(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CREATING AND ORDERING CUSTOMIZED BRANDED MERCHANDISE OVER A COMPUTER NETWORK

(57) Abstract:
The present invention provides a method and apparatus for creating and ordering customized branded merchandise over a computer network. An Internet site is provided that allows a consumer to create and order customized branded merchandise, such as bottles of soda. A customer may visit the WWW site utilizing a standard WWW browser executing on a computer. Once the customer has registered with the WWW site, the customer may place an order for an item of customized branded merchandise. The customer may also be asked to identify a graphic image for customizing the requested merchandise. The graphic image may be a digital photograph taken by the customer or other type of graphic image. Once the customer has identified a graphic image, the graphic image may be displayed for editing. The customer may be permitted to crop the graphic image or perform other types of image manipulations. A preview of the cropped or manipulated image may also be provided for the customer. One the customer is satisfied with the graphic image, the graphic image may be transmitted to the WWW server.
(57) Abrégé(suite)/Abstract(continued):
Once the customer has specified order details, the customer may be asked to provide a billing and shipping address. The customer may then be asked to identify a payment method, and provide a credit card or other billing number. The customer may then be provided with a summary of the order details and asked to verify that all of the information is correct. If the information is correct, the customized branded merchandise item ordered by the customer will be created and shipped to the customer at the provided address.
The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A method for creating and providing customized branded merchandise over a computer network, comprising:
   receiving a request for a merchandise item including a specification;
   customizing said merchandise item in accordance with said specification to create a customized merchandise item;
   branding said customized merchandise item to create a branded customized merchandise item; and
   providing said branded customized merchandise item to a requestor of said merchandise item.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said specification comprises a graphic image provided by said requestor of said merchandise item.

3. The method of Claim 2, wherein said specification further comprises a text message provided by said requestor of said merchandise item.

4. The method of Claim 3, wherein customizing said merchandise item in accordance with said specification comprises displaying said graphic image and said text message on said merchandise item to create said customized merchandise item.

5. The method of Claim 4, wherein branding said customized merchandise item comprises displaying a trademark on said customized merchandise item to create said branded customized merchandise item.

6. The method of Claim 5, wherein said trademark comprises a well-known trademark.

7. The method of Claim 6, wherein said merchandise item is a bottle.
8. The method of Claim 7, wherein said customized branded merchandise item comprises a bottle having an affixed label comprising a graphic image and a text message provided by a requestor of said merchandise item and a trademark.

9. A method for creating and providing customized branded merchandise over a computer network, comprising:
   transmitting a request for a customized branded merchandise item from a client computer to a server computer;
   in response to receiving said request at said server computer, transmitting a request for a specification from said server computer to said client computer;
   transmitting said specification from said client computer to said server computer in response to receiving said request for a specification at said client computer;
   creating said requested customized branded merchandise item in accordance with said specification; and
   providing said customized branded merchandise item created in accordance with said specification to a requestor of said item.

10. The method of Claim 9, wherein said specification comprises a graphic image and a text message.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein customize branded merchandise item comprises a bottle having an affixed label including said graphic image and said text message.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein said label further comprises a trademark.

13. The method of Claim 12, wherein said specification is provided by said requestor of said customized branded merchandise item.

15. A computer-readable medium comprising instructions which, when executed by a computer, perform the method of Claim 9.

16. A system for creating and providing a customized branded merchandise item over a computer network, comprising:
   a client computer;
   a server computer; and
   a print server; and wherein,
   said client computer is operative to transmit a request to said server computer for a customized branded merchandise item said request including a graphic image,
   said server computer is operative to receive said graphic image from said client computer and to create a customized label including said graphic image and a trademark in response to said request, and to transmit said label to said print server, and wherein
   said print server is operative to receive said label from said server computer and to print said label on a connected printer.

17. The system of Claim 16, wherein said request further comprises a text message, and wherein said server computer is further operative to create a customized label including said graphic image, said text message, and a trademark.

18. The system of Claim 16, wherein said client computer is operative to display said graphic image on a display screen and to receive input selecting a portion of said graphic image to crop, thereby creating a cropped graphic image.

19. The system of Claim 18, wherein said client computer is operative to transmit said cropped graphic image to said server computer as said graphic image.

20. The system of Claim 16, wherein said client computer is operative to receive input for manipulating said graphic image prior to transmitting said graphic image to said server computer.
21. In a computer system having a graphical user interface including a display and a user interface selection device, a method for creating and providing customized branded merchandise over a communication network, the method comprising:

obtaining a request for a merchandise item from a requester;

generating a set of display items, the set of display items operable to be generated on the computer system display and operable to obtain a customization of the merchandise item;

obtaining a requester manipulation of the set of display items from the user interface selection device corresponding to a customization of the merchandise item;

customizing the merchandise item in accordance with the specification to create a customized merchandise item;

branding the customized merchandise item to create a branded customized merchandise item; and

providing the branded customized merchandise item to the requester of the merchandise item.

22. The method as recited in Claim 21, wherein the set of display items includes one or more display items for obtaining a user registration corresponding to the customization of the merchandise item.

23. The method as recited in Claim 21, wherein the set of display items includes at least one display item operable to obtain an order identifier corresponding to the customization of the merchandise item.

24. The method as recited in Claim 21, wherein the set of display items includes at least one display item operable to obtain a digital photograph corresponding to the customization of the merchandise item.

25. The method as recited in Claim 21, wherein the set of display items includes at least one item operable to obtain a textual message corresponding to the customization of the merchandise item.
26. The method as recited in Claim 21 further comprising displaying on the computer system display a result of the customization prior to customizing the merchandise item.

27. The method as recited in Claim 26 further comprising obtaining a requester manipulation of the customization prior to customizing the merchandise item.

28. The method as recited in Claim 27, wherein the requester manipulation includes cropping of an image with the user interface selection device.

29. The method as recited in Claim 21, wherein the set of display items includes at least one display item for obtaining a quantity of merchandise items corresponding to the customization of the merchandise item.

30. The method as recited in Claim 21, wherein the merchandise item is a bottle.

31. The method as recited in Claim 30, wherein the set of display items includes at least one display item operable to obtain a specification of a flavor of beverage corresponding to the customization of the merchandise item.

32. The method as recited in Claim 21, wherein the communication network is the Internet and wherein the graphical user interface is a World Wide Web Website.
The embodiments of the invention in which an exclusive property or privilege is claimed are defined as follows:

1. A method for creating and providing customized branded merchandise over a computer network, comprising:
   receiving a request for a merchandise item including a specification;
   customizing said merchandise item in accordance with said specification to create a customized merchandise item;
   branding said customized merchandise item to create a branded customized merchandise item; and
   providing said branded customized merchandise item to a requestor of said merchandise item.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said specification comprises a graphic image provided by said requestor of said merchandise item.

3. The method of Claim 2, wherein said specification further comprises a text message provided by said requestor of said merchandise item.

4. The method of Claim 3, wherein customizing said merchandise item in accordance with said specification comprises displaying said graphic image and said text message on said merchandise item to create said customized merchandise item.

5. The method of Claim 4, wherein branding said customized merchandise item comprises displaying a trademark on said customized merchandise item to create said branded customized merchandise item.

6. The method of Claim 5, wherein said trademark comprises a well-known trademark.

7. The method of Claim 6, wherein said merchandise item is a bottle.
8. The method of Claim 7, wherein said customized branded merchandise item comprises a bottle having an affixed label comprising a graphic image and a text message provided by a requestor of said merchandise item and a trademark.

9. A method for creating and providing customized branded merchandise over a computer network, comprising:
   transmitting a request for a customized branded merchandise item from a client computer to a server computer;
   in response to receiving said request at said server computer, transmitting a request for a specification from said server computer to said client computer;
   transmitting said specification from said client computer to said server computer in response to receiving said request for a specification at said client computer;
   creating said requested customized branded merchandise item in accordance with said specification; and
   providing said customized branded merchandise item created in accordance with said specification to a requestor of said item.

10. The method of Claim 9, wherein said specification comprises a graphic image and a text message.

11. The method of Claim 10, wherein customize branded merchandise item comprises a bottle having an affixed label including said graphic image and said text message.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein said label further comprises a trademark.

13. The method of Claim 12, wherein said specification is provided by said requestor of said customized branded merchandise item.

15. A computer-readable medium comprising instructions which, when executed by a computer, perform the method of Claim 9.

16. A system for creating and providing a customized branded merchandise item over a computer network, comprising:
   a client computer;
   a server computer; and
   a print server; and wherein,
   said client computer is operative to transmit a request to said server computer for a customized branded merchandise item said request including a graphic image,
   said server computer is operative to receive said graphic image from said client computer and to create a customized label including said graphic image and a trademark in response to said request, and to transmit said label to said print server, and wherein
   said print server is operative to receive said label from said server computer and to print said label on a connected printer.

17. The system of Claim 16, wherein said request further comprises a text message, and wherein said server computer is further operative to create a customized label including said graphic image, said text message, and a trademark.

18. The system of Claim 16, wherein said client computer is operative to display said graphic image on a display screen and to receive input selecting a portion of said graphic image to crop, thereby creating a cropped graphic image.

19. The system of Claim 18, wherein said client computer is operative to transmit said cropped graphic image to said server computer as said graphic image.

20. The system of Claim 16, wherein said client computer is operative to receive input for manipulating said graphic image prior to transmitting said graphic image to said server computer.
Your photo on your very own bottle of Jones

Put your photo on a bottle of Jones

Now, easier than using tape.

It's actually quite easy and if you have any questions we'll show you how.

After receiving stacks and stacks of requests from you happy campers who visited our jonessoda.com site, we decided "why not!"

Here is how it works: Follow the 1,2,3 steps shown at the bottom of this page.
Register

Quick registration page

Please supply the following items for your quick registration and then you will be free to place your orders online. Registration also allows you to come back at any time and see the details of your orders. You will be able to track your order right to your door.

We keep all your information in strictest confidence and we do not share your information with other companies (items marked with a red star are required items).

IMPORTANT REGISTRATION INFORMATION

First Name: *Joseph

Last Name: *Kearney

E-mail: *joe@email.com

Phone Number: *206-845-3359

Password: *glabhyf346

This is a random password. Feel free to change it.
Order now

my details  my orders  order now

you are on page of
of your order  1234

Getting Started

Order Number: 11299Jo
Start Description: Joe's Bottles
Type a short description that will help us identify this order quickly.

Pick Your Photo

Choose your photos or artwork for your very own Jones Soda bottles. If you are unsure about the format or details, please see our how-to page for complete details.

Ready? To upload your photo or artwork, click on the browser button and find the graphic file on your personal computer. Valid file types are EPS, JPG, GIF, and TIF.

The measurements shown are the minimum requirements for your artwork to get a quality label.

Fig. 8A.
Add Personalized text

1. Give the photo credit (who took the picture). You have about 50 characters space.

2. This is where you can add a paragraph of text which will be posted on the back of the label. Be creative, go wild, or go with what we have below. You have as much room as the text below. Anything longer will get chopped off after 65 words.

Note: allow a few moments for the computer to upload your file to the server as we move to page 2 of the order form. Keep an eye on the status bar on the bottom of your browser. For a 1Meg artwork file, you can expect a 5 minute delay on a 56K modem.
Is this how you would like your picture to look like?

Your photo will be automatically resized to fill the space on the label. If you would like to try again, use the back arrow on your browser to try again with a new or resized photo.

For best results size and crop your photo before you select it in page 1 of the order form. Use the chart shown right to guide you with the size details.

The measurements shown are the minimum requirements for your artwork to get a quality label.
Choose your flavors

Now select the flavors and number of cases of soda you would like to order with your personalized labels (12 in each case). What? You haven't seen all the Jones flavors? Quick, have a look and then come back to complete the order.

order 1: 0 cases  → Select flavour  →  12 bottles  US$ 29.95 per case of 12 + shipping
order 2: 0 cases  → Select flavour  →  
order 3: 0 cases  → Select flavour  →  
order 4: 0 cases  → Select flavour  →  

Fig. 9B.
(4) Crop and size your photo here

Select the part of the picture you want to have on the label. Click on the save button to move to the next step.

How to use this workspace: click and drag your mouse over your original photo to select the area on the photo you wish to crop. If you have a Java enabled browser you will see a sample of your newly designed label to the right side. You can continue to crop and save your work by clicking on the button at the bottom of the page.
**How would you like to pay for this?**

We accept credit cards with our super secure credit card payment online. If this presents a problem, please contact us at info@myjones.com

Order Number: 11299Jo  
Description: Joe's bottles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORDER #: FLAVOR</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green Apple Soda- same as above</td>
<td>2 cases</td>
<td>$59.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>$59.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shipping &amp; Handling</td>
<td>$8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$67.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Is this correct?

- change artwork for this order
- change cases, flavors, and shipping information for this order

Card type: VISA  
Card Number: [1234567890123456]

Expiry Date: Month / Year  
Name: 1234567890123456

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**Fig. 10B.**
**CASE ORDERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORDER #</th>
<th>FLAVOR</th>
<th>QUANTITY</th>
<th>AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Green Apple Soda</td>
<td>2 Cases</td>
<td>$59.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$59.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$8.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total
Billed to: Joseph Kearney
VISA 1234567890123456 exp Month/Year

$87.90

**Fig. 11B.**
1200  START

1202  DISPLAY MAIN MENU

1204  RECEIVE USER INPUT

1206  REGISTER ?

1208  RECEIVE USER INFORMATION AND CREATE NEW ENTRY IN CUSTOMER DATABASE

1210  ORDER ?

1212  PROCESS ORDER FOR CUSTOMIZED BRANDED MERCH. (ROUTINE 1300, FIG. 13)

1214  GALLERY ?

1216  DISPLAY GALLERY OF PREVIOUSLY CREATED LABELS

1218  ACCOUNT DETAILS ?

1216  RECEIVE USER ID AND DISPLAY ACCOUNT DETAILS

1220  EXIT ?

1222  YES

1224  END

Fig.12.
20/20

A

RECEIVE PAYMENT INFORMATION

DISPLAY ORDER CONFIRMATION INFORMATION

1328

ORDER CORRECT?

NO

B

YES

CHARGE CREDIT CARD FOR ORDER

PRINT BRANDED BOTTLE LABELS CUSTOMIZED WITH GRAPHIC IMAGE

LABEL BOTTLES

SHIP BRANDED, CUSTOMIZED BOTTLES TO CUSTOMER

RETURN (TO STEP 1202, FIG. 12)

Fig. 13B.