, in and out of the memory **230** as needed, and thus may include fewer

than all of these programs at any one time.

[0020] The game device **110B**, shown in FIG. **2**, is also a general-purpose computer,

such as a mobile telephone, handheld game console, mobile computer, desktop computer,

or the like. A bus **250** is a communication medium that connects a central processor unit

(CPU) **255**, data storage device **260** (such as a disk drive, or flash memory), input device

265 (such as a keyboard, keypad, or touchscreen), output device **270** (such as a monitor,

or graphic display), network adapter **275**, and memory **280**. In one embodiment, the

network adapter **275** also connects to the network **100** and is the mechanism that

facilitates the passage of network traffic between the game device **110B** and the network

100. In another embodiment, the network adapter **275** also connects to another game

device **110A** and is the mechanism that facilitates the passage of network traffic between

the game device **110B** and the other game device **110A**.

[0021] The CPU **255** performs the disclosed methods by executing the sequences of operational instructions that comprise each computer program resident in, or operative on, the memory **280**. The reader should understand that the memory **280** may include operating system, administrative, and database programs that support the programs disclosed in this application. In one embodiment, the configuration of the memory **280** of the game device **110B** includes a game program **282**, player identifier **284**, owned content media items **286**, shared content media items **288**, and browser program **290**. The game program **282** performs the method of the present invention. In one embodiment, the player identifier **284** is stored in a file referred to as a cookie. The game server **120** may assign and send the player identifier **284** to the game device **110B** once when the game device **110B** first communicates with the game server **120**. From then on, the game device **110B** includes the player identifier **284** with all messages sent to the game server **120** so the game server **120** can identify the source of the message. In another embodiment, the player identifier **284** is installed on the game device **110B** by the manufacturer. The owned content media items **286** and shared content media items **288** include trading cards, character roles, or the like. In one embodiment, the owned content media items **286** store the content media that Player B either purchases from the game server **120** or obtains in a trade with the game server **120** or another player, and the shared content media items **288** store the content media that that game device **110B** receives from another game device during a game synchronization process. Since Player B is the owner of the owned content media items **286**, Player B has full access rights to use the owned content media items **286**, including viewing, playing, manipulating,

trading, and deleting the owned content media items **286** either before, during, or after a

game. Since Player B is not the owner of the shared content media items **288**, Player B

has limited access rights to the shared content media items **288**. The limited access rights

include no viewing or manipulation without the consent of the owner or the game device

operated by the owner of the shared content media items **288**, and deleting only when

there is no connection to the owner's game device. In addition, a connection needs to

exist between the game device **110B** that stores the shared content media items **288** and

the game device operated by the owner of the shared content media items **288** to enable

viewing or manipulation. However, for faster game setup and reduced data exchange, the

shared content media items **288** would typically remain on the game device **110B** even

after the session/connection has been broken. The player identifier of the owner of the

shared content media items **288** is stored with the shared content media items **288**, and

the level of access would depend on connection to the game device operated by the

owner of the shared content media items **288**. For example, Player B may be able to look

at the number of cards stored in the shared content media items **288**, but cannot view

individual items until establishment of a connection and game session. In another

embodiment, the owned content media items **286** and the shared content media item **288**

are stored together and each item is associated with an identifier, such as the player

identifier **284**, to identify the owner of the item, and determine the rights that Player B

has to use the item. The browser program **290** displays web pages on the output device

270. These computer programs store intermediate results in the memory **280**, or data

storage device **260**. In another embodiment, the memory **280** may swap these programs,

or portions thereof, in and out of the memory **280** as needed, and thus may include fewer than all of these programs at any one time.

[0022] FIG. **3** is a block diagram that illustrates, in detail, an exemplary embodiment of the hardware components shown in FIG. **1**. In particular, FIG. **3** illustrates, in detail, the hardware and software components that comprise the game server **120**.

[0023] As shown in FIG. **3**, the game server **120** is a general-purpose computer that provides server functionality including file services, web page services, and the like. A bus **300** is a communication medium that connects a central processor unit (CPU) **305**, data storage device **310** (such as a disk drive, or flash memory), network adapter **315**, database **320**, and memory **330**. The network adapter **315** also connects to the network **100** and is the mechanism that facilitates the passage of network traffic between the game server **120** and the network **100**.

[0024] The database **320** is a collection of data organized in such a way that a database management system can quickly store, modify, and extract the data from the database **320**. In one embodiment, the collection of data for the database **320** includes a player table **322**, and a content media table **324**. The player table **322** stores data related to each player registered with the game server **120** and operating the game devices **110A, 110B**. The content media table **324** stores the content media that each registered player owns, and a status of the content media, including whether the registered player wants to trade or sell the content media. The database management system may employ a relational, flat, hierarchical, object-oriented architecture, or the like.

[0025] The CPU **305** performs the disclosed methods by executing the sequences of operational instructions that comprise each computer program resident in, or operative on, the memory **330**. The reader should understand that the memory **330** may include operating system, administrative, and database programs that support the programs disclosed in this application. In one embodiment, the configuration of the memory **330** of the server computer **120** includes a game program **335**, and web server program **340**. The game program **335** performs a method embodying aspects of the present invention. The web server program **340** includes an engine **342**, and web pages **344**. These computer programs store intermediate results in the memory **330**, database **320**, or data storage device **310**. These programs also receive input from the players operating the game devices **110A, 110B**, access the database **320**, and display the results to the players operating the game devices **110A, 110B**. In another embodiment, the memory **330** may swap these programs, or portions thereof, in and out of the memory **330** as needed, and thus may include fewer than all of these programs at any one time.

[0026] The engine **342** of the web server program **340** receives requests such as hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) requests from the game devices **110A, 110B** to access the web pages **344** identified by uniform resource locator (URL) addresses and provides the web pages **344** in response. The requests include a registration request, purchase request, trade request, and game initiation request. The engine **342** receives the registration request from the game device **110A** which Player A operates to add Player A as a registered player of a game. The engine **342** receives the purchase request from the

game device **110A** which Player A operates to purchase content media for Player A. The engine **342** receives the trade request from the game device **110A** which Player A operates to trade or sell a content media item that Player A owns. The engine **342** receives the game initiation request from the game device **110A** to begin a game with another registered player.

[0027] FIG. **4** is a message flow diagram that illustrates an exemplary embodiment of a method embodying aspects of the present invention. In particular, FIG. **4** illustrates the communication between a game device **110A** which Player A operates, and a game device **110B** which Player B operates. The method shown in FIG. **4** begins with the game device **110A** which Player A operates sending a request to the game device **110B** which Player B operates to establish a peer-to-peer connection (step **405**). The game device **110B** which Player B operates receives the request (step **410**). If the game device **110B** which Player B operates is accepting connections, it sends an acknowledgement to the game device **110A** which Player A (step **415**). The establishment of the peer-to-peer connection is complete when the game device **110A** which Player A operates receives the acknowledgement (step **420**).

[0028] The method shown in FIG. **4** continues when Player A operates a user interface on the game device **110A** to initiate a game with Player B. The user interface sends a request to the game device **110B** which Player B operates to initiate a game with Player B (step **425**). The game device **110B** which Player B operates receives the request (step **430**). If Player B consents to initiate a game with Player A, Player B operates a user

interface on the game device **110B** to accept the game initiation request. The user

interface sends an acknowledgement to the game device **110A** which Player A operates

(step **435**). The game initiation is complete when the game device **110A** which Player A

operates receives the acknowledgement (step **440**).

[0029] The method shown in FIG. **4** continues when the game device **110A** which Player

A operates and the game device **110B** which Player B operates begin a synchronization

process. The game device **110A** which Player A operates begins the synchronization

process by sending the content media owned by Player A (step **445**), such as the owned

content media items **236** shown in FIG. **2**. The game device **110B** which Player B

operates receives the content media owned by Player A (step **450**) and stores it, such as in

the shared content media items **288** shown in FIG. **2**. In response, the game device **110B**

which Player B operates sends the content media owned by Player B (step **455**), such as

the owned content media items **286** shown in FIG. **2**. The game device **110A** which

Player A operates receives the content media owned by Player B (step **460**) and stores it,

such as in the shared content media items **238** shown in FIG. **2**. When the

synchronization process is complete, the game device **110A** which Player A operates and

the game device **110B** which Player B operates each store the content media items owned

by the other game device as shared content media items. Since the player is not the

owner of the shared content media items, the player has limited access rights to the

shared content media items. The shared content media items are initially hidden from the

player, the player may only view the shared content media when the owner of the shared

content media consents to the viewing, such as when the owner elects to play the one of the shared content media items during a move in the game, and the player may only delete the shared content media when the owner of the shared content media items is not connected to the game device that the player is operating.

[0030] The method shown in FIG. 4 continues with the iterative play cycles of the game, such as alternating moves between each player in the game. Player A operates a user interface on the game device **110A** to select one of the content media items owned by Player A **236** to play during a move in the game (step **265**). The user interface displays the selected content media item on the game device **110A** which Player A operates (step **270**) and sends a request to the game device **110B** which Player B operates to reveal the selected content media item (step **475**). The game device **110B** which Player B operates receives the request (step **480**) and reveals the selected content media item stored in the shared content media, such as in the shared content media items **238** shown in FIG. **2** (step **485**).

[0031] Aspects of the present invention also provide support for multi-user ownership of content media items. In an illustrative example in accordance with an embodiment, Player A does not own content media item X, but fellow gamers Player B, Player C, and Player D own content media item X. The game device that Player A operates will store a limited use copy of content media item X and a list of associated owners (*i.e.*, Player B, Player C, and Player D). Only when the game device that Player A operates is in communication/gaming with a game device operated by Player B, Player C, or Player D

will access to the content media item X image and associated game modification rules occur. In this example, Player B may sell or trade the ownership right to content media item X to another player. When Player A connects to the online game server, the ownership rights stored in his device for content media item X is updated to reflect that Player B no longer has ownership right to content media item X. If all of the owners of content media item X (*i.e.*, Player B, Player C, and Player D) sell or trade their ownership right to content media item X, the online game server directs the game device that Player A operates to delete the content media item X.

[0032] In another exemplary embodiment, the shared content media items disclosed in the present invention include photographs, music, and the like. In this embodiment, the level of access to the shared content media items stored on the user device depends on the level of connectivity with the device of the owner of the shared content media items.

[0033] Although the disclosed exemplary embodiments describe a fully functioning system and method for limiting access to shared content media items in a game between a first player operating a first game device that includes first content media items, and a second player operating a second game device that includes second content media items, the reader should understand that other equivalent exemplary embodiments exist. Since numerous modifications and variations will occur to those reviewing this disclosure, the system and method for limiting access to shared content media items in a game between a first player operating a first game device that includes first content media items, and a second player operating a second game device that includes second content media items

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is not limited to the exact construction and operation illustrated and disclosed. Accordingly, this disclosure intends all suitable modifications and equivalents to fall within the scope of the claims.

I claim:

1.   A method for limiting access to shared content media items stored on a device, comprising:

        initiating a session with another device;

        receiving a copy of content media items stored on the other device;

        storing the received copy of the content media items as shared content media items on the device; and

        restricting access to the shared content media items by a user operating the device, wherein a status of the session determines a level of access to the shared content media items.

2.   The method of claim 1, wherein the initiating of the session further comprises:

        establishing a peer-to-peer connection with the other device.

3.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

        receiving a request from the other device to reveal an item in the shared content media items; and

        displaying the item in the shared content media items.

4.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

transmitting a copy of content media items stored on the device to the other device;

selecting one of the content media items on the device;

displaying the selected one of the content media items on the device; and

sending a request to the other device to display the item in the copy of the content media items transmitted to the other device that corresponds to the selected one of the content media items,

wherein a certificate is associated with each content media item, the certificate identifying the user operating the device, and allowing access to the item by the user operating the device.

5.   The method of claim 1, further comprising:

breaking the session with the other device; and

deleting the shared content media items.

6.   The method of claim 1, wherein a certificate is associated with each shared content media item, the certificate identifying another user, and restricting access to the item by the user operating the device.

7.   The method of claim 1, wherein the session comprises at least one of a card game, a trading card game, a board game, a role playing game, and an interactive media session.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the content media items comprise at least one of a playing card description, a trading card description, a card image, a game modification, a character image, a character description, a video, and an avatar.

9. A system for limiting access to shared content media items stored in a device, comprising:

a memory device resident in the device; and

a processor disposed in communication with the memory device, the processor configured to:

initiate a session with another device;

receive a copy of content media items stored on the other device;

store the received copy of the content media items as shared content media items on the device; and

restrict access to the shared content media items by a user operating the device,

wherein a status of the session determines a level of access to the shared content media items.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein to initiate the session, the processor is further configured to:

establish a peer-to-peer connection with the other device.

11.   The system of claim 9, wherein the processor is further configured to:

receive a request from the other device to reveal an item in the shared content media items; and

display the item in the shared content media items.

12.   The system of claim 9, wherein the processor is further configured to:

transmit a copy of content media items stored on the device to the other device;

select one of the content media items on the device;

display the selected one of the content media items on the device; and

send a request to the other device to display the item in the copy of the content media items transmitted to the other device that corresponds to the selected one of the content media items,

wherein a certificate is associated with each content media item, the certificate identifying the user operating the device, and allowing access to the item by the user operating the device.

13.   The system of claim 9, wherein the processor is further configured to:

break a connection to the other device; and

delete the shared content media items.

14.   The system of claim 9, wherein a certificate is associated with each shared content media item, the certificate identifying another user, and restricting access to the item by the user operating the device.

15.   The system of claim 9, wherein the session comprises at least one of a card game, a trading card game, a board game, a role playing game, and an interactive media session.

16.   The system of claim 9, wherein the content media items comprise at least one of a playing card description, a trading card description, a card image, a game modification, a character image, a character description, a video, and an avatar.

17.   A computer-readable medium containing instructions for limiting access to shared content media items stored in a device, by a method comprising:

        initiating a game with another device;

        receiving a copy of content media items stored on the other device;

        storing the received copy of the content media items as shared content media items on the device; and

        restricting access to the shared content media items by a user operating the device,

        wherein a status of the session determines a level of access to the shared content media items.

18.   The computer-readable medium of claim 17, wherein the initiating of the session further comprises:

establishing a peer-to-peer connection with the other device.

19.   The computer-readable medium of claim 17, the method further comprising:

receiving a request from the other device to reveal an item in the shared content media items; and

displaying the item in the shared content media items.

20.   The computer-readable medium of claim 17, the method further comprising:

transmitting a copy of content media items stored on the device to the other device;

selecting one of the content media items on the device;

displaying the selected one of the content media items on the device; and

sending a request to the other device to display the item in the copy of the content media items transmitted to the other device that corresponds to the selected one of the content media items,
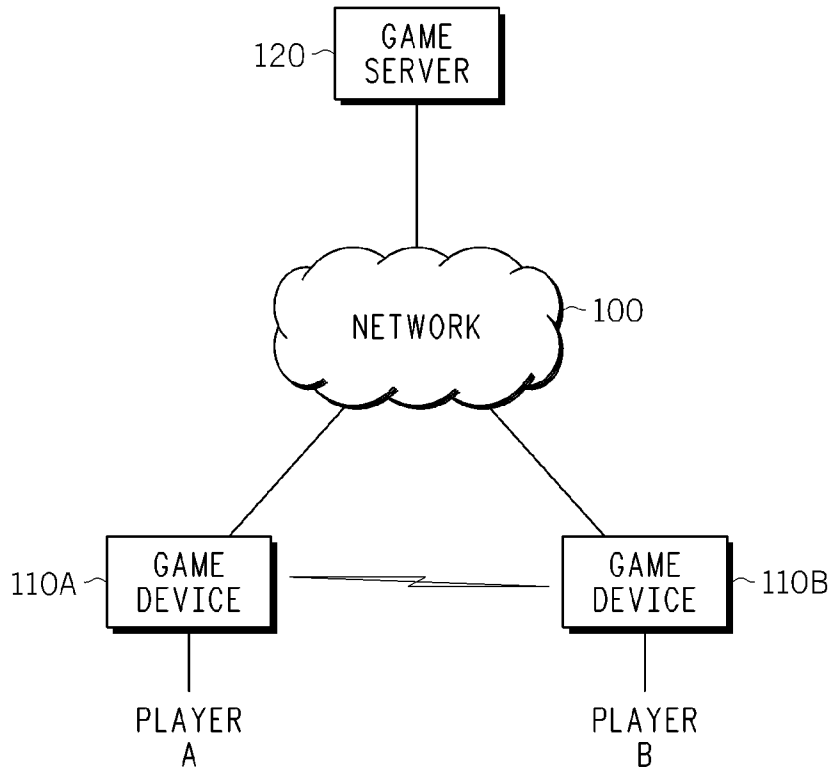
wherein a certificate is associated with each content media item, the certificate identifying the user operating the device, and allowing access to the item by the user operating the device.

21.   The computer-readable medium of claim 17, the method further comprising:

breaking a connection to the other device; and

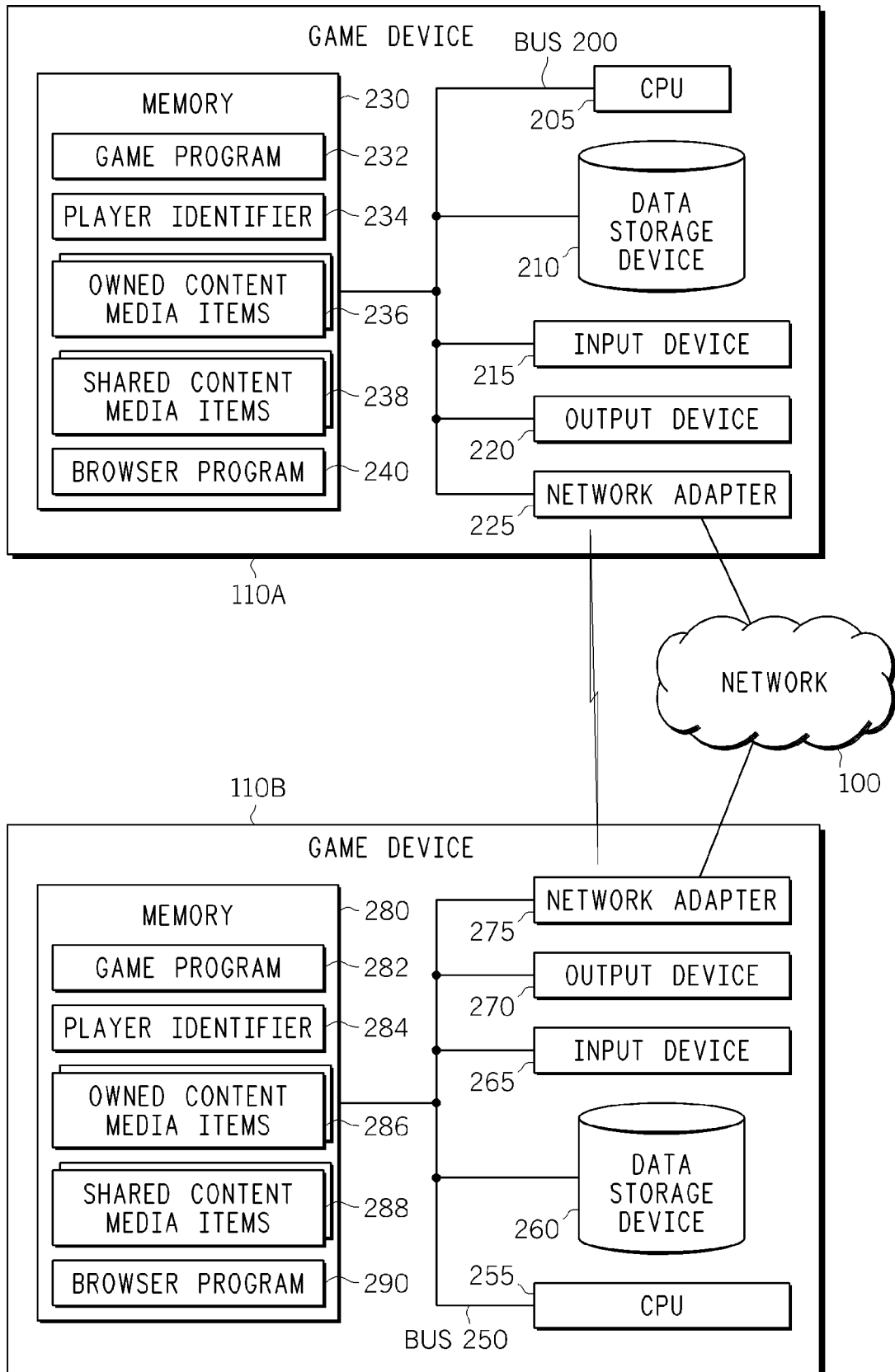deleting the shared content media items.

22.   The computer-readable medium of claim 17, wherein a certificate is associated
with each shared content media item, the certificate identifying another user, and
restricting access to the item by the user operating the device.

23.   The computer-readable medium of claim 17, wherein the session comprises at
least one of a card game, a trading card game, a board game, a role playing game, and an
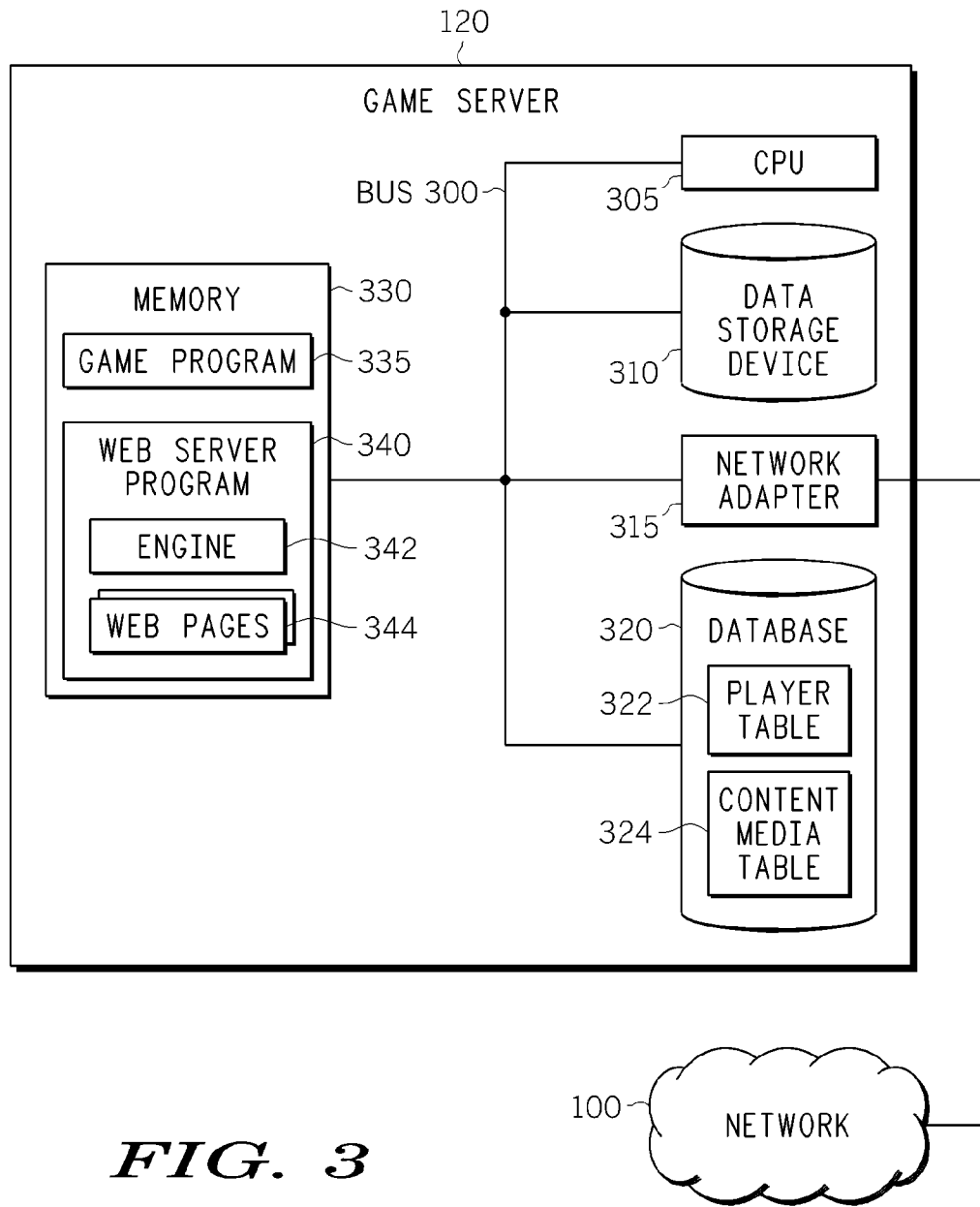interactive media session.

24.   The computer-readable medium of claim 17, wherein the content media items
comprise at least one of a playing card description, a trading card description, a card
image, a game modification, a character image, a character description, a video, and an
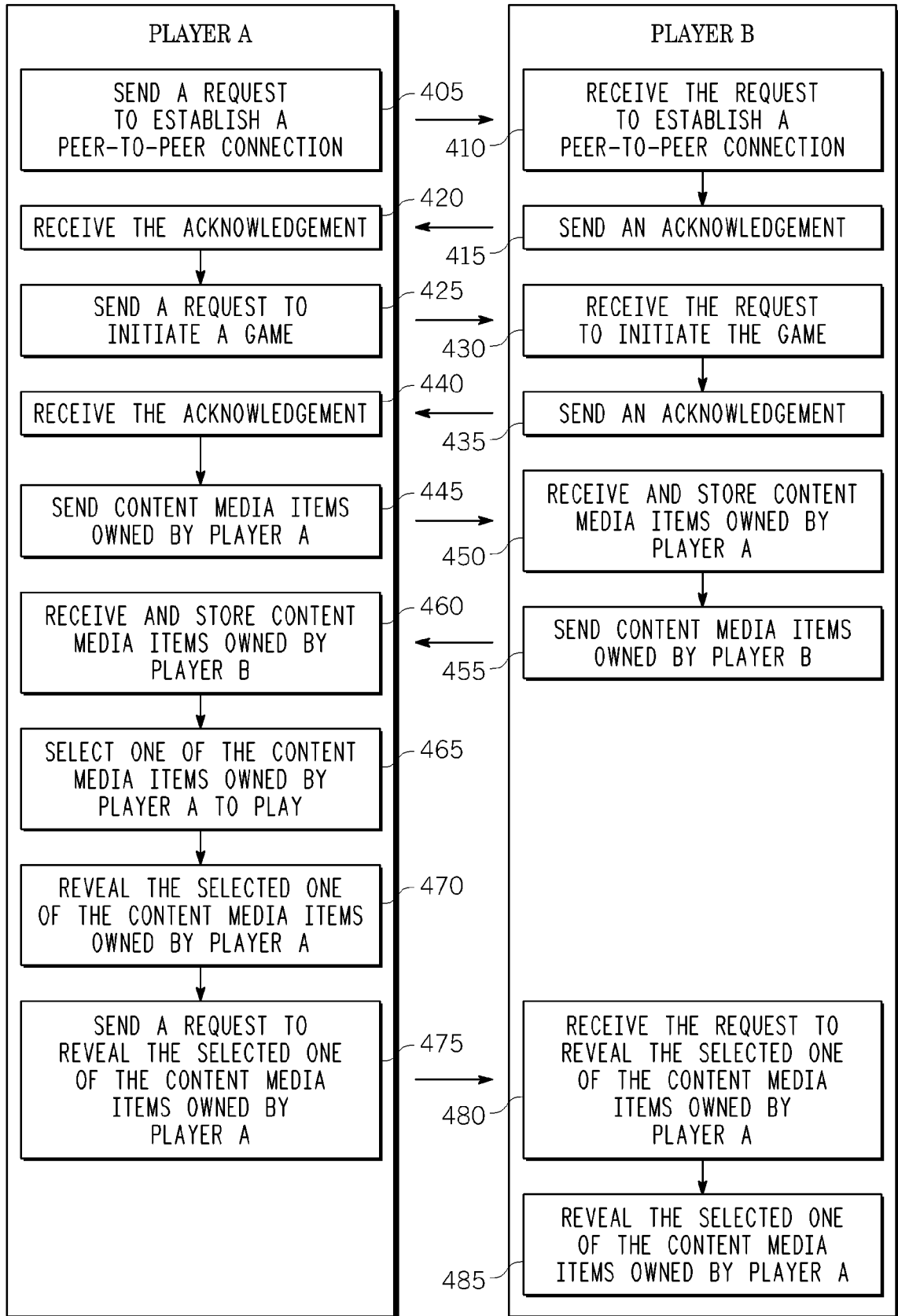avatar.

FIG. 1

FIG. 2

FIG. 3

PLAYER A	PLAYER B
SEND A REQUEST TO ESTABLISH A PEER-TO-PEER CONNECTION — 405	RECEIVE THE REQUEST TO ESTABLISH A PEER-TO-PEER CONNECTION
410 →	
RECEIVE THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT — 420	SEND AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
← 415	
SEND A REQUEST TO INITIATE A GAME — 425	RECEIVE THE REQUEST TO INITIATE THE GAME
430 →	
RECEIVE THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT — 440	SEND AN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
← 435	
SEND CONTENT MEDIA ITEMS OWNED BY PLAYER A — 445	RECEIVE AND STORE CONTENT MEDIA ITEMS OWNED BY PLAYER A
450 →	
RECEIVE AND STORE CONTENT MEDIA ITEMS OWNED BY PLAYER B — 460	SEND CONTENT MEDIA ITEMS OWNED BY PLAYER B
← 455	
SELECT ONE OF THE CONTENT MEDIA ITEMS OWNED BY PLAYER A TO PLAY — 465	
REVEAL THE SELECTED ONE OF THE CONTENT MEDIA ITEMS OWNED BY PLAYER A — 470	
SEND A REQUEST TO REVEAL THE SELECTED ONE OF THE CONTENT MEDIA ITEMS OWNED BY PLAYER A — 475	RECEIVE THE REQUEST TO REVEAL THE SELECTED ONE OF THE CONTENT MEDIA ITEMS OWNED BY PLAYER A
480 →	
	REVEAL THE SELECTED ONE OF THE CONTENT MEDIA ITEMS OWNED BY PLAYER A — 485

FIG. 4