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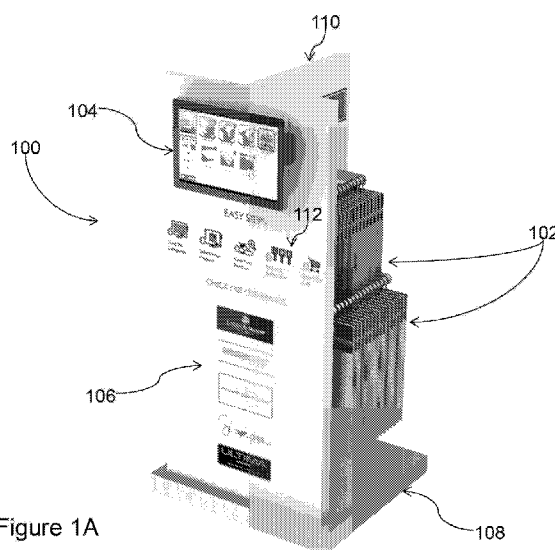


Figure 1A

(57) Abstract: A retailing system for providing interaction between a customer and a retailer to assist in the completion of a sale, comprising, a customer interface arranged to display to a customer information about at least one item, an input module arranged to receive input regarding a potential sale of the at least one item from the customer for provision to a database via a communications system, wherein the database is arranged to provide the input from the customer to at least one other user associated with the retailer on a retailer interface viewable by the at least one other user, wherein the at least one other user utilises the interface to review the input and interact with the customer to assist in the completion of the sale.



A RETAIL SYSTEM

Technical Field

[0001] The present invention relates to a retail system that combines the advantages of online and personal shopping. It relates to an interactive kiosk system and/or an interactive website or software application that provides a retail solution for the retailer of goods or services while also building brand equity for the supplier. The retail system finds particular, but not exclusive, use in areas where floor space is at a premium, such as in retail outlets that would traditionally sell large and bulky goods and services. The system, in at least one embodiment, provides advantages that ameliorate issues with regard to sales, marketing, merchandising and logistics and may be easily utilised in existing traditional retail channels.

Background to the Invention

[0002] In the past, retailing generally required physical retail premises, such as a shop or store, which held and displayed goods or provided information about services, which a customer could then select and purchase in the store. A customer enters the premises and usually select goods from shelves or displays, and carries them to a counter where a sales assistant will accept payment, and usually wrap the articles being purchased, which the customer will then carry from the store. Even when selling services, like in a travel agency for example, shops exist where customers can browse and select brochures and suchlike, before discussing their likely travel purchase with a sales assistant or travel agent, before having the assistant record the sale, accept payment, and pass over details of the travel arrangement selected and provide tickets to the customer.

[0003] These days such retail establishments are often computer aided, with retailers utilising computerised supply chain systems, and sometimes using delivery systems, to provide goods directly to the customer's home, especially with bulky items, for example. But the customers usually do not interact with a software assisted, or online, sales system within such shops or stores.

[0004] More recently there has been the rapidly developing "*online retail*" system, generally following the "*Amazon*"™ model, where customers shop via their home computers connected to retail sites located on the internet. In this arrangement,

customers see images of the goods they may wish to buy, together with information about the goods or services involved. The customer typically registers their identification information at the online store. The user also provides a means of payment like a credit card or PayPal™ account, and records their address for shipping their purchases. After selecting the goods or services to be purchased, the customer agrees to the purchase, affirms the payment, and then some time later accepts the delivery of the physical goods that are shipped to their homes. Sometimes, when the purchase is a service or an electronic file like an airline ticket or e-Book, the item can be transferred directly to the user back over the internet.

[0005] However there are deficiencies with each of these retail methods, but there are advantages as well. It would therefore be useful if a new retailing system could be provided that avoids some of the disadvantages for each of these approaches, by using the advantages without the disadvantages. It would be even more useful if at least some the advantages from each of these different retail approaches could be combined into a single system.

[0006] The method of letting a customer purchase goods or services by visiting retail premises has many advantages. The customer is accustomed to this method, and often gains pleasure from shopping in this manner. The customer can inspect real samples of the goods or services and information about them. It helps to sell goods if the customer can see and touch the goods directly. Clothing can be tried on to determine that is the correct size. Whereas purchasing these same items via a computer over the internet only permits the customer to see photographs or a description of the item, and just from these, the customer is often uncertain or even suspicious about the quality, size, texture, weight or other attributes of the physical goods.

[0007] On the other hand, an advantage of online retailing is that the customer is often able to access a much wider range of products, including many different models, options and sizes. Since the products available to purchase are just provided as images, the actual goods remain in warehouses until they are purchased and delivered, making the system more cost effective. Whereas with purchasing goods in a shop, the size of the premises has to be large enough to hold all the different models, styles, and sizes for the goods that customers might be interested in buying. There is a practical limit to this, and so retail premises usually only stock a smaller range for the goods than

would be available with online retailing, where every possible variation for the goods or services being presented to the customer can in theory be provided, as the user merely sees electronic representations that do not take up appreciable space.

[0008] With physical retailing there are overheads that the shop keeper must pay, such as rent for the premises and salaries for sufficient sales people, which increase and correlate with the quantity of different goods being made available for purchase. These additional costs are often not necessary or are much less with online retailing.

[0009] Retail premises usually have at least some sales assistants available to help customers. A good salesperson can increase sales by using persuasion as well as providing helpful assistance to the customer. While online retailing can also make a salesperson available, normally using a microphone and speaker, or via text messaging, or video interaction, this always lacks the personal touch that helps with the sales when the salesperson is dealing directly and personally with the customer. A remotely located sales assistant, which is the only arrangement possible for online retailing, cannot handle the goods, or know clearly what the customer is experiencing when the product is being selected and a purchase choice is being made, and is therefore at a disadvantage.

[0010] Accordingly, it would be useful to provide a solution that preferably avoids or ameliorates any one or more of the disadvantages present in the prior approaches to retail, or which may provide another alternative to such approaches.

Summary of the Invention

[0011] According to one aspect of the invention, there is provided a retailing system for providing interaction between a customer and a retailer to assist in the completion of a sale, comprising, a customer interface arranged to display to a customer information about at least one item, an input module arranged to receive input regarding a potential sale of the at least one item from the customer for provision to a database via a communications system, wherein the database is arranged to provide the input from the customer to at least one other user associated with the retailer on a retailer interface viewable by the at least one other user, wherein the at least one other user utilises the interface to review the input and interact with the customer to assist in the completion of the sale.

[0012] The customer interface may be an interactive kiosk and/or a remote device under the control of the customer.

[0013] The interaction of the at least one other user with the customer may include manipulating the sale price of an item as viewed by the customer.

[0014] The interaction of the at least one other user with the customer may include communicating at least one incentive to the customer in order to induce the customer to complete the sale.

[0015] The system may include a processing module arranged to receive the input from the customer and processes the input to provide analysis information derived from the customer input, wherein the analysis information is presented on the retailer interface.

[0016] The processing module may further access the database to retrieve sale information relevant to the at least one item, wherein the processing module processes the sale information to provide further analysis information, wherein the further analysis information is presented on the retailer interface.

[0017] The further analysis information may include a gross margin associated with the at least one item selected by the customer.

[0018] According to another aspect of the invention there is provided a retailing system for increasing the total sales for a retail premises selling a multiplicity of products, by providing to a customer within the retail premises, a system comprising:

at least one interactive kiosk in close association with:

- (a) a display of samples of at least some of said multiplicity of products,
- (b) said kiosk being in communication with a database maintained on a computer system, the database containing information about said products;

said interactive kiosk having:

- (a) at least one display means adapted to display to a customer some information about at least some of said products,
- (b) means for accepting input from said customer, so as to permit the customer to manipulate the display to allow the customer to view the information from (a) for at least one of the products,

- (c) means for the customer to choose one or more products that the customer wishes to purchase, by the allowing customer to provide some input for (b),
- (d) means for accepting payment for the products from customers,
- (e) means for entering identification details of said customer,
- (f) means for accepting delivery details for the delivery of the purchased products, and
- (g) means for connecting the kiosk with the database via a communications system (such as the internet);

wherein said database has:

- (a) means to record the details purchases made by the customer, at least some of these details being input by the customer via the kiosk,
- (b) means to communicate with a supplier of the goods or services so purchased, and to place an order to supply them,
- (c) means to record the financial details of the purchase, and
- (d) means to disburse the amounts payable to the supplier for supplying the goods or services once they are supplied to the customer, and
- (e) means to disburse the amounts payable to the retailer for retailing the goods or services once they are supplied to the customer; and

wherein said samples of the products relate to at least some of the same products available for display and purchase using the kiosk, this display being readily accessible to the customers using the kiosk.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0019] Further features of the present invention are more fully described in the following description of several non-limiting embodiments thereof. This description is included solely for the purposes of exemplifying the present invention. It should not be understood as a restriction on the broad summary, disclosure or description of the invention as set out above. The description will be made with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figures 1 show one version of the interactive kiosk according to the invention, where Figure 1A shows a front view of the kiosk, Figure 1B shows a side view, and Figure 1C shows the other side view;

Figures 2 show an alternate version of the interactive kiosk, where Figure 2A shows a front view of the kiosk from the left, Figure 2B shows the front view from the right, and Figure 2C shows the other side of the kiosk; and

Figures 3 show yet another version of the interactive kiosk, comprising three modules, where Figure 3A shows the front of the kiosk and Figure 3B shows a single module of the kiosk unit of Figure 3A.

[0020] The functions for the touch-screen interface are shown in Figures 4 to 16, where:

Figure 4 shows an example of a *“Navigation”* frame that appears on a Home screen, for use by a customer;

Figure 5 shows an example of a *“Home screen”*;

Figures 6A and 6B show an example of a *“Product Listing”* screen, before and after details are populated on it for the products being displayed;

Figures 7A and 7B show an example of two different *“Product”* screens;

Figures 8A and 8B show an example of two different *“Help”* type screens;

Figure 9 shows an example of an *“Accessory”* selection screen;

Figures 10A and 10B show two views of an example of the *“Shopping Cart”* pop-up screen;

Figures 11A and 11B show an example of a *“Checkout”* screen, 11B showing the associated online keyboard that is made available for entering text;

Figure 12 shows an example of a *“Delivery”* details screen;

Figure 13 shows an example of a *“Shipping”* details screen;

Figure 14 shows an example of a *“Payment”* details screen;

Figure 15 shows an example of a *“Payment Processing”* screen;

Figure 16 shows an example of a *“Payment Complete”* confirmation screen;

Figure 17 shows an example of a group of core products screen;

Figure 17A shows an example of a *“Confirmation Category Discount”* screen;

Figures 18 and 18A show similar screens for accessories and for other discounted products respectively;

Figure 19 there is shown a screen which allows a user a list of *“Disabled Products”*;

Figure 20 there is shown an example of a login screen, so that an employee of the retail store may log into the system;

Figure 21 there is shown a screen where the employee can review the items that have been selected by the customer;

Figure 22 there is shown a screen where the employee may then add a discount or modify the price of the items to create a new final price;

Figure 23 there is shown a screenshot of an interface for a *“SmartBasket”*TM;

Figure 24 there is shown a repetitive office screen;

Figure 25 there is shown a supplier competitive performance report; and

Figures 26A to 26P shows a user (i.e. customer) interface for use on a smartphone.

Detailed Description of Preferred Embodiments

[0021] In the ensuing description, reference will be made to “users”, “customers”, “salespeople” and “retailer”. It will be understood that the aforementioned terms are used to provide the reader with colloquial labels that aim to provide a clear and understandable example of the embodiment. It will be understood, however, that the reader is not to draw any “gloss” from the aforementioned terms, and that the terms are provided solely for illustrative purposes and should not be used to limit or otherwise vary the scope of the embodiments and or the broader invention described and defined herein.

[0022] Broadly speaking the embodiment described herein provides a retailing system for providing interaction between a customer and a retailer to assist in the completion of a sale. The system includes a customer interface arranged to display to a customer information about at least one item and an input module arranged to receive input regarding a potential sale of the at least one item from the customer for provision to a database via a communications system. The database is arranged to provide the input from the customer to at least one other user associated with the retailer on a retailer interface viewable by the at least one other user, wherein the at least one other user utilises the interface to review the input and interact with the customer to assist in the completion of the sale.

[0023] The customer interface may be an interactive kiosk and/or a remote device under the control of the customer and the interaction of the at least one other user with the customer may include manipulating the sale price of an item as viewed by the customer.

[0024] The interaction of the at least one other user with the customer may include communicating at least one incentive to the customer in order to induce the customer to complete the sale.

[0025] The system may include a processing module arranged to receive the input from the customer and processes the input to provide analysis information derived from the customer input, wherein the analysis information is presented on the retailer interface.

[0026] The processing module may further access the database to retrieve sale information relevant to the at least one item, wherein the processing module processes the sale information to provide further analysis information, wherein the further analysis information is presented on the retailer interface. The further analysis information may include a gross margin associated with the at least one item selected by the customer.

[0027] In one specific embodiment, which is described in more detail hereinbelow, there is provided a retailing system for increasing the total sales for a retail premises selling a multiplicity of products, by providing to a customer within the retail premises, a system comprising at least one interactive kiosk in close association with a display of samples of at least some of said multiplicity of products, said kiosk being in

communication with a database maintained on a computer system, the database containing information about said products.

[0028] The interactive kiosk has at least one display means adapted to display to a customer some information about at least some of said products, means for accepting input from said customer, so as to permit the customer to manipulate the display to allow the customer to view the information from (a) for at least one of the products, means for the customer to choose one or more products that the customer wishes to purchase, by the allowing customer to provide some input for (b), means for accepting payment for the products from customers, means for entering identification details of said customer, means for accepting delivery details for the delivery of the purchased products, and means for connecting the kiosk with the database via a communications system (such as the internet).

[0029] The database has means to record the details purchases made by the customer, at least some of these details being input by the customer via the kiosk, means to communicate with a supplier of the goods or services so purchased, and to place an order to supply them, means to record the financial details of the purchase, and means to disburse the amounts payable to the supplier for supplying the goods or services once they are supplied to the customer, and means to disburse the amounts payable to the retailer for retailing the goods or services once they are supplied to the customer; and wherein said samples of the products relate to at least some of the same products available for display and purchase using the kiosk, this display being readily accessible to the customers using the kiosk.

[0030] The embodiment will now be described in more detail with reference to the drawings. Various examples of the physical embodiment of the kiosk are provided in Figures 1A, 1B and 1C, 2 and 3. Figure 1A, 1B and 1C shows three views of an example of a kiosk according to the invention.

[0031] The kiosk (100), displays a number of samples (102) of goods, in this example which are bed linen. A touch-screen (104) is mounted on one of the walls of the module in a location that makes it readily and easily available to customers. Some branding and advertising (106) for the products on display are also preferably provided on the kiosk. This branding may be physical and removably fixed, or may also, or instead, be provided on electronic displays. The displays should preferably be able to be updated

regularly and easily. The module making up the kiosk generally has a base portion (108) and one or more vertical walls (110). Instructions (112) for using the kiosk may also be provided, normally near to the touchscreen. Preferably the walls are located to support the displays and shelves for the goods, and also for mounting the touch-screen.

[0032] Preferably the walls may have internal cavities for hiding the cables and suchlike that connect the touchscreen display and data input means to the communications system like the internet. Different styles and types of physical displays and fitting for the samples of products being displayed may be provided, such as shelves, cabinets, hanging racks and the like. The physical space available is an important determinant for the size of the kiosk displays. This permits a wide variety of different kiosks, and modules from which to construct the kiosks, to be chosen. Alternatively, some kiosks may occupy existing wall fixtures that have been modified. Some stores have distinctive fittings, and the kiosks may be designed to blend in, or integrate with, such fittings.

[0033] It is also preferred that the samples may be housed in a secure fashion. This reduces pilferage, but importantly also helps to keep the display tidy and attractive, when customers cannot remove the samples or move them around. Keeping the kiosk tidy reduces the need for a sales assistant to continually tidy the display, or replace items that are removed. The sample may be secured by fixing them to non-removable racks, or storing them in cabinets, or attaching one portion of the product to the display kiosk itself. However, the samples should still be available for close inspection by the customer if securing the products is to be utilised.

[0034] The kiosk may alternatively have more than one display screens, to display additional views of the products, or movies, or advertising, for example. Using such screens permits a centrally controlled campaign or information display to be provided, which can be quickly and easily upgraded or changed. The kiosk may contain speakers to play music, or relay the sound from videos or advertising about the product. The text on the screen may be automatically spoken aloud by the software, to help customers who have difficulty in seeing, or in reading the language involved. There may be lighting provided as part of the kiosk. The kiosk may have means for securing it firmly in place so it cannot be upset or moved. Alternatively, the kiosk modules may have wheels, preferably lockable, to allow it to be moved around to different locations in the store.

[0035] Ideally the display screens used are retail hardened units. The associated cables are securely fitted and locked in place. This ensures they cannot be easily or accidentally removed. Typical dimensions for the kiosk unit can be for example a square base which is 800 x 800 mm, and a height of 1500 mm, and the divider walls may be around 50 mm thick.

[0036] In the representations provided in Figures 2A, 2B and 2C, another version of the kiosk is shown. Instead of the generally square base and “T” shaped wall arrangement of Figures 1A, 1B and 1C, in this example the base is rectangular, and the walls are in a zig-zag arrangement. The features of the kiosk are identified in the same manner as with Figure 1A, 1B and 1C.

[0037] This arrangement has an advantage in allowing the samples to be easily accessible by a customer operating or watching the touch-screen. This shape may suite specific locations within the store or by mixing different unit shapes; this can improve the aesthetics of the store. Different shaped kiosk units may be used with different brands, to assist in distinguishing them for customers. Typical dimensions for the kiosk unit in Figures 2A, 2B and 2C can be for example a rectangular base which is 900 x 500 mm, and a height of 1500 mm, and the divider walls may be around 50 mm thick.

[0038] It may also be advisable to provide the kiosk as a number of modules. These modules may be positioned together or separately, possibly in different parts of the store.

[0039] In Figures 3A, 3B and 3C, another variation of the kiosk is shown, where the kiosk (100) is made up of three separate modules (100a, 100b and 100c) which are linked and fitted together. The retailer may utilise the different modules in a mix-and- match configuration. For example, when the products, in this example being boating accessories, are updated, a replacement module can be provided having the new models incorporated, which can then be swapped for the older module with the previous models shown. In this example, the samples (102) are fixed into the display kiosk.

[0040] As shown in Figure 3A, the instructions for using the kiosk are including on the display touch-screen 104, rather than being included on the walls of the kiosk. Typical dimensions for the kiosk modular unit can be for example a rectangular base which is

1000 x 600 mm, and a height of 1900 mm, and the divider panel walls may be around 100 mm thick, and which may allow the panels to be opened, giving access to the interior, where the products are fixed in place. One module shows a box to which samples of boat control levers are attached, allowing the customer to play with them directly.

[0041] The functioning of the display touch-screen are now described in more detail. These examples are just one way of implementing the interactivity between the screen and its information display function and its data entry function. Other commonly used alternatives may also be utilised to achieve the desired result.

[0042] Figure 4 at 400 illustrates a portion of a Navigation frame that is provided on a touch screen display. Turning to Figure 5, there is shown an example of the Navigation Frame that is provided on the touch-screen display including the portion of Figure 4 at 502 (i.e. the portion 502 is equivalent to the portion 400 of Figure 4. It is preferably located in a particular location upon the screen. The components displayed are explained in Table 1 below.

Legend	Item	Description
402, 504	Rotating Banner	Rotates through images
404, 506	Home Icon	When selected returns to Home Screen
406, 508	Video Icon	When selected opens the Video Icon Pop-up and plays video
408, 510	Language Icon	When selected opens Language Pop-up – (optional)
410, 512	Email Icon	When selected opens Email Pop-up - (optional)
412, 514	Categories Sub-Navigation menu	Displays all Categories available on the kiosk. Is used an additional menu option for users to change top level categories
414, 516	Shopping Cart	Displays total number of items and total price of cart content. When selected opens Shopping Cart pop-up

Table 1

[0043] This navigation frame permits the user to bring up different displays, and the Rotating Banner (402, 504) shows a series of images of the products available. There is a *"Home"* icon button (404, 506) which can be selected by a user to return the screen to the initial setting. The selection with a touch-screen will merely involve the customer tapping on the icon. Otherwise, a joy-stick, separate touch panel, mouse or the like can be used to select the button, for instance. Another icon or button will display a video (406, 508) in display area (402, 504) containing information about the products. As a preferred but optional feature, there may be a *"Language"* button (408, 510) which changes the text being displayed into other languages, although without this option, the text is displayed in the local language, in this example in the English language.

[0044] Another option is an *"Email"* button (410, 512) which allows the customer to receive or send information from or to an email account, where the email address can be entered using the touch screen keyboard. In a preferred approach, this button permits the customer to join a mailing list. Alternatively, other links to Twitter, Facebook or the like may be provided instead, or a selection permitted among them, to perform a similar purpose. In the *"Categories"* area (412, 514) buttons may be provided to permit the customer to filter the products being displayed to specific sub-categories, to aid in locating particular items. Also, the display ideally provides access to the *"shopping cart"* which is a known concept utilised with online retailing software systems (414, 516).

[0045] In Figure 5, an example of the home screen is shown. The components of the home screen are explained in more detail in Table 2 below.

Legend	Item	Description
518	Category Image	When selected goes to either the Product listing page or next grouping level page
520	Category Product Indicator	Displays the total number of Products available in the Category
522	Category Name	Display Category Name
524	Category Description	Display Category Description

Table 2

[0046] This portion of the screen shows icons for each category of products (518). When an icon is selected the display changes to show either the product listing for that

category, or a sub-category listing. Ideally the number of possible products (520) that are available for each category is indicated adjacent each category icon. Under the icon the name (522) and description (524) of the category may be displayed.

[0047] In Figures 6A and 6B, examples of a “*product listing*” screen 600 is shown. The components of screen 600 are explained in Table 3 below. This screen shows a listing of all the products available to be purchased in the selected category.

Legend	Item	Description
602	Product Image	When selected goes to Product screen
604	Product Name	Name of Product
606	Non-sale Product Price	Price and display of Product not on sale
608	Sale Product Price	Price and display of Product on sale
610	Product Overlay	Conveys to the user any additional Product information

Table 3

[0048] An image of each product is shown (602), as well as its name (604), and a price (606) for each product. The normal price is shown, but preferably any adjusted prices for products on sale (608) may be indicated in a special way, such as using distinctive colours, and ideally showing the original price (606) as well, but with the amount shown with ‘strike through’. An “*overlay*” symbol icon may also be displayed (610) to indicate any additional information about the product of special significance.

[0049] In Figures 7A and 7B, examples of a “*product*” screen 700 is shown. The components are explained in Table 4 below. This screen shows the details of each of the products available to be purchased that have been selected by a customer. It would normally be the last screen shown to the user prior to the checkout process. Its general purpose is to provide the user with everything they may want to know about a specific product. Options such as about size, colour, style, model, and the like are shown here.

Legend	Item	Description
702	Product Image	Large Product default image
704	Product Name	Name of Product
706	Brand Name	Name of product Brand

708	Price	Price based on quantity (Preferably the wholesale price is also available, so the wholesale cost per order can also be calculated and stored)
710	Quantity	Number of Products selected to be added to cart
712	Add/Remove Quantity	When + selected adds 1 to quantity, when – selected 1 subtracted from quantity
714	Colour Selector	Display colours available for Product. When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change highlighted colour. ▪ Loads product attributes applicable for that colour i.e. Product images, attributes.
716	Image Selector	Display attribute list available for Product. When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Change highlighted image ▪ Changes main image area
718	Size Selector	Display attribute list available for Product. When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Save information for user Product selection
720	Add Accessory Button	When selected opens Accessory pop-up
722	Product Description	Displays description of Product
724	Sizing Help Button	When selected opens Size Information Pop-up
726	Contact Us Button	When selected opens Email Pop-up
728	Back Button	When selected goes back to the previous screen the kiosk was on
730	Add To Cart Button	When selected adds Product to Shopping Cart
732	Product Overlay	Conveys to the user any additional Product information

Table 4

[0050] In the product screen, a representative product image (702) is displayed, along with its name (704) and brand (706). The retail price (708) is shown. A field to display the quantity for the product (710) is displayed along with controls (712) to increase or

decrease the quantity displayed. The quantity can default to 1, for example. Controls for selecting the colour (714), if appropriate for the product, can be displayed. All these controls may be used to display other variants. If there is a series of images available, then thumbnails can be provided (716) letting the customer swap to other views of the product for the main image (702). Controls for selecting the size (718), if appropriate for the product can be displayed, or this may be used for other attributes. Preferably if the product can be sold with accessories, then a control for selecting these (720) can be provided, which can cause a pop-up window to appear, to allow this accessory to be selected. A product description is displayed (722).

[0051] Various functions to assist the customer may also be provided. These may include a *"Sizing help button"* (724), or a *"Contact us"* button (728), for example. A *"Back"* control (728) is provided. An *"Add to the shopping cart"* control (730) is also provided. Also a product overlay control (732) may be provided to give the customer access to additional product information.

[0052] In Figures 8A and 8B, examples of pop-up *"Help"* screens 800 are shown. The components are explained in Table 5 below. Such screens *"pop-up"* or appear on top of the original screen from where this help screen is called, by means of clicking or tapping on a button on the original screen. Figure 8A is an example of a *"Contact Us"* screen, where an image (A) of the company, (usually including a logo, or some advertising), which is the source of the goods that the kiosk relates to, is shown. The details for the company is also provided (B) usually showing its address and telephone details, and optionally this may also include a link to further allow a connection to the company's web site, or an email link, that may permit the customer the option of sending the company an email, for example. Otherwise the customer may copy these details onto their own smart-phones allowing them to call, text or email the company themselves. A control (C) is available to permit the user to close the pop-up window, and return to the original screen.

Legend	Item	Description
802	<i>"Contact Us"</i> (or <i>"Sizing"</i>) Image	Contact us information for users to read
804	<i>"Contact Us"</i> (or <i>"Sizing"</i>) Description	Information about contact us

806	Close Button	When selected the pop-up closes
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Table 5

[0053] In Figure 8B, an example of a similar pop-up window is shown, which provides a customer with help on sizing, for bed linen or clothing items, for instance. Again, there is an image (802) or table, or text explanation, giving the customers conversion sizes in metric, imperial, or other sizing systems, or perhaps for sheets, then the King, Queen, Double, and Single sizes and their actual measurements. A similar template may be used for all the Help pop-up windows, to assist with the design of the system. Again a portion of the window is set aside for text explanation (804, and a "Close" button or control (806) is provided to allow the user to close the window and return to the previous window.

[0054] In Figure 9, an example of an "Accessory" pop-up window 900 is shown. There is an image for the main product (902), and smaller images or thumbnails (904) of all of the accessories which may be selected to accompany the main product, are also provided. Each type of accessory may ideally be its own product that can be located from the main enquiry, so this function can operate as a short cut to allow customers to find matching accessories to an initial selection for purchase. In this example a "left arrow" 906 and "right arrow" 908 control is provided to allow the user to select the quantity number for each accessory, by adding or decreasing the quantity that is also shown beneath the accessory image. This also updates the subtotal 910. The name of each accessory (916) is provided adjacent to its image. A field showing the subtotal (910) is preferably provided, and a control (912) to permit the user to add an accessory to their shopping cart is also available. There is also provided a close button 914. A summary of these controls is shown in Table 6 below.

Legend	Item	Description
902	Main Product Image	Main Product image
904	Accessory Image	Accessory image
906	Left Arrow	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adds one to quantity Increases Sub-total

908	Right Arrow	When selected: ▪ Decreases one from quantity ▪ Decreases Sub-total
910	Sub-Total	Displays sub-total amount of Accessories added to cart
912	Add Accessory Button	When selected add Accessory selection to users cart
914	Close Button	When selected closes Accessory pop-up
916	Accessory Name	Name of Accessory

Table 6

[0055] Figures 10A and 10B show two views of the shopping cart pop-up window 1000. A product image (1002) is shown for each of the items that the customer has decided to purchase. Beneath that image the name of the product (1004) is displayed. The price of the product (1006) is also shown preferably beneath the product name. In this example, at the bottom of the window, a summary of the number of items selected (1008), and the total price (1010) for all the items in the shopping cart is displayed. Various controls for manipulating the shopping cart are also provided. For example, a button that clears all the selected items (1012) can be provided, to allow the user to start over. A “Checkout” button (1014) is provided, to allow the customer to continue with the purchase, for when the shopping cart is ready. A control that allows the customer to remove an item (1016) may also be provided. If there are more selected items than can appear on one screen, then a control is shown that allows the customer to move to following or previous screens, in the form of left arrow (1018) and right arrow (1020) buttons. A “Close” button (1022) will close a pop-up window. For each of the selected items some details are provided. The product name or brand (1024) is shown, along with the selected colour description (1026), and the size description (1028), if appropriate. The quantity selected for each product is also indicated (1030) as is a subtotal (1032) taking the quantity into account. If related accessories have also been ordered, then their details (1034) are shown beneath the main product, and their prices are included in the subtotal (1032). Figure 10A shows the view initially presented to the customer, while 10B shows the window with its details populated.

Legend	Item	Description
1002	Product Image	Product default image
1004	Product Name	Name of Product
1006	Product Price	Product price
1008	Cart Items	Total number of items in the shopping cart
1010	Cart Price	Total price of all items in the shopping cart
1012	Clear Cart	When selected opens confirmation alert box
1014	Checkout Button	When selected opens Billing Step 1 screen
1016	Remove Item Button	When selected opens confirmation alert box
1018	Left Arrow Button	Move left through Products in cart
1020	Right Arrow Button	Move right through Products in cart
1022	Close Button	When selected closes the Shopping Cart Pop-up
1024	Product Brand	Brand of Product
1026	Product Colour Name	Colour name of the Product
1028	Product Size Name	Size name of the Product
1030	Product quantity	Number of items for Product added to cart
1032	Product total	Total amount of Product cost (product price X quantity)
1034	Accessories	Details of chosen accessories

Table 7

[0056] Once the customer has approved the purchases, and has used the “Check out” control then the customer will be asked to provide some identification details. An example of a screen 1100 to enable this functionality is shown in Figures 11A and 11B. A summary of the controls and features is provided in Table 8 below. The first step of the checkout process is to collect the customers basic details. These include the customer’s name, preferably divided into first name (1102) and surname (1104) with their telephone number (1106) and email address (1108). Some instructions are preferably also provided (1110) for guiding the customer to fill in the needed

information. A basic check is carried out that the requested information has been provided, and preferably that the right type of information is entered in each of these fields. For example, the email field must have a properly formatted email address that includes an "@" character for instance. An indicator (1110) is provided to flag that either the information is missing or that it is not the expected right type of information.

[0057] In addition, when the user selects a field where text must be entered, an on-screen keyboard (1136) is displayed, as shown in Figure 11B. The customer can tap, or otherwise select, the keys in order to type in their name and so on. Alternatively a voice recognition system can be used to handle this.

[0058] A button (1112) allows the customer to continue shopping, by validating the entered data and then moving back to the *"Home screen"*, perhaps to continue shopping. A button that allows the customer to view the shopping cart (1114) also validates the entered data and then opens the *"Shopping cart"* pop-up window. A *"Back"* (1128) button validates the screen and then returns to the previous page. Finally, a *"Next step"* button (1130) validates and moves on to the next step in the billing process.

[0059] Preferably, a summary of the order is also shown with the product name (1120), product quantity (1122), product attributes (1124) and the product price (1126). The total cost (1132) is indicated.

Legend	Item	Description
1102	First Name	User's First Name
1104	Last Name	User's Last Name
1106	Phone Number	User's Phone Number
1108	Email Address	User's Email Address
1110	Information text	Informs user of what information is expected of field entry
1112	Error Indicator	Visual indicator of whether field has passed validation
1114	Continue Shopping Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful goes to Home Screen

1116	View Cart Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful opens Shopping Cart pop-up
1118	Contact Details Button	When selected forces validation of current screen
1120	Product Name	Name of product being purchased
1122	Product Quantity	Quantity of product being purchased
1124	Product Attribute	Attributes of product being purchased
1126	Product Cost	Total cost of product being purchased
1128	Back Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful goes back to previous page
1130	Next Step Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful goes next step in billing process
1132	Total Cost	Total cost of order being purchased including shipping
1134	Subscription	Enables user subscription
1136	Keyboard	Windows keyboard for user input
1138	Delivery Address	When selected forces validation of current screen
1140	Shipping Method	When selected forces validation of current screen
1142	Payment	When selected forces validation of current screen

Table 8

[0060] In Figure 12, an example of a window 1200 for entering the customer's address details is shown. Again a pop-up keyboard is made available to allow the customer to add their address. Some of the fields, such as the "Country" (1202) field, provide a drop down list, where all possible countries are shown, and the user only needs to select the right one. Some detail about the items of information to be entered is given in Table 9 below.

[0061] The customer is requested to provide their country (1202), state (1204), suburb (1206) and street address (1208). As with the screen for entering the customer's name,

the screen also validates that the required fields are filled in, and the type of text entered is valid. Error indicators (1212) alert the customer if a field is missed, or contains invalid information. A combination of the entered information is displayed in an area (1210), so the customer can see that they have entered the right information in the right field.

[0062] The customer's details may be already recorded on the database, from previous purchases. An option to assist with this is to provide the customer with a unique identification number. Preferably a secret password would be required, when using this to reduce mistakes. The details of the identification number may be emailed to the customer, or a printed receipt may be provided. Alternatively, the credit card or other payment method may be used to trigger a default set of customer details, or else the customer's telephone number or name or combination of these may be used. But it may be preferred to have the customer key in their identity and address details with each use of the kiosk, to minimise the need for the customer to keep track of their user details.

Legend	Item	Description
1202	Country	Country dropdown
1204	State/Province/Area	State/Province/Area dropdown
1206	Suburb	User's Suburb
1208	Post Code	User's Post Code
1210	Street Address	Users Street Address
1212	Error Indicator	Visual indicator of whether field has passed validation
1214	Continue Shopping Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful goes to Home Screen
1216	View Cart Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful opens Shopping Cart pop-up
1218	Contact Details Button	When selected forces validation of current screen
1220	Product Name	Name of product being purchased
1222	Product Quantity	Quantity of product being purchased

1224	Product Attribute	Attributes of product being purchased
1226	Product Cost	Total cost of product being purchased
1228	Back Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forces validation of current screen ▪ If validation successful goes back to previous page
1230	Next Step Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Forces validation of current screen ▪ If validation successful goes next step in billing process
1232	Total Cost	Total cost of order being purchased including shipping
1234	Delivery Address	When selected forces validation of current screen
1236	Shipping Method	When selected forces validation of current screen
1238	Payment	When selected forces validation of current screen

Table 9

[0063] The customer will use the “*Next step*” button (1230) to move on to record how they want the goods delivered to them. An example of a screen 1300 for this functionality, to choose the shipping method is shown in Figure 13. As with the previous screens, a pop-up keyboard is available when a user wishes to enter text in any of the indicated fields. The preferred fields are outlined in Table 10 below.

[0064] Using this window the customer will select the shipping method that they wish to use, in order for the purchased products to be shipped to them. A control to allow the selection (1302) among the potential choices is provided. The cost of each method is shown (1304), with a short name (1306) along with a description of the advantages and disadvantages involved, such as the estimated arrival time. A field that permits a message is also available (1310) to allow the customer to provide further instructions when the product is delivered to their door. One of the options may be for the customer to collect some or all of the items in person from the store they are in, and if this option is to be available, then an indicator that the goods are in stock may be provided, or else a means of having a salesperson to approve this, may be provided.

Legend	Item	Description
1302	Shipping Method Selector	User delivery method selection. When Selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of shipping added to order amount
1304	Shipping Cost	Cost of shipping method
1306	Shipping Name	Name of shipping method
1308	Shipping Description	Description of shipping method
1310	Shipping Message	User message with any shipping instructions
1312	Continue Shopping Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful goes to Home Screen
1314	View Cart Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful opens Shopping Cart pop-up
1316	Contact Details Button	When selected forces validation of current screen
1318	Product Name	Name of product being purchased
1320	Product Quantity	Quantity of product being purchased
1322	Product Attribute	Attributes of product being purchased
1324	Product Cost	Total cost of product being purchased
1326	Back Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful goes back to previous page
1328	Next Step Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful goes next step in billing process
1330	Total Cost	Total cost of order being purchased including shipping
1332	Delivery Address	When selected forces validation of current screen
1334	Shipping Method	When selected forces validation of current screen

1336	Payment	When selected forces validation of current screen
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Table 10

[0065] The customer moves on to the next step, where the method of payment is selected. An example of a window for defining the payment method is shown in Figure 14 at screen 1400. Details of the fields that may be utilised for this are provided in Table 11 below. The total amount for the goods being purchased is shown (1430), and various options for making a payment are also provided (1402), so that the customer can select among them. These may include the option of selecting a credit card, and icons for the various credit cards will be shown to select among. Alternately, the options may include purchasing in cash, which may provide and print out a voucher for the customer to take to a cash register. Any of the commonly used payment methods may be incorporated into this screen.

Legend	Item	Description
1402	Payment Method Selector	Used for user to select the particular payment method
1404	Continue Shopping Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful goes to Home Screen
1406	View Cart Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful opens Shopping Cart pop-up
1408	Contact Details Button	When selected forces validation of current screen
1410	Product Name	Name of product being purchased
1412	Product Quantity	Quantity of product being purchased
1414	Product Attribute	Attributes of product being purchased
1416	Product Cost	Total cost of product being purchased
1418	Back Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful goes back to previous page

1420	Next Step Button	When selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forces validation of current screen If validation successful goes to Billing Step 5 Screen
1422	Total Cost	Total cost of order being purchased including shipping
1424	Delivery Address	When selected forces validation of current screen
1426	Shipping Method	When selected forces validation of current screen
1428	Payment	When selected forces validation of current screen
1430	Total Amount	Total cost of order being purchased including shipping. Should be the same as Total cost

Table 11

[0066] The customer then moves on to the next, and fifth, step, where the payment is processed. Examples of the fields that may be utilised in this screen 1500 of Figure 15 are shown below in Table 12. Generally, the selected payment method is highlighted (1502) and a progress bar (1504) will graphically indicate the processing time occurring. The total amount involved will also display (1506). If the payment is refused, for example if the credit card check does not permit further costs being incurred by a customer, then an error message would appear.

Legend	Item	Description
1502	Payment Method Image	Image of payment method selected by user
1504	Payment Progress Bar	Displays the progress of the transaction visually
1506	Total Amount	Total cost of order being processed including shipping

Table 12

[0067] Finally, a window indicating the payment result will display to the customer, and an example 1600 of this is provided in Figure 16. A summary of the fields that may be included on the screen is shown in Table 13. A notification (A) that the transaction was successful is indicated. The name of the store where the transaction occurred is shown

(B) and the client may be invited (C) to have themselves added to a mailing list for further shopping information to be provided to them, using the email address previously provided. The user clicks on the *"Finished"* button to return to the home screen. If desired a receipt may be printed, or else a copy may be emailed to the client at the address previously provided.

Legend	Item	Description
1602	Email Address	Users Email Address entered in Contact Details
1604	Store name	Name of store user purchased from
1606	Subscription	Enables user subscription
1608	Finished Button	When clicked go to Home Screen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If user has selected Yes to subscribe, subscription process kicked off
1610	Order Complete	
1612	Total Amount	Total cost of order being processed including shipping.

Table 13

[0068] The example shown is merely one variation of an interactive kiosk and the associated software. Other variations may be used equally.

[0069] As mentioned, a language translation module is a preferred embodiment of the invention. Also, provision may be made for customers who have trouble seeing or hearing. This can involve a button to expand the size of the details shown on the screen. An earphone jack can be provided with the screen to enable a customer to connect earphones, along with a volume control, to allow any spoken information or advertising to be played more loudly, if desired. A function to permit integration with hearing aids is also possible. The facility to have the text displayed on each screen spoken to the user is also an option, using existing software to enable this function.

[0070] As a further preferred option, the system may provide a tutorial to the customer using the display. This tutorial may be a video explaining the functions of the kiosk, or else individual short videos may display explaining each window, or function. These tutorials may be triggered using the *"Help"* control on the windows, or via a separate button and system.

[0071] Another preferred option is to provide tutorials or infomercials via the display about the products to which the kiosk relates. For example, when a cooking implement is purchased, then at the end of the shopping process, a short demonstration may be provided to teach the customer how to use it, or clean it, or care for it, as just some examples. Generic tutorials or advertisements may also be shown about the products to the customers.

[0072] As yet another preferred option, there may be tutorials provided on the display directed to the shop assistants. These types of tutorials may involve the use of hidden controls, or security enabled controls. Alternatively, these tutorials may be made available when each shop assistant enters their name identification details. Or else, these tutorials may be available only at times when the store location containing the kiosk is closed to customers. The aim of these tutorials is to train the sales assistants about the products on display in the kiosk. Information about the range of products or about new models can be provided to the sales people. The goal to update the product knowledge of the sales staff can be enhanced by using the interactivity, and so, for example, multiple choice tests about the products can be provided to test their knowledge. If the sales staff log into the database using their identity details, the results of the tests can be stored, and bonuses or prizes can be awarded to staff who learn the best, for instance.

[0073] The third feature of the system is the connection of the interface utilised in the kiosk to a database. All the information displayed on the screen about the products, as described above, is held in the database. The database may be maintained locally, on an individual computer unit for each kiosk. But most preferably the database is centrally located, and the kiosk is linked to the database via communication lines, such as over the internet. The data captured from the customers is also added and held in the database.

[0074] Any suitable database may be utilised, along with the software to manage and maintain it. The access, security, updating or adding or deleting of data is managed by software programs, created using conventional means. Each separate database will preferably utilise the same architecture, although some types of products may warrant extra or special features that may not apply to the basic system, in which case variations of slightly different architectures may be maintained.

[0075] A centralised database for each kiosk brand owner and retailer is preferred. However, combining the data from different brands and retailers may be used, provided that attention is paid to security and suchlike. But providing a separate database holding the data of a specific brand owner, for the products of common kiosks is advisable.

[0076] The centralised database system permits an easy and rapid updating of the catalogue of products being displayed in the kiosk for the invention. The database preferably also manages the samples supplied to each kiosk, and the signage and advertising used as well. If a brand owner wants to update their catalogue of products, by adding new models, or replacing one seasons goods with another, then this can be rolled out using the information kept in the database. The new samples and signage can be ordered, catalogued and shipped using the information in the database to each location, and once the sales assistants in each location signal using the touchscreen that these have been put on display for the customers, the catalogue of products can switch over immediately. The tutorial function for sales staff may also be utilised to show the sales staff how to update and arrange the new samples, and signage, for instance.

[0077] The database also maintains details that the customers have entered. As well as handling the distribution of payments to suppliers, retailers, and shippers, using conventional accounting procedures, this source of data can be mined, to assist in the sales effort.

[0078] The centralised database may also be used to group kiosks into categories, and alter the prices for products for those groups that meet specified criteria. For example, kiosks selling boating supplies may discount their prices when the weather in the locality of the kiosk is cold and rainy.

[0079] The kiosk system for the invention may especially be used in the retail arena to stock rarely purchased items in a store that sells those products. For example a liquor store will be selling popular brands of wine and beer. Kiosks can be provided linked to a warehouse that holds rare and expensive wines. Such wines are uneconomic for the storekeeper to stock, as their demand is low, and the wines can spoil if not kept in the right environmental conditions. The rare customers wanting to purchase these rare and expensive wines can do so from the kiosk, which is linked to the warehouse, from where

the wines can be dispatched to each customer. Part of the payment received may be provided to the retailer, in return, to allow a profit to be obtained by providing the kiosk at their location.

[0080] Alternatively, another preferred use for the kiosk system is to expand the goods available to purchase in a store that sells a narrow range of goods, to other linked goods that the store keeper has no desire to stock, but which their customers may wish to purchase along with the main product they obtained from that store. For example, providing bed linen via a kiosk, at a bedroom furniture store would work like this. Again, some money from each kiosk purchase can be fed back to the store owner.

[0081] In a further embodiment, the retailer is able to easily provide discounts against an item or a group of items. In more detail, the retailer has the ability to discount products to assist in sale closure so that a product or group of products may be sold, set discounts against a category and all underlying sub-categories by specifying percentage, set discounts against the accessories for a category and all underlying sub-categories by a specified percentage, set discounts at a user item level by a percentage or dollar amount for a core product and/or accessories, set new recommended retail product amounts for core products or accessories, show or hide products or categories, and set filters to restrict searches allowed.

[0082] Turning to Figure 17, there is shown an example screen 1700 which displays a group of core products, where it is possible to assign a discount to one or more products simultaneously. At Figure 17A there is shown an example screen 1702 of a confirmation screen where a user has applied a flat 10% discount to a category of products and the system asks for confirmation that the group discount should apply to all products in the category.

[0083] Similarly, at Figure 18 and 18A there is shown examples of similar screens 1800 and 1802 for accessories and for other discounted products respectively.

[0084] Turning to Figure 19, there is shown an example of a screen 1900 which allows a user a list of “disabled” products. These are products which are not visible to an end user of the system.

[0085] Turning now to Figure 20, there is shown an example of a system screen 2000 which allows a user to interact with an employee to receive a further discount. This

system provides particular use where, in a retail environment, the retail store wishes to secure some form of interaction with a physical salesperson, to thereby attempt to create more rapport with the customer. In other words, the system provides a dual interface which allows both a salesperson and a user/customer to interact.

[0086] Turning to Figure 20, there is shown an example of a login screen 2000, so that an employee of the retail store may log into the system.

[0087] At Figure 21, there is shown an example screen 2100 where the employee can review the items that have been selected by the customer.

[0088] At Figure 22, there is shown an example screen 2200 employee may then add a discount or modify the price of the items to create a new final price.

[0089] Referring now to Figure 23, there is shown an example screen 2300 of an interface for a *"SmartBasket"*TM which allows a salesperson (i.e. an employee of a retailer) to view various aspects of an uncompleted live shopping basket. In the context of the present specification, the term *"SmartBasket"* is utilised as a descriptor for the embodiment described herein. It will be understood that this term is utilised by the Applicant as a trade mark and use of the term in the context of the specification does not provide an implied licence to use the term to identify other similar embodiments of systems, methods, etc. which incorporate a similar functionality. In the context of the embodiment, the term *"live"* refers to a shopping basket where a customer (or potential customer) is currently considering making a purchase by virtue of the fact that the customer has expressed an interest in purchasing goods and/or services by placing at least one *"item"* (which represents the goods and/or services) into the live shopping basket, but has not yet agreed or proceeded to pay for the goods and/or services.

[0090] As can be seen generally at area 2302, the retailer is provided with a list of live shopping baskets (which represent pending and/or potential orders) and can review any one or more of the baskets that are saved and being held by a customer (an example of a live shopping basket being shown generally in area 2304). Included in all pending and/or potential orders 2302 are live and also abandoned baskets, including all baskets that are currently open and where a customer is actively adding items to the basket and all baskets where it appears that the customer is no longer actively interacting with the live shopping basket. In this manner, a retailer can see a customer's selection in real-time as the customer browses the kiosk, but can also review orders that customers

have appeared to have abandoned, which may yield relevant information about a customer's interest in the goods and/or services.

[0091] It will be understood that in this embodiment, the SmartBasket™ can also be displayed on a hand-held device (such as a tablet computing device or a smartphone) or may be accessed by a user via a website on a remote computing system, such as a personal computer. Where the SmartBasket™ is utilised on a hand-held device or via a web-site, the device and/or the web-site may be in communication with the kiosk (via a Wi-Fi, Bluetooth or other connection) or may independently connect to a remote server (bypassing the kiosk). Such variations are within the scope of the embodiment and broader inventive concepts described and defined herein.

[0092] Returning to Figure 23, at area 2306 there is shown a series of *“associated products”* which are potentially viewable only to the retailer and/or salesperson. The retailer and/or salesperson may review the cost price of the accessories and may offer the accessories to the customer at a discounted price or at a nil sum in order to entice the customer to complete the sale. This process may occur as part of a “face to face” negotiation (i.e. the customer and the salesperson are both located adjacent the kiosk), or it may occur as a “virtual” negotiation (i.e. the customer and the salesperson are both located at respective remote devices, such as tablet computing systems, smartphones and/or computing systems/terminals).

[0093] In other words, the retailer and/or salesperson, by monitoring the customers decision in real-time, may predict the behavior of the customer and may provide incentives to entice the customer to purchase an item. In this manner, there is provided a hybrid sales methodology and system, where a customer interacts predominantly with an electronic interface, but a live salesperson can monitor the progress of the sale and utilise traditional sales techniques to complete a sale either remotely via the interface of Figure 23, or in person with the customer.

[0094] The completion of the sales process is facilitated by to the interface 2400 of Figure 24. At Figure 24, there is shown a screen 2400 where a retailer may view a retail price for the product 2402 and may also view competitor prices generally shown at 2404. Conveniently, this allows the retailer to scan other prices available on the Internet for the product and then manually adjust the price accordingly, and make the price shown to the consumer more attractive.

[0095] In an alternate embodiment, such price adjustment may be performed automatically, through use of an appropriate algorithm. In addition, at 2406 there is shown a messaging function which allows the retailer to contact the customer and alert the customer to the fact that the price has been lowered in order to match the price of a competitor. The messaging interface therefore operates to entice the customer to remain and complete the purchase. Once again, this demonstrates the use of a hybrid sales technique, which allows the retailer to provide the customer with an electronic “*low pressure*” sales environment, while also allowing a salesperson to intervene and drive the sales process in order to close the sale. As such, the interface and the hybrid model integrate the best elements of both an online sales portal and a traditional offline “*face-to-face*” sales technique.

[0096] Turning to Figure 25, there is shown a supplier competitive performance report at 2500 which can be generated for review by a retailer. The report highlights the number of instances a supplier’s product has been discounted to meet market pricing and the dollar amount of the discounts needed to secure sales. As such, the retailer can use such information to determine whether pricing structure is correct or to identify specific competitors.

[0097] Now with reference to Figures 26A through 26P, there is shown a user (i.e. customer) interface for use on a smartphone. The customer interface shown generally through Figures 26A through 26P provides a live shopping basket that can be readily accessed by the customer for review. The smartphone app shown in Figures 26A through to 26P may be viewed as an “*extension*” of the interface described more generally in the present specification.

[0098] That is, the interface at Figures 26A through 26P may be used by a customer independently of the kiosk or alternatively, may be used in conjunction with the kiosk. The SmartBasket™ can be created from a kiosk on the shop floor or from a retailer’s website. Once the SmartBasket™ is created it is available and can be reopened on any other device at any time.

[0099] For example, a customer may be encouraged by a retailer to create a basket by using the website (rather than the kiosk on the shop floor). That is, the customer may perform some preliminary shopping at home (away from the store) to narrow down the products and services they are interested in, and may then arrive at the store to gather

more information about the product and/or service. When the customer enters the store they may seamlessly interact with the interface on a kiosk. This occurs by assigning a unique identification code to each basket created by a customer. This unique identification code is utilised by the kiosk to immediately identify the relevant basket when the customer interacts with a kiosk or another device (separate from the device which created the basket).

[00100] For security reasons, the customer may also need to enter a further unique identifier such as an email address or a telephone number, to prevent customers accidentally accessing incorrect baskets (due to, for example, keying in an incorrect basket number). When the customer logs into a kiosk, the retailer may be immediately alerted to the fact that the customer is now physically in the store; and this information may be used to provide notification of offers, discounts, price changes, items out of stock and any other messages pertaining to the current basket selection. Again, the provision of such information is intended to assist in the closing of a sale.

[00101] The basket also includes a number of additional features which are listed below and which are described with reference to Figures 26A through to 26P:

[00102] *Identification of basket*—when a basket is created from a kiosk or web site it is allocated a basket number which incorporates a supplier code so the basket can be linked to both the customer and the supplier if it is on a retailers' site that contains more than one supplier. As shown in Figure 26A, to access this basket the customer must enter a unique customer identifier 2602, which maybe either an email address or phone number.

[00103] *Login screen*—originally the basket is accessed through a link that is sent at the time of creation of the basket from the web site or kiosk from where the basket originated. Once this link is activated the basket is opened at the login screen. To re-enter a basket that is existing the customer enters the web address of the retailers SmartBasket™ website and then logs in with their unique identifier, such as an email address or telephone number, as shown at 2606 in Figure 26C, which leads the customer to a list of the baskets they currently have with that retailer, as shown at 2608 in Figure 26D.

[00104] *Notifications*—at any time the retailer (owner of the original kiosk or website where the basket was generated) can send directly to the basket, or to the mobile

telephone number (via SMS) or email originally provided by the customer, notification of offers, discounts, price changes, pending out of stocks or any other message pertaining or not pertaining to the current basket selection, as shown at 2604 in Figure 26B.

[00105] *Cart View*—the basket selection can be viewed via a number of different formats such as swipe, scroll or index cards etc. (subject to suitability to product category), as shown at 2610 in Figure 26E. Alternatively, the entire catalogue can be accessed to add product not previously considered.

[00106] *Product View*—an individual product can be viewed and variants, such as size or colour, can be changed, as shown at 2612 in Figure 26F.

[00107] *Product View Mid Page, Accessories*—scrolling down from top of product page reveals all accessories associated with that product not only those previously selected, as shown at 2614 in Figure 26G. Accessories can be added or those previously chosen can be deleted.

[00108] *Product View Bottom Page, Competitive Price Assurance (Optional)*—once a SmartBasket™ is created in any of the above mentioned ways, the SmartBasket™ is able to scan other Internet prices of the goods in the basket. These are visible at the bottom of the Product View page, as shown at 2616 in Figure 26H. The retailer may set a business rule to match the lowest competitive price or any other business rule, as appropriate.

[00109] *Automatic Discount offer*—through a number of retailer defined business rules the retailer may offer a discount once a predetermined dollar gross margin or other measure of value of the basket is reached. These offers may also be triggered by information acquired by the scanning of competitors' prices. The customer is made aware of this new discount or promotional offer via a pop-up on a kiosk, via their mobile SmartBasket™ or via SMS or email.

[00110] *Check Market Price Refresh*—the SmartBasket™ can be set to check the market price of goods in a basket at regular intervals automatically. At the time that a consumer is about to confirm a purchase they may use the check market price button to refresh the current prices listed, as shown at 2618 in Figure 26I.

[00111] *Billing Confirmation Cart*—once the customer decides to complete the purchase they are able to check their final selection through the confirm cart screen, as shown at 2620 in Figure 26J. Products are grouped with their associated selected accessories. Scrolling down reveals the total due applying any discounts or offers that have been taken up, as shown at 2622 in Figure 26K.

[00112] *Contact and Delivery Details*—the customer then proceeds to populate the delivery detail screen with the relevant details, as shown at 2624 in Figure 26L. If details have been previously entered by the user they will be automatically populated with an option to be over write all or some fields.

[00113] *Shipping Method*—various options for shipping and delivery can be chosen from the Shipping screen, as shown at 2626 in Figure 26M.

[00114] *Billing Method*—payment options are available through the final payment method screen, as shown at 2628 in Figure 26N. This would include a “*pay at counter*” option for in-store basket transactions.

[00115] *Wayfinder*—SmartBasket™ is able to create a “*wayfinder*” floor plan for the customer to use for self-selection of goods in the basket (as shown at 2630 in Figure 26O) throughout a physical store or shopping centre, automatically shown through a printed map, electronic map, or talking directions. This can be created on a store kiosk or web site or mobile handheld device, as shown at 2632 in Figure 26P. It is activated through a View In Store map button on the product page and can also talk you through the store to the goods in your basket/shopping list.

[00116] *My SmartBasket™*—is a smart basket that is created by the consumer and not attached to any one retailer. The consumer can enter any product from any web store or combination of stores.

[00117] *Competitive Price Assurance*—as with the retailer held SmartBasket™ once the basket is created it is able to automatically scan other internet prices of the goods in the basket at predetermined intervals. It can then alert the customer of the availability of a superior offer and/or automatically replace the existing item with the newly found, more competitively priced item.

[00118] *Invite Bids*—My SmartBasket™ can identify sellers of the goods in the basket and inform them of the required delivery time and place as well as the current “*best price*”. Sellers in turn can bid for the goods or individual items in the basket.

[00119] On this matter, the employee and the customer may interact and the employee may then provide the customer with further suggestions and/or “*upsell*” other products to the customer. As such, this embodiment of the retail system provides a hybrid retail system which mixes a traditional “*salesperson-client*” relationship with an online retailing model.

Advantages and Industrial Applicability

[00120] The invention can be utilised in the retail industry or in any other industry where there is a requirement for an interaction between a customer and a salesperson.

[00121] The invention, in at least one embodiment, is a retailing system for selling products, such as a multiplicity of goods and/or services, where the system involves the combination of a physical interactive retail kiosk, in association with a display of samples, and the kiosk also being connected with a database that stores information about the products, and from the customer interaction permits the selection, purchase and shipping of the products to the customer. The information displayed by the kiosk, and the interaction from the customer in making the purchase comes and goes to and from the database system. The products can be sourced from a brand owner. Alternatively or in addition they may be sourced from a retailer.

[00122] This system utilises the advantages of online retailing, because the kiosk has a display for showing digital representations of the wide variety of goods or services that are then available to the customer for purchase. Customers can browse or search through any or all these products, and they are able to select any that they want to buy from a full electronically maintained catalogue. The goods are then shipped from a warehouse to the customer once the customer enters their identification details and attends to payment and records where the goods or services are to be delivered. The customer’s habits in viewing the products can also be utilised for later analysis to help with product marketing and development, for example. The kiosk can also provide useful information about the products or the brand owner to the customer for future use.

[00123] The system also takes advantage of allowing the customer to see and handle samples of at least some of the products available for sale via the kiosk. The sample display is located adjacent to the touch screen for displaying and allowing the purchase. Letting the client inspect a physical sample of the items would increase retail success. Preferably the kiosk is located within a physical retail environment such as a store, which gives a salesperson access to the potential client. This can increase sales and also provide other intangible benefits to the retailer by making the client more satisfied with the products they are buying, and feeling that they have received sufficient personal attention. These intangible effects are normally lacking with online retailing.

[00124] The retail kiosk will often takes up less floor space in a the store where it is located than for traditional shopping, where the retailer must maintain sufficient supplies of the goods for when they are purchased, or lose the sale. This helps lower costs and increases retail margins, or allows a reduction in retail pricing. As another option, the retailer may retain stocks of the products available for purchase via the kiosks, and operate a hybrid system, by directly supplying goods to some purchasers who wish to have the goods immediately, but allowing other purchasers to obtain the home delivery of the goods if they do not want to carry the goods around with them, or if the actual goods being purchased are not in stock.

[00125] Unlike a website, the range of products displayed on the kiosk can be customised to reflect the range selected by the individual retailer to be presented to their customer base. With the approach taken in the embodiment described, the kiosk owner can tailor the goods or services to the location, appealing to the type of customers who frequent the location, and be guided by feedback received from a sales assistant who may be present.

[00126] The ability provided by the embodiment to highlight associated accessories when a customer views a particular product encourages increased sales. In a traditional store, the accessories or associated products are commonly found in a different part of the store. With the embodiment, when a specific item is chosen, the system then can display its accessories, or linked items, which a customer can then select the same time. This also lets a customer easily customise their accessories to the main product by selecting the best colour and size, for example. In a traditional store these accessories are commonly purchased separately, and the customer often

forgets the details of the main product, and so may not find the best accessory that is available, or may not get around to buying the matching accessories at all.

[00127] The embodiment also helps reduces pilferage from the store as large amounts of stock no longer needs to be kept on the shop floor, thereby reducing the opportunity for shop lifting.

Due to the reduction of space and capital requirements for the system of the invention, it enables sales to be generated through new retail distribution channels that are complementary to a product that is traditionally being sold in the store. For example, a kiosk for selling bed linen may be made available through bed or furniture stores.

[00128] In at least one embodiment, the invention provides a user interface that works in conjunction with samples of the stock displayed on the shop floor. This retail system advantageously allows the consumer to touch and feel the products available, then select, and if needed accessorise the chosen product, by means of an intuitive touch screen interface, or the like. Additional promotional information or special offers, or similar material, may be presented to the customer during this process. The purchase is then made, preferably utilising a kiosk credit card reader or similar method, which then preferably generates an order to the supplier and then may also allocate funds to a holding account.

[00129] In the embodiment that includes a kiosk, the kiosk can generally be associated with a wide and varied range of retail environments, covering a variety of product types. In a preferred arrangement each kiosk may relate to products sourced from a brand owner, and located in a retail outlet for a separate retailer especially one retailing related products, although other arrangement may also apply. For example, a kiosk displaying and retailing bed linen of a specific brand may be located in a retail establishment selling beds and bedroom furniture.

Disclaimers

[00130] Throughout this specification, unless the context requires otherwise, the word “comprise” or variations such as “comprises” or “comprising”, will be understood to imply the inclusion of a stated integer or group of integers but not the exclusion of any other integer or group of integers.

[00131] Those skilled in the art will appreciate that the invention described herein is susceptible to variations and modifications other than those specifically described. The invention includes all such variation and modifications. The invention also includes all of the steps, features, formulations and compounds referred to or indicated in the specification, individually or collectively and any and all combinations or any two or more of the steps or features.

[00132] Other definitions for selected terms used herein may be found within the detailed description of the invention and apply throughout. Unless otherwise defined, all other scientific and technical terms used herein have the same meaning as commonly understood to one of ordinary skill in the art to which the invention belongs.

[00133] It will also be appreciated that where methods and systems of the present invention and/or embodiments are implemented by computing systems or partly implemented by computing systems then any appropriate computing system architecture may be utilised. This includes standalone computers, network computers and dedicated computing devices (such as field-programmable gate arrays).

[00134] Where the terms “*computer*”, “*computing system*” and “*computing device*” are used in the specification, these terms are intended to cover any appropriate arrangement of computer hardware for implementing the inventive concept and/or embodiments described herein.

CLAIMS:

1. A retailing system for providing interaction between a customer and a retailer to assist in the completion of a sale, comprising, a customer interface arranged to display to a customer information about at least one item, an input module arranged to receive input regarding a potential sale of the at least one item from the customer for provision to a database via a communications system, wherein the database is arranged to provide the input from the customer to at least one other user associated with the retailer on a retailer interface viewable by the at least one other user, wherein the at least one other user utilises the interface to review the input and interact with the customer to assist in the completion of the sale.
2. A retailing system in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the customer interface is an interactive kiosk.
3. A retailing system in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the customer interface is a remote device under the control of the customer.
4. A retailing system in accordance with any one of Claims 1 to 3, wherein the interaction of the at least one other user with the customer includes manipulating the sale price of an item as viewed by the customer.
5. A retailing system in accordance with any one of Claims 1 to 4, wherein the interaction of the at least one other user with the customer includes communicating at least one incentive to the customer in order to induce the customer to complete the sale.
6. A retailing system in accordance with any one of Claims 1 to 5, wherein the system includes a processing module arranged to receive the input from the customer and processes the input to provide analysis information derived from the customer input, wherein the analysis information is presented on the retailer interface.
7. A retailing system in accordance with Claim 6, wherein the processing module further access the database to retrieve sale information relevant to the at least one item, wherein the processing module processes the sale information to provide further analysis information, wherein the further analysis information is presented on the retailer interface.

8. A retailing system in accordance with Claim 7, wherein the further analysis information includes a gross margin associated with the at least one item selected by the customer.

9. A retailing system for increasing the total sales for a retail premises selling a multiplicity of products, by providing to a customer within the retail premises, a system comprising:

at least one interactive kiosk in close association with:

- (c) a display of samples of at least some of said multiplicity of products,
- (d) said kiosk being in communication with a database maintained on a computer system, the database containing information about said products;

said interactive kiosk having:

- (h) at least one display means adapted to display to a customer some information about at least some of said products,
- (i) means for accepting input from said customer, so as to permit the customer to manipulate the display to allow the customer to view the information from (a) for at least one of the products,
- (j) means for the customer to choose one or more products that the customer wishes to purchase, by the allowing customer to provide some input for (b),
- (k) means for accepting payment for the products from customers,
- (l) means for entering identification details of said customer,
- (m) means for accepting delivery details for the delivery of the purchased products, and
- (n) means for connecting the kiosk with the database via a communications system (such as the internet);

wherein said database has:

- (f) means to record the details purchases made by the customer, at least some of these details being input by the customer via the kiosk,
- (g) means to communicate with a supplier of the goods or services so purchased, and to place an order to supply them,
- (h) means to record the financial details of the purchase, and
- (i) means to disburse the amounts payable to the supplier for supplying the goods or services once they are supplied to the customer, and

(j) means to disburse the amounts payable to the retailer for retailing the goods or services once they are supplied to the customer; and

wherein said samples of the products relate to at least some of the same products available for display and purchase using the kiosk, this display being readily accessible to the customers using the kiosk.

10. The system of Claim 9, wherein said products comprise goods and/ or services.

11. The system of Claim 9, wherein the display means is a screen.

12. The system of Claim 9, wherein said information about each of the products (a) comprises one or more of:

one or more images of said products;
text information describing said products;
the retail price of said products; and
one or more attributes of said products.

13. The system of Claim 12, wherein said one or more attributes are selected from among the model, size, colour, quality, quantity relating to said products.

14. The system of Claim 9, wherein said means for accepting input (b) from a customer is selected from one or more of a keyboard, a keypad, a card reader, a customer's smartphone or tablet communicating with the kiosk, or a touch screen.

15. The system of Claim 14 which is a touch screen, directly manipulable by the customer.

16. The system of Claim 14 which is a keyboard.

17. The system of Claim 9, wherein said means (d) for accepting payment is selected from one or more of:

a credit or debit [transaction] card reader, or means provided in the input means (b) to permit the entry of credit or debit card details;
or means to accept money or dispense money as change.

18. The system of Claim 17, wherein said means (d) is compliant with security standards for electronic processing of credit card transactions

19. The system of Claim 9, wherein the communication means to link the kiosk to the database is a link maintained via the internet.
20. The system of Claim 9, wherein the samples of products comprise samples of the goods, or information about the goods or services.
21. The system of Claim 9, wherein the display of samples comprises one or more modular units which hold the samples.
22. The system of Claim 21, wherein the display of samples includes retention means to display and fixably mount a series of samples of the goods or services.
23. The system of Claim 21, wherein the display of samples comprises one of more free standing units, have at least a base and one or more vertical panels upon with the samples are mounted.
24. The system of Claim 21, wherein the display of samples includes information about the goods or services mounted thereon, or representations of the branding of the goods or services.
25. The system of Claim 9, wherein each kiosk involves the products related to a single brand.
26. The system of Claim 25, wherein the display of samples includes one touch screen mounted upon one of the vertical panels, at a convenient height for a customer to interact with the screen.
27. The system of Claim 9, wherein the database also collects information about the habits of the customers who are selecting among the products being displayed.
28. The system of Claim 27, wherein the information being collected includes information about which products are being viewed by which types of customers.
29. The system of Claim 9, wherein the kiosk includes one or more digital signage displays adapted to further inform the consumer about the products they may wish to purchase.
30. The system of Claim 9, wherein the database is maintained in a central location linked to the kiosk via a communication link.

31. The system of Claim 30, where the communication link is via the internet.
32. The system of Claim 30, where the catalogue of products displayed to the customer by the kiosk is maintained centrally on the database and distributed to the kiosk using software operating on the data held in the database.
33. The system of Claim 30, where the database holds data for products sourced from a single brand owner or retail outlet.

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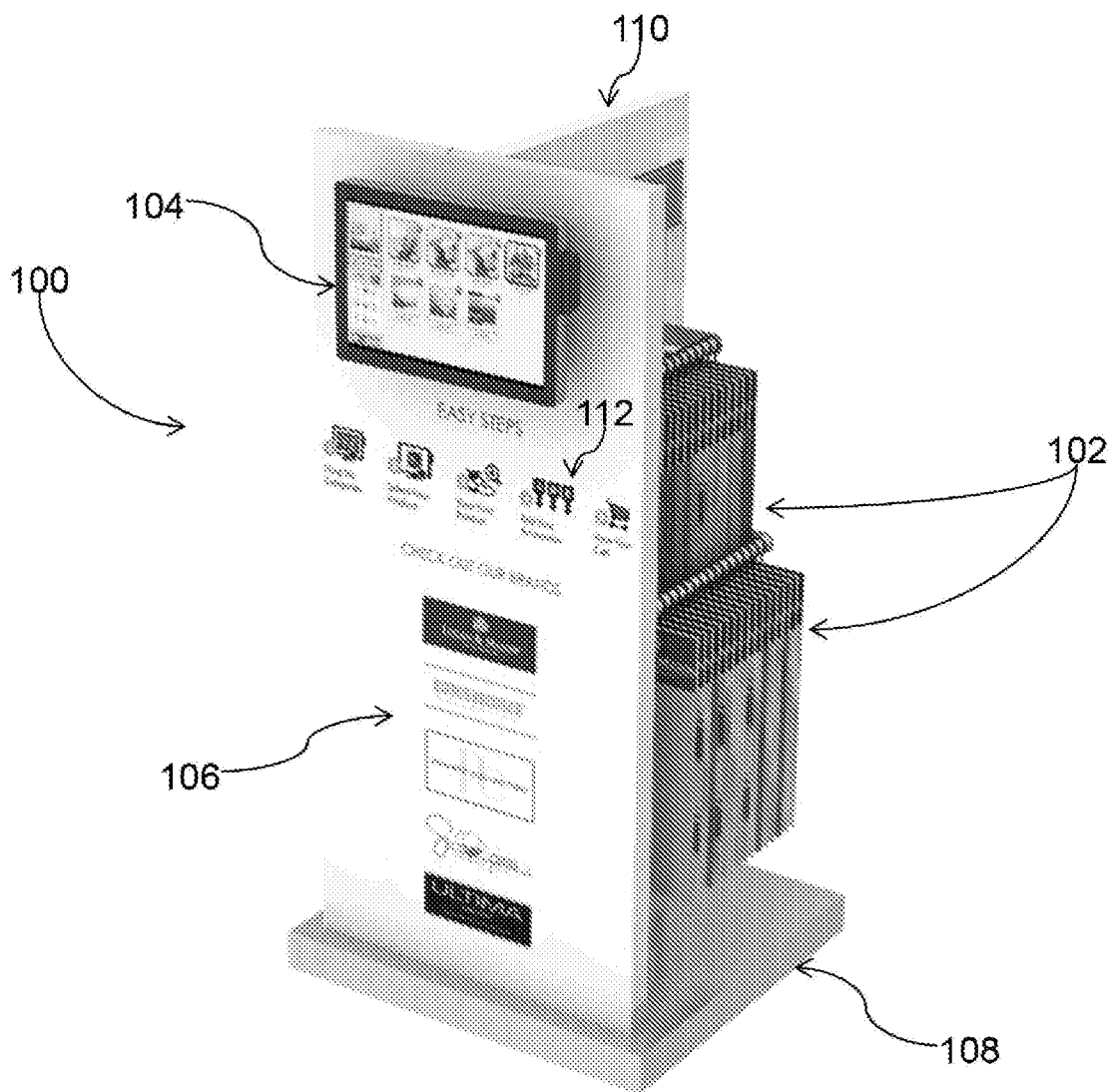


Figure 1A

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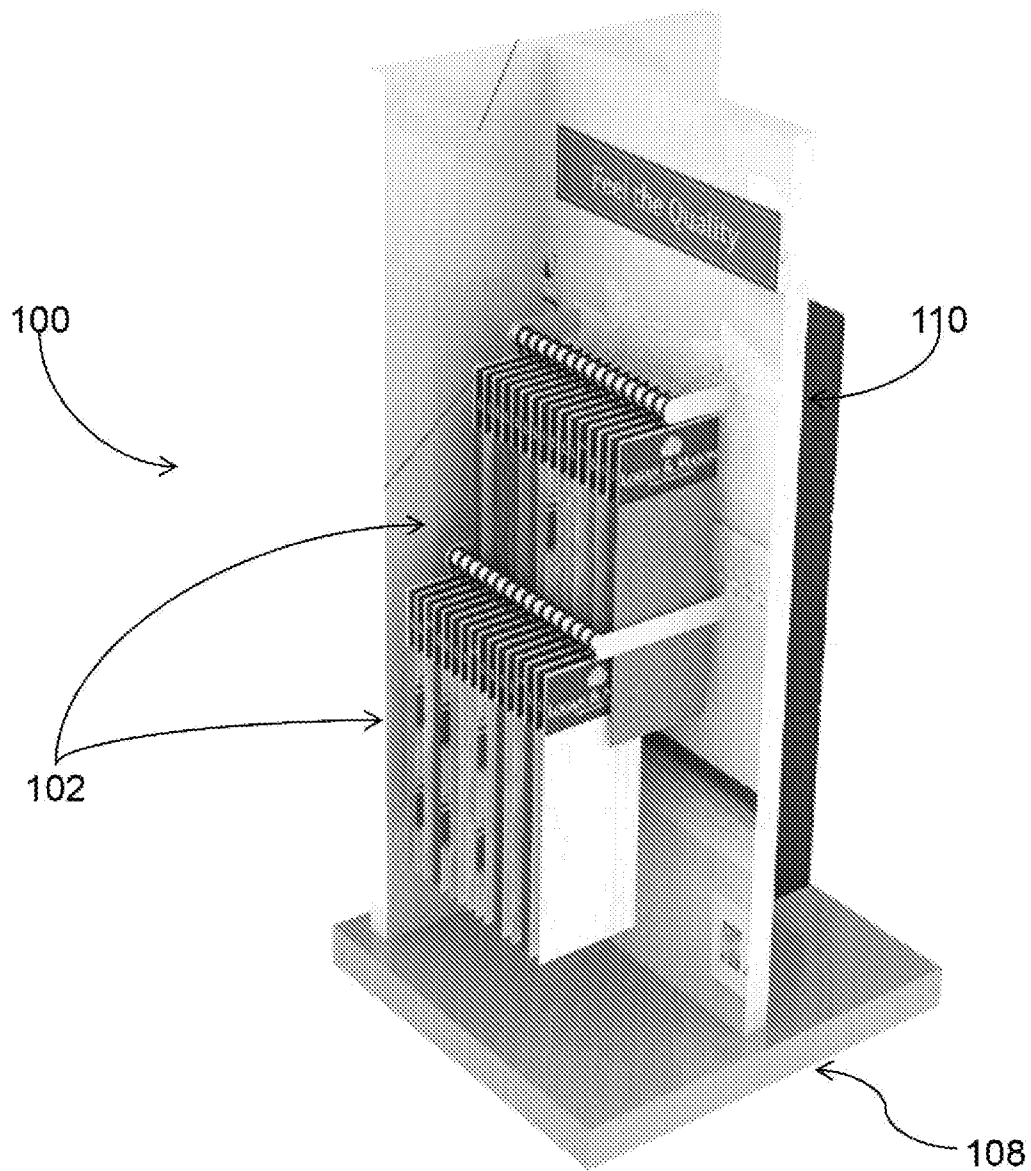


Figure 1B

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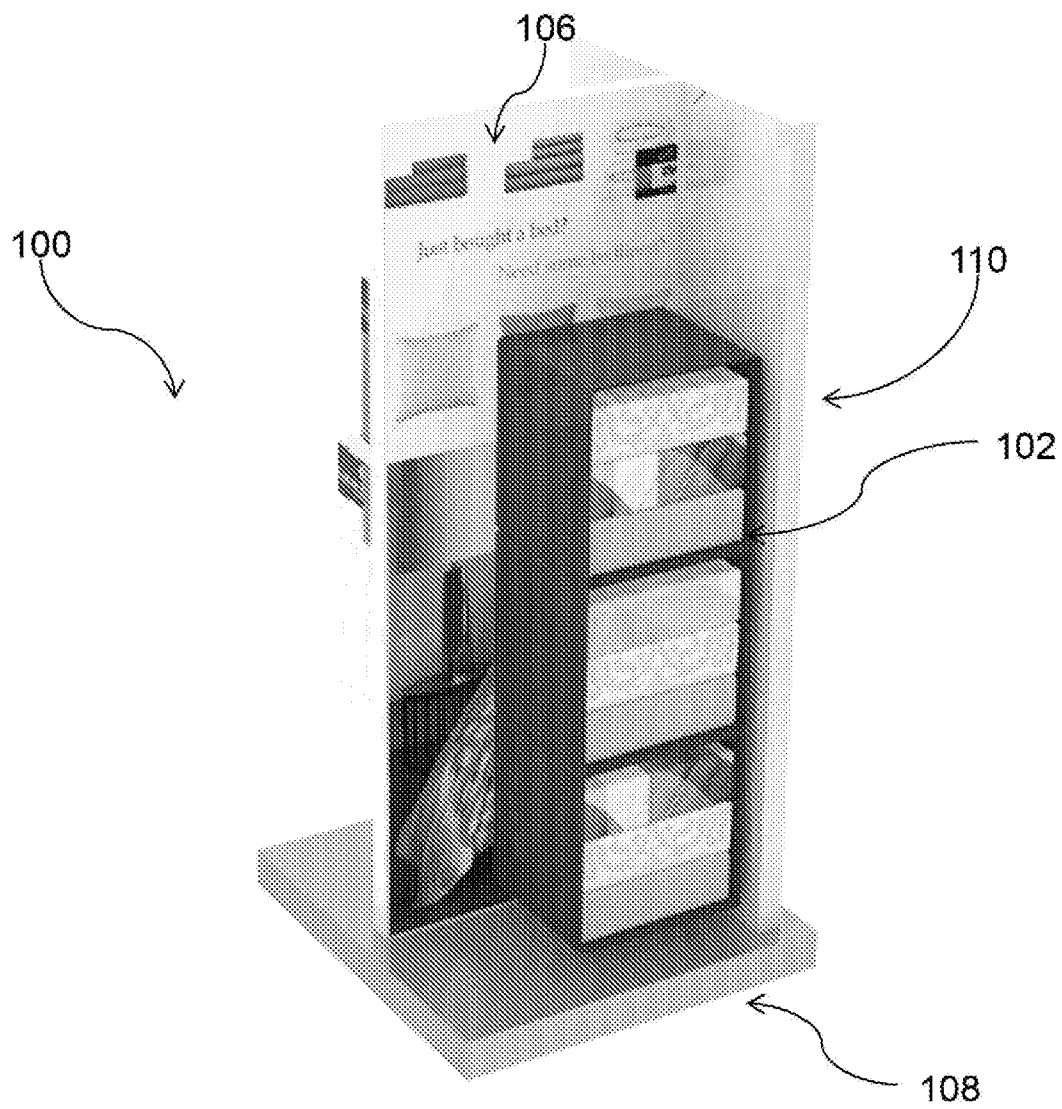


Figure 1C

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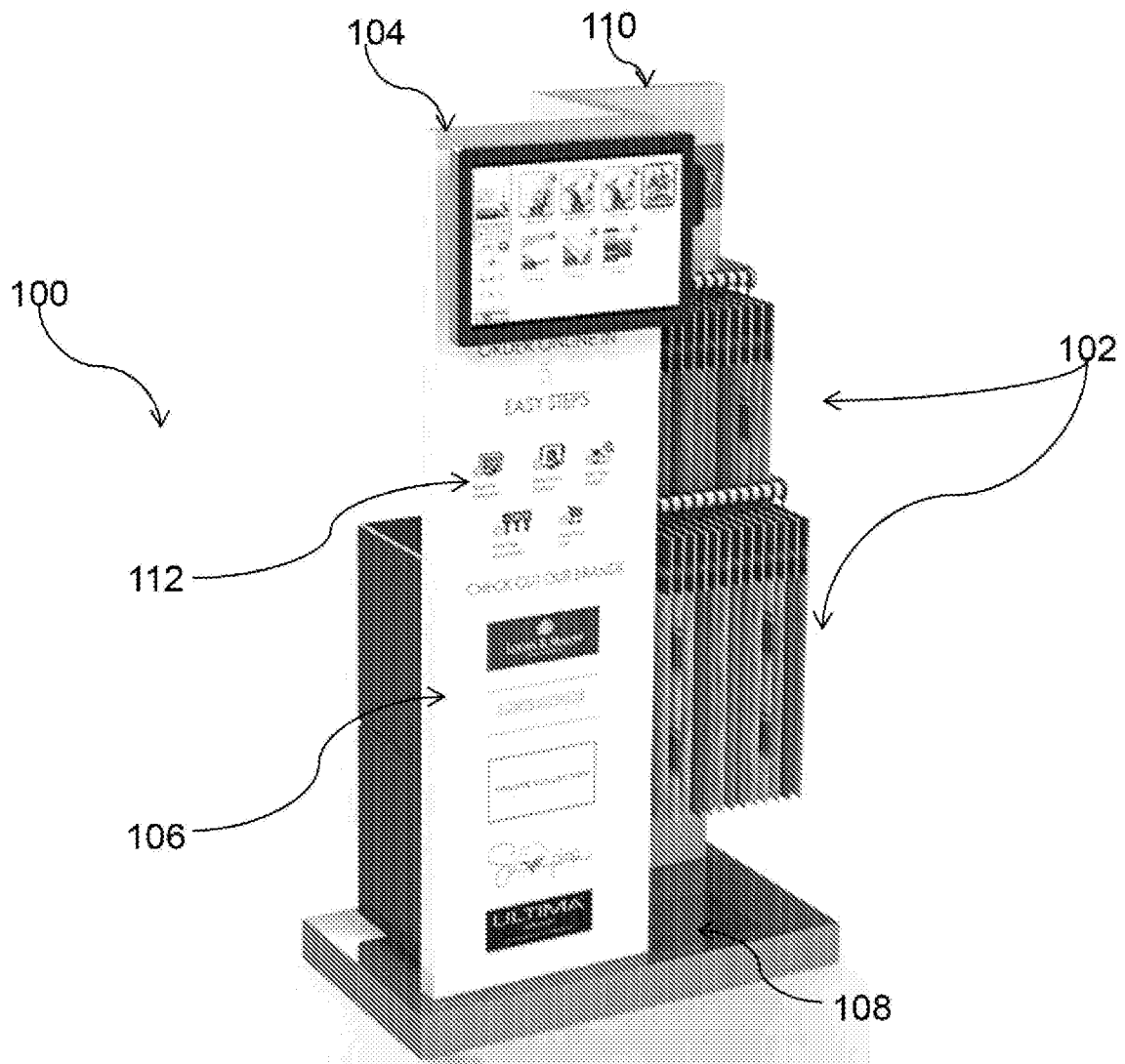


Figure 2A

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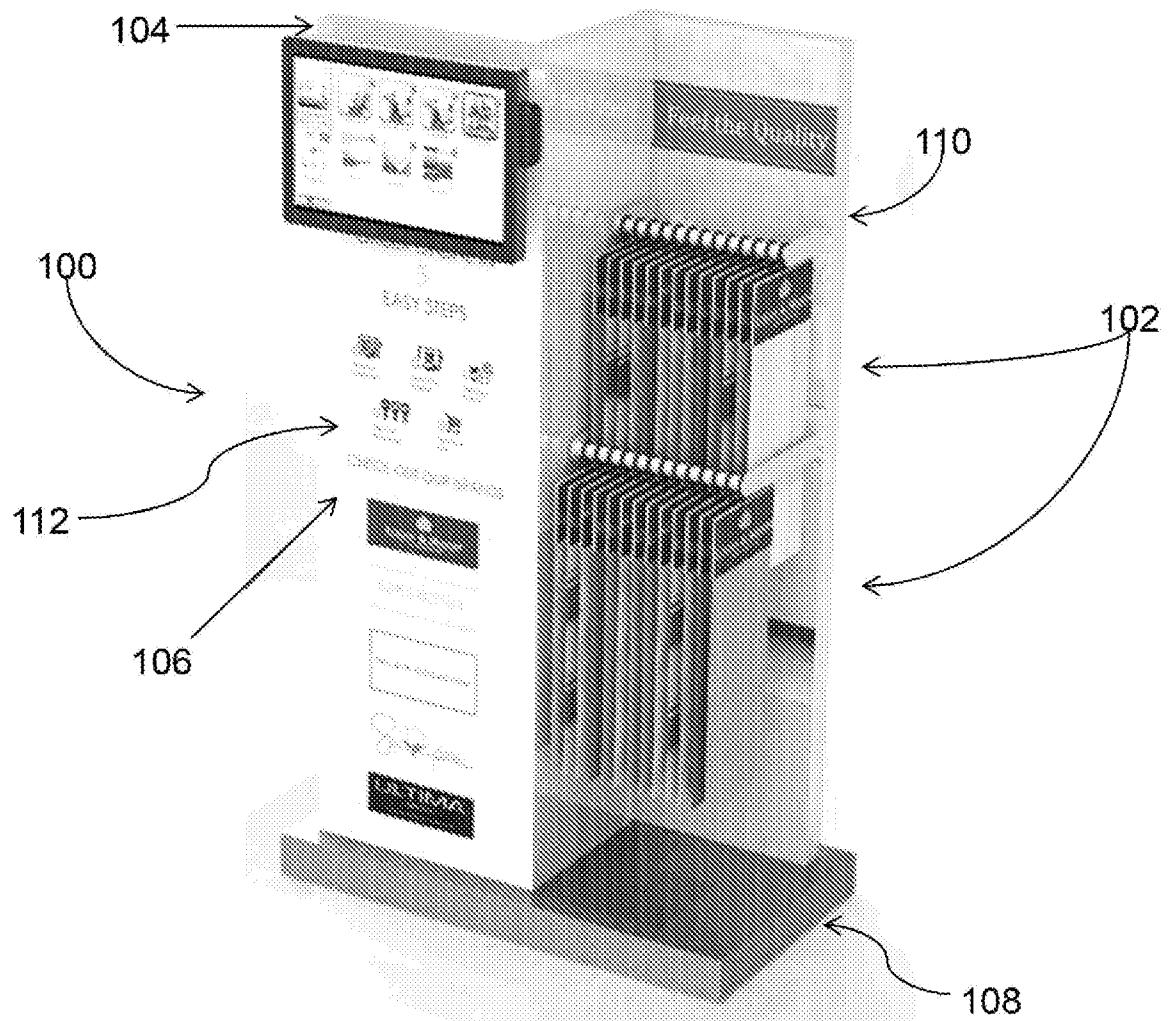


Figure 2B

6/32

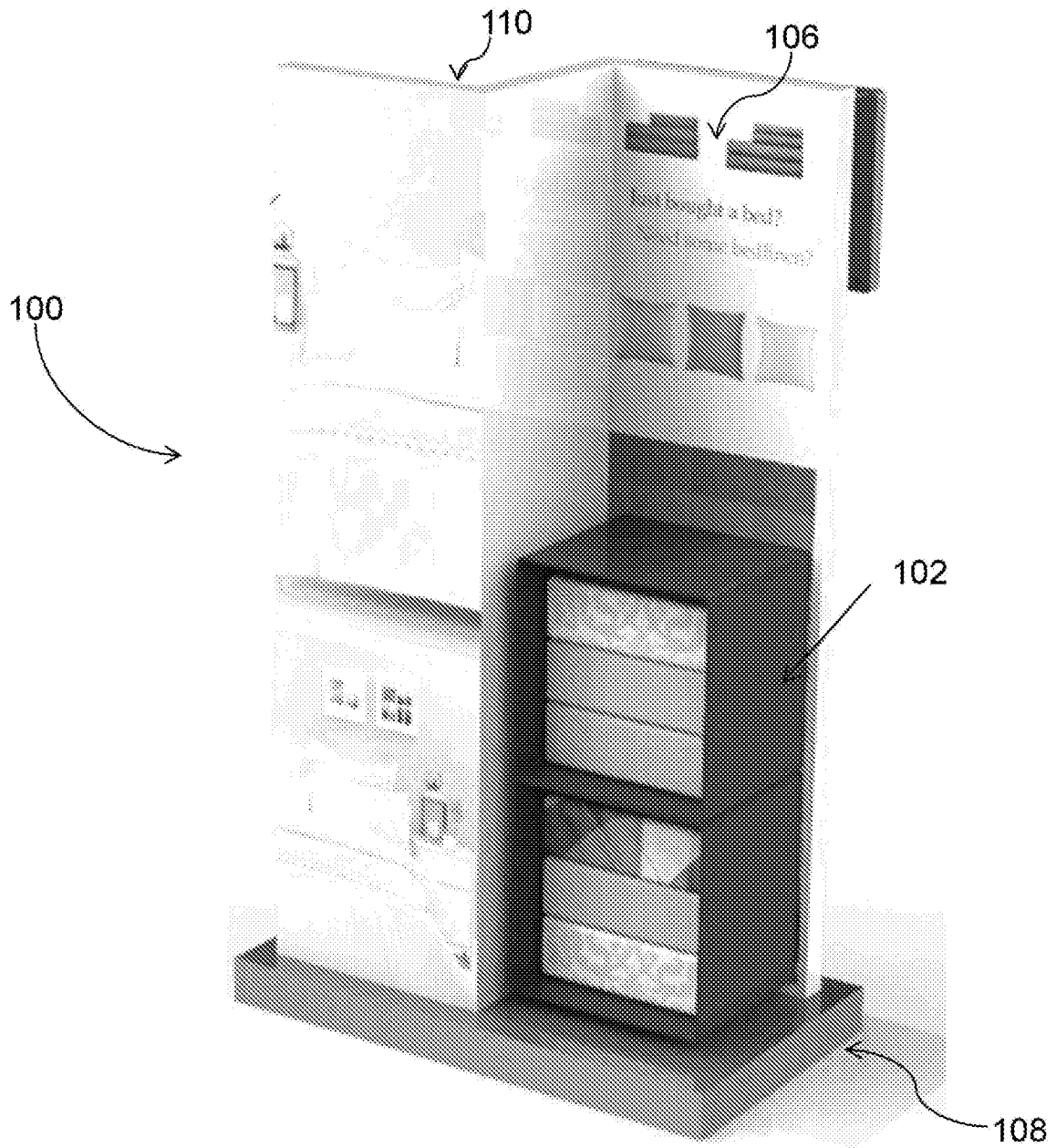


Figure 2C

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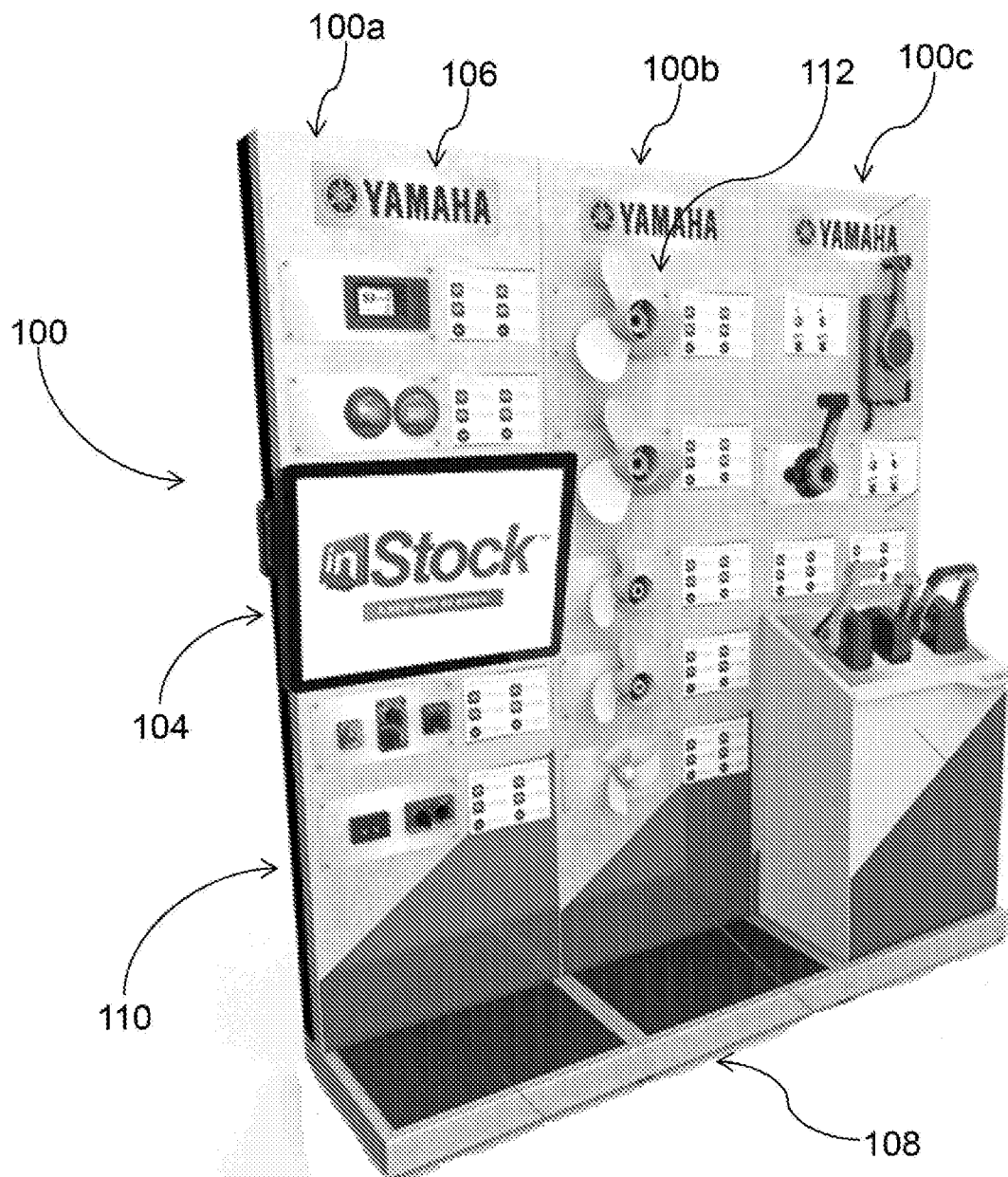


Figure 3A

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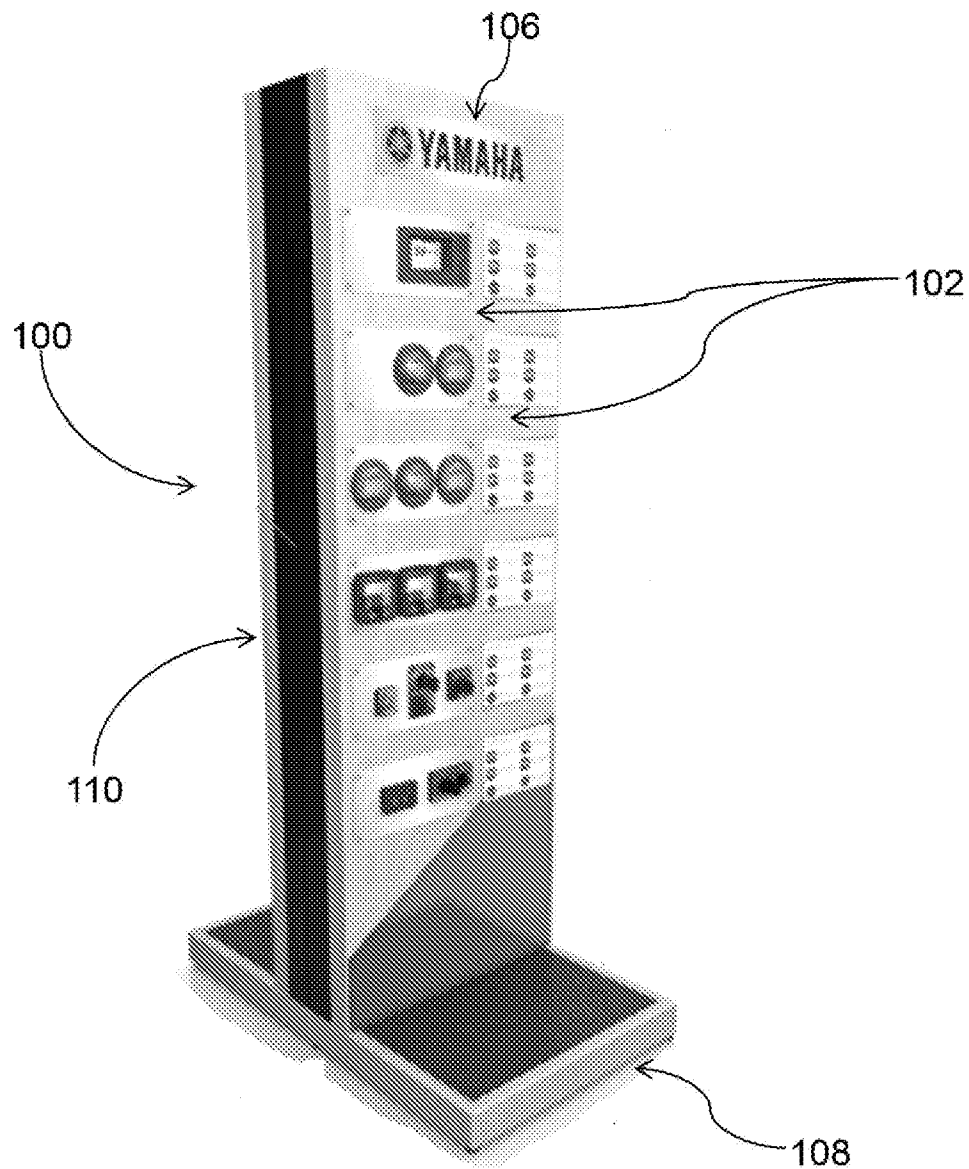


Figure 3B

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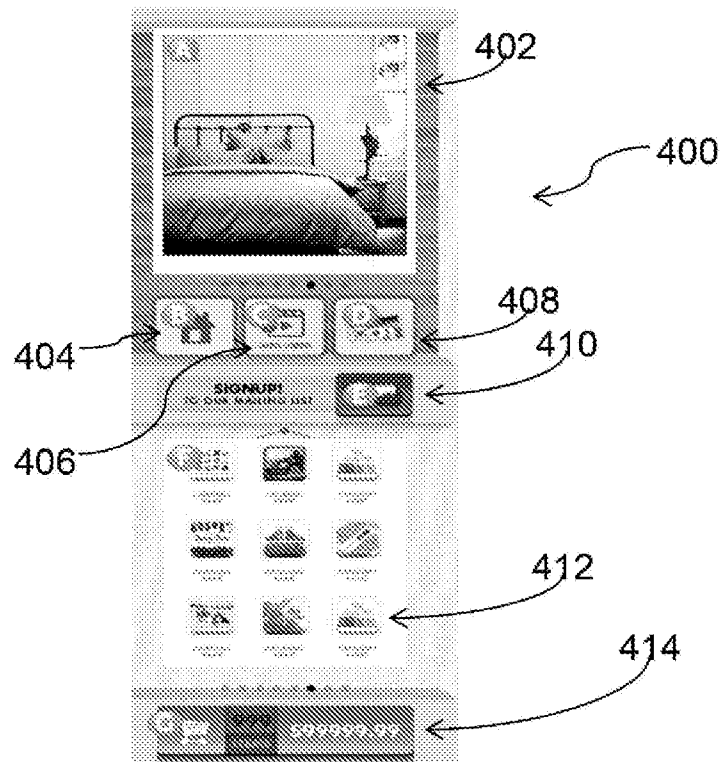


Figure 4

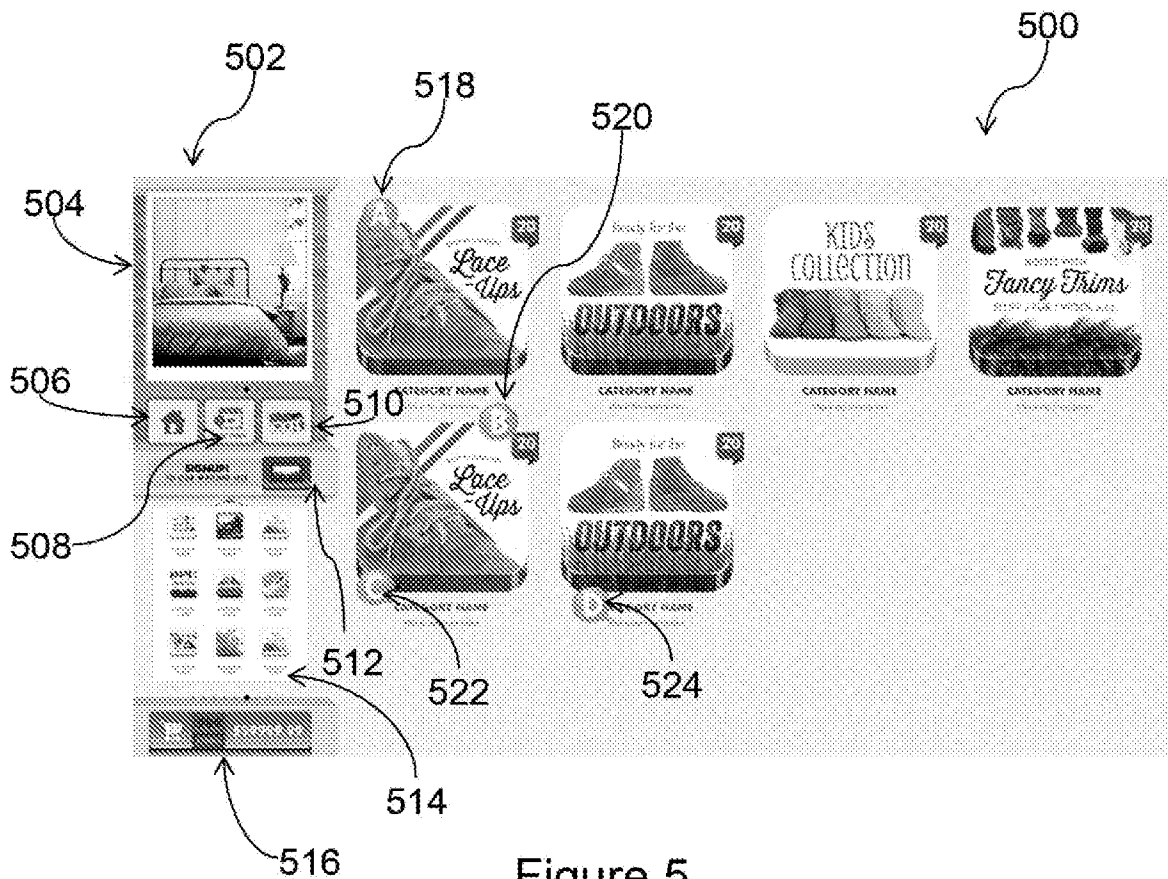


Figure 5

10/32

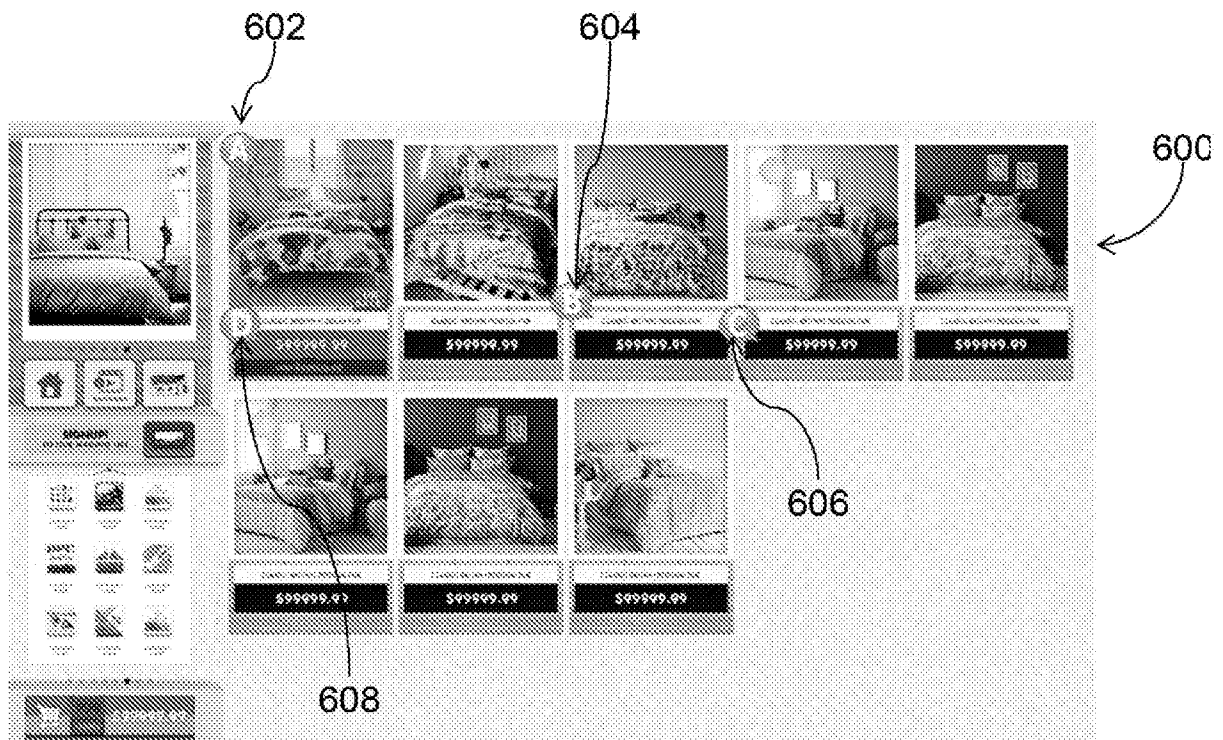


Figure 6A

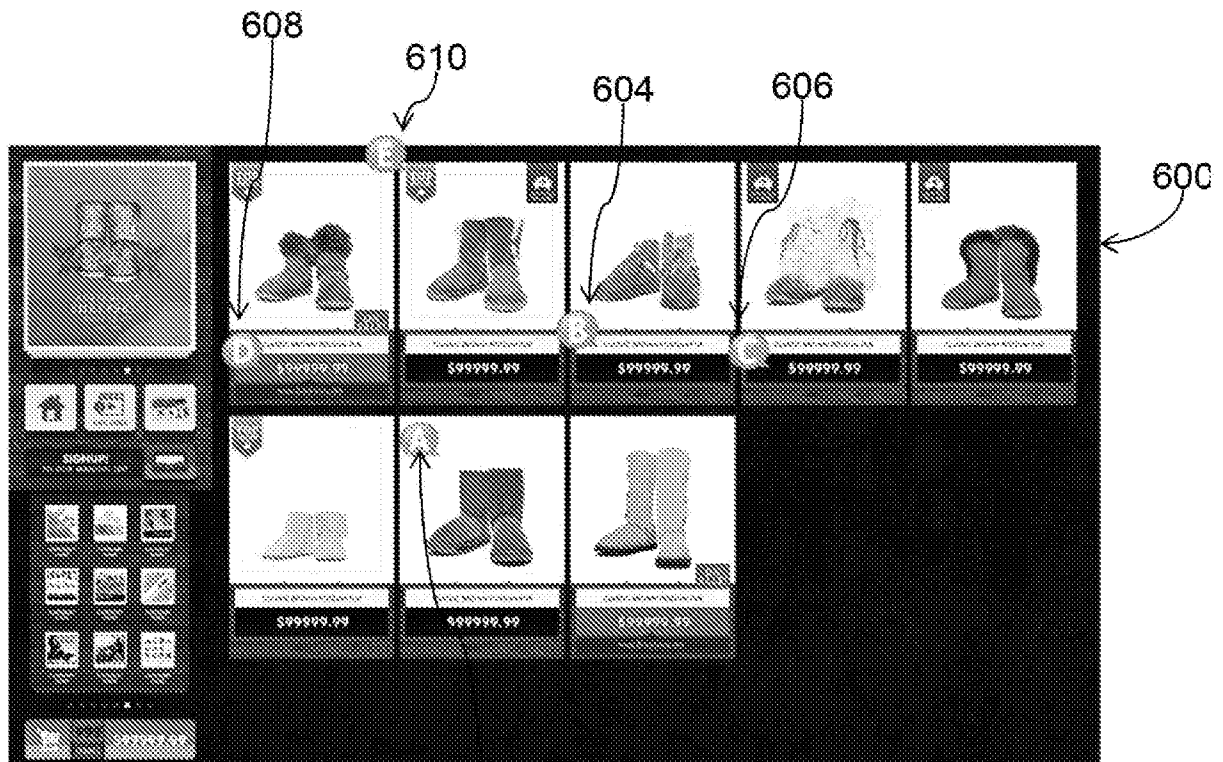


Figure 6B

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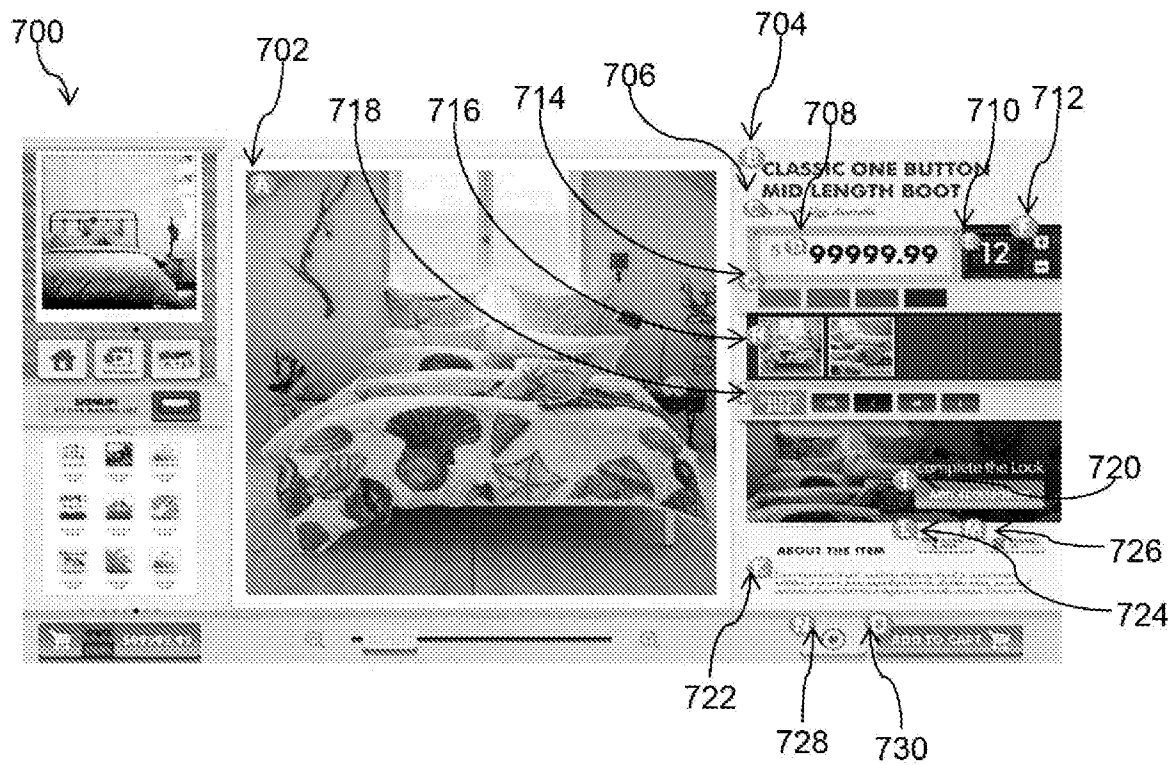


Figure 7A

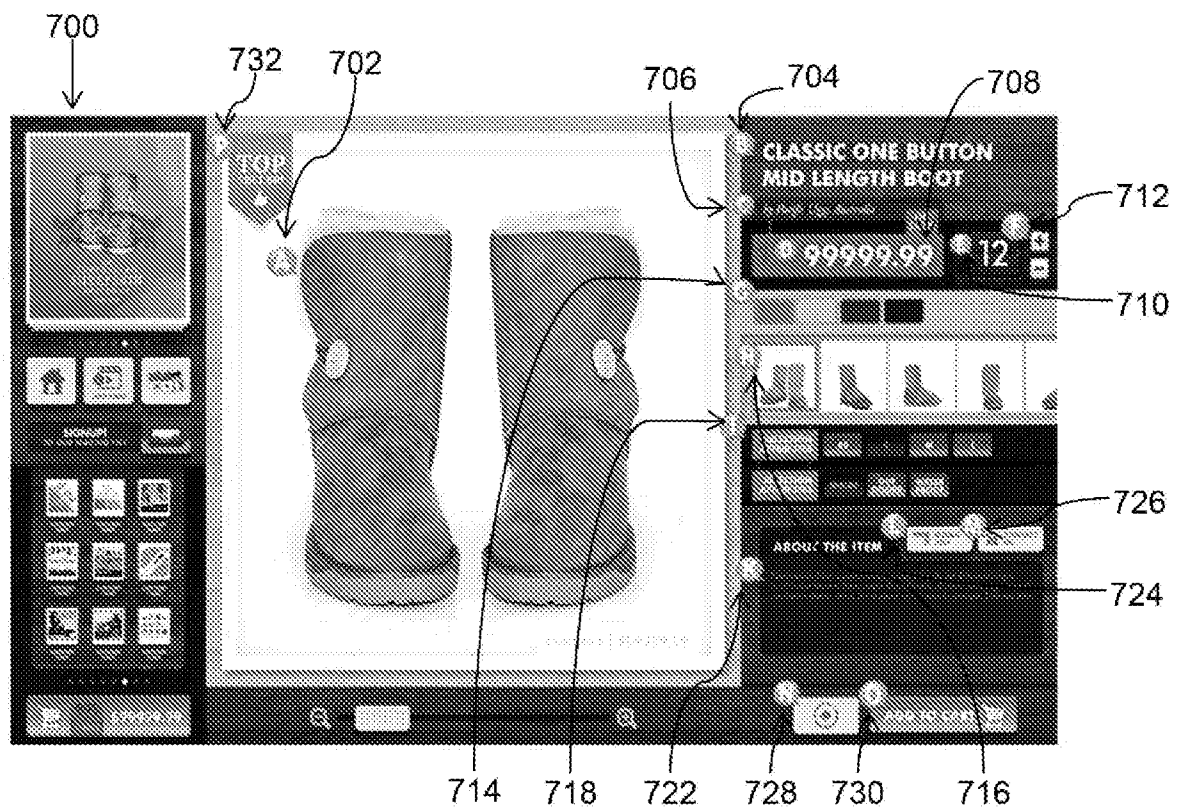


Figure 7B

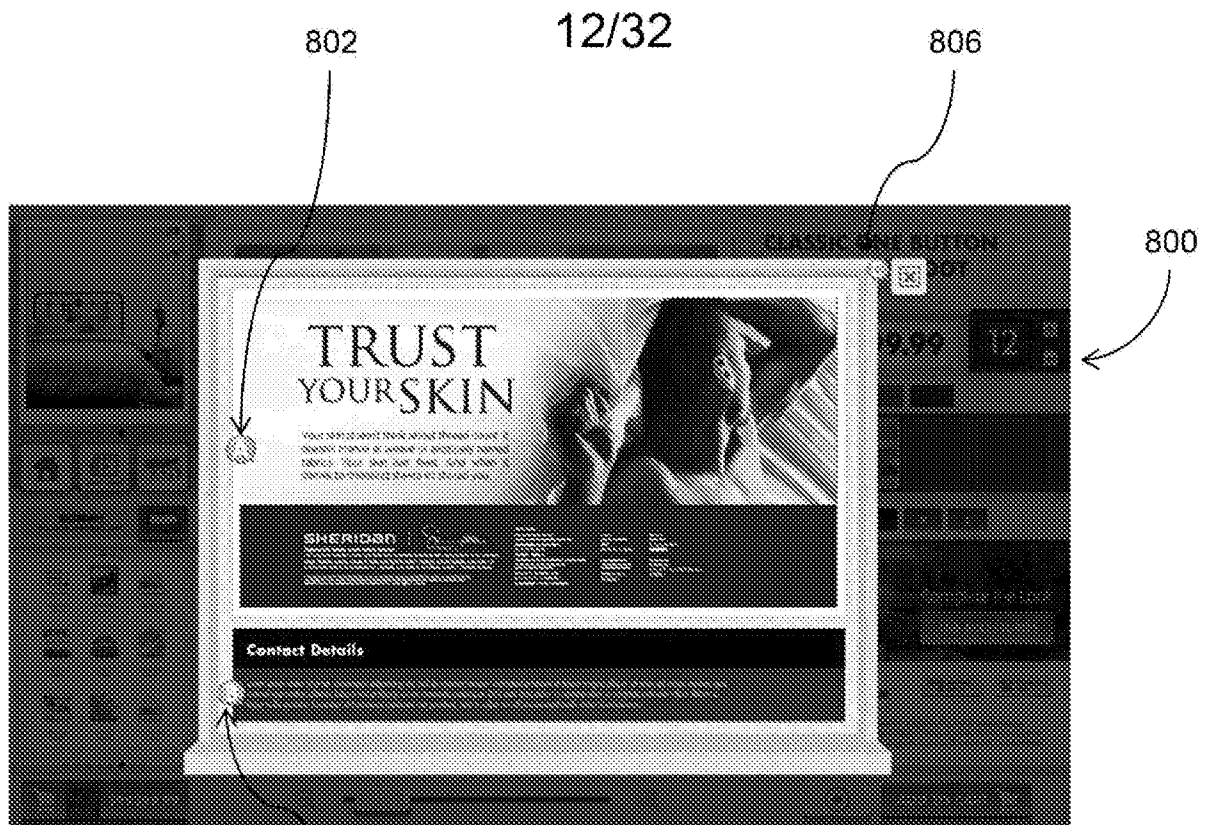


Figure 8A

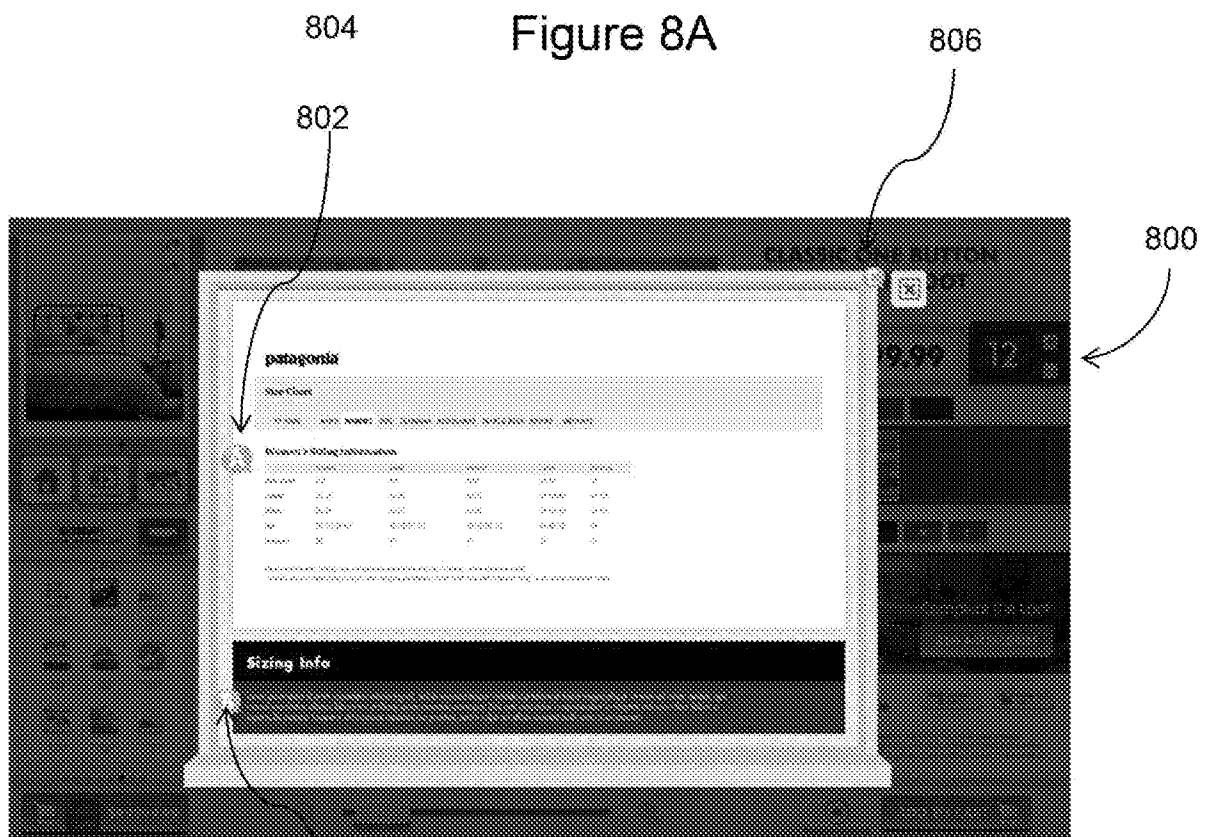


Figure 8B

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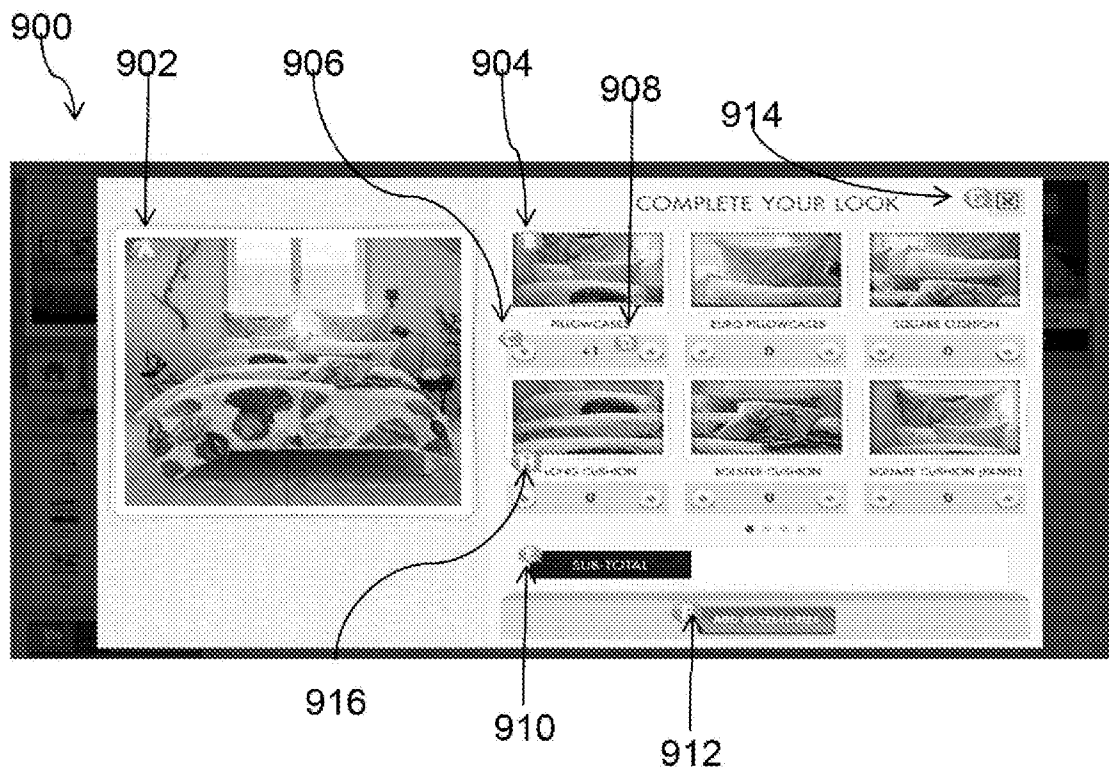


Figure 9

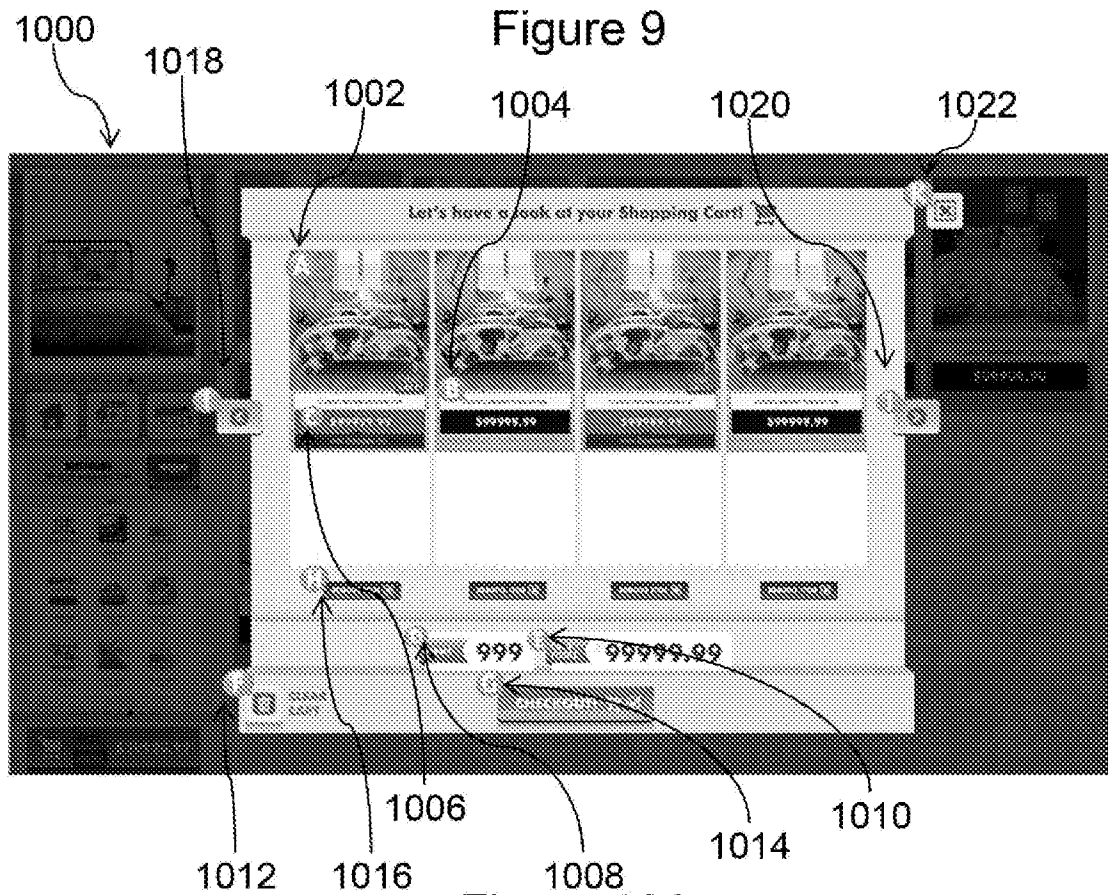


Figure 10A

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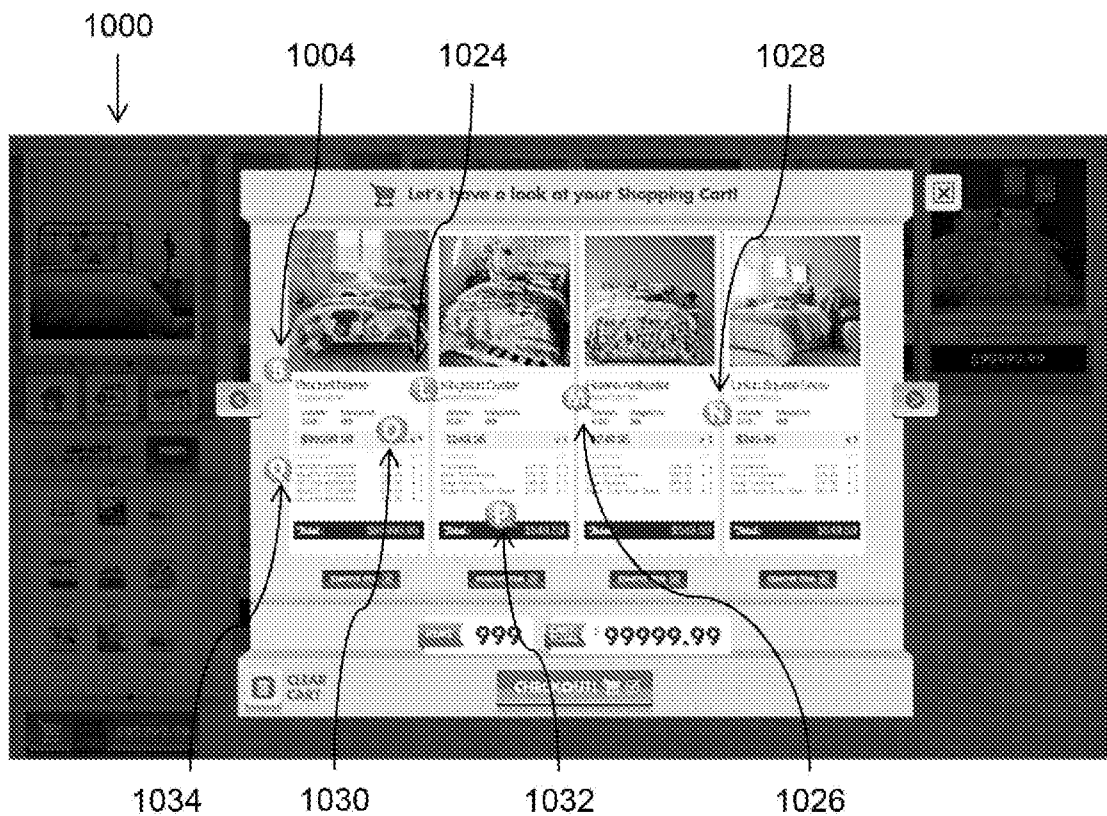


Figure 10B

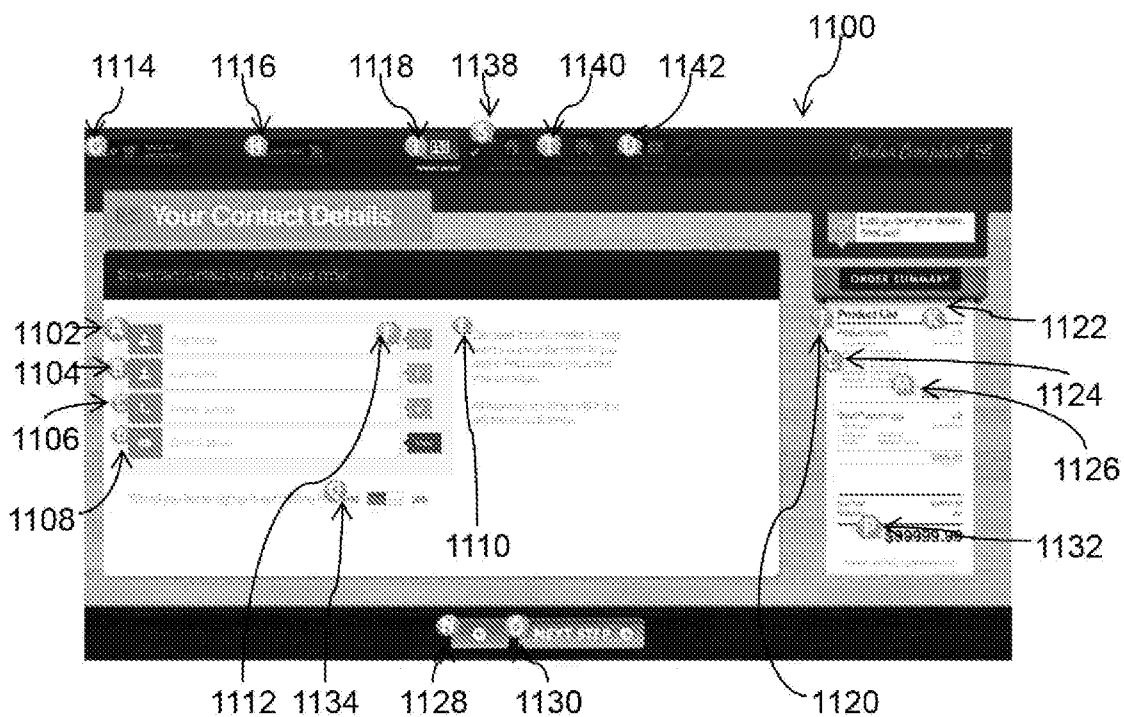


Figure 11A

15/32

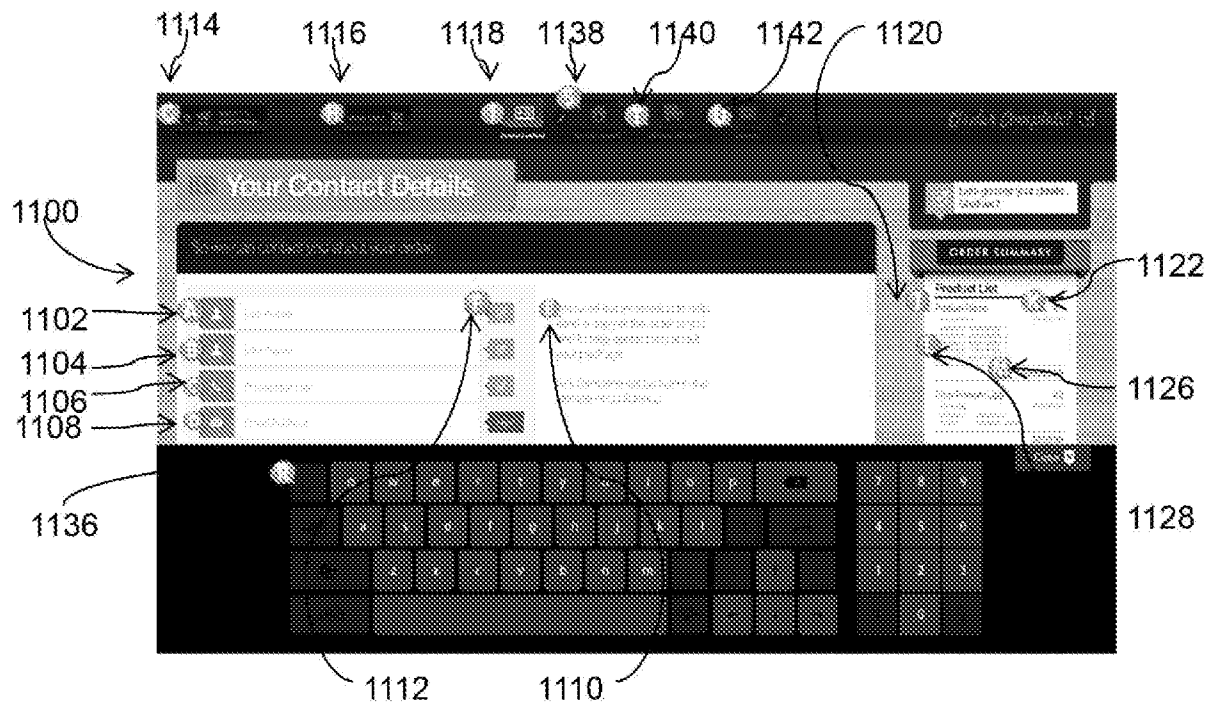


Figure 11B

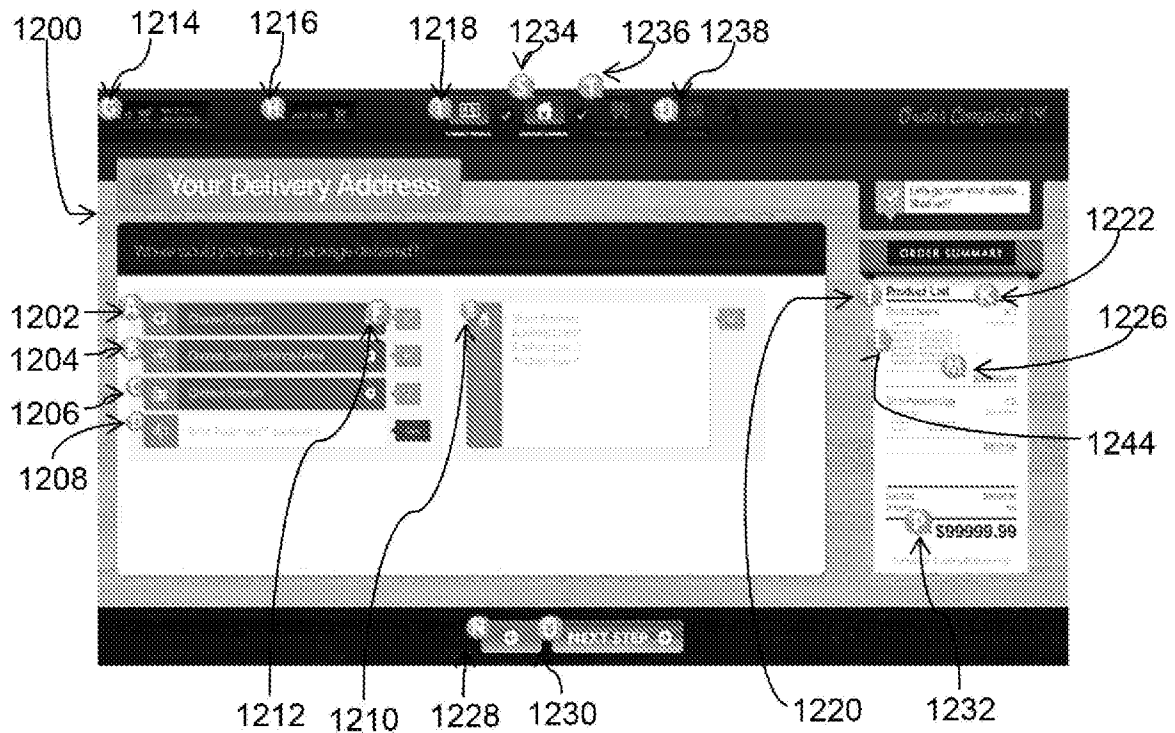


Figure 12

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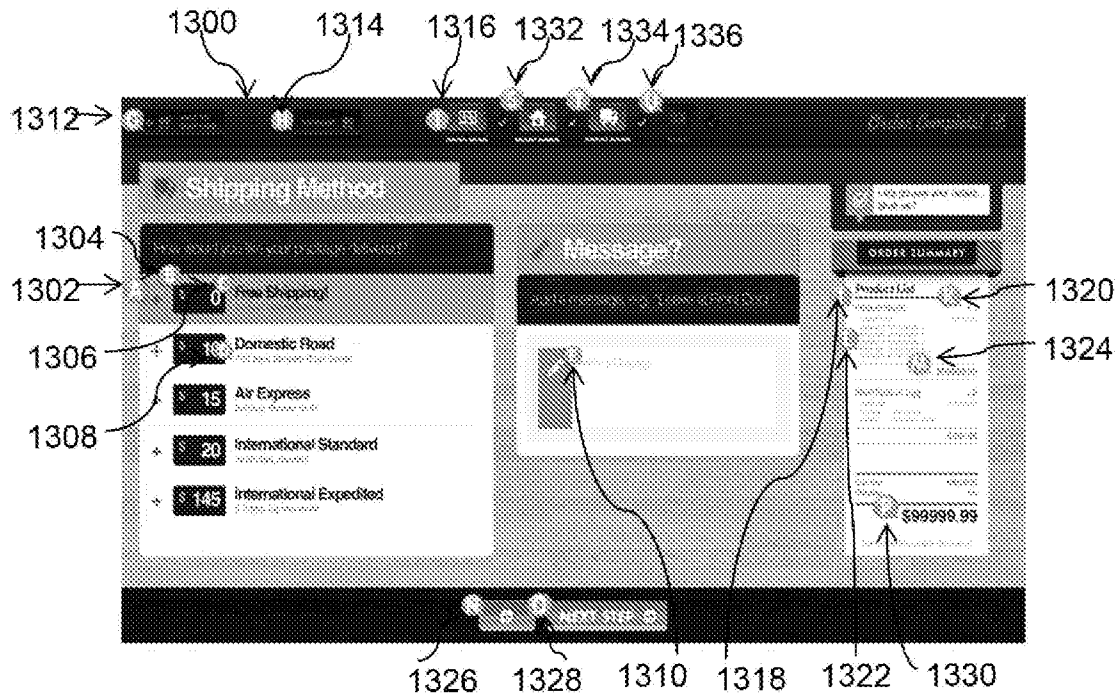


Figure 13

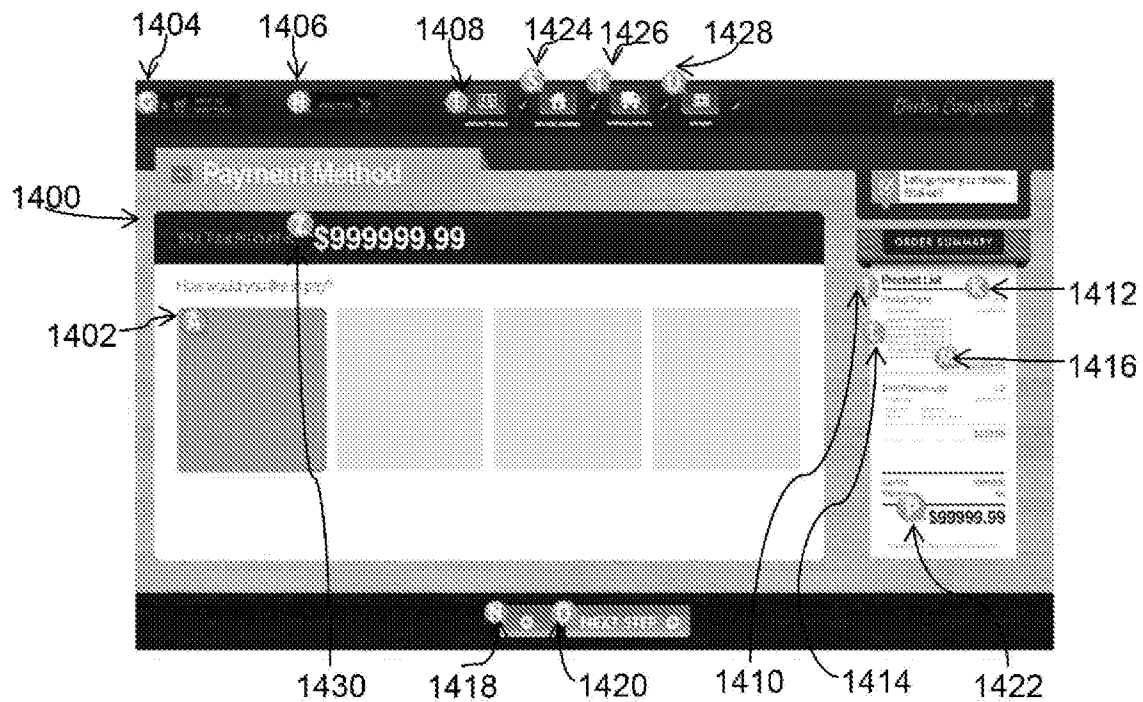


Figure 14

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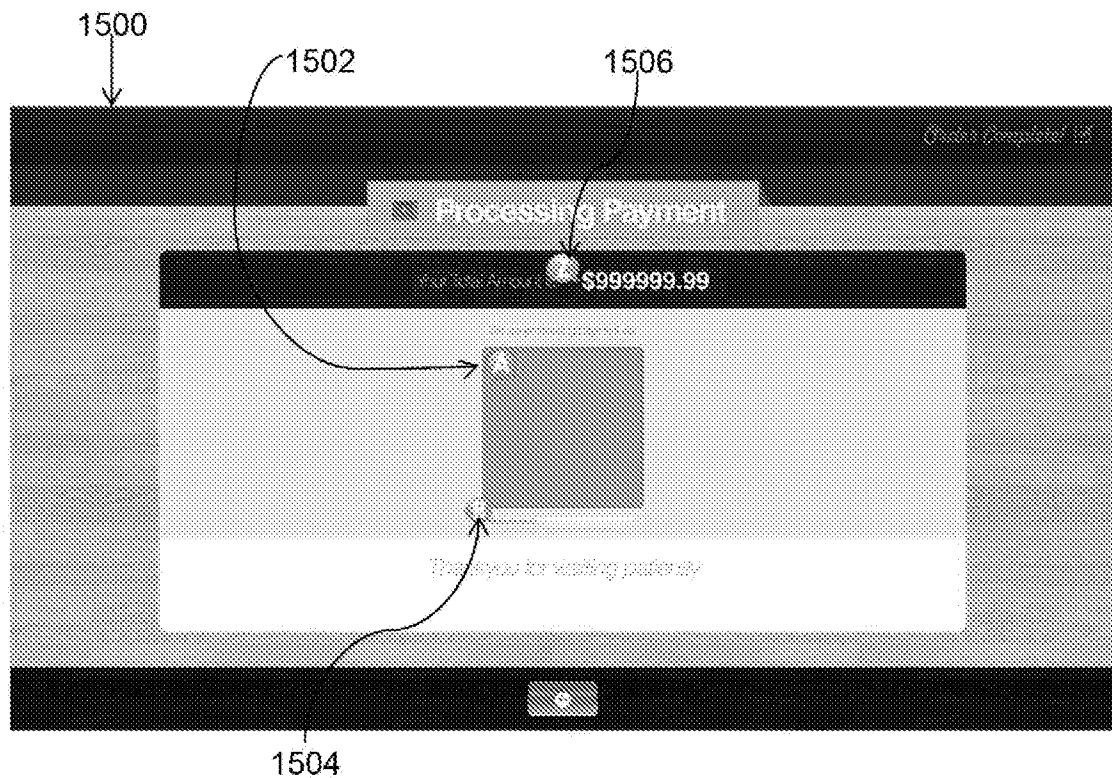


Figure 15

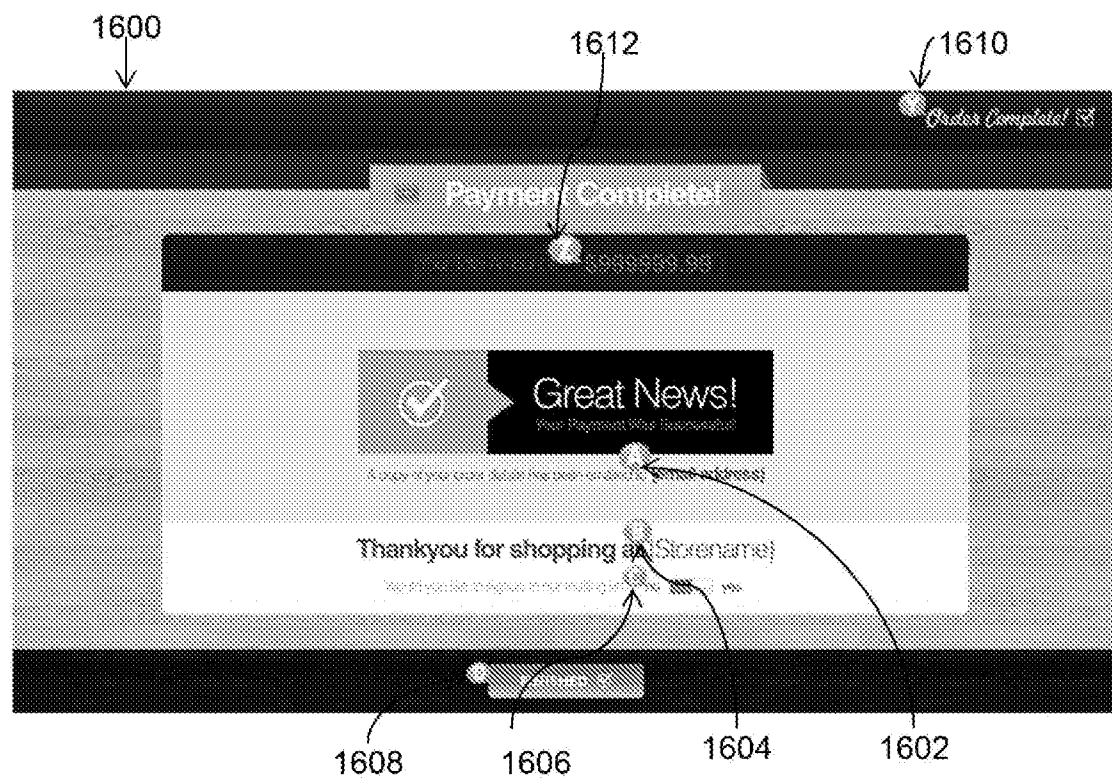


Figure 16

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1700

Legend Australia

Patterns + Colours

18

Confirm Category Discount

10%

Confirm Category Discount

Product Name	SKU	Weight	Dimensions	Material	Price	Discounted Price	Quantity	Availability
Aurora Jewel	10000000	100g	Single	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000001	100g	King Single	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000002	100g	Double	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000003	100g	Queen	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000004	100g	King	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000005	100g	Queen Ring	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000006	100g	Queen Ring	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000007	100g	Single	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000008	100g	King Single	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000009	100g	Double	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000010	100g	Queen	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000011	100g	King	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000012	100g	Queen Ring	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000013	100g	Queen Ring	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock

Figure 17

1702

Legend Australia

Patterns + Colours

18

Confirm Category Discount

10%

Confirm Category Discount

Product Name	SKU	Weight	Dimensions	Material	Price	Discounted Price	Quantity	Availability
Aurora Jewel	10000000	100g	Single	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000001	100g	King Single	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000002	100g	Double	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000003	100g	Queen	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000004	100g	King	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000005	100g	Queen Ring	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000006	100g	Queen Ring	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000007	100g	Single	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000008	100g	King Single	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000009	100g	Double	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000010	100g	Queen	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000011	100g	King	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000012	100g	Queen Ring	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock
Aurora Jewel	10000013	100g	Queen Ring	Gold	100	90	10	In Stock

Figure 17A

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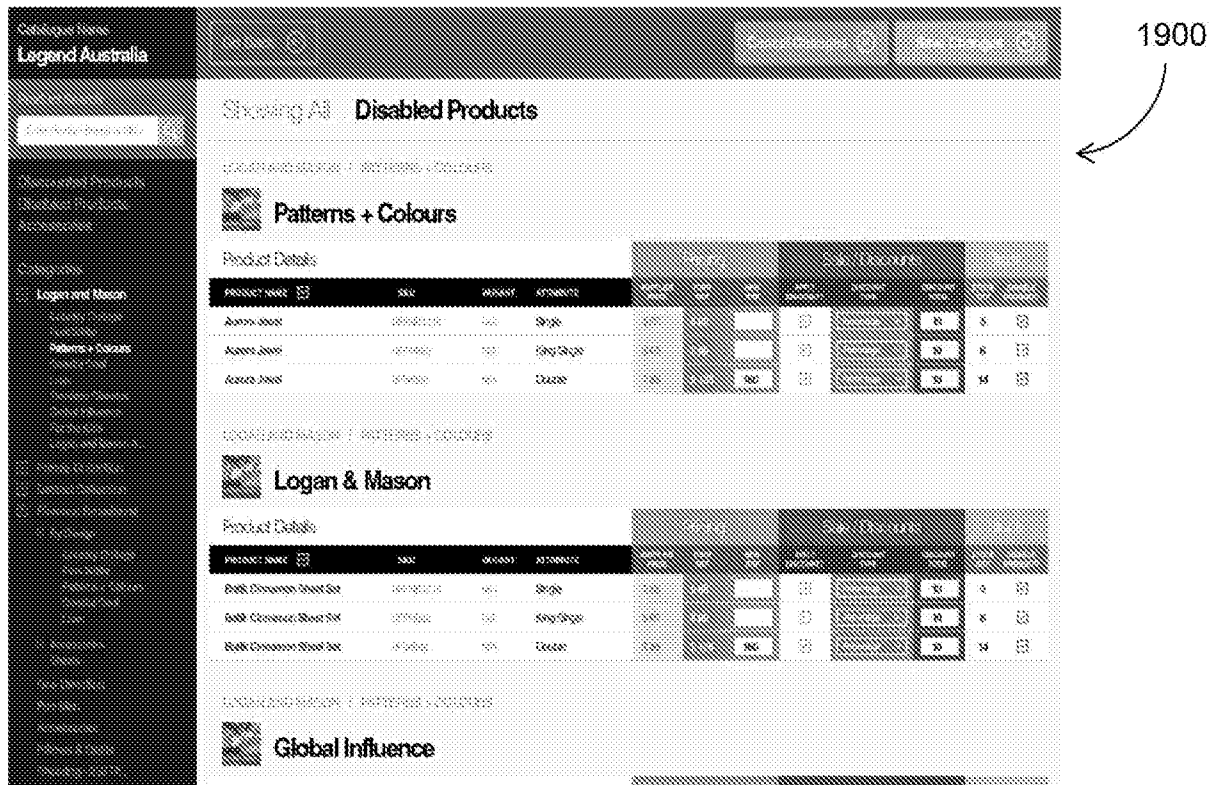


Figure 19

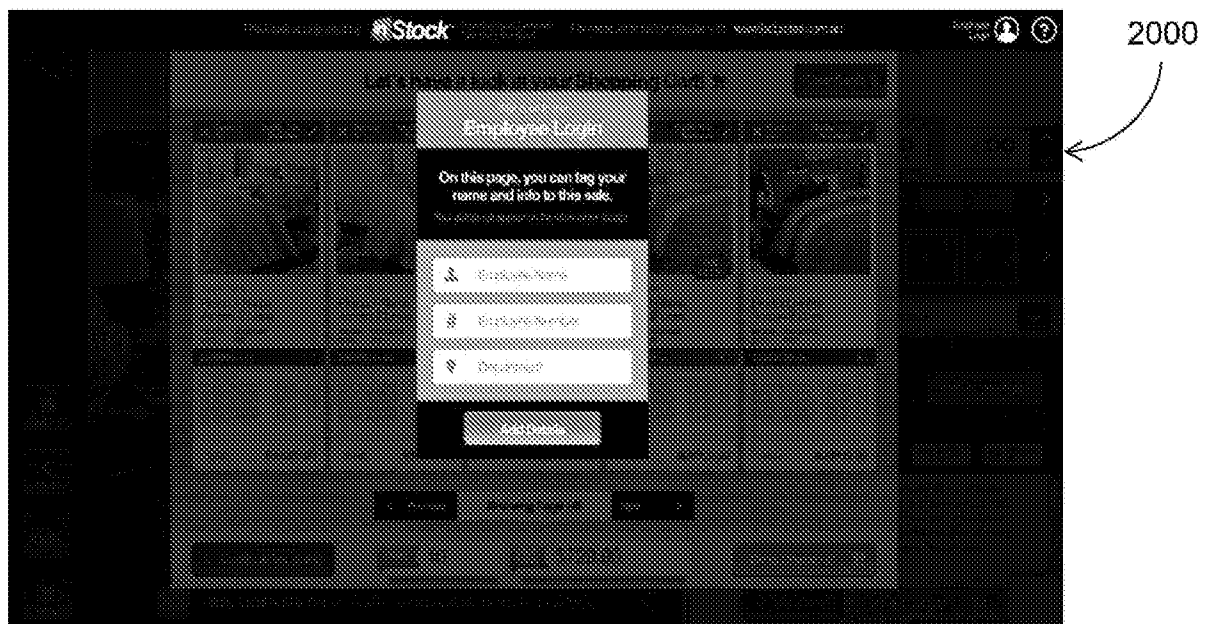


Figure 20

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Figure 21

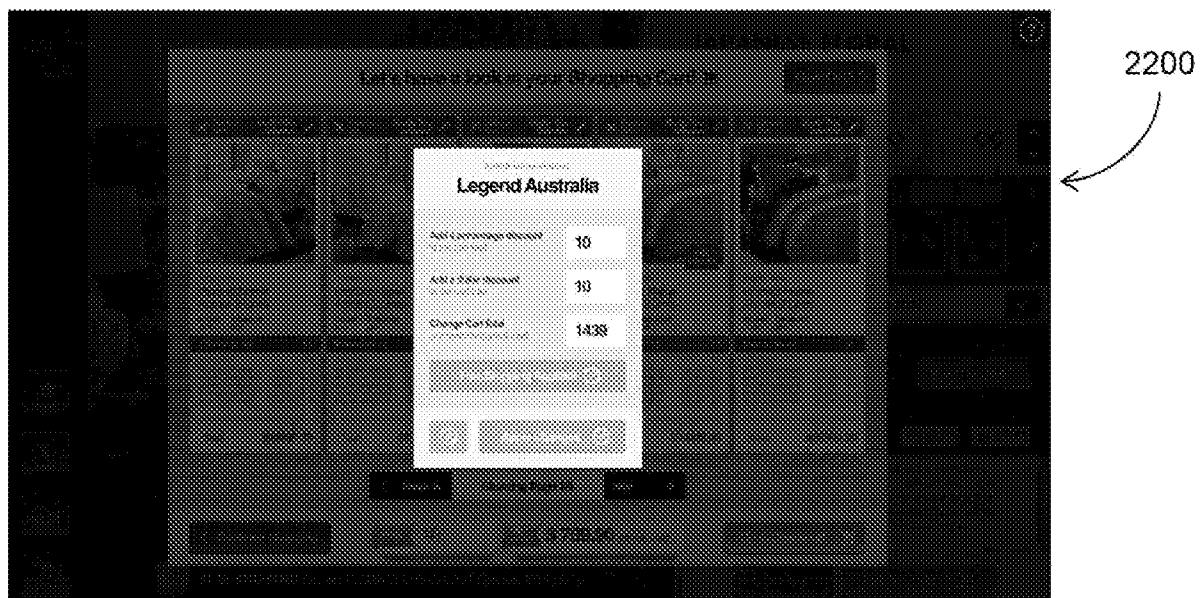


Figure 22

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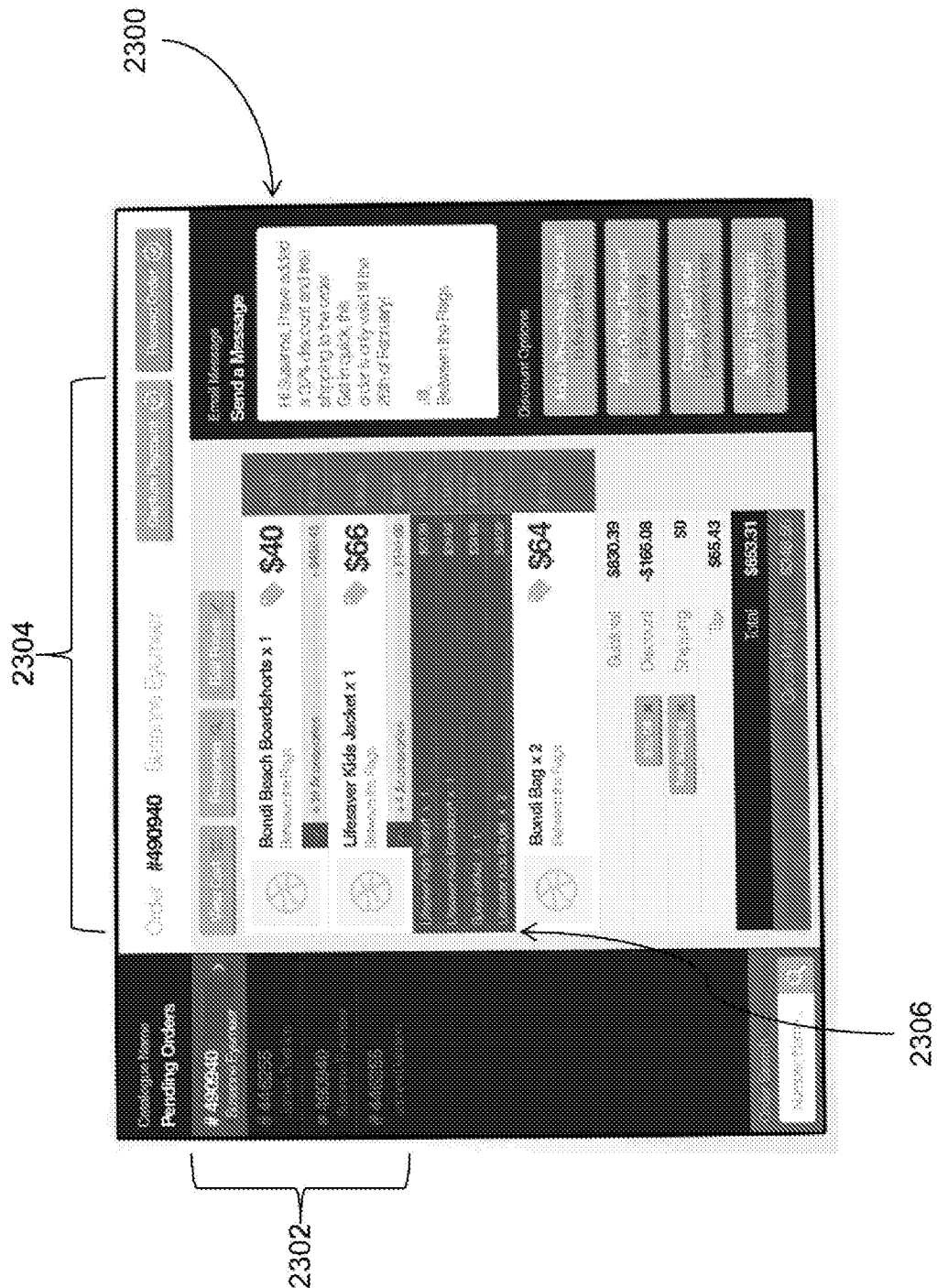


Figure 23

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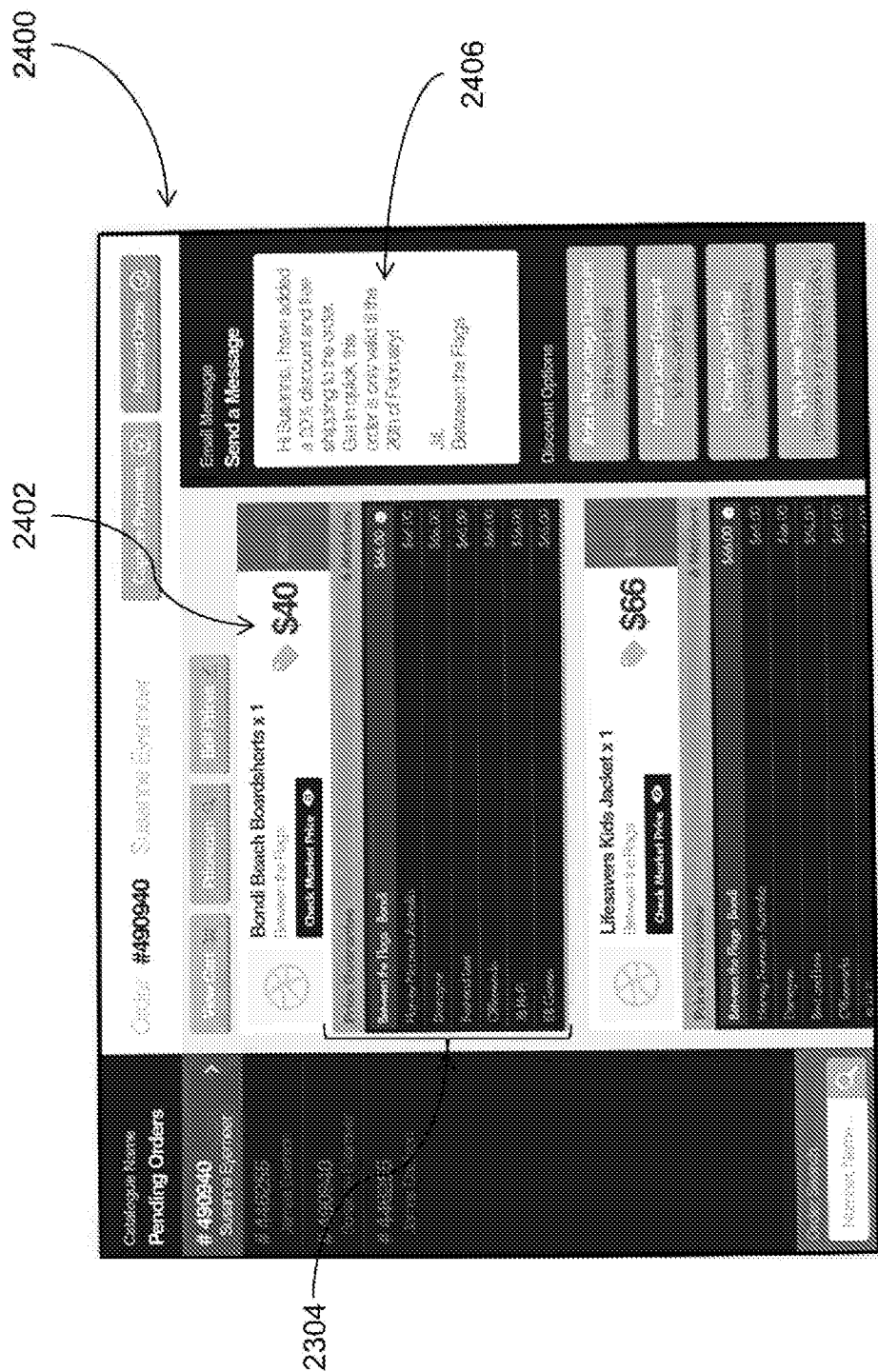


Figure 24

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2500

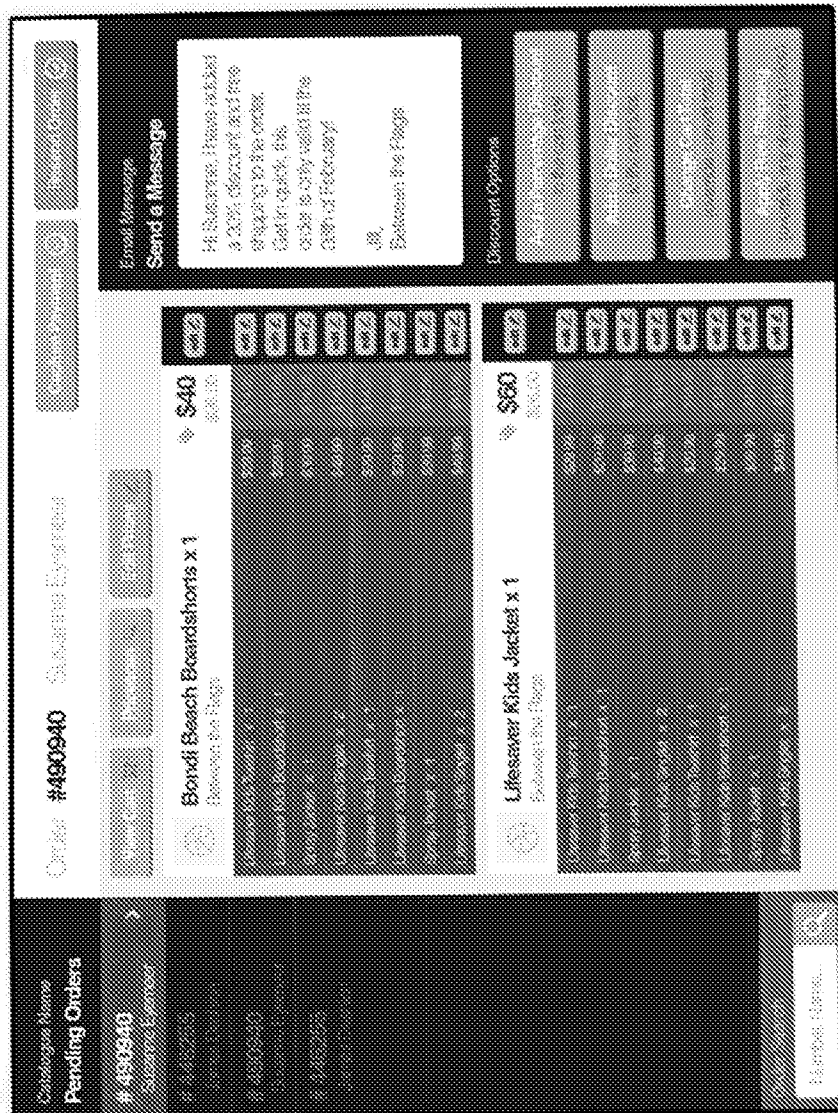


Figure 25

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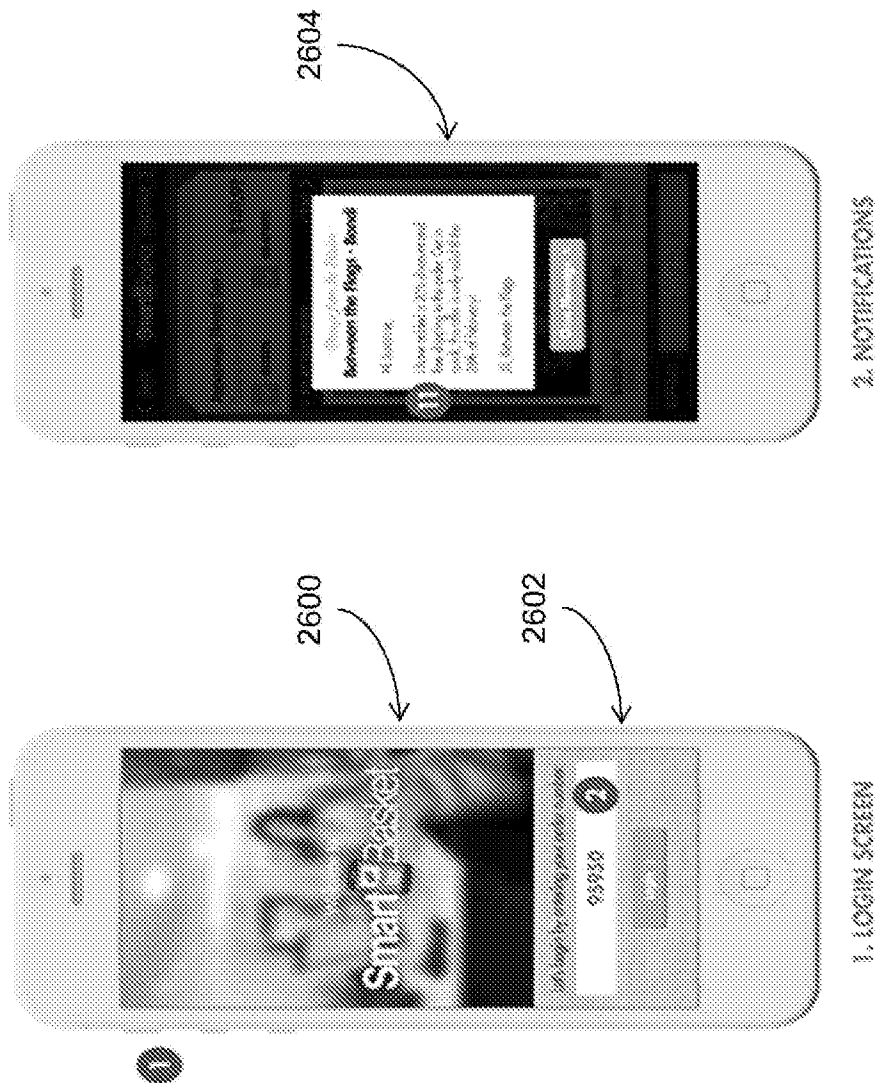


Figure 26B

Figure 26A

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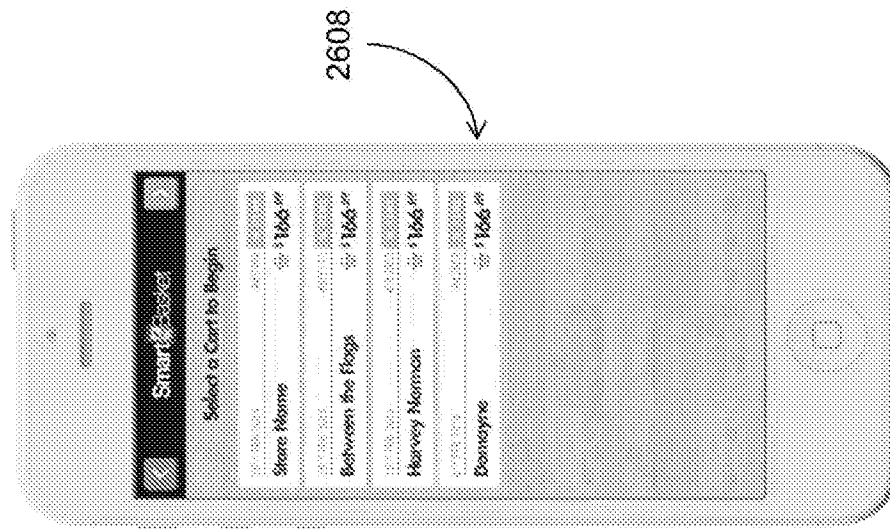


Figure 26D

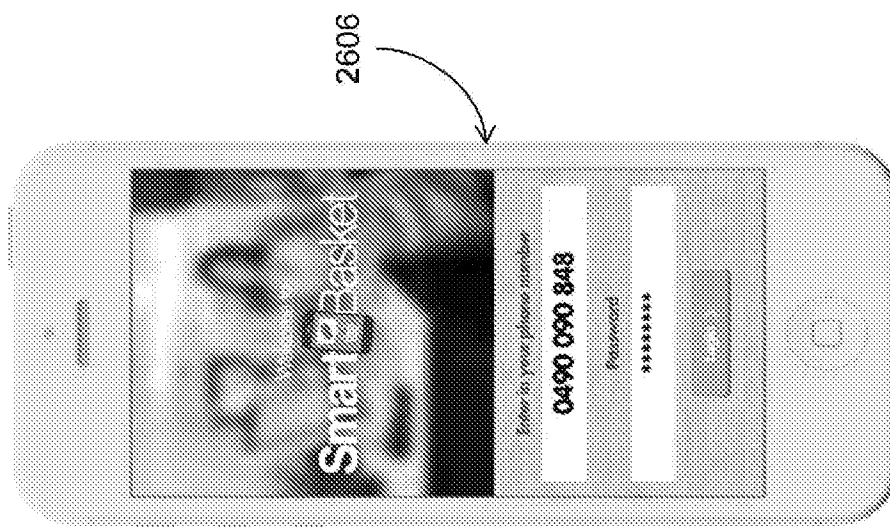


Figure 26C

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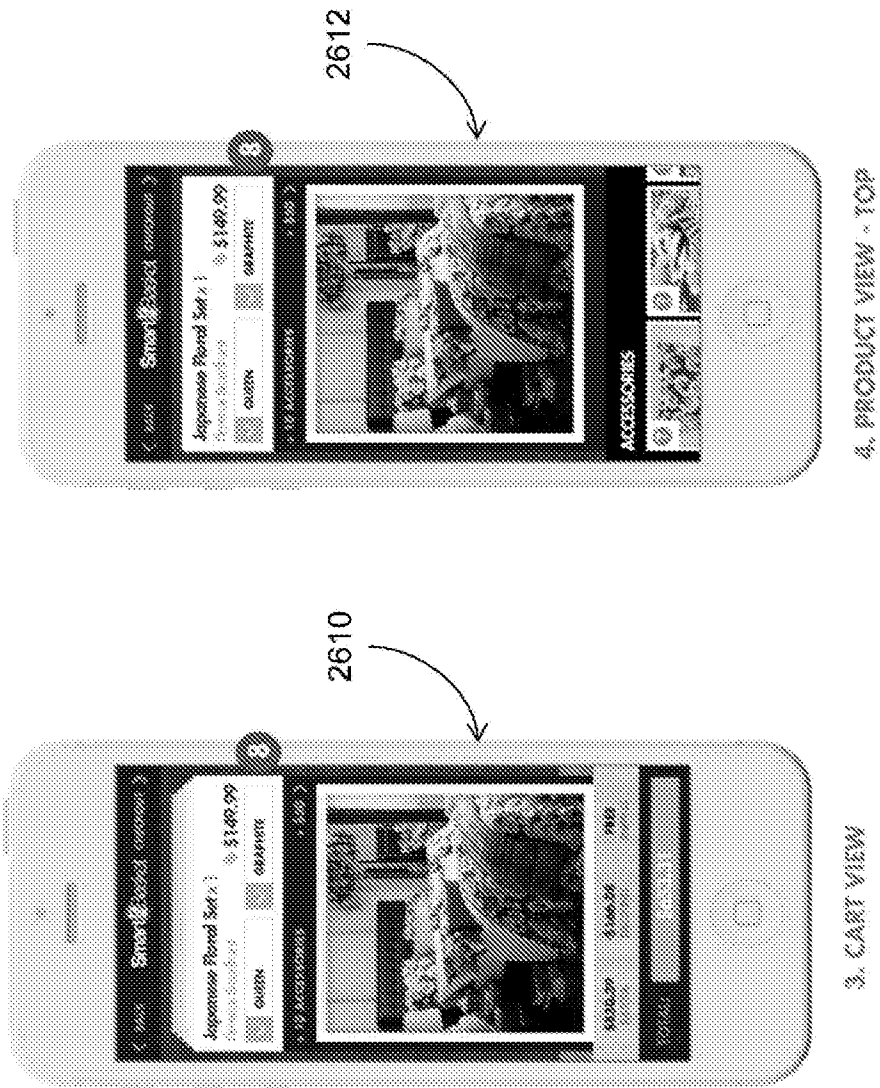
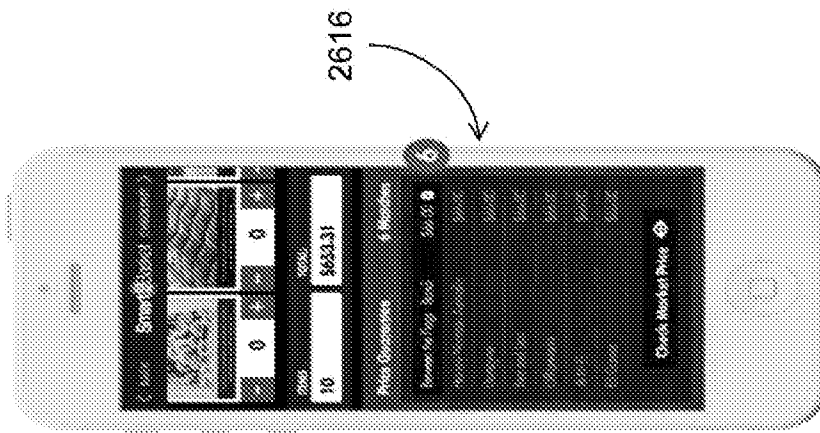


Figure 26F

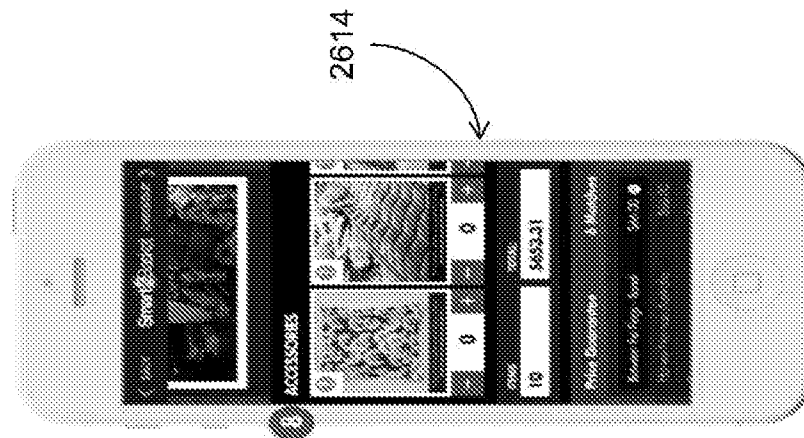
Figure 26E

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4. PRODUCT VIEW - BOTTOM

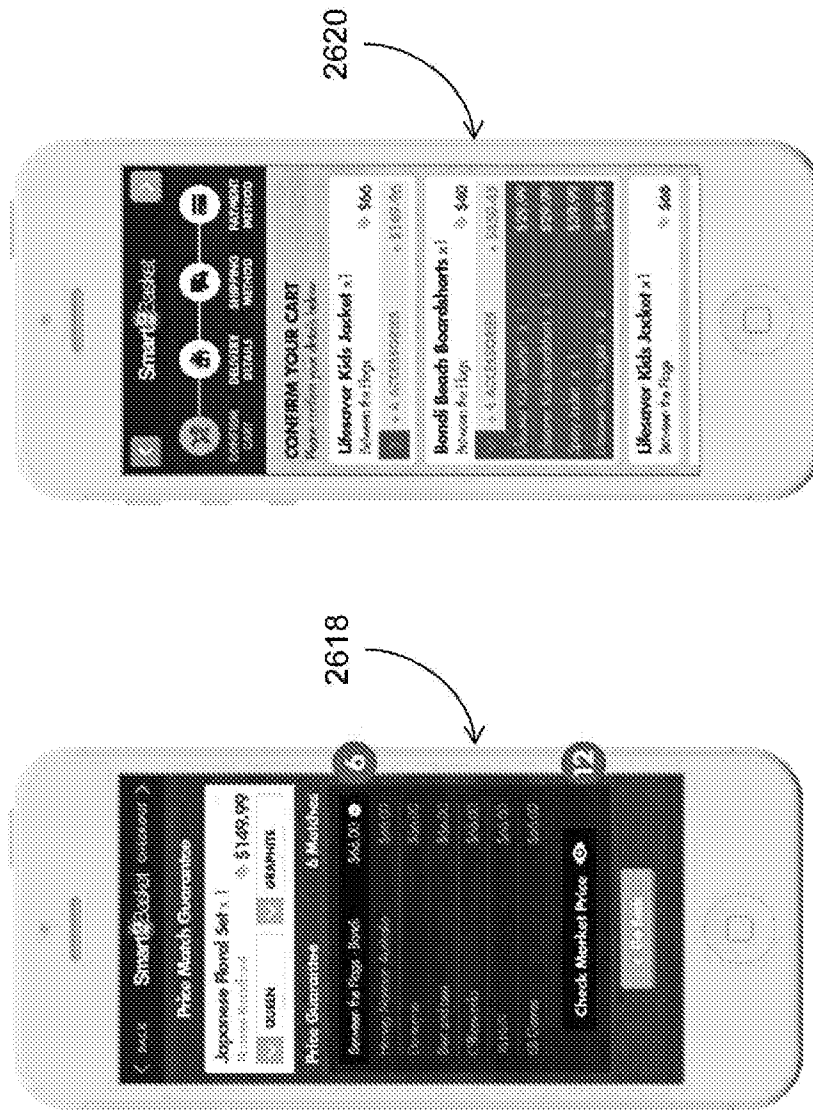
Figure 26H



4. PRODUCT VIEW - MID

Figure 26G

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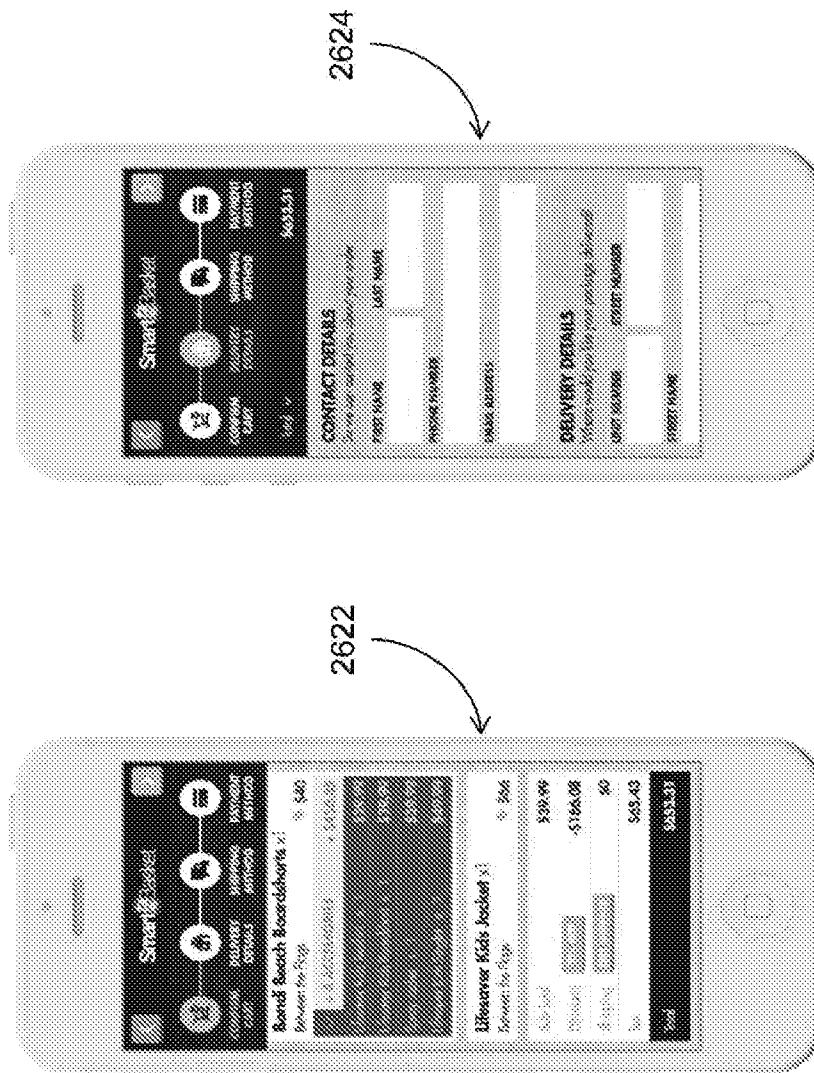
6. BILLING - CONFIRM CART

Figure 26J

5. PRICE MATCH

Figure 26I

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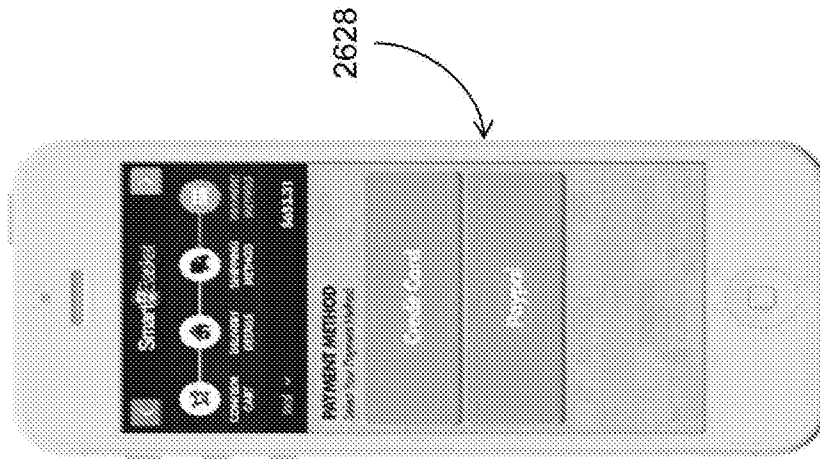
7. BILLING - DELIVERY DETAILS

Figure 26L

6. BILLING - CONFIRM CART

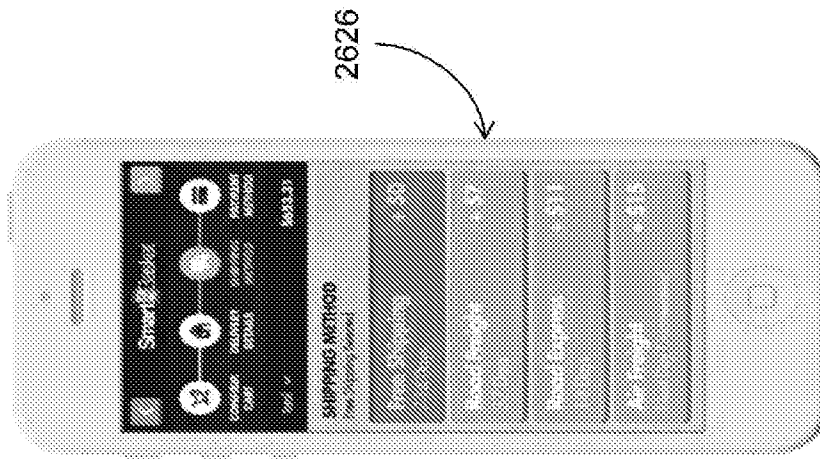
Figure 26K

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9. BILLING - PAYMENT METHOD

Figure 26N



8. BILLING - SHIPPING METHOD

Figure 26M

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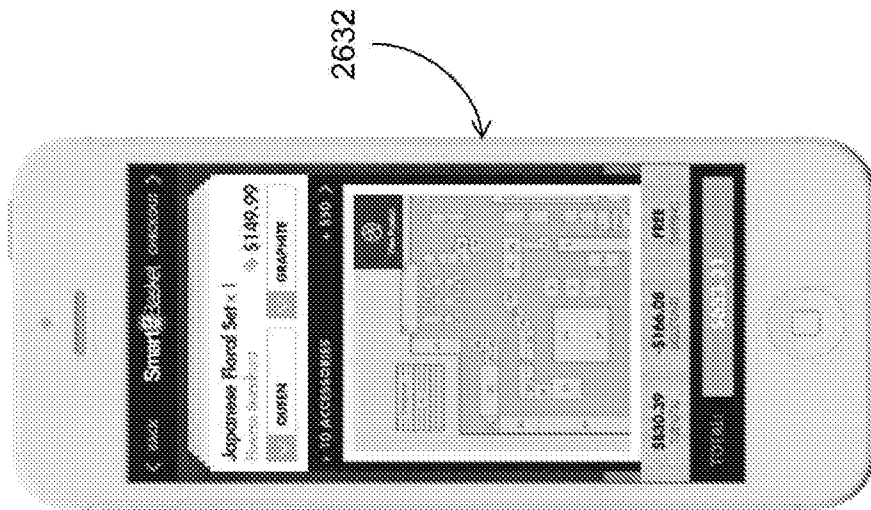


Figure 26P

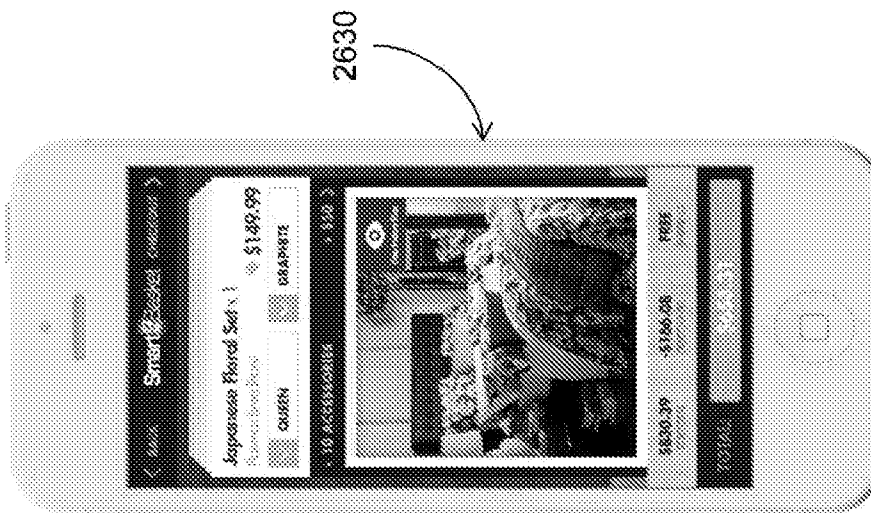


Figure 26O

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/AU2014/000572

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

G06Q 20/18 (2012.01)

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)

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)

Internet (Google, Google Scholar), EPODOC, WPI using keywords such as: kiosk, point of sale, POS, assist, intervene, retail, admin, management, interface, console, tool, sample, test, product, display, interactive, manipulate, touch, feel, in store, retail, order, purchase, online, web based, Internet

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
	Documents are listed in the continuation of Box C	



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C



See patent family annex

* "A"	Special categories of cited documents: document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"E"	earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date	"X"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"L"	document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)	"Y"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&"	document member of the same patent family
"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 18 June 2014		Date of mailing of the international search report 18 June 2014	
Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA Email address: pct@ipaustalia.gov.au		Authorised officer Jonty Goldin AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE (ISO 9001 Quality Certified Service) Telephone No. 0399359618	

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT		International application No.
C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		PCT/AU2014/000572
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2002/0184104 A1 (LITTMAN) 05 December 2002	
Y	Whole document, in particular: Abstract; Paras 0011, 0021, 0023 - 0027, 0031, 0033 - 0036, 0038 - 0041, 0046, 0047, 0049, 0050, 0054, 0055, 0058 - 0060	1 - 3, 6 - 20, 25, 27, 28, 30 - 33
	As above	21 - 24, 26, 29
X	US 2013/0117137 A1 (KLEIN et al.) 09 May 2013	
Y	Whole document, in particular: Abstract; Paras 0019, 0028	1 - 5
	Figs 1C - 1E; Paras 0020, 0031 - 0034	21 - 24, 26, 29

Form PCT/ISA/210 (fifth sheet) (July 2009)

Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
the subject matter listed in Rule 39 on which, under Article 17(2)(a)(i), an international search is not required to be carried out, including
2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a)

Box No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

See Supplemental Box for Details

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☒ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying additional fees, this Authority did not invite payment of additional fees.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest and, where applicable, the payment of a protest fee.
- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest but the applicable protest fee was not paid within the time limit specified in the invitation.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

Supplemental Box

Continuation of: Box III

This International Application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention because it does not relate to one invention or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept.

This Authority has found that there are different inventions based on the following features that separate the claims into distinct groups:

- Claims 1 - 8 are directed to a retailing system for providing interaction between a customer and a retailer to assist in the completion of a sale. The feature of providing a retail interface viewable by at least one other user, wherein the other user utilises the interface to review customer input and interact with the customer to assist in the completion of a sale is specific to this group of claims.
- Claims 9 - 33 are directed to a retailing system for increasing the total sales for a retail premises selling a multiplicity of products. The feature of providing an interactive kiosk to receive customer input, to provide product information, and to coordinate the purchase and supply of a product to the customer is specific to this group of claims.

PCT Rule 13.2, first sentence, states that unity of invention is only fulfilled when there is a technical relationship among the claimed inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding special technical features. PCT Rule 13.2, second sentence, defines a special technical feature as a feature which makes a contribution over the prior art.

When there is no special technical feature common to all the claimed inventions there is no unity of invention.

In the above groups of claims, the identified features may have the potential to make a contribution over the prior art but are not common to all the claimed inventions and therefore cannot provide the required technical relationship. The only feature common to all of the claimed inventions and which provides a technical relationship among them is *providing a retail system with a customer interface*

However this feature does not make a contribution over the prior art because it is disclosed in:

US 2002/0184104 A1 (LITTMAN) 05 December 2002

Therefore in the light of this document this common feature cannot be a special technical feature. Therefore there is no special technical feature common to all the claimed inventions and the requirements for unity of invention are consequently not satisfied *a posteriori*.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT Information on patent family members		International application No. PCT/AU2014/000572	
This Annex lists known patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.			
Patent Document/s Cited in Search Report		Patent Family Member/s	
Publication Number	Publication Date	Publication Number	Publication Date
US 2002/0184104 A1	05 December 2002	None	
US 2013/0117137 A1	09 May 2013	WO 2013070749 A1	16 May 2013
End of Annex			
<div> <p>Due to data integration issues this family listing may not include 10 digit Australian applications filed since May 2001.</p> <p>Form PCT/ISA/210 (Family Annex)(July 2009)</p> </div>			



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11283

代理人 谢鑫 肖冰滨

(51) Int. Cl.

G06Q 20/18(2006. 01)

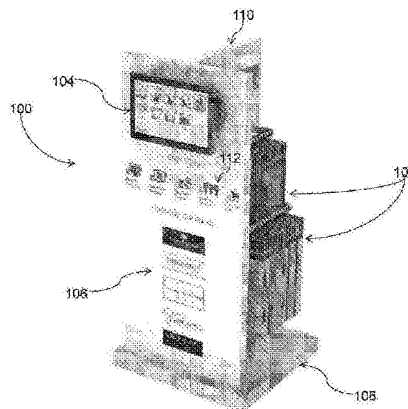
权利要求书3页 说明书32页 附图29页

(54) 发明名称

零售系统

(57) 摘要

一种用于在顾客和零售商之间提供交互以帮助完成销售的零售系统,包括:顾客界面,被配置成向顾客显示关于至少一个物品的信息;输入模块,被配置成从该顾客接收关于该至少一个物品的潜在销售的输入,以经由通信系统提供到数据库;其中该数据库被配置成在与至少一个其他用户能够察看的零售商界面上提供来自该顾客的该输入给与该零售商相关联的该至少一个其他用户,其中该至少一个其他用户使用该界面察看该输入并与该顾客交互以帮助完成该销售。



1. 一种用于在顾客和零售商之间提供交互以帮助完成销售的零售系统,包括:
顾客界面,被配置成向顾客显示关于至少一个物品的信息;
输入模块,被配置成从该顾客接收关于该至少一个物品的潜在销售的输入,以经由通信系统提供到数据库;
其中该数据库被配置成在与至少一个其他用户能够察看的零售商界面上提供来自该顾客的该输入给与该零售商相关联的该至少一个其他用户,其中该至少一个其他用户使用该界面察看该输入并与该顾客交互以帮助完成该销售。
2. 根据权利要求1所述的零售系统,其中所述顾客界面是交互式信息服务亭。
3. 根据权利要求1所述的零售系统,其中所述顾客界面是在该顾客控制下的远程设备。
4. 根据权利要求1至3任意一项所述的零售系统,其中所述至少一个其他用户与所述顾客的交互包括操作该顾客看到的物品的销售价格。
5. 根据权利要求1至4任意一项所述的零售系统,其中所述至少一个其他用户与所述顾客的交互包括传输至少一个诱因给所述顾客以吸引该顾客完成该销售。
6. 根据权利要求1至5任意一项所述的零售系统,其中该系统包括处理模块,被配置成从所述顾客接收所述输入并处理该输入以提供从该顾客输入得到的分析信息,其中该分析信息在所述零售商界面上被呈现。
7. 根据权利要求6所述的零售系统,其中所述处理模块还访问所述数据库以获取关于所述至少一个物品的销售信息,其中该处理模块处理该销售信息以提供进一步的分析信息,其中该进一步分析信息在所述零售商界面上被呈现。
8. 根据权利要求7所述的零售系统,其中所述进一步分析信息包括与所述顾客选择的所述至少一个物品相关联的毛利。
9. 一种用于通过向零售店址内的顾客提供一系统来增加销售该零售店址的多个产品的总销售的零售系统,该系统包括:
至少一个交互式信息服务亭,其与以下关联:
(c) 所述多个产品的至少一些样品显示,
(d) 所述信息服务亭与在计算机系统上维护的数据库通信,该数据库包含关于所述产品的信息;
所述交互式信息服务亭具有:
(h) 至少一个显示装置,适用于向顾客显示关于所述产品的至少一些的一些信息,
(i) 用于从所述顾客接受输入的装置,由此允许该顾客操作该显示装置以允许顾客从
(a) 察看该产品的至少一个的信息,
(j) 用于所述顾客通过允许顾客提供(b)的一些输入来选择该顾客希望购买的一个或多个产品的装置,
(k) 用于接受来自顾客的产品付款的装置,
(l) 用于输入所述顾客的标识详情的装置,
(m) 用于接受购买的产品递送的递送详情的装置,以及
(n) 用于经由通信系统(例如因特网)将该信息服务亭连接到所述数据库的装置;
其中所述数据库具有:

(f) 用于记录所述顾客做出的购买详情的装置,这些详情的至少一些由所述顾客经由该信息服务亭输入,

(g) 用于与购买的商品或服务的供应商通信并下订单以供应该商品或服务的装置,

(h) 用于记录该购买的财务详情的装置,以及

(i) 用于一旦该商品或服务提供给该顾客则支付应付额给用于提供该商品或服务的该供应商的装置,以及

(j) 用于一旦该商品或服务被提供给该顾客就支付应付额给用于零售该商品或服务的该零售商;以及

其中该产品的所述样品关于能用于使用该信息服务亭显示和购买的相同产品的至少一些,顾客使用该信息服务亭容易获得该显示。

10. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中所述产品包括商品和 / 或服务。

11. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中所述显示装置是屏幕。

12. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中关于所述产品 (a) 的每一个的所述信息包括以下的一者或多者:

所述产品的一个或多个图片;

描述所述产品的文本信息;

所述产品的零售价格;以及

所述产品的一个或多个属性。

13. 根据权利要求 12 所述的系统,其中所述一个或多个属性选自关于所述产品的型号、尺寸、颜色、质量、数量。

14. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中所述用于从顾客接受输入 (b) 的装置选自键盘、小键盘、读卡器、与所述信息服务亭通信的顾客的智能电话或平板电脑、或触摸屏。

15. 根据权利要求 14 所述的系统,其中所述装置是由所述顾客直接操作的触摸屏。

16. 根据权利要求 14 所述的系统,其中所述装置是键盘。

17. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中所述用于接受付款的装置 (d) 选择以下的一者或多者:

信用或借记 [交易] 卡读卡器,或在所述输入装置 (b) 中提供的用于允许输入信用或借记卡详情的装置;

或用于接受钱或在更改时分配钱的装置。

18. 根据权利要求 17 所述的系统,其中所述装置 (d) 与信用卡交易电子处理安全标准兼容。

19. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中用于将所述信息服务亭关联到所述数据库的所述通信装置是经由因特网维持的链路。

20. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中所述产品的样品包括所述商品的样品或关于所述商品或服务的信息。

21. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中所述样品的显示包括持有该样品的一个或多个模块单元。

22. 根据权利要求 21 所述的系统,其中所述样品的显示包括用于显示并固定安装所述商品或服务的一系列样品的保留装置。

23. 根据权利要求 21 所述的系统,其中所述样品的显示包括多个无支撑单元中的一个,具有至少基座和一个或多个竖直板,所述样品被安装在该竖直板上。

24. 根据权利要求 21 所述的系统,其中所述样品的显示包括关于安装的所述商品或服务的信息,或该商品或服务的品牌表现。

25. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中每个信息服务亭涉及与单个品牌有关的产品。

26. 根据权利要求 25 所述的系统,其中所述样品的显示包括安装在所述竖直板的一个上的一个触摸屏,该触摸屏位于方便顾客与该触摸屏交互的高度。

27. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中所述数据库还收集关于在显示的所述产品间进行选择 of 所述顾客的习惯的信息。

28. 根据权利要求 27 所述的系统,其中所述被收集的信息包括关于哪些类型的顾客察看哪些产品的信息。

29. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中所述信息服务亭包括一个或多个数字引导标示显示器,适用于还向所述顾客通知该顾客可能希望购买的产品。

30. 根据权利要求 9 所述的系统,其中所述数据库被维护在经由通信链路链接到所述信息服务亭的中央位置。

31. 根据权利要求 30 所述的系统,其中所述通信链路是经由因特网。

32. 根据权利要求 30 所述的系统,其中通过所述信息服务亭显示给所述顾客的产品的目录被集中保存在所述数据库上并使用在对保持在该数据库中的数据进行操作的软件被分配到所述信息服务亭。

33. 根据权利要求 30 所述的系统,其中所述数据库保持来源于单个品牌所有者或零售店的产品数据。

零售系统

技术领域

[0001] 本发明涉及组合在线和个人购物的优点的零售系统。本发明涉及交互信息服务亭系统和 / 或交互网站或软件应用,其提供商品或服务的零售商的零售方案同时还建立供应商的品牌价值。零售系统可特别地(但不是排他地)用于占地面积的地方,例如传统地销售大型商品和服务的零售店。在至少一个实施方式中,系统提供改善关于销售、营销、推销和物流的问题并可以容易用在现有的传统零售渠道中。

背景技术

[0002] 过去,零售一般需要实体零售店址,例如商场或商店,其用于存放并展示商品或用于提供关于服务的信息,然后顾客可以在商店中进行选择和购买。顾客进入店址并通常从货架或展示柜台选择商品,并将其带到柜台,在此销售助理接受付款,且一般会将购买的物品打包,然后顾客可从商店带走这些物品。即使销售服务,例如旅行社,也存在商店,其中顾客能够在与销售助理或旅行代理人讨论其可能的旅游商品,顾客可浏览并选择宣传册,助理记录该销售,接受付款以及递送所选择的旅游计划的详情以及给顾客提供票据等服务。

[0003] 近来,这样的零售建立通常是由计算机辅助的,零售商使用计算机供应链系统,且有时使用递送系统,以将商品直接提供到顾客的家里,尤其是提供例如大体积的物品。但是顾客通常不与该商贩或商店内的软件辅助或在线销售系统进行交互。

[0004] 最近“在线零售”系统发展迅速,通常仿照“亚马逊”模式,其中顾客经由其连接到位于因特网的零售网站的家庭计算机进行购物。在这种模式中,顾客观看他们可能希望购买的商品的图片以及关于涉及的商品或服务的信息。顾客一般在在线商城注册其标识信息。用户还提供像信用卡或 PayPal 账户的支付方式,并记录其用于配送他们购买的东西的地址。在选择要购买的商品或服务之后,顾客同意购买,确认支付,然后过一会儿接受被配送到他们家里的实物商品的快递。有时,当该购买的是服务或电子文件,像机票或电子书时,该物品能够直接通过因特网传输给用户。

[0005] 这些零售方法的每一种存在缺陷,但也有优点。因此有用的是能够提供新零售系统,使用这些优点并避免这些方式的每一个的一些缺点。还更有用的是这些不同零售方式的每一个的至少一些优点能够被组合到单个系统。

[0006] 让顾客通过访问零售店址购买商品或服务的方法具有许多优点。顾客习惯这种方法,且经常以这种方式从购物中得到乐趣。顾客能够审视商品或服务的真实样品和关于它们的信息。如果顾客能够直接看到和触摸商品这有助于销售商品。衣服能够试穿以确定是正确的尺码。而通过因特网经由计算机购买这些相同的物品仅允许顾客看照片或物品描述,且仅是通过这些,顾客通常不确定或甚至怀疑实物商品的质量、尺寸、质地、重量或其他属性。

[0007] 另一方面,在线零售的优点是顾客经常能够接触到非常广范的产品,包括许多不同的型号、选项和尺寸。由于可用于被购买的产品仅被提供图片,实际商品仍然在仓库直到它们被购买并递送,使得系统更具成本效益。而在商店购买商品,店址的尺寸必须足够大以

容纳顾客可能有想去购买的商品的所有不同型号、款式和尺寸。对此有实际的限制,且因此零售店址一般与在线零售可得到的相比仅仓储更小范围的商品,对于在线零售理论上能够提供呈现给顾客的商品或服务的每一种可能的变化,因为用户仅仅察看不占很大空间的电子表达。

[0008] 使用实体零售,店主必须支付开销,例如店址的租金和足够销售人员的薪水,这开销随着能够购买的不同商品的数量增加并与之关联。这些另外的成本使用在线零售时通常是不必要的或少很多。

[0009] 零售店一般具有能够帮助顾客的至少一些销售助理。好的销售人员能够通过使用劝导以及给顾客提供有帮助的援助增加销售。而在线零售也能够使用销售人员,通常使用麦克风和扬声器,或通过短信,或视频互通,这在销售人员直接和亲自接待顾客时一直缺少帮助销售的人情味。远程销售助理,其仅是可能用于在线零售的一种安排,不能够处理商品或清楚知道当产品被选择且进行了购买选项时顾客的体验,且因此是不利的。

[0010] 因此,有用的是提供较好避免或改善在现有零售方法中存在的任意一个或多个缺点的方案,或其可以提供这种方式的另一可替换方式。

发明内容

[0011] 根据本发明的一个发明,提供了用于在顾客和零售商之间提供交互以帮助完成销售的零售系统,包括顾客界面,用于向顾客显示关于至少一个物品的信息;输入模块,用于从顾客接收关于至少一个物品的潜在销售的输入,用于经由通信系统提供给数据库,其中该数据库用于在至少一个其他用户可察看的零售商界面上提供来自该顾客的输入给与该零售商相关联的至少一个其他用户,其中该至少一个其他用户使用该界面察看输入并与顾客交互以帮助完成该销售。

[0012] 顾客界面可以是交互式信息服务亭和/或在顾客的控制下的远程设备。

[0013] 至少一个其他用户与顾客的交互可以包括处理顾客看到的物品的销售价格。

[0014] 至少一个其他用户与顾客的交互可以包括传输至少一个激励给顾客以吸引顾客完成该销售。

[0015] 系统可以包括处理模块,用于从顾客接收该输入并处理该输入以提供从顾客输入得到的分析信息,其中该分析信息被呈现在零售商界面上。

[0016] 该处理模块还可以访问数据库以获取关于至少一个物品的销售信息,其中该处理模块处理该销售信息以进一步提供分析信息,其中该进一步分析信息被呈现在零售商界面上。

[0017] 进一步分析信息可以包括与顾客选择的至少一个物品相关联的毛利。

[0018] 根据本发明的另一个方面,提供了用于增加销售多个产品的零售店的总销售的零售系统,通过向零售店内的顾客提供系统,该系统包括:

[0019] 至少一个交互式信息服务亭,其与以下紧密关联:

[0020] (a) 所述多个产品的至少一些样品展示,

[0021] (b) 所述信息服务亭与计算机系统上保存的数据库通信,该数据库包含关于所述产品的信息;

[0022] 所述交互式信息服务亭具有:

- [0023] (a) 至少一个显示装置,用于向顾客显示关于所述产品的至少一些的一些信息,
- [0024] (b) 用于从所述顾客接受输入的装置,由此允许顾客操作该显示装置以允许顾客从 (a) 察看产品的至少一个的信息,
- [0025] (c) 用于顾客通过允许顾客提供 (b) 的某输入选择顾客希望购买的一个或多个产品的装置,
- [0026] (d) 用于从顾客接受对产品的付款的装置,
- [0027] (e) 用于输入所述顾客的标识详情的装置,
- [0028] (f) 用于接受购买的产品的递送的递送详情的装置,以及
- [0029] (g) 用于经由通信系统(例如因特网)将信息服务亭与数据库连接的装置;
- [0030] 其中所述数据库具有:
- [0031] (a) 用于记录顾客进行的购买详情的装置,这些详情的至少一些由顾客经由网络输入,
- [0032] (b) 用于与购买的商品或服务的供应方通信并下订单以提供该商品或服务的装置,
- [0033] (c) 用于记录购买的财务详情的装置,以及
- [0034] (d) 用于一旦所述商品或服务被提供给顾客就支付应付款给提供该商品或服务的供应方的装置,以及
- [0035] (e) 用于一旦所述商品或服务被提供给顾客则支付应付款给用于零售该商品或服务的零售商的装置;以及
- [0036] 其中所述产品的样品与可用于使用信息服务亭展示并购买的相同产品的至少一些有关,顾客使用该信息服务亭容易获得该展示。

附图说明

- [0037] 在下面对一些本发明的非限制性实施方式的描述中更全面描述本发明的进一步特征。该描述被包括仅用于列示本发明。其不应理解为对上面提出的本发明的宽泛概括、公开或描述的限制。可以参考附图进行该描述,在该附图中:
- [0038] 图1示出了根据本发明的交互式信息服务亭的一个视图,其中图1A示出了信息服务亭的正视图,图1B示出了侧视图,且图1C示出其他侧视图;
- [0039] 图2示出了交互式信息服务亭的替换视图,其中图2A示出了从左边看的信息服务亭的正视图,图2B示出了从右边看得前视图,以及图2C示出了信息服务亭的其他侧;以及
- [0040] 图3示出了交互式信息服务亭的另一视图,包括三个模块,其中图3A示出了信息服务亭的正视图以及图3B示出了图3A的信息服务亭的单个模式。
- [0041] 触摸屏界面的功能在图4至16中示出,其中:
- [0042] 图4示出了在主屏幕上出现的“导向”框架的示例,供顾客使用;
- [0043] 图5示出了“主屏幕”的示例;
- [0044] 图6A和6B示出了“产品清单”屏幕的示例,分别是在针对显示的产品在屏幕上填入详情之前和之后;
- [0045] 图7A和7B示出了两个不同“产品”屏幕的示例;
- [0046] 图8A和8B示出了两个不同“帮助”类型屏幕的示例;

- [0047] 图 9 示出了“配件”选择屏幕的示例；
- [0048] 图 10A 和 10B 示出了“购物车”弹出屏幕的示例的两个视图；
- [0049] 图 11A 和 11B 示出了“结算”屏幕的示例，11B 示出了可用于输入文本的相关联的在线键盘；
- [0050] 图 12 示出了“递送”详情屏幕的示例；
- [0051] 图 13 示出了“送货”详情屏幕的示例；
- [0052] 图 14 示出了“付款”详情屏幕的示例；
- [0053] 图 15 示出了“付款处理”屏幕的示例；
- [0054] 图 16 示出了“付款完成”确认屏幕的示例；
- [0055] 图 17 示出了核心产品组屏幕的示例；
- [0056] 图 17A 示出了“确认类别折扣”屏幕的示例；
- [0057] 图 18 和 18A 分别示出了配件和其他折扣产品的类似屏幕；
- [0058] 图 19 示出了允许用户列出“缺陷产品”的屏幕；
- [0059] 图 20 示出了登录屏幕的示例，由此零售商店的雇员可以登录到系统；
- [0060] 图 21 示出了雇员能够察看顾客已经选择的物品的屏幕；
- [0061] 图 22 示出了雇员然后可以添加折扣或修改物品价格以产生新最终价格的屏幕；
- [0062] 图 23 示出了“智能购物筐”的界面的截屏；
- [0063] 图 24 示出了重复办公屏幕；
- [0064] 图 25 示出了供应方竞争行为报告；以及
- [0065] 图 26A 至 26P 示出了在智能电话上使用的用户“即顾客”界面。

具体实施方式

[0066] 在进行描述时，提及了“用户”、“顾客”、“销售人员”和“零售商”。可以理解上述的术语用于给读者提供通俗的标签，旨在提供实施方式的清楚且可理解的示例。但是可以理解读者从上述的术语不会得到任何“注释”，且这些术语被提供仅用于示例的目的且不应当用于限制或改变这里描述和定义的实施方式和 / 或更宽发明的范围。

[0067] 宽泛地说，这里描述的实施方式提供了零售系统，用于在顾客和零售商之间提供交互以帮助完成销售。该系统包括顾客界面，用于向顾客显示关于至少一个物品的信息，以及输入模块，用于从顾客接收关于至少一个物品的潜在销售的输入，用于经由通信系统提供给数据库。数据库用于在至少一个其他用户可察看的零售商界面上提供来自顾客的输入给与零售商相关联的至少一个其他用户，其中该至少一个其他用户使用该界面察看该输入并与顾客交互以帮助完成该销售。

[0068] 顾客界面可以是交互式信息服务亭和 / 或在顾客的控制下的远程设备，且至少一个其他用户与该顾客的交互可以包括操作顾客看到的物品的销售价格。

[0069] 至少一个其他用户与顾客的交互可以包括向顾客传输至少一个诱因以吸引顾客完成该销售。

[0070] 该系统可以包括处理模块，用于从顾客接收该输入并处理该输入以提供从顾客输入得到的分析信息，其中该分析信息被呈现在该零售商界面上。

[0071] 处理模块还可以访问数据库以获取关于至少一个物品的销售信息，其中该处理模

块处理该销售信息以提供进一步的分析信息,其中该进一步的分析信息被呈现在零售商家面上。该进一步的分析信息可以包括与顾客选择的至少一个物品相关联的毛利。

[0072] 在一个具体实施方式中,其在下面被更详细描述,提供了用于增加销售多个产品的零售店的总销售的零售系统,通过向零售店内的顾客提供一系统,该系统包括至少一个交互式信息服务亭,其与所述多个产品的至少一些的样品的展示相关联,所述信息服务亭与计算机系统上保存的数据库通信,该数据库包含关于所述产品的信息。

[0073] 所述交互式信息服务亭具有至少一个显示装置,用于向顾客显示关于至少一些所述产品的一些信息,用于从所述顾客接受输入的装置,由此允许顾客操作该显示装置以允许顾客从 (a) 察看产品的至少一个的信息,用于顾客通过允许顾客提供 (b) 的某输入选择顾客希望购买的一个或多个产品的装置,用于从顾客接受对产品的付款的装置,用于输入所述顾客的标识详情的装置,用于接受购买的产品的递送详情的装置,以及用于经由通信系统(例如因特网)将信息服务亭与数据库连接的装置;

[0074] 其中所述数据库具有用于记录顾客进行的购买详情的装置,这些详情的至少一些由顾客经由网络输入,用于与购买的商品或服务的供应方通信并下订单以提供该商品或服务的装置,用于记录购买的财务详情的装置,以及用于当所述商品或服务被提供给顾客就支付应付款给提供该商品或服务的供应方的装置,以及用于当所述商品或服务被提供给顾客则支付应付款给用于零售该商品或服务的零售商的装置;以及可用于使用信息服务亭来展示并购买的与其中所述相同产品至少一些有关的产品的样品,顾客使用该信息服务亭容易获得该展示。

[0075] 现在参考附图更详细描述实施方式。图 1A、1B 和 1C、2 和 3 中提供了信息服务亭的实体实施方式的各种示例。图 1A、1B 和 1C 示出了根据本发明的信息服务亭的示例的三个视图。

[0076] 信息服务亭(100)显示多个商品样品(102),在该示例中是床上亚麻制品。触摸屏(104)被安装在该模块的多个墙的一个上,所在的位置使其为顾客轻易容易可用。显示的产品的一些品牌和广告(106)也优选地在信息服务亭上提供。该品牌可以是实体的且可移除式固定,或还可以或替代地在电子显示器上被提供。显示器应当优选地能够定期且容易被更新。组成信息服务亭的模块一般具有基部(108)和一个或多个竖直墙(110)。用于使用信息服务亭的说明(112)也可以被提供,一般靠近触摸屏。优选地,墙被设置以支持商品的展示和货架,并还用于安装触摸屏。

[0077] 优选地,墙可以具有内腔,用于隐藏电缆等,其将触摸屏显示器和数据输入装置连接到像因特网的通信系统。被展示的产品样品的不同风格和类型的实体展示和装配可以被提供,例如架子、橱柜、挂架等。可用的物理空间是信息服务亭展示的尺寸的重要确定因素。这允许宽范围的不同信息服务亭,以及用于构建信息服务亭的模块被选择。可替换地,一些信息服务器可以占用已经被修改的已有的墙固定设备。一些商店具有不同的装配,且信息服务亭可以被设计用于融合这些装配或与这些装配整合。

[0078] 还优选地是可以以安全方式将这些样品装起来。这减少盗窃,但是重要地是防止顾客移走或移动样品,以帮助展示整齐并吸引人。保持信息服务亭整齐可减少销售助理不断整理该展示或替换被移走的物品的需要。样品可以通过将其固定到不能移除的货架上或将其存储在橱柜中,或将产品的一部分固定在展示信息服务亭自身上来保证样品的安全。

但是,如果要使用保证产品的安全,样品应当仍然可被顾客近距离观察。

[0079] 可替换地信息服务亭可以具有多个显示屏幕,以显示例如产品或电影或广告的另外的视图。使用这样的屏幕允许提供中央控制的活动或信息显示,这能够快速且容易升级或更改。信息服务亭可以包含扬声器用于播放音乐,或中继来自关于产品的视频或广告的声音。屏幕上的文本可以由软件自动朗读出,以帮助有难度看或阅读涉及的语言的顾客。可以为信息服务亭的部分提供照明。信息服务亭可以具有用于将其牢固固定在位置的装置,由此其不能被推倒或移动。可选地,信息服务亭模块可以具有轮子,优选地可锁定的,以允许其被移动到商店里的任何位置。

[0080] 理想地是被使用的显示屏是零售硬化单元。相关联的电缆被安全地安装并锁定到位。这确保它们不能被容易或偶然移除。信息服务亭单元的典型尺寸能够例如是正方形基座是 $800 \times 800\text{mm}$,高度是 1500mm ,以及分隔墙的厚度可以大约 50mm 。

[0081] 在图 2A、2B 和 2C 提供的表示中,示出了另一种信息服务亭。不是图 1A、1B 和 1C 的一般正方形基座和“T”型墙结构,在该示例中基座是矩形的,且墙是锯齿形结构。信息服务亭的特征以与图 1A、1B 和 1C 相同的方式标识出。

[0082] 这种结构的优点是允许样品由操作或看触摸屏的顾客容易访问。这种形状可以适合商店内的特定位置,或混合不同单元形状;这能够改善商店的外观。不同形状的信息服务亭单元可以与不同品牌使用,以帮助为顾客区分这些品牌。图 2A、2B 和 2C 中的信息服务亭的典型尺寸能够例如是矩形基座 $900 \times 500\text{mm}$,高度 1500mm ,以及分隔墙的厚度可以大约 50mm 。

[0083] 还可取的是将信息服务亭提供为多个模块。这些模块可以被设置一起或分开设置,可能在商店的不同部分中。

[0084] 在图 3A、3B 和 3C 中,示出了另一版本的信息亭,其中信息服务亭 (100) 由三个分开模块 (100a、100b 和 100c) 组成,其被连接并装配在一起。零售商可以以混合并匹配结构使用不同的模块。例如,当产品(在该示例中是划船配件)被更新时,替换模块能够提供,具有整合的新模块,其然后能够为较老的模块与之前示出的模块进行交换。在该示例中,样品 (102) 被固定到显示信息服务亭。

[0085] 如在图 3 中所示,使用信息服务亭的说明包括在显示触摸屏 104 上,而不是被包括在信息服务亭的墙上。信息服务亭模块单元的典型尺寸能够例如是矩形基座是 $1000 \times 600\text{mm}$,高度 1900mm ,以及分隔板墙的厚度可以大约在 100mm ,且其可以允许板打开,由此能够进入到放置有产品的内部。一个模块示出船控制杆的样品所附着的盒子,允许顾客直接操作这些控制杆。

[0086] 现在更详细描述显示触摸屏的功能。这些示例只是实施排名与其信息显示功能及其数据输入功能之间的交互的一种方式。其他常用的可替换方式也可以用于达到预期的结果。

[0087] 图 4 在 400 示出了在触摸屏显示器上提供的导向框的一部分。转到图 5,示出了在触摸屏显示器上提供的导向框的示例,包括图 4 的部分 (在 502) (即该部分 502 等同于图 4 的部分 400)。其优选地位于屏幕上的特定位置。下表 1 解释显示的组件。

[0088] 表 1

[0089]

图例	项	描述
402, 502	转动横幅	通过图片转动
404, 506	主屏幕图标	当选择回到主屏幕
406, 508	视频图标	当选择打开视频图标 弹出并播放视频
408, 510	语言图标	当选择时打开语言弹 窗（可选）
410, 512	电子邮件图标	当选择时打开电子邮 件 弹窗（可选）
412, 514	类别子导向菜单	显示信息服务亭上可 用的所有类别。用户使 用另外的菜单选项改

[0090]

		变顶层类别
414, 516	购物车	显示购物车内容的物 品总数和总价格。当选 择时打开购物车弹窗

[0091] 该导向框允许用户提出不同的显示,且转动横幅(402,504)显示可获得产品的一系列图片。“主屏幕”图标键(404,506)能够由用户选择以将屏幕回到初始环境。使用触摸屏进行的选择仅涉及顾客敲击图标。另外,控制杆、分开的触摸板、鼠标等能够用于例如选择该键。另一图标或键在显示区域(402,504)显示包含关于产品信息的视频(406,508)。作为优选但可选特征,可以有“语言”键(408,510),其将显示的文本改变成其他语言,但是没有这个选项,文本被显示为本地语言,在该示例中是英语。

[0092] 另一选项是“电子邮件”键(410,512),其允许顾客从电子邮件账户接收信息或向电子邮件账户发送信息,其中能够使用触摸屏键盘输入电子邮件地址。在优选方式中,该键允许顾客加入邮寄清单。可替换地,到推特、脸书等的其他链接可以被提供,或允许在它们之间进行选择,以执行相似目的。在“类别”区域(412,514)中,键可以被提供以允许顾客将被显示的产品过滤到特定的子类别,以帮助找到特定物品。此外,该显示理想地提供到“购

物车”的接入,其是在在线零售软件系统(414,516)使用的已知概念。

[0093] 在图 5 中,示出了主屏幕的示例。主屏幕的组件在下表 2 中更详细解释。

[0094] 表 2

[0095]

图例	项	描述
518	类别图片	当被选择进入到产品清单页或下一群组级

[0096]

		页
520	类别产品指示符	显示该类别中有的产品总数
522	类别名	显示类别名
524	类别描述	显示类别描述

[0097] 屏幕的这部分显示每个类别产品(518)的图标。当图标被选择时显示改变以显示该类别的产品清单或子类别清单。理想地,在每个类别图标附近指示每个类别有的可能产品(520)的数量。在图标下可以显示该类别的名称(522)和描述(524)。

[0098] 在图 6A 和 6B 中,示出了“产品清单”屏幕 600 的示例。下表 3 示出了屏幕 600 的组件。该屏幕显示了在所选类别中能够购买的所有产品的清单。

[0099] 表 3

[0100]

图例	项	描述
602	产品图片	当被选择时进入到产品 屏幕
604	产品名称	产品的名称
606	非特价产品价格	不是特价的产品的价格 和显示
608	特价产品价格	特价产品的价格和显示
610	产品覆盖	向用户传达任意另外的 产品信息

[0101] 示出了每个产品的图片 (602), 以及每个产品的其名称 (604) 和价格 (606)。示出了正常价格, 但是优选地可以以特殊方式指示特价产品 (608) 的任意调整的价格, 例如使用特别的颜色, 且理想地还显示原始价格 (606), 但是显示将该价格用“横线”划掉。“覆盖”符号图标也可以被显示 (610) 以指示关于特殊意义的产品的任意另外信息。

[0102] 在图 7A 和 7B 中, 示出了“产品”屏幕 700 的示例。下表 4 解释了其组件。该屏幕显示了顾客已经选择的能够被购买的每个产品的详情。通常其是在结算过程之前显示给用户的最后的屏幕。其通常目的是给用户 提供他们可能想知道关于特定产品的一切。这里示出了例如尺寸、颜色、风格、型号等的选项。

[0103] 表 4

[0104]

图例	项	描述
702	产品图片	大产品默认图片
704	产品名称	产品的名称
706	品牌名称	产品品牌的名称
708	价格	基于数量的价格（优选地也可以有批发价格，因此也能够计算并存储每个订单的批发费用）
710	数量	被选择添加到购物车的产品的数量
712	添加/移除数量	当选择+时在数量上添加 1，当选择-时从数量中减去 1
714	颜色选择	显示产品可以有的颜色。 当选择时：

[0105]

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 改变突出的颜色。 • 加载适用于该颜色的产品属性，即产品图片，属性。
716	图片选择	<p>显示产品可以有的属性列表。</p> <p>当选择时：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 改变强调的图片 • 改变主图片区域
718	尺寸选择	<p>显示产品可以有的属性列表。</p> <p>当选择时：</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 保存用户产品选择的信息
720	添加附件键	当选择时打开附件弹窗
722	产品描述	显示产品的描述
724	尺寸帮助键	当选择时打开尺寸信息弹窗
726	联系我们键	但选择时打开电子邮件弹窗
728	返回键	当选择时回到信息服务亭显示的之前屏幕
730	添加到购物车键	当选择时添加产品到购物车

[0106]

732	产品覆盖	向用户传达任意另外的产品信息
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[0107] 在产品屏幕中,显示了代表性的产品图片 (702),以及其名称 (704) 和品牌 (706)。显示了零售价格 (708)。显示了用于显示产品的数量的字段 (710) 以及用户增加或减少显示的控制 (712)。例如数量能够默认为 1。如果颜色 (714) 适合该产品,能够显示用于选择颜色 (714) 的控制。所有这些控制可以用于显示其他变体。如果有一系列图片可用,则能够提供缩略图 (716),让顾客切换到主图片 (702) 的产品的其他视图。如果尺寸 (718) 适合该产品能够显示用于选择尺寸 (718) 的控制,或这可以用于其他属性。优选地,如果产品能够与附件一起卖,则能够提供用于选择这些附件的控制 (720),其能够使得出现弹出窗,以让该附件被选择。显示了产品描述 (722)。

[0108] 还可以提供用户帮助顾客的各种功能。这些功能可以包括例如“尺寸帮助键” (724) 或“联系我们”键 (728)。提供了“返回”控制 (728)。还提供了“添加到购物车”控制 (730)。还可以提供产品覆盖控制 (732) 以给予顾客获得另外的产品信息。

[0109] 在图 8A 和 8B 中,示出了弹出“帮助”屏幕 800 的示例。下表 5 解释了其组件。这样的屏幕通过点击或轻敲原始屏幕上的键“弹出”或出现在原始屏幕 (该帮助屏幕从该原始屏幕被调出) 的上方。图 8A 是“联系我们”屏幕的示例,其中示出了公司的图片 (A) (一般包括商标或某广告),其是信息服务亭涉及的商品的来源。该公司的详情也被提供 (B),一般显示其地址和电话详情,且可选地这还可以包括允许连接到该公司的网站的链接,或电子邮件链接,这可以给顾客提供了例如向该公司发送电子邮件的选项。另外,顾客可以将这些详情复制到自己的智能电话,让他们能够自己向该公司打电话、发短信或发电子邮件。控制 (C) 可用于允许用户关闭弹窗,并回到原始屏幕。

[0110] 表 5

[0111]

图例	项	描述
802	“联系我们”(或“定尺寸”) 图片	用户阅读的联系我们的信息
804	“联系我们”(或“定尺寸”) 描述	关于联系我的信息
806	关闭键	当选择时弹窗关闭

[0112] 在图 6B 中,示出了类似弹窗的示例,其给顾客提供定尺寸的帮助,例如针对床上用品制品或衣服。另外,有图片 (802) 或表格或文本解释,给顾客度量标准上的尺寸转换,纸张尺寸,或其他定尺寸系统,或可能针对床单,则是国王、皇后、双人和单人尺寸及其实际测量尺寸。类似的模板可以用于帮助弹窗,以帮助系统设计。此外该弹窗的一部分被留出用于文本解释 (804) 和“关闭”键或控制 (806) 被提供以允许用户关闭弹窗并返回到之前

的窗。

[0113] 在图 9 中,示出了“附件”弹窗 900 的示例。有主产品的图片 (902),还提供了可以被选择以伴随主产品的所有附件的较小图片或缩略图 (904)。每个类型的附件可以理想地是其自己的能够从主查询中定位到的产品,因此这种功能能够操作为允许顾客找到要购买的初始选择的匹配附件的捷径。在该示例中,“左箭头”906 和“右箭头”908 控制被提供以允许用户选择每个附件的数量,即通过添加或减少也在附件图片下面显示的数量。这还更新小计 910。每个附件的名称 (916) 被提供在其图片附近。优选地提供了显示小计 (910) 的字段,以及用于允许用户添加附件到其购物车的控制 (912) 也是可用的。还提供了关闭键 (914)。下表 6 示出了这些控制的简介。

[0114] 表 6

[0115]

图例	项	描述
902	主产品图片	主产品图片
904	附件图片	附件图片
906	左箭头	当选择时: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 添加 1 到数量• 小计增加
908	右箭头	当选择时: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 从数量减 1• 小计减少
910	小计	显示添加到购物车的附件的小计价格
912	添加附件键	当选择时添加附件选择到用户购物车
914	关闭键	当选择时关闭附件弹窗
916	附件名称	附件的名称

[0116] 图 10A 和 10B 示出了购物车弹窗 1000 的两个视图。示出的产品图片 (1002) 是针对顾客已经决定购买的每一个物品。在该图片下面显示的是产品的名称 (1004)。优选地在产品名称下面还显示产品的价格 (1006)。在该示例中,在该窗的底部,显示了选择的物品的数量 (1008) 和购物车中所有物品的总价格 (1010) 的简介。还提供了操作购物车的各种

控制。例如,能够提供清除所有选择的物品的键 (1012),以允许用户重新开始。当购物车准备好时,提供了“结算”键 (1014) 以允许顾客继续购买的进程。还可以提供允许顾客移除物品的控制 (1016)。如果选择的物品多于在一个屏幕上能够显示的数量,则显示允许顾客以左箭头 (1018) 和右箭头 (1020) 键的形式移动到下一个或上一个屏幕的控制。“关闭”键 (1022) 会关闭弹窗。提供了针对每一个选择的物品的一些详情。示出了产品名称或品牌 (1024) 以及选择颜色描述 (1026) 和尺寸描述 (1028) (如果适用)。还指示了每个产品的选择的数量 (1030),其是考虑该数量的小计 (1032)。如果相关附件也被订购,则在主产品下显示附件的详情 (1034),且其价格被包括在小计 (1032) 中。图 10A 示出了初始呈现给顾客的视图,而图 10B 示出了填入其详情的窗。

[0117] 表 7

[0118]

图例	项	描述
1002	产品图片	产品默认图片
1004	产品名称	产品名称
1006	产品价格	产品价格
1008	购物车物品	购物车中的物品总数
1010	购物车价格	购物车中的所有物品的 总价格
1012	清空购物车	当选择时打开确认警示 框
1014	结算键	当选择时打开账单步骤 1 屏幕
1016	移除物品键	当选择时打开确认警示 框
1018	左箭头键	向左移动购物车中的产

[0119]

		品
1020	右箭头键	向右移动购物车中的产品
1022	关闭键	当选择时关闭购物车弹窗
1024	产品品牌	产品的品牌
1026	产品颜色名称	产品的颜色名称
1028	产品尺寸名称	产品的尺寸名称
1030	产品数量	添加到购物车的产品的物品数量
1032	产品总计	产品费用的总数（产品价格×数量）
1034	附件	选择的附件详情

[0120] 当顾客已经同意购买,并使用了“结算”控制,则顾客会被问到提供一些认证详情。图 11A 和 11B 中示出了实现该功能的屏幕 1100 的示例。下表 8 中提供了控制和特征的简介。结算过程的第一步是收集顾客基本信息。这些信息包括顾客姓名,优选地分为名 (1102) 和姓 (1104) 以及其电话号码 (1106) 和电子邮件地址 (1108)。优选地还提供一些说明 (1110) 用于引导顾客填入所需要的信息。执行对已经提供的请求的信息的基本审查,且优选地在这些字段的每一个中输入正确类型的信息。例如,电子邮件字段必须具有包括例如“@”字符的正确格式化的电子邮件地址。指示符 (1110) 被提供以标记信息缺失或其不是期望的正确类型的信息。

[0121] 此外,当用户选择必须输入文字的字段时,显示屏幕上的键盘 (1136),如图 11B 所示。顾客能够轻敲或以其他方式选择按键以打入其名字等。可替换地语言识别系统能够用于这些处理。

[0122] 键 (1112) 允许顾客继续购物,通过确认输入的数据且然后回到“主屏幕”,可以继续购物。允许顾客察看购物车的键 (1114) 也确认输入的数据并然后打开“购物车”弹窗。“返回” (1128) 键确认该屏幕并然后回到上一个页面。最后,“下一步”键 (1130) 确认并移到付款过程的下一个步骤。

[0123] 优选地,还示出了该订单的简介,包括产品名称 (1120)、产品数量 (1122)、产品属性 (1124) 和产品价格 (1126)。指示了总费用 (1132)。

[0124] 表 8

[0125]

图例	项	描述
1102	名	用户的名
1104	姓	用户的姓
1106	电话号码	用户的电话号码
1108	电子邮件地址	用户的电子邮件地址
1110	信息文本	通知用户期望在字段输入什么信息
1112	错误指示符	字段是否通过确认的视觉指示符
1114	继续购物键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 执行当前屏幕的确认• 如果确认成功则进入主屏幕
1116	察看购物车键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 执行当前屏幕的确认• 如果确认成功则打开购物车弹窗

[0126]

1118	联系信息键	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1120	产品名称	正购买的产品的名称
1122	产品数量	正购买的产品的数量
1124	产品属性	正购买的产品的属性
1126	产品费用	正购买的产品的总费用
1128	返回键	当选择时： • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功则回到上一个页面
1130	下一步键	当选择时： • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功则进入到付款过程的下一步
1132	总费用	正购买的订单包括送货的总费用
1134	订阅	实现用户订阅
1136	键盘	用于用户输入的窗口键盘
1138	递送地址	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1140	送货方式	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1142	付款	当选择时执行当前屏幕

[0127]

		的确认
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[0128] 在图 12 中,示出了用于输入顾客的地址信息的窗 1200 的示例。此外弹出键盘是可用的以允许顾客添加其地址。一些字段,例如“国家”(1202) 字段提供下拉清单,其中显示了所有可能的国家,且用户仅需要选择正确的一个国家。下表 9 给出了关于要输入的信息项的一些详情。

[0129] 顾客被请求提供其国家 (1202)、州 (1204)、郊区 (1206) 和街道地址 (1208)。当使用该屏幕输入顾客的名字时,该屏幕还确认填入了要求的字段,且输入的文字类型有效。如果字段缺失或包含无效信息,错误指示符 (1212) 提醒顾客。在区域 (1210) 中显示了输入的信息的组合。因此顾客能够知道他们在正确的字段输入正确的信息。

[0130] 顾客的详情可以从之前的购买已经被记录到数据库。用于帮助这个的一个选项是给顾客提供唯一的标识号。优选地当使用这个时会要求密码以降低错误。标识号的详情可以通过电子邮件发送给顾客,或可以提供打印的小票。可替换地,信用卡或其他支付方法可以用于触发顾客详情的默认集合,或顾客的电话号码或名称或这些的组合可以被使用。但是可以优选的是在每次使用信息服务亭时在其标识和地址详情中具有顾客密钥,以最小化对顾客知道其详情的需要。

[0131] 表 9

[0132]

图例	项	描述
1202	国家	国家下拉选单
1204	州/省/地区	州/省/地区下拉选单
1206	郊区	用户的郊区
1208	邮编	用户的邮编
1210	街道地址	用户的街道地址

[0133]

1212	错误指示符	字符是否通过确认的可 视指示符
1214	继续购物键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功进入到 主屏幕
1216	察看购物车键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功打开购 物车弹窗
1218	联系信息键	当选择时执行当前屏幕 的确认
1220	产品名称	正购买的产品的名称
1222	产品数量	正购买的产品的数量
1224	产品属性	正购买的产品的属性
1226	产品费用	正购买的产品的总费用
1228	返回键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功则返回 到上一页面
1230	下一步键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功进入到 付款过程的下一步

[0134]

1232	总费用	整个购买的订单包括送货的总费用
1234	递送地址	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1236	送货方式	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1238	付款	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认

[0135] 顾客将使用“下一步”键 (1230) 以进行到记录顾客想以什么方式将商品递送给他们。图 13 示出了用于该功能的屏幕 1300 的示例,以选择示出的送货方式。如在之前屏幕,当用户希望在任意指示的字段的中输入文本时可以使用弹出的键盘。下表 10 概括了优选的字段。

[0136] 使用该窗口,顾客可以选择他们希望使用的送货方式,以将购买的产品送给他们。提供了用于在潜在选择间进行选择的控制 (1302)。示出了每个方法的费用 (1304),涉及短名 (1306) 以及优缺点描述,例如估计的到达时间。允许消息的字段 (1310) 也是可用与允许顾客提供进一步的指示产品何时递送到他们家门口。选项之一可以是顾客从商店亲自取一些或所有物品,且如果这种选项是可用的,则可以提供商品有货的指示符,或可以提供让销售人员同意这个的方式。

[0137] 表 10

[0138]

图例	项	描述
1302	送货方式选择器	用户递送方法选择 当选择时: •运费添加到订单费用

[0139]

1304	运费	送货方式的费用
1306	送货名称	送货方式的名称
1308	送货描述	送货方式的描述
1310	送货消息	具有任意送货说明的用户消息
1312	继续购物键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功则进入到主屏幕
1314	察看购物车键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功则打开购物车弹窗
1316	联系信息键	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1318	产品名称	正购买的产品的名称
1320	产品数量	正购买的产品的数量
1322	产品属性	正购买的产品的属性
1324	产品费用	正购买的产品的总费用
1326	返回键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认

[0140]

		认 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 如果确认成功则返回到上一页
1328	下一步键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功则进入到付款过程的下一步
1330	总费用	正购买的订单包括送货的总费用
1332	递送地址	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1334	送货方式	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1336	付款	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认

[0141] 顾客进行到下一步,其中选择付款方式。在图 14 中在屏幕 1400 显示了定义付款方式的窗口的示例。下表 11 提供了可以用于这个的字段的详情。示出了正购买的商品的总计 (1430) 以及还提供了进行付款的各种选项 (1402),由此顾客能够从中选择。这些可以包括选择信用卡的选项,以及各种信用卡的图标被示出以从中进行选择。可替换地,选项可以包括现金购买,其可以给顾客提供并打印收据以带到收银台。任意常用的付款方式可以被整合到该屏幕。

[0142] 表 11

[0143]

图例	项	描述
1402	付款方式选择	用于用户选择特定付款方式
1404	继续购物键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功则进入到主屏幕
1406	察看购物车键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功则打开购物车弹窗
1408	联系信息键	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1410	产品名称	正购买的产品的名称
1412	产品数量	正购买的产品的数量
1414	产品属性	正购买的产品的属性
1416	产品费用	正购买的产品的总费用
1418	返回键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认 • 如果确认成功则回到上一页
1420	下一步键	当选择时： <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 执行当前屏幕的确认

[0144]

		• 如果确认成功进入到付款步骤 5 屏幕
1422	总费用	正购买的订单包括送货的总费用
1424	递送地址	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1426	送货方式	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1428	付款	当选择时执行当前屏幕的确认
1430	总计	正购买的订单包括送货的总费用。应当与总费用相同

[0145] 顾客然后进入到下一个即第五步,其中处理付款。下表 12 示出了可以在图 15 的该屏幕 1500 中使用的字段的示例。一般来说,选择的付款方式被以高亮标示 (1502) 且进度条 (1504) 以图形的方式指示发生的处理事件。涉及的总计也可以显示 (1506)。如果付款被拒绝,例如如果信用卡核查不允许顾客再花钱,则会出现错误消息。

[0146] 表 12

[0147]

图例	项	描述
1502	付款方式图片	用户选择的付款方式的图片
1504	付款进度条	视觉上显示交易进度
1506	总计	正处理的订单包括送

[0148]

		货的总费用
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[0149] 最后,指示付款结果的窗可以显示给顾客,且图 16 中提供了这个的示例 1600。表

13 示出了可以包括在屏幕上的字段的简介。交易成功的通知 (A) 被指示。发生交易的商店的名称被显示 (B) 且可以邀请 (C) 客户端将其自己添加到邮寄清单以用于使用之前提供的电子邮件地址进一步将购物信息提供给他们。用户点击“结束”键以返回到主屏幕。如果需要可以打印小票,或者可以将副本通过电子邮件发到客户端的之前提供的地址。

[0150] 表 13

[0151]

图例	项	描述
1602	电子邮件地址	在联系信息中输入的用户电子邮件地址
1604	商店名称	用户进行购买的商店名称
1606	订阅	实现用户订阅
1608	结束键	当点击时进入到主屏幕: • 如果用户已经选择 Yes 则订阅, 订阅过程开始
1610	订单完成	
1612	总计	正购买的订单包括送货的总费用

[0152] 示出的示例仅是交互式信息服务亭和相关联的软件的一个变形。通用可以使用其他变形。

[0153] 如所述的, 语言翻译模块是本发明的优选实施方式。此外, 可以给有视力或听力障碍的顾客提供服务。这能够涉及用于在屏幕上扩大显示的详情的尺寸的键。耳机插口能够配置给屏幕以使得顾客能够连接耳机, 还带有音量控制, 以在需要时允许任意语音信息或通告更大声地播放。用于允许整合听力辅助的功能也是可能的。用于使得显示在每个屏幕上的文本朗读给用户的设施也是一种选择, 使用现有的软件来实现这个功能。

[0154] 如进一步优选的选择, 该系统可以给顾客提供使用该显示器的指导。该指导可以是解释信息服务亭的功能的视频, 或者个别短视频可以显示解释每个窗口或功能。这些指导可以使用窗口上的“帮助”控制或经由分开的键或系统被触发。

[0155] 另一优选选择是经由显示器提供关于信息服务亭相关产品的指导或信息。例如,

当购买炊具时,在购物过程的最后,可以提供简短演示以告诉顾客如何使用,或清洗或保养炊具,这只是一些示例。还可以向顾客显示关于产品的一般性指导或广告。

[0156] 作为另一个优选选择,可以有在显示器提供的给购物助理的指导。这些类型的指导可以涉及使用隐藏控制,或安全使能控制。可替换地,当每个购物助理输入其名字标识信息时可以使用这些指导。否则,这些指导可以只在包含信息服务亭的商店地址对顾客关闭时才可用。这些指导的目的是在信息服务亭的显示器上给销售助理培训产品。关于这类产品或新型号的信息能够被提供给销售人员。更新销售人员的产品知识的目的能够通过使用交互来增强,其因此例如关于产品的单选题测试能够被提供以测试其知识。如果销售人员使用其标识信息登录到数据库,则能够存储测试结果,且奖金或奖励能够给予例如学得最好的员工。

[0157] 该系统的第三个特征是在信息服务亭中使用的界面到数据库的连接。如上所述在屏幕上显示的关于产品的所有信息被保存在数据库。可以在每个信息服务亭的单独计算机单元上本地维护数据库。但是最优选地是数据库是集中式的,且信息服务亭经由通信连线例如通过因特网连接到数据库。从顾客获取的数据也被添加并存储到数据库。

[0158] 可以使用任意合适的数据库以及软件以管理并维护数据库。使用常规方式产生的软件程序管理数据的访问、安全、更新或添加或删除。每个单独的数据库优选地使用相同的架构,但是一些类型的产品可以批准可以不适用于基础系统的额外或特殊特征,在该情况中可以维护稍微不同架构的变化。

[0159] 每个信息服务亭的品牌所有者和零售商的中央数据库是优选的。但是,如果看重安全性等,则可以使用组合来自不同品牌和零售商的数据。但是建议为共同信息服务亭的产品提供保存特定品牌所有者的数据的单独数据库。

[0160] 中央数据库系统允许在本发明的信息服务亭中显示的产品目录更新容易且快速。该数据库优选地还管理提供给每个信息服务亭的样品以及使用的引导标示和广告。如果品牌所有者想要通过添加新型号或将一季的商品替换成另一季来更新其产品目录,则这能够使用保存在数据库中的信息来铺开。该新样品和引导标示能够使用数据库中的信息被预定,编入目录并运送到每个位置,且一旦每个位置中的销售助理使用触摸屏通告这些样品已经显示给顾客,则能够立即切换到该产品目录。销售人员的指导功能也可以用于向销售人员显示例如如何更新并安排新样品和引导标示。

[0161] 数据库还保存顾客已经输入的详情。以及使用常规记账过程来处理给供应商、零售商和运货商的支付分配,该数据源能够被挖掘以帮助销售工作。

[0162] 中央数据库还可以用于将信息服务亭分组成类别,并改变满足指定标准的这些群组的产品价格。例如,当信息服务亭的当地天气是冷且下雨时,出售划船用品的信息服务器可以给与划船用品的折扣。

[0163] 本发明的信息服务亭系统可以由其用在零售场所以将很少购买的物品存储在出售这些产品的商店中。例如卖酒商店出售流行牌子的红酒和啤酒。信息服务亭能够被提供链接到持有稀少且昂贵的红酒的仓库。这样的红酒对于店主存这种货来说是不经济的,因为它们的需求低,且红酒如果没有保存在正确的环境条件中会变质。想要购买这些稀少且昂贵的红酒的稀少顾客能够从信息服务亭这样做,信息服务亭链接到仓库,红酒能够从该仓库派送到每个顾客。而接收的付款的部分可以被提供给零售商以允许通过提供在他们位

置的信息服务亭而获利。

[0164] 可替换地,信息服务亭系统的另一优选使用是将在出售窄范围的商品的商店可以购买的商品扩展到店主不想进货但是他们的顾客可能希望与顾客从该商店得到的主产品一起购买的的其他关联的商品。例如,在卧室家具店经由信息服务亭提供创伤亚麻制品就是这样。再次,从每个信息服务亭购买的一定金钱能够反馈给店主。

[0165] 在进一步实施方式中,零售商能够容易提供物品或一组物品的折扣。更具体地,零售商能够对产品进行打折以帮助销售结束由此产品或一组产品可以被出售,通过指定百分比来设定类别或所有下面的子类别的折扣,通过指定的百分比设定一类别或所有下面的子类别的附件的折扣,通过核心产品和 / 或附件的百分比或现金数来设定在用户物品级的折扣,设定核心产品和附件的新建议零售产品量,显示或隐藏产品或类别,以及设定允许的限制搜索的过滤器。

[0166] 转到图 17,示出了示例屏幕 1700,其显示一组核心产品,其中可能的是同时将折扣指定给一个或多个产品。在图 17A 示出了确定屏幕的示例屏幕 1702,其中用户已经使用的平价 10%的折扣到一类的产品且系统要求确认该组折扣应当应用到该类别的所有产品。

[0167] 类似地,在图 18 和 18A 分别示出了附件和其他折扣产品的类似屏幕 1800 和 1802 的示例。

[0168] 转到图 19,示出了允许用户列出“禁用”产品清单的屏幕 1900 的示例。这些是系统用户看不到的产品。

[0169] 现在转到图 20,示出了系统屏幕 2000 的示例,其允许用户与员工交互以接收进一步的折扣。该系统提供特定使用,其中在零售环境中,零售店希望保证某形式的与实体销售人员的交互的安全以由此尝试创建与顾客的更密切关系。换句话说,系统提供允许销售人员和用户 / 顾客交互的双界面。

[0170] 转到图 20,示出了登录屏幕 2000 的示例,由此零售店的员工可以登录到该系统。

[0171] 在图 21,示出了示例屏幕 2100,其中员工能够察看顾客选择的物品。

[0172] 在图 22,示出了示例屏幕 2200,员工然后可以添加折扣或修改物品的价格以产生新的最终价格。

[0173] 现在参考图 23,示出了“智能购物筐”的界面的示例屏幕 2300,其允许销售人员(即,零售商员工)察看未完成的现场购物篮的各种方面。在本说明书的上下文中,术语“智能购物筐”用作这里描述的实施方式的描述符。可以理解该术语被本申请人用作商标并在说明书的上下文中使用该术语不暗示准许使用该术语来确定结合相似功能的系统、方法等的其他类似实施方式。在该实施方式的上下文中,术语“现场”指的是购物篮,其中顾客(或潜在顾客)由于顾客通过将至少一个“物品”(其代表商品和 / 或服务)放置到现场购物篮而已经表示有兴趣购买该商品和 / 或服务但还没有同意或进行到对该商品和 / 或服务付款而当前正在考虑购买。

[0174] 能够在区域 2302 总的看到,零售商被提供有现场购物篮清单(其代表未决和 / 或潜在订单)且能够察看顾客保存和正持有的购物篮的任意一个或多个(现场购物篮的示例在区域 2340 总的示出)。包括在所有未决和 / 或潜在订单 2302 中的是现场还有放弃的购物篮,包括当前打开且顾客正主动添加物品到该购物篮的所有购物篮和看起来顾客不在主动与现场购物篮交互的所有购物篮。以这种方式,零售商能够在顾客浏览信息服务亭时实

时看到顾客的选择,还能够察看顾客似乎已经放弃的订单,这可以产生关于顾客对商品和 / 或服务的兴趣的相关信息。

[0175] 可以理解在该实施方式中,智能购物筐还能够被显示在手持设备上(例如平板计算设备或智能电话)或可以由用户在远程计算系统(例如个人计算机)上经由网站访问。当智能购物筐在手持设备上被使用或经由网站被使用时,设备和 / 或网站可以与信息服务亭通信(经由 Wi-Fi、蓝牙或其他连接)或可以独立地连接到远程服务器(绕开信息服务亭)。这种变化在该实施方式以及这里描述和定义的更宽发明概念的范围内。

[0176] 回到图 23,在区域 2306,示出了一系列“相关联产品”,其潜在地仅给零售商和 / 或销售人员可察看。零售商和 / 或销售人员可以察看附件的成本价格并可以将附件以折扣价或以免费提供给顾客以吸引顾客完成出售。该过程可以作为“面对面”协商的部分发生(即,顾客和销售人员都位于信息服务亭附近),或其可以作为“虚拟”协商发生(即,顾客和销售人员位于各自的远程设备,例如平板计算系统、智能电话和 / 或计算系统 / 终端)。

[0177] 换句话说,零售商和 / 或销售人员通过实时监视顾客决定可以预测顾客的行为并可以提供吸引顾客购买物品的激励。以这种方式,可以提供混合销售方法和系统,其中顾客主要与电子界面交互,但是现场销售人员能够监视该销售过程并使用传统销售技术来经由图 23 的界面远程或亲自完成与顾客的销售。

[0178] 图 24 的界面 2400 促进该销售过程的完成。在图 24,示出了屏幕 2400,其中零售商可以察看产品的零售价格 2402 并还可以察看在 2404 笼统示出的竞争对手的价格。常规地,这允许零售商浏览在因特网上可获得的产品的其他价格并然后相应地手动调整价格,并使得显示给顾客的价格更诱人。

[0179] 在可替换实施方式中,这种价格调整可以通过使用合适的算法自动执行。此外,在 2406,示出了消息发送功能,其允许零售商联系顾客并告知顾客价格已经降低以匹配竞争对手的价格。因此消息发送界面用于吸引顾客保持并完成该购买。再次,这演示了使用混合销售技术,这允许零售商给顾客提供电子“低压力”销售环境,同时还允许销售人员干预并引导该销售过程以结束该销售。这样,该界面和混合模型结合在线销售入口和传统的先下“面对面”销售技术的最佳元素。

[0180] 转到图 25,示出了在 2500 的供应商竞争行为,其能够被生成供零售商察看。该报告突出供应商产品已经打折以满足市场定价和安全销售需要的折扣的现金数的实例的次数。这样,零售商能够使用这种信息来确定定价结构是否是正确的或识别特定的竞争对手。

[0181] 现在参考图 26A 至 26P,示出了用于在智能电话上使用的用户(即顾客)界面。通过图 26A 至 26P 笼统示出的顾客界面提供能够被顾客容易接入以察看的现场购物筐。图 26A 至 26P 中示出的智能电话应用可以视为在本说明书中更一般描述的界面的“扩展”。

[0182] 也就是,在图 26A 至 26P 的界面可以由顾客独立于信息服务亭来使用,或可替换地可以结合信息服务亭使用。可以从在商店的信息服务亭创建智能购物筐或从零售商的网站创建该智能购物筐。一旦创建了智能购物筐,则其可用且能在任意事件任意其他设备上重新打开。

[0183] 例如,零售商可以鼓励顾客通过使用网站创建购物筐(而不是在商店的信息服务亭)。也就是说,顾客可以在家(商店之外)执行一些初步购物以缩小他们感兴趣的产品和服务,并然后可以去商店获得关于该产品和 / 或服务的更多信息。当顾客进入商店时,他们

可以与信息服务亭上的界面无缝交互。这通过分配唯一标识码给顾客创建的每个购物筐来发生。该唯一标识码由信息服务亭使用以在顾客与信息服务亭或另一设备（与创建购物筐的设备分开的）交互时立即识别相关的购物筐。

[0184] 处于安全原因，顾客还可以需要输入进一步的唯一标识符，例如电子邮件地址或电话号码，以防止顾客偶然访问不正确的购物筐（由于例如键入不正确的购物筐号）。当顾客登录到信息服务亭时，零售商可以立即被告知顾客现在人在商店；且该信息可以用于提供报价、折扣、价格更改、物品没货和关于当前购物筐选择的任意其他消息的通知。再次，提供这种信息用于帮助销售结束。

[0185] 购物筐还包括多个附加特征，其在下面列出并参考图 26A 至 26P 被描述：

[0186] 购物筐标识——当从信息服务亭或网站创建购物筐时，其被分配整合供应商码的购物筐号，由此如果其在包含多个供应商的零售商站点上，则该购物筐能够关联到顾客和该供应商。如图 26A 中所示，为了接入该购物筐，顾客必须输入唯一顾客标识符 2602，其可以是电子邮件地址或电话号。

[0187] 登录屏幕——初始地，购物筐通过链接接入，该链接在从是购物筐的起源的网站或信息服务亭创建购物筐时被发送。一旦该链接被激活，该购物筐在登录屏幕被打开。为了重新输入存在的购物筐，顾客输入零售商智能购物筐网站的网页地址并然后使用其唯一认证（例如电子邮件地址和电话号码）登录，如在图 26C 的 2606 所示，这将顾客引到他们当前在该零售商有的购物筐清单，如在图 26D 的 2608 所示。

[0188] 通知——在任何时候，零售商（生成购物筐的初始信息服务亭或网站的所有者）能够直接向购物筐，或顾客初始提供的移动电话号码（经由 SMS）或电子邮件发送报价、折扣、价格更改、未完成无货或关于或不关于当前购物筐选择的任意其他消息的通知，如在图 26B 的 2604 所示。

[0189] 购物车察看——购物筐选择能够经由多种不同格式被察看，例如滑动、滚动或索引卡等（取决于产品类别的适用性），如在图 26E 的 2610 示出。可替换地，整个目录能够被访问以添加之前没考虑的产品。

[0190] 产品察看——个别产品能够被察看且变量，例如尺寸或颜色能被更改，如在图 26F 的 2612 示出。

[0191] 产品察看中间页，附件——从产品页的顶部向下滚动到显示与该产品相关联的所有附件（不仅仅是之前选择的），如在图 26G 的 2614 所示。附件能够被添加或之前选择的附件能够被删除。

[0192] 产品察看底页，竞争价格保证（可选）——一旦在任意上述方式创建了智能购物筐，该智能购物筐能够浏览购物筐中商品的其他因特网价格。这些可以在产品察看页的底部被看到，如在图 26H 的 2616 所示。零售商可以设定商业规则以匹配最低竞争价格或任何其他商业规则（如果合适）。

[0193] 自动折扣报价——通过多种零售商定义的规则，一旦达到预定的毛利或其他考量的购物筐价值，则零售商可以提供折扣。这些报价还可以通过浏览竞争对手的价格获取的信息来触发。让顾客经由信息服务亭上的弹窗，经由其移动智能购物筐或经由 SMS 或电子邮件知道该新折扣或促销报价。

[0194] 检查市场价格刷新——智能购物筐能够被设置自动定期检查购物筐中的商品的

市场价格。在顾客要确认购买时,他们可以使用该检查市场价格键来刷新列出的当前价格,如在图 26I 的 2618 所示。

[0195] 付款确认购物车——一旦顾客决定完成购买,他们能够检查通过该确认购物车屏幕检查其最终选择,如在图 26J 的 2620 所示。产品使用其相关联的选择的类别被分组。向下滚动显示使用已经占据的任何折扣或报价的总应付款,如在图 26K 的 2622 所示。

[0196] 联系和发送信息——顾客然后开始在递送信息屏幕填入相关信息,如在图 26L 的 2624 示出。如果用户之前已经输入过信息,则信息将被自动填入,具有用于重写所有或一些字段的选项。

[0197] 送货方式——能够从送货屏幕选择用于送货和递送的各种选项,如在图 26M 的 2626 示出。

[0198] 付款方式——付款选项通过付款方式屏幕可用,如在图 26N 的 2628 所示。这可以包括用于店内购物筐交易的“柜台支付”选项。

[0199] 寻路器——智能购物筐能够创建“训练器”建筑平面图供顾客用于在实体店或购物中心自选购物筐中的商品(如在图 26O 的 2630 所示),通过打印地图、电子地图或语音方向自动显示。这能够在商店信息服务亭或网站或移动手持设备上被创建,如在图 26P 的 2632 所示。其通过产品页上的察看商店内地图键被激活且还能够告诉你通过该商店获得你购物筐/购物清单中的商品。

[0200] 我的智能购物筐——是顾客创建的智能购物筐且不关联到任意一个零售商。顾客能够输入来自任意网上商店或商店组合的任意产品。

[0201] 竞争价格保证——当零售商持有智能购物筐时,一旦该购物筐被创建,其能够定期自动浏览该购物筐中的商品的其他因特网价格。其然后能够告示顾客优质报价的可用性和/或自动将已有的物品替换成新发现的更有竞争力定价的物品。

[0202] 邀请竞价——我的智能购物筐能够识别购物筐中的商品的卖家并通知他们要求的递送时间和位置以及当前“最佳价格”。而卖家能够竞价购物筐中的商品或个别物品。

[0203] 在这件事上,员工和顾客可以交互且员工然后可以给顾客提供进一步的建议和/或将其他产品“增效”给顾客。这样,该零售系统的实施方式提供混合零售系统,其将传统的“销售人员-客户”关系与在线零售模式混合。

[0204] 优势和行业适用性

[0205] 本发明能够用于零售行业或对顾客与销售人员之间的交互有要求的任意其他行业。

[0206] 在至少一个实施方式中,本发明是用于销售例如多种商品和/或服务的产品的零售系统,其中系统涉及组合:实体交互零售信息服务亭与样品的显示相关联,该信息服务亭也连接到存储关于产品的信息的数据库,以及从顾客的交互允许选择产品、购买产品并将该产品运送给顾客。信息服务亭显示的信息和做出购买的顾客的交互往来于数据库系统。产品能够来源与品牌拥有者。可替换地或另外,产品可以来源于零售商。

[0207] 该系统使用在线零售的优点,因为该信息服务亭有用于显示宽种类的商品或服务的数字表示的显示器,该商品或服务然后可供顾客购买。顾客能够浏览或搜索任意或所有这些产品,且他们能够从完全电子维护的目录选择他们想买的任意产品。一旦顾客输入其标识信息并进行付款并记录将商品或服务递送到哪里,则商品然后从仓库被送往顾客。顾

客的察看产品的习惯还能够用于之后的分析以帮助例如产品营销和开发。信息服务亭还能够提供关于产品或品牌所有者的有用信息给顾客以供将来使用。

[0208] 该系统还利用允许顾客看并处理可用于经由信息服务亭出售的产品的至少一些样品。样品展示位于显示并允许购买的触摸屏的附近。让客户审视物品的实体样品可以增加零售的成功。优选地,信息服务亭位于实体零售环境内,例如商店,这给予销售人员接触到潜在客户。这能够增加销售并且还通过使得客户更满意他们买的产品并感到他们已经接收到了足够的个人关注给零售商提供无形收益。这些无形效果通常是在线零售缺少的。

[0209] 该零售信息服务亭与传统购物相比经常占用其位于的商店中更少的地面空间,在传统购物中零售商必须在商品被购买时维持足够的商品供应,否则会损失销售。这有助于成本更低且增加零售利润,或者能够降低零售定价。作为另一选项,零售商可以保留可用于经由信息服务亭购买的产品的库存,且通过直接供应商品给希望立即拥有商品的买家但是允许其他买家在他们不想带走商品的情况下或在实际购买的商品没库存的情况下送货到家来运行混合系统。

[0210] 不像网站,在信息服务亭上显示的范围的产品能够被定制以反映个别零售商选择的出示给其顾客基础的该范围。使用在描述的实施方式中采用的方式,信息服务亭所有者能够在地点定制商品或服务,吸引频繁光顾该地点的这类顾客,并通过从现在的销售助理接收的反馈被指导。

[0211] 实施方式提供的用于在顾客看到特定产品时突出相关联的附件的能力能够促进销售增加。在传统商店中,通常在商店的不同部门找到附件或相关联的产品。使用该实施方式,当选择特定物品时,该系统能够显示其附件,或关联的物品,顾客然后能够同时进行选择。这还让顾客通过例如选择最佳颜色和尺寸来将其附件定制到主产品。在传统商店中,这些附件通常是分开购买的,且顾客经常忘记主产品的细节,且因此不能够找到可买到的最佳附件,或可能根本不可以抽时间来买到匹配的附件。

[0212] 实施方式还帮助降低商店的偷窃,因为在商店不再需要保持大量的库存,因此降低商店偷东西的机会。

[0213] 由于本发明的系统降低空间和资金要求,其使得销售通过新零售分配渠道而产生,该渠道是对传统地在商店内出售的产品的补充。例如,用于出售床上亚麻制品的信息服务亭可以用在床上或家具店。

[0214] 在至少一个实施方式中,本发明提供与在商店显示的库存样品结合使用的用户界面。该零售系统有利地允许顾客触摸并感觉可售产品,然后选择,并如果需要所选产品的附件,通过直观的触摸屏界面进行,等等。在该过程期间可以给顾客提供另外的促销信息或特殊出价或相似的材料。然后进行购买,优选地使用信息服务亭信用卡读卡器或类似方式,其然后优选地生成订单给供应方并然后还可以分配资金给持有账户(holding account)。

[0215] 在包括信息服务亭的实施方式中,该信息服务亭能够一般与宽且各种范围的零售环境相关联,包括各种产品类型。在优选的布置中,每个信息服务亭可以关于来源于品牌所有者的产品,且其位于分开零售商的零售店,尤其是零售相关产品的零售商,但是其他布置也可以应用。例如显示并零售特定品牌的床上亚麻制品的信息服务亭可以位于销售床和卧室家具的零售店铺中。

[0216] 不承诺

[0217] 在本说明书中,除非上下文需要,否则词或其变体“包括”被理解为暗含包含描述的整数或一组整数但不排除任意其他整数或一组整数。

[0218] 本领域技术人员可以理解这里描述的本发明可以进行这里描述的以外的变形和修改。本发明包括所有这些变形和修改。本发明还包括本说明书中涉及的或指明的所有的步骤、特征、公式和化合物(个别是整体),以及包括这些步骤或特征的任意两个或更多的任意和所有组合。

[0219] 这里使用的选择术语的其他定义可以在本发明的具体实施方式中找到并整个说明书中都适用。除非另有定义,这里使用的所有其他科技术语的含义与本发明属于的所属领域的技术人员的通常理解相同。

[0220] 还理解的是当本发明和/或实施方式的方法和系统由计算系统实施或由计算系统部分实施,则可以使用任意合适的计算系统架构。这包括独立计算机、网络计算机和专用计算设备(例如场可编程门阵列)。

[0221] 当在说明书中使用了术语“计算机”、“计算系统”和“计算设备”时,这术语旨在包括用于实施这里描述的发明概念和/或实施方式的计算机硬件的任意合适结构。

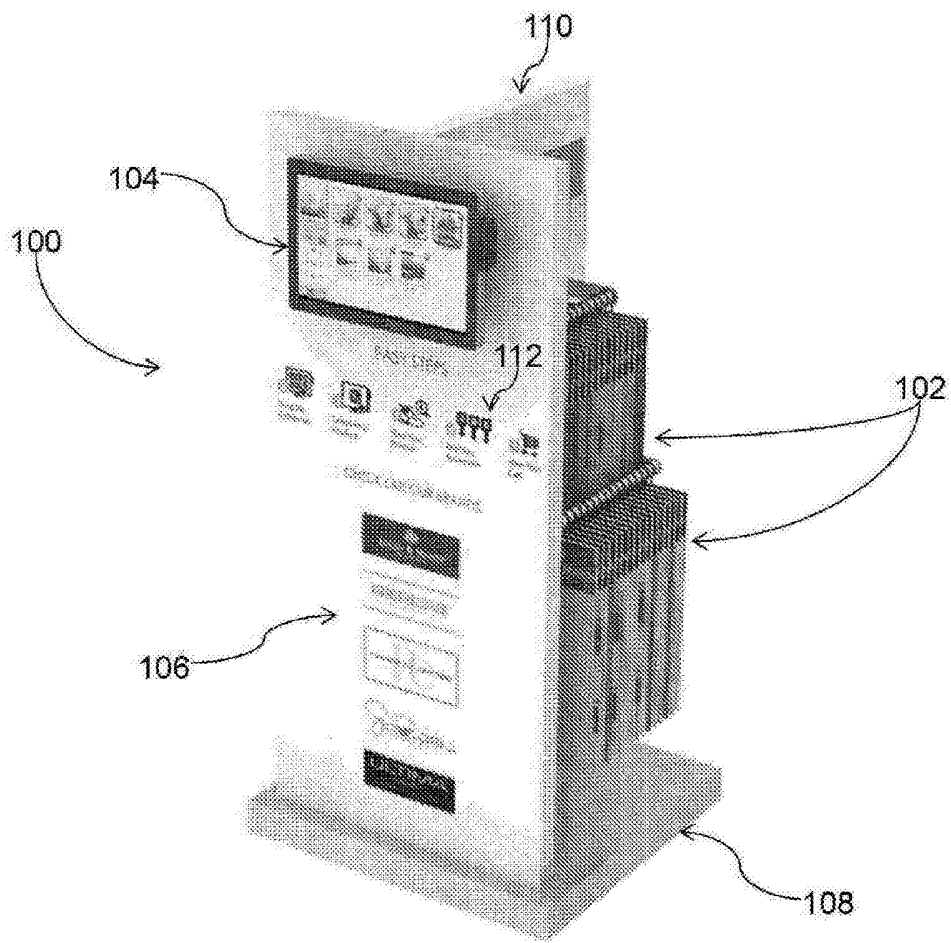


图 1A

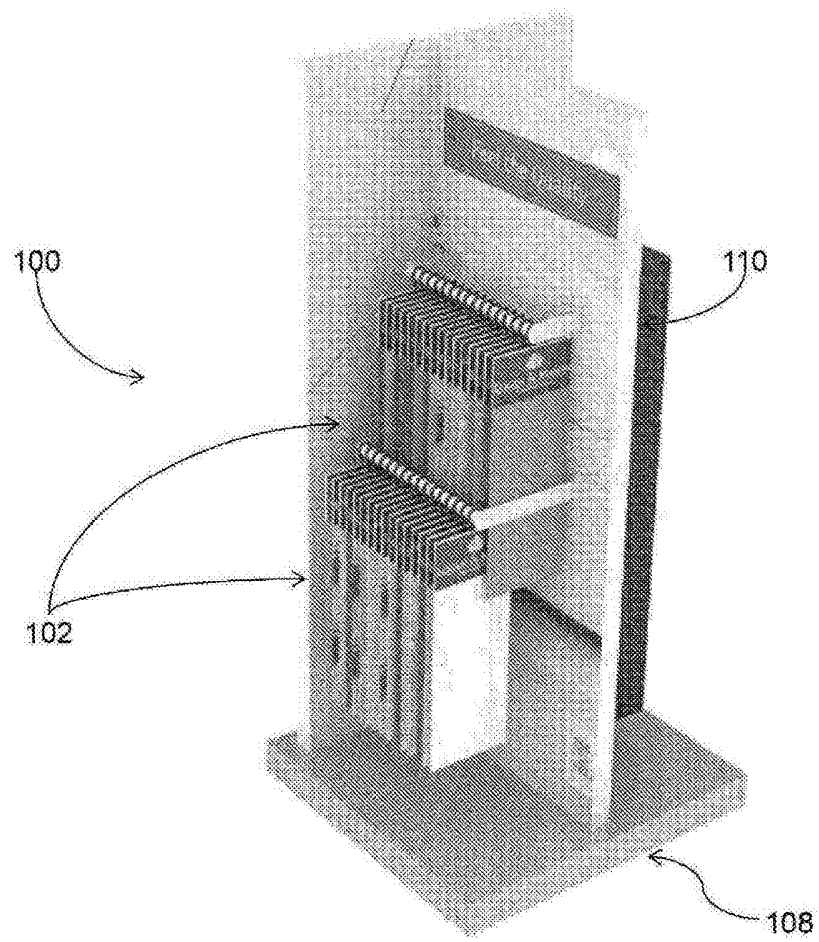


图 1B

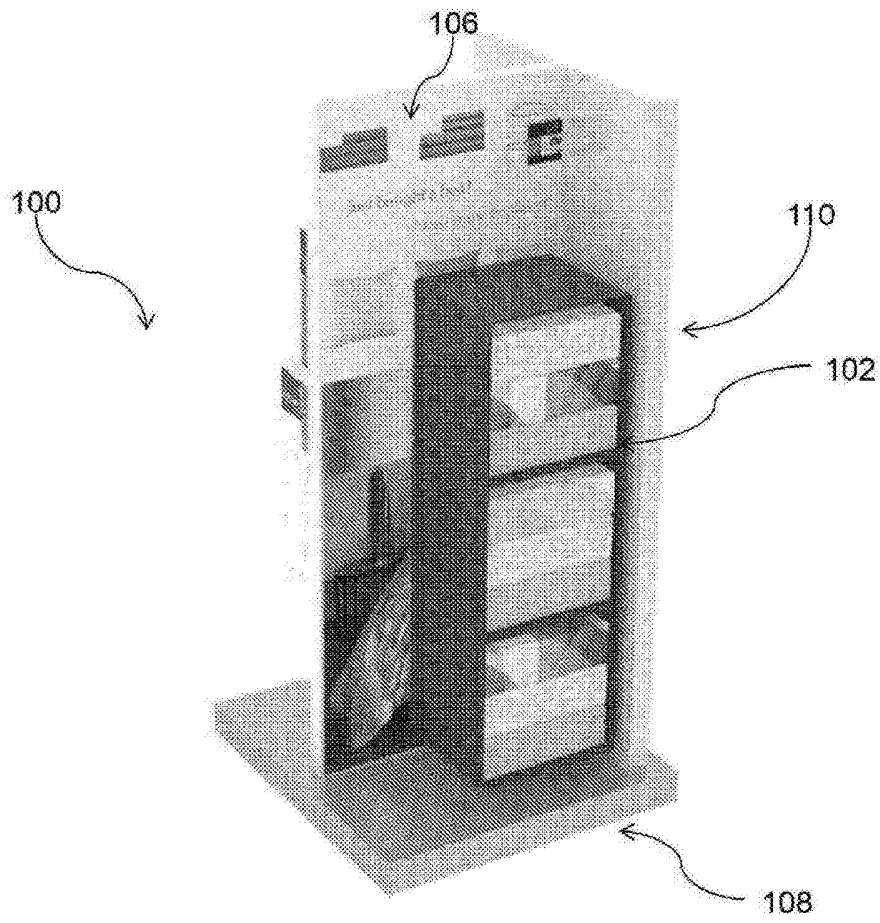


图 1C

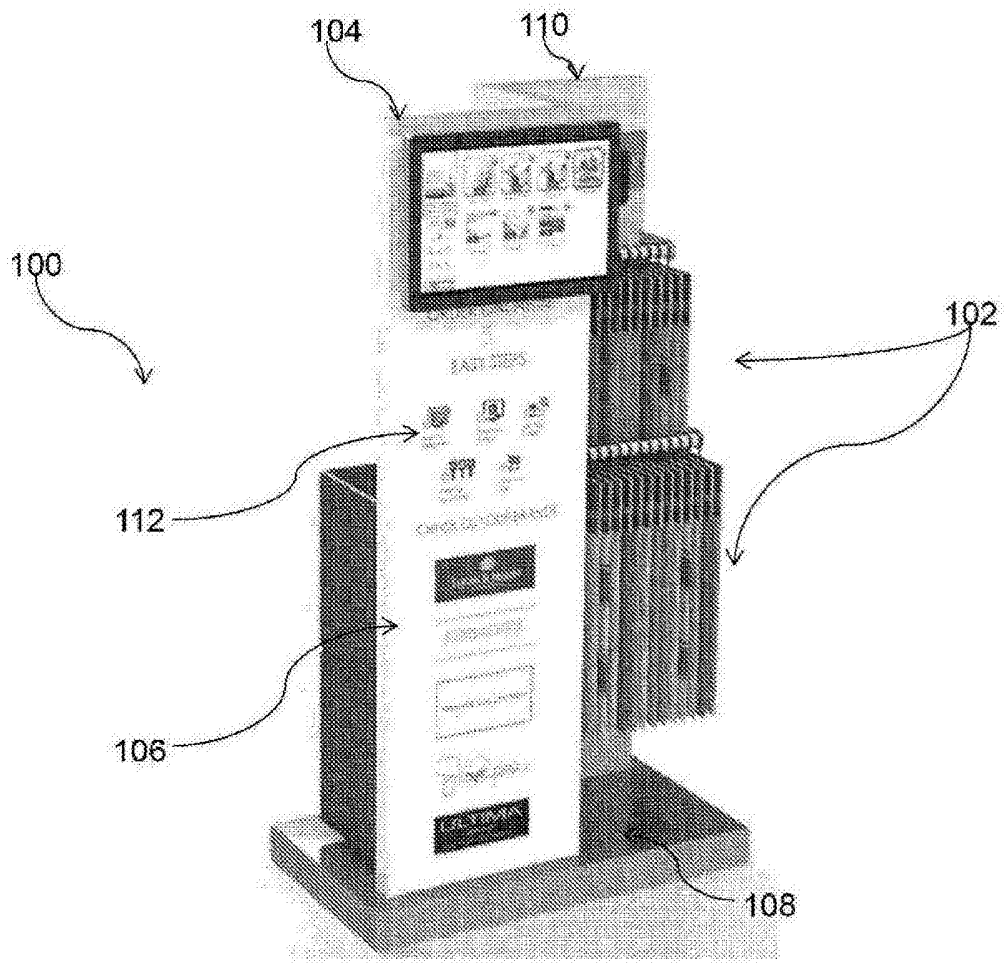


图 2A

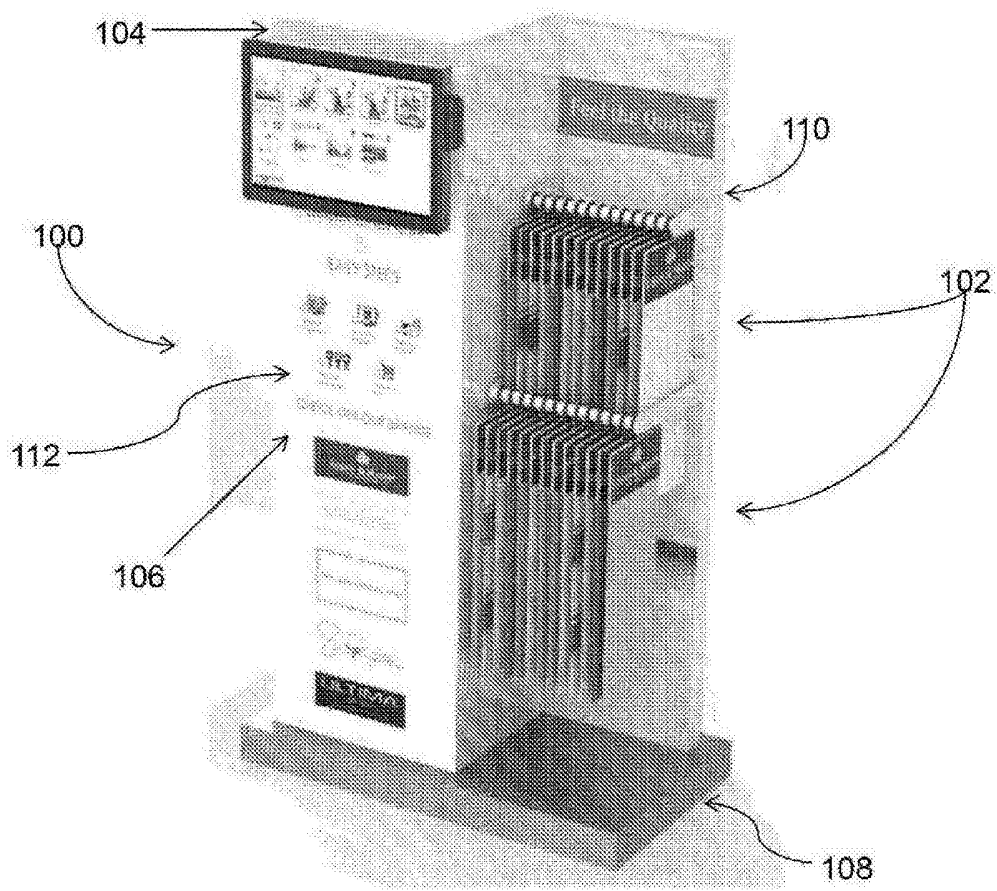


图 2B

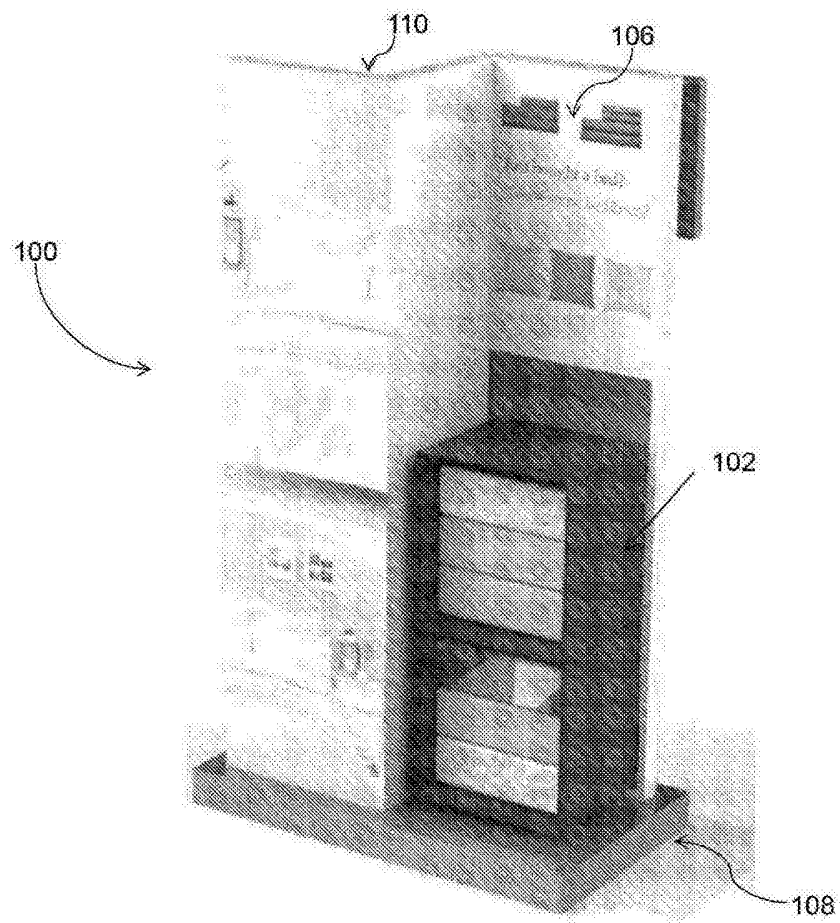


图 2C

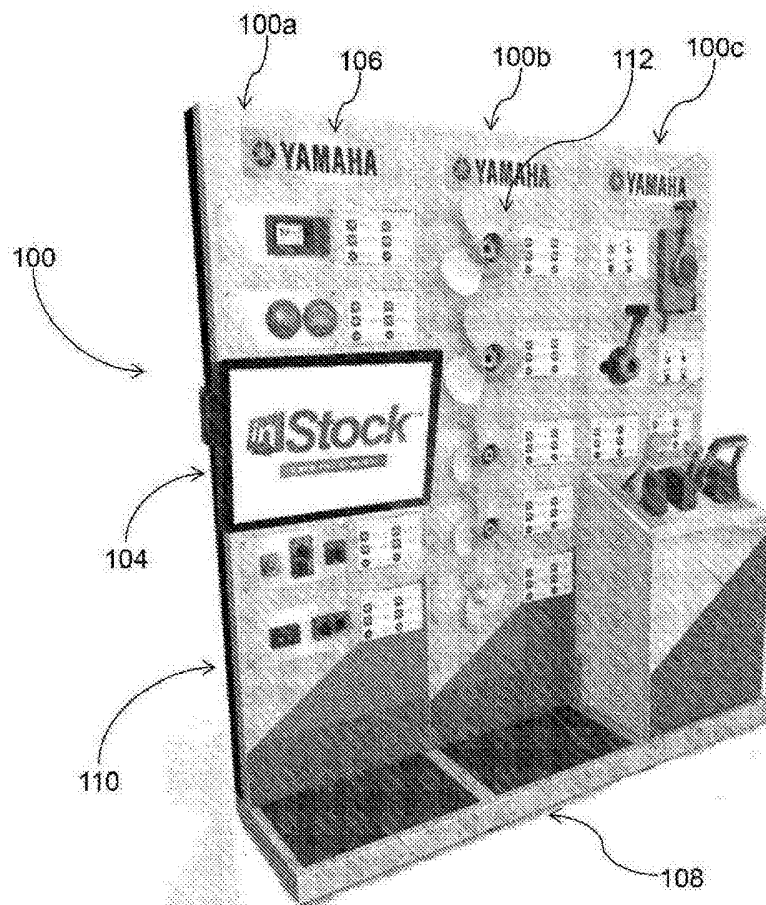


图 3A

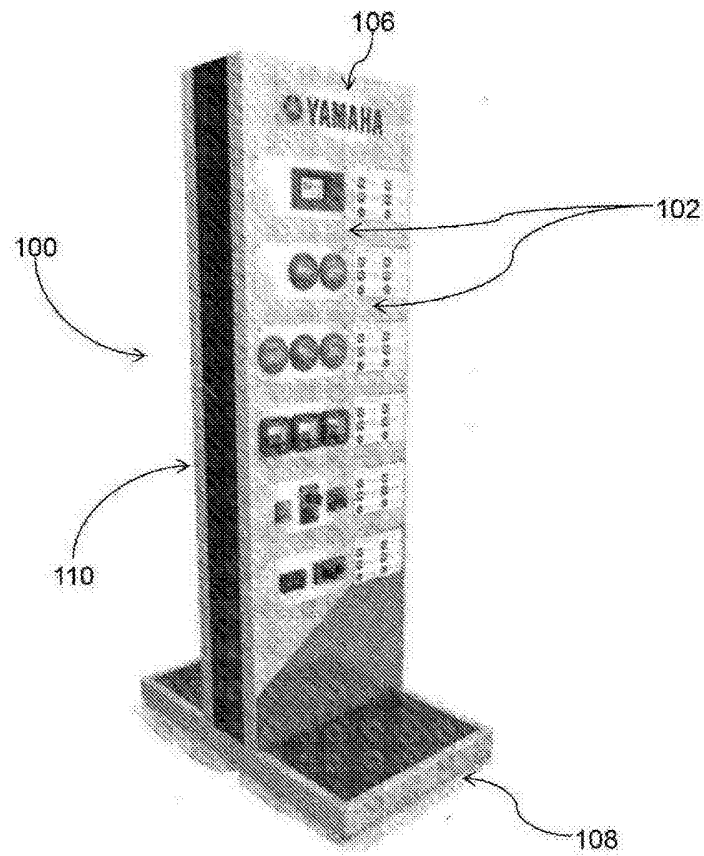


图 3B

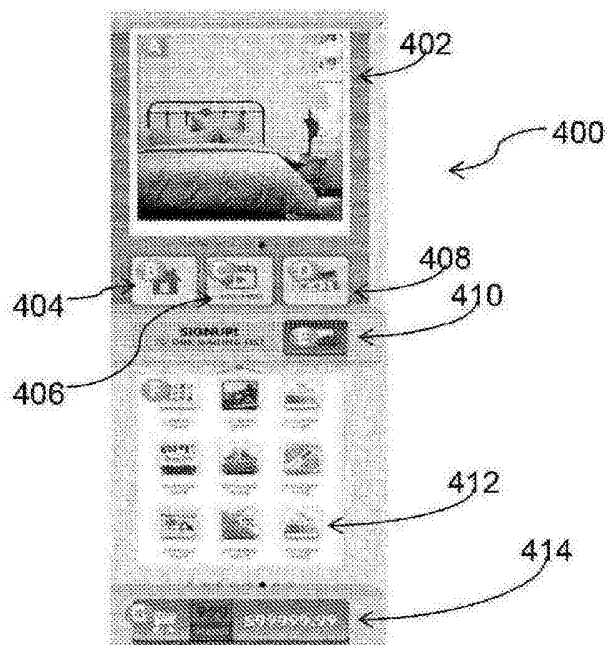


图 4

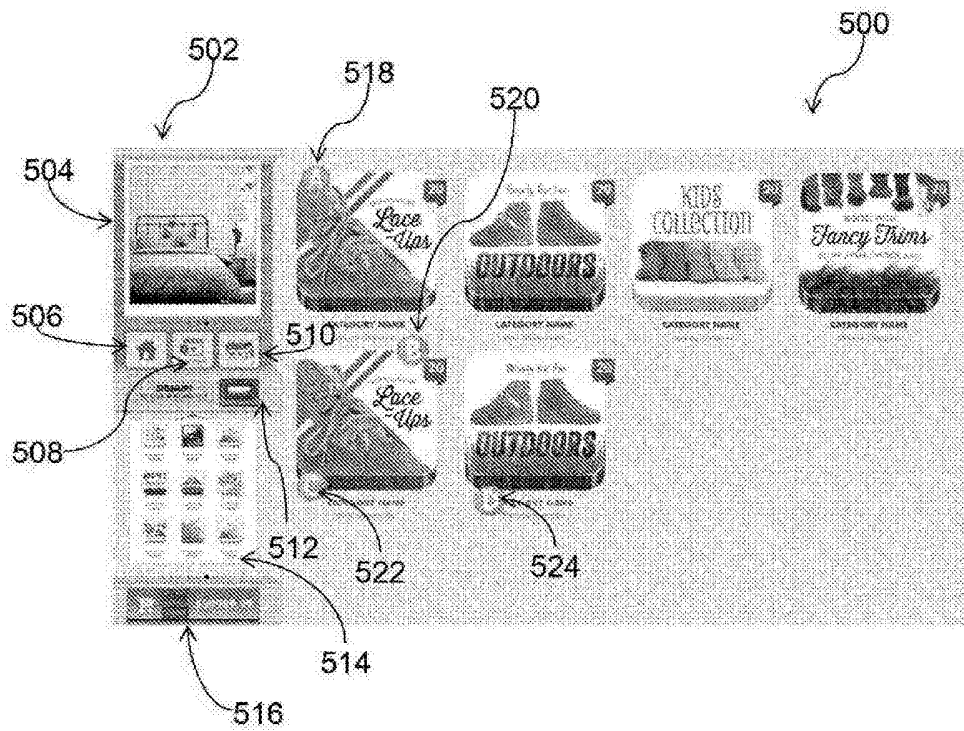


图 5

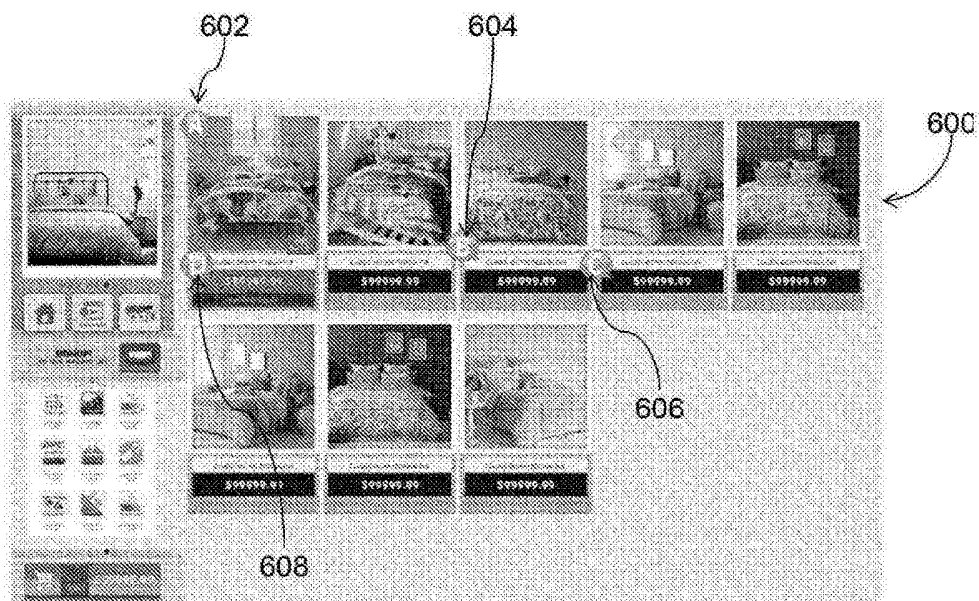


图 6A

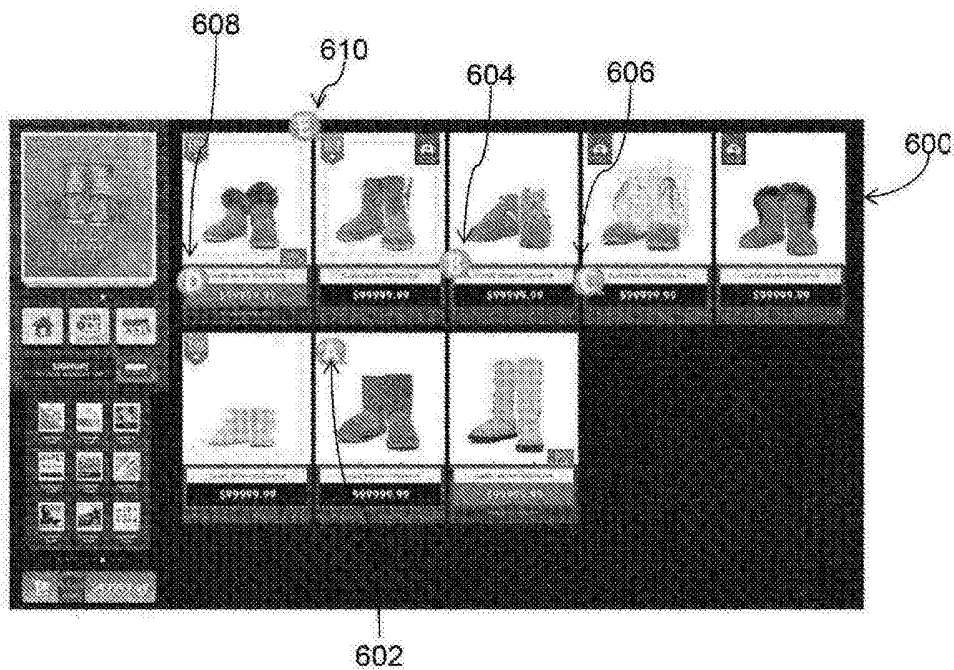


图 6B

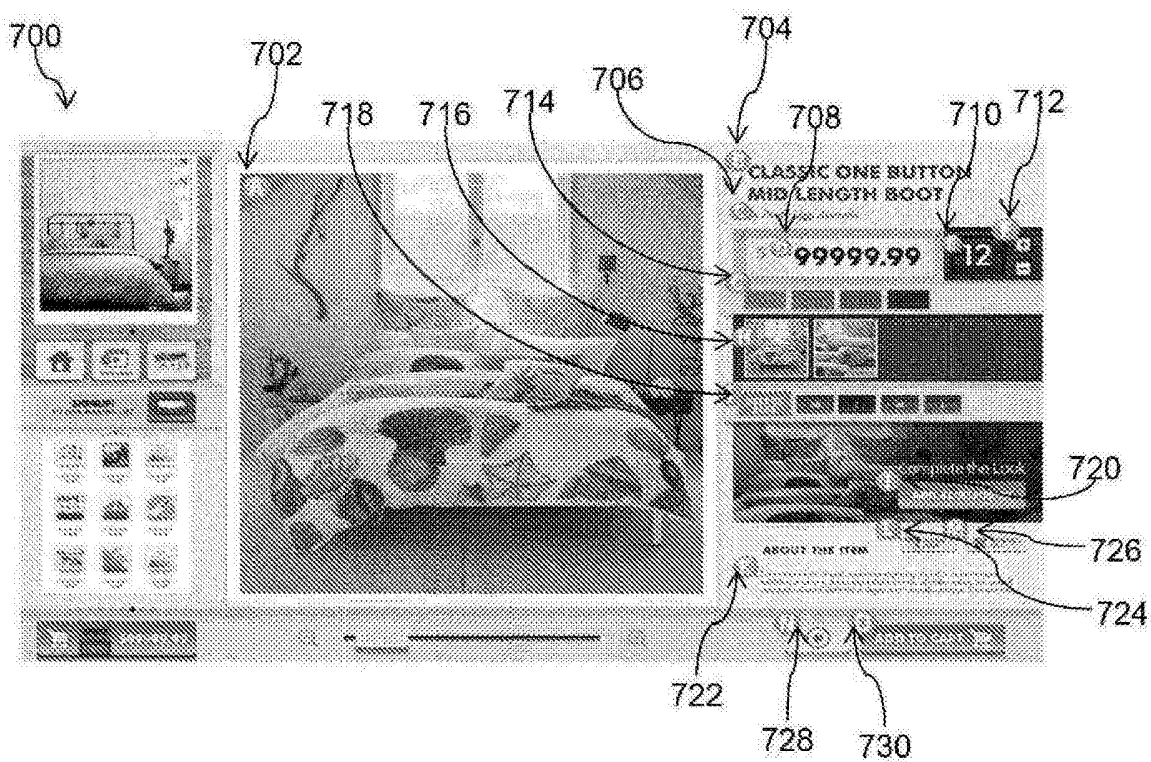


图 7A

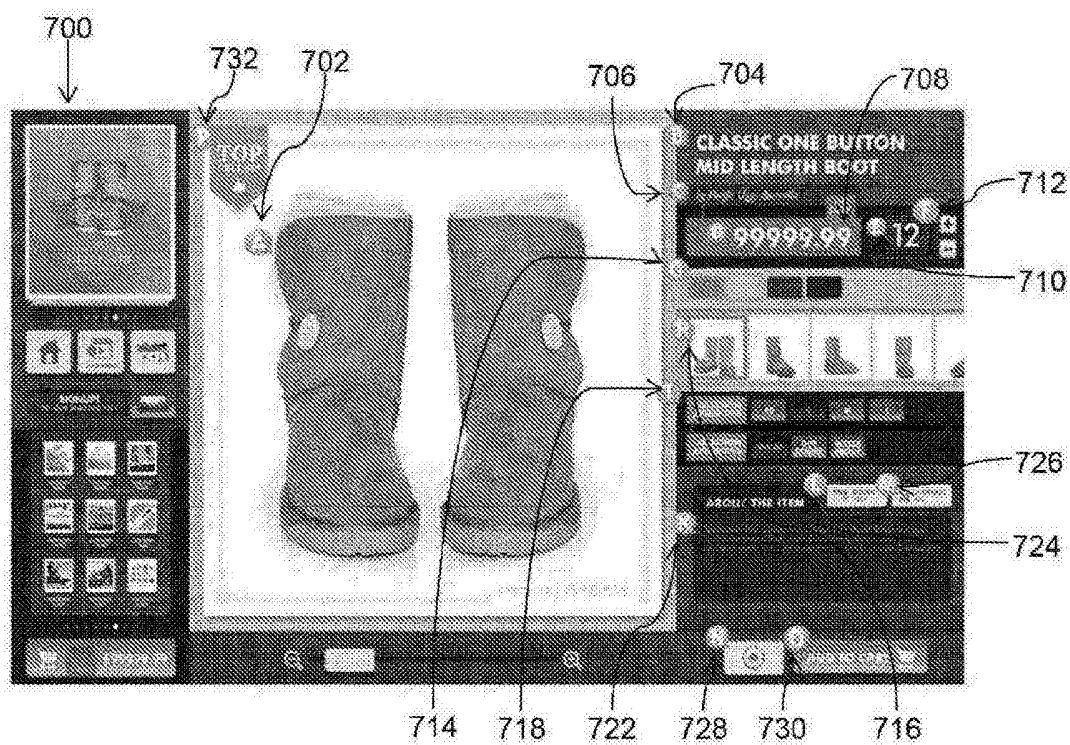


图 7B

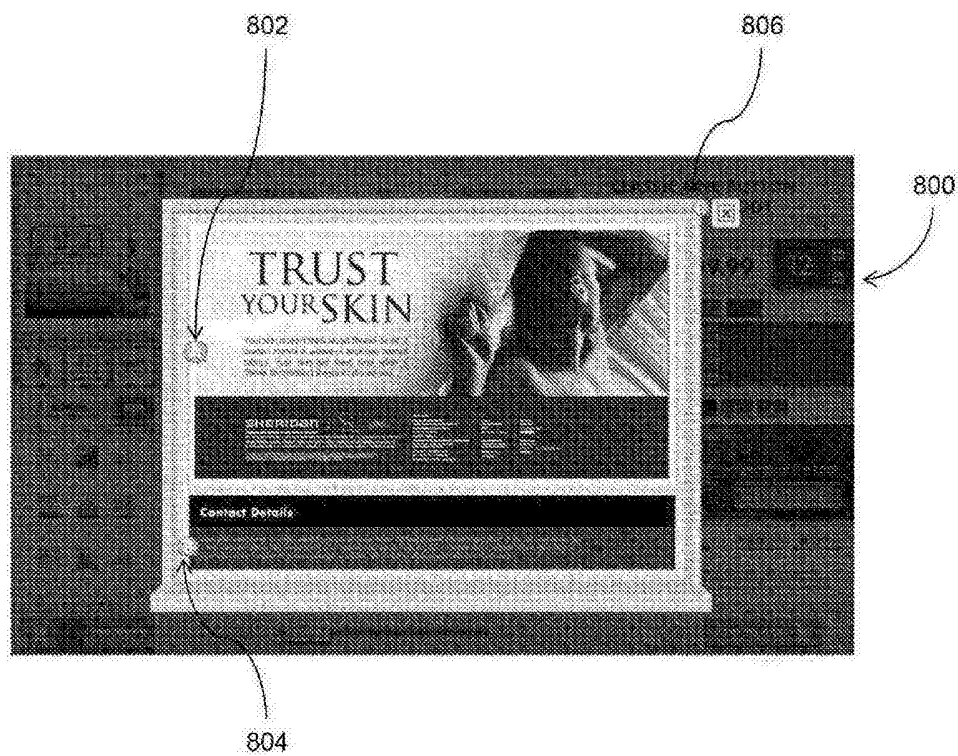


图 8A

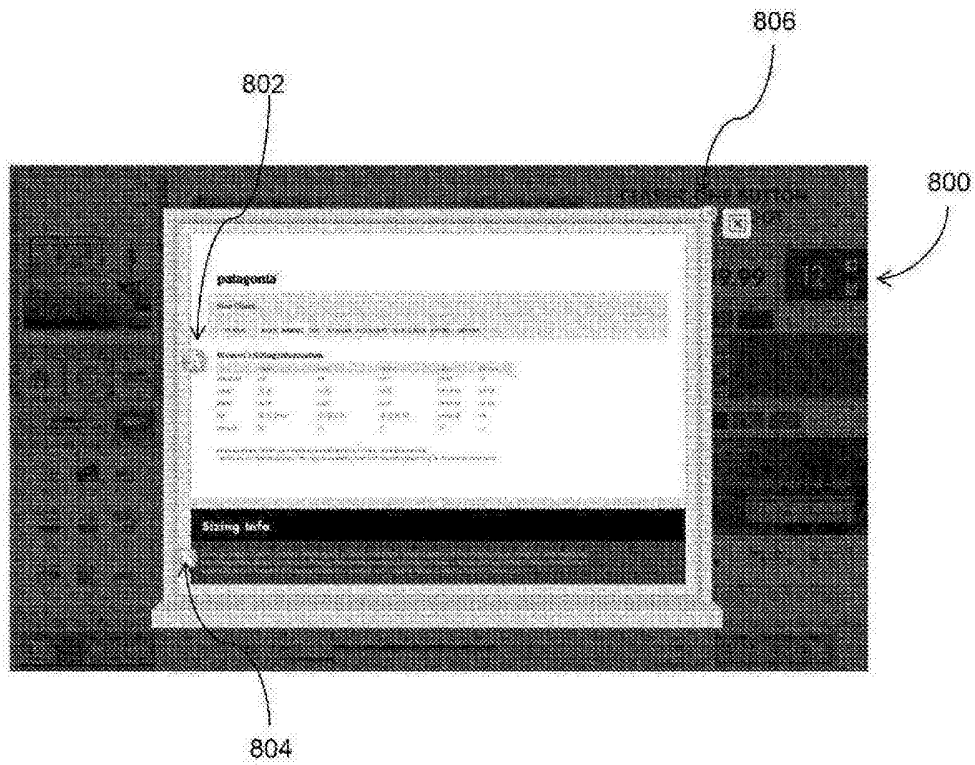


图 8B

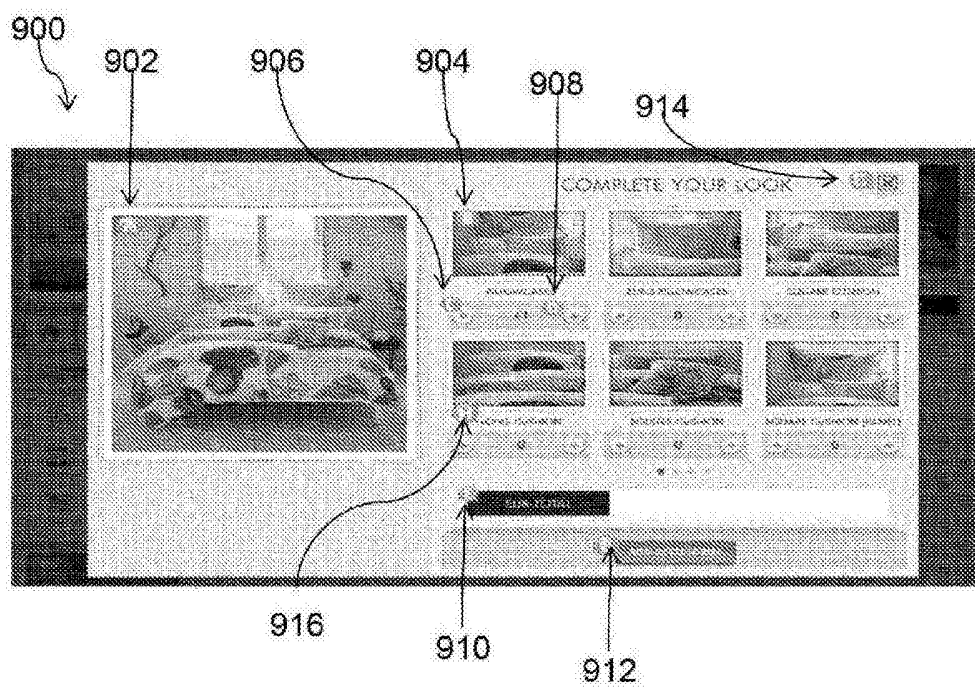


图 9

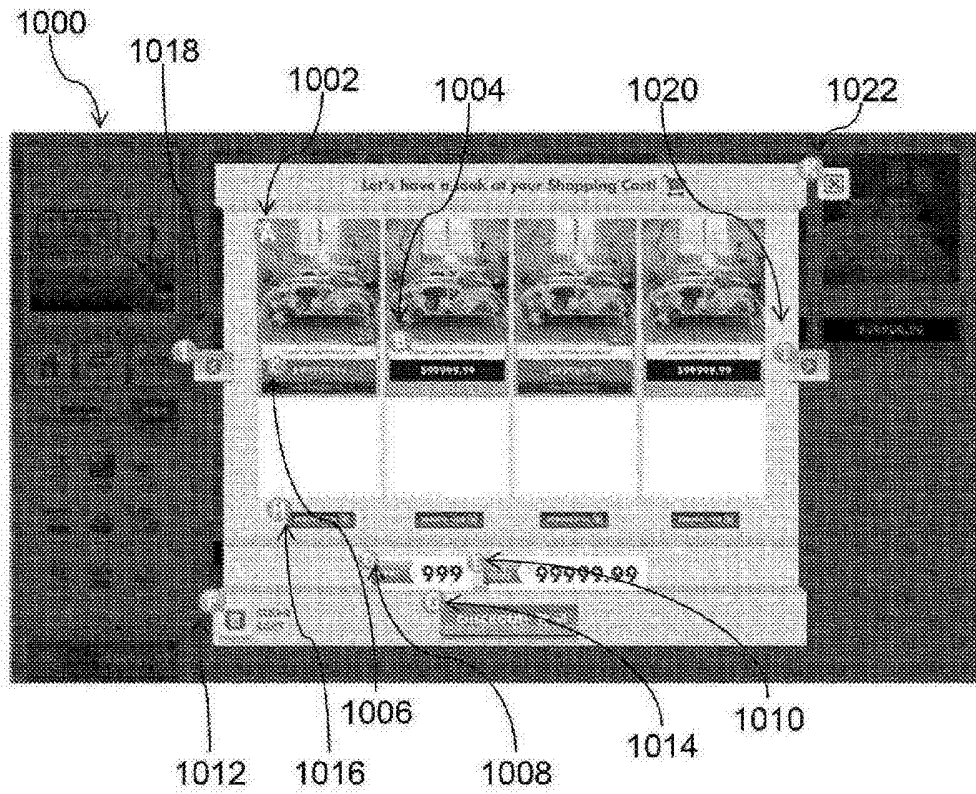


图 10A

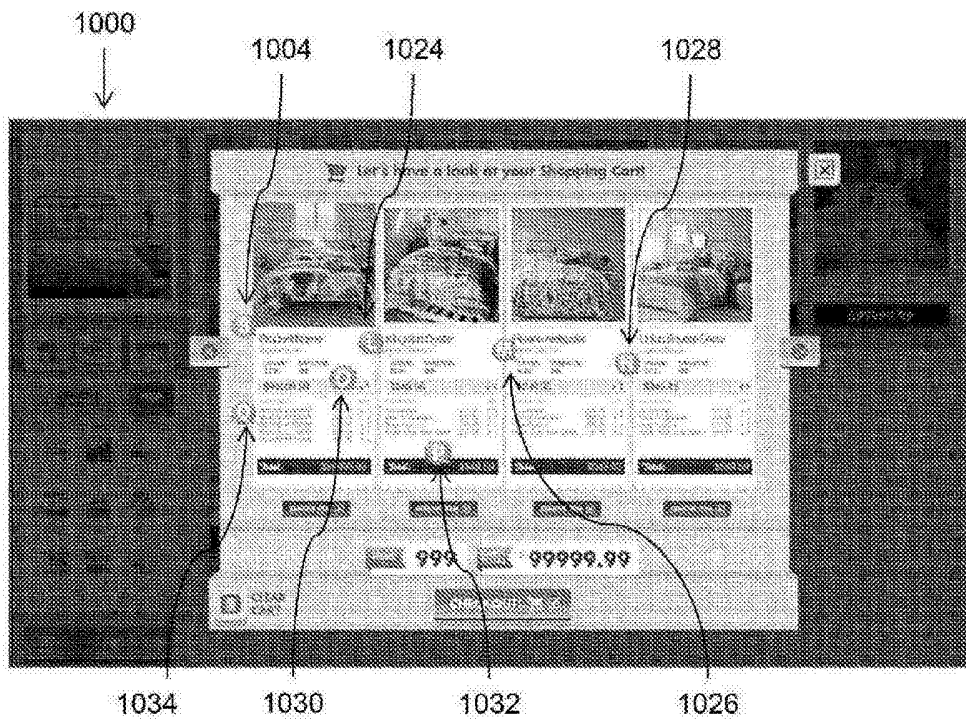


图 10B

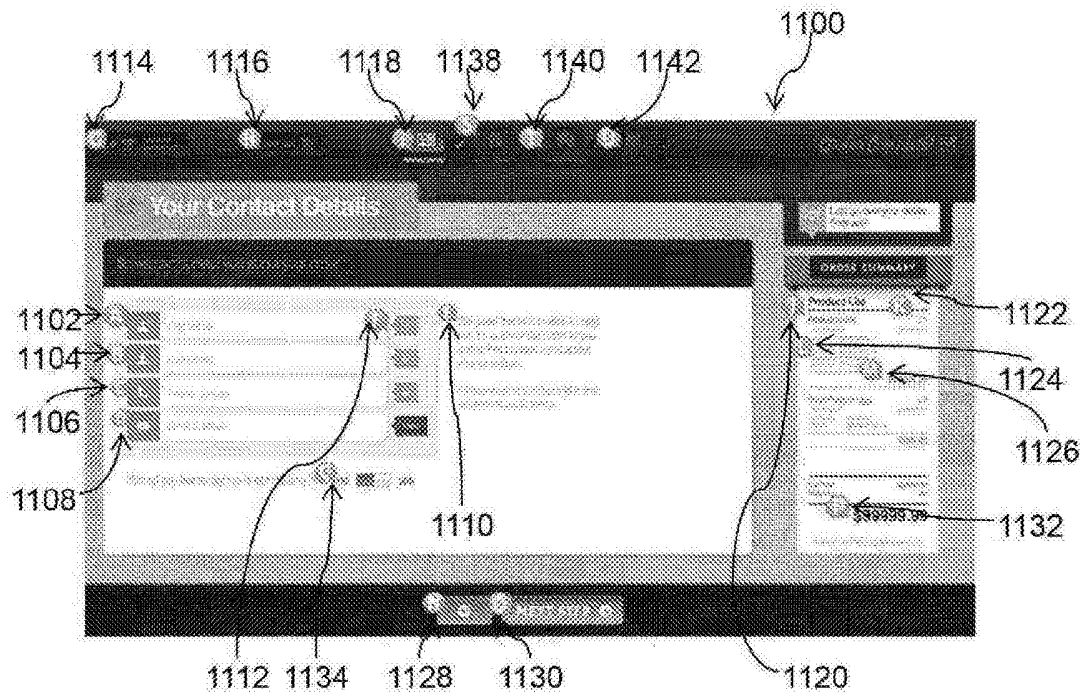


图 11A

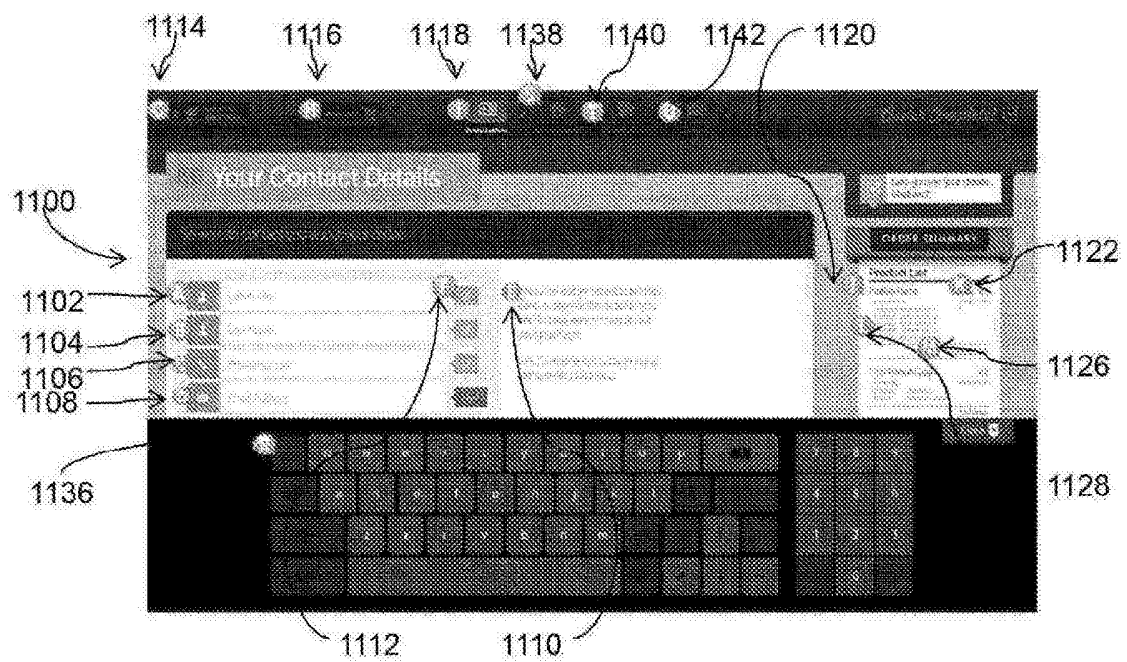


图 11B

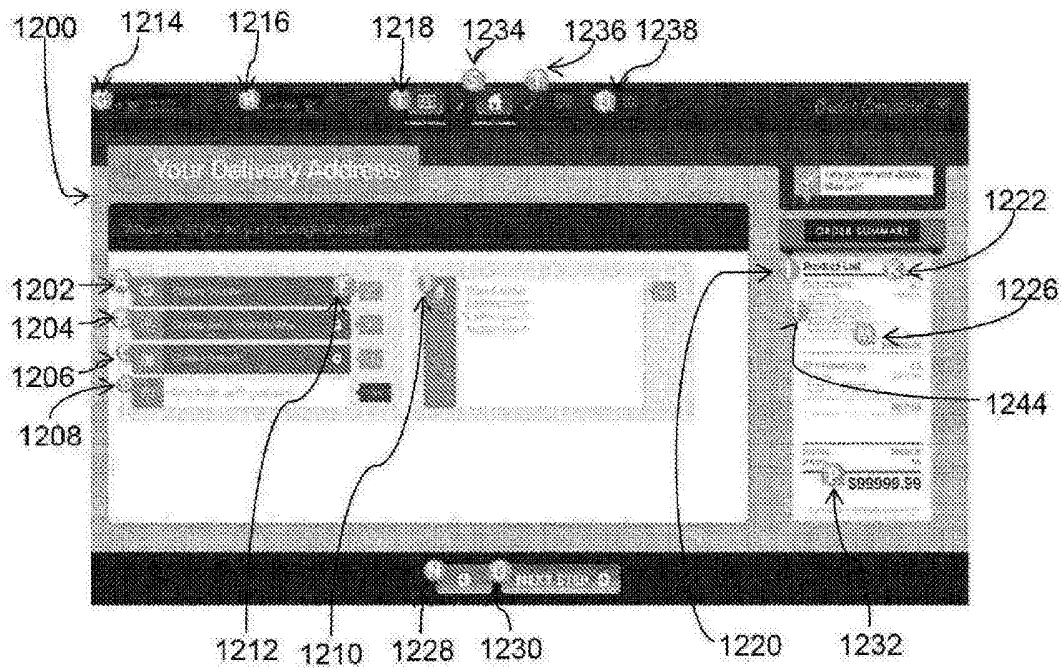


图 12

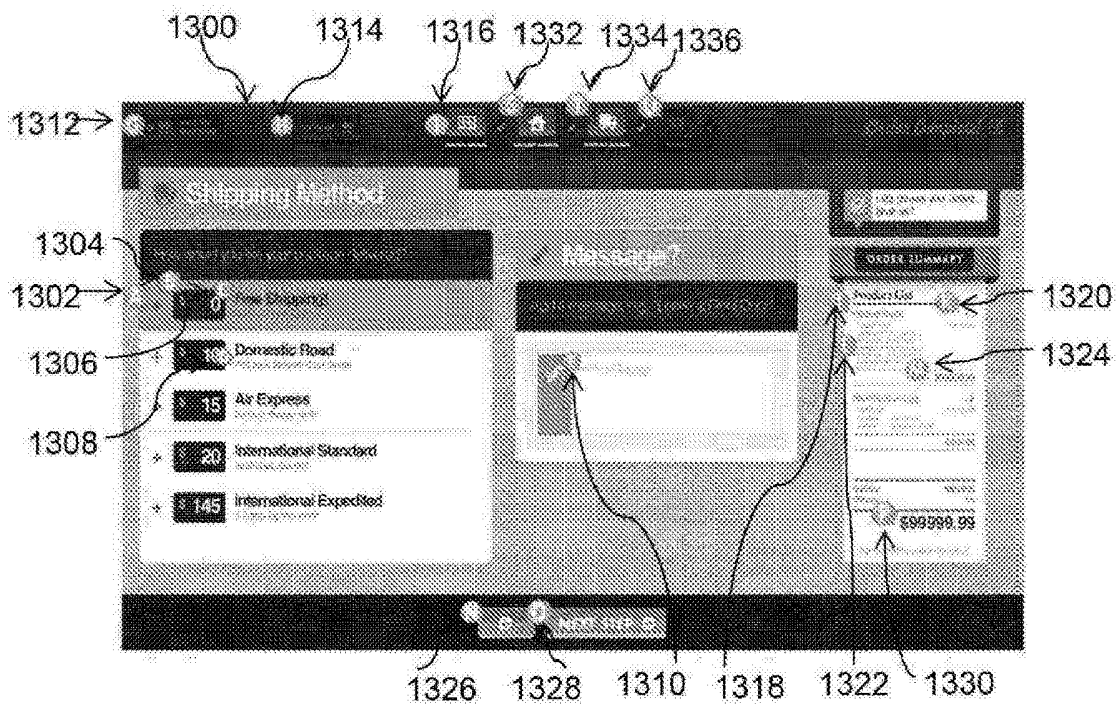


图 13

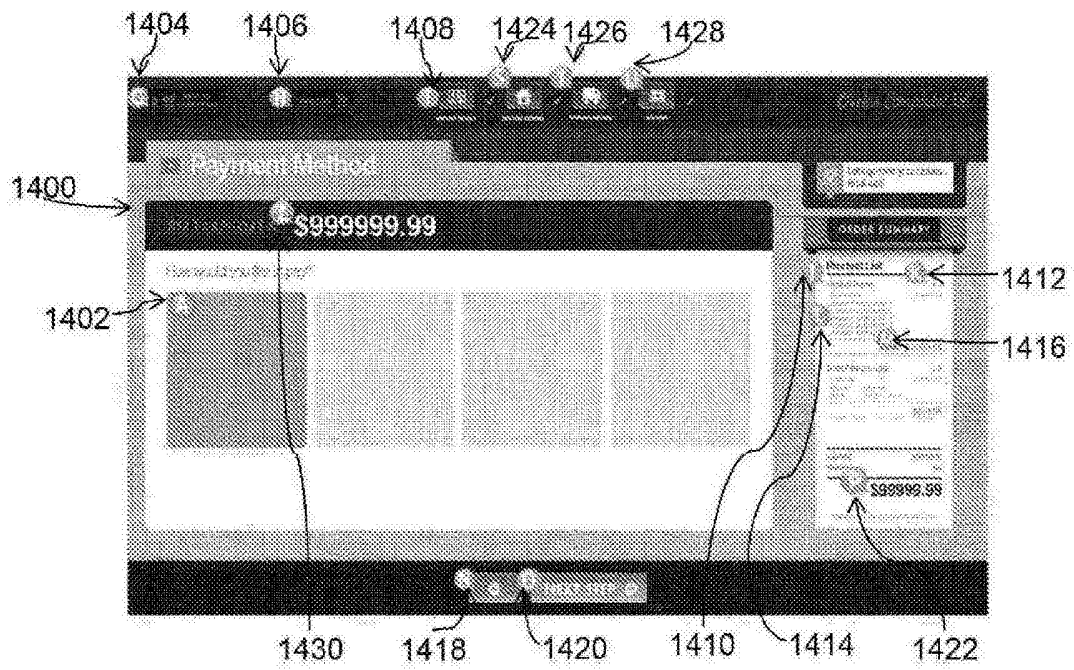


图 14

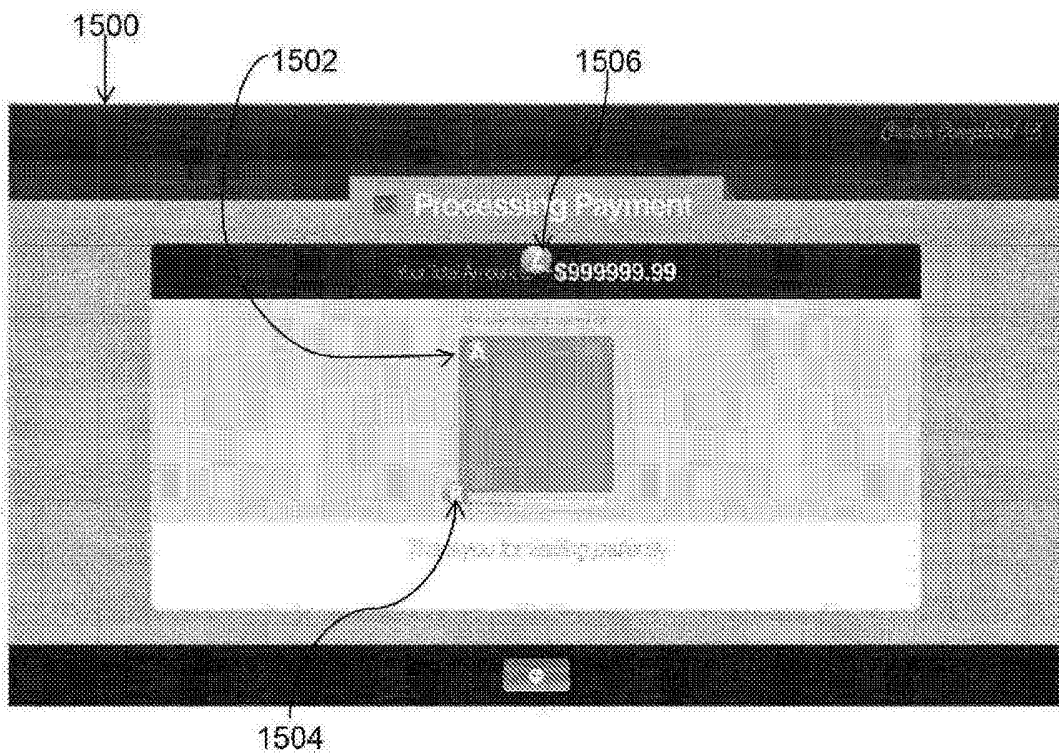


图 15

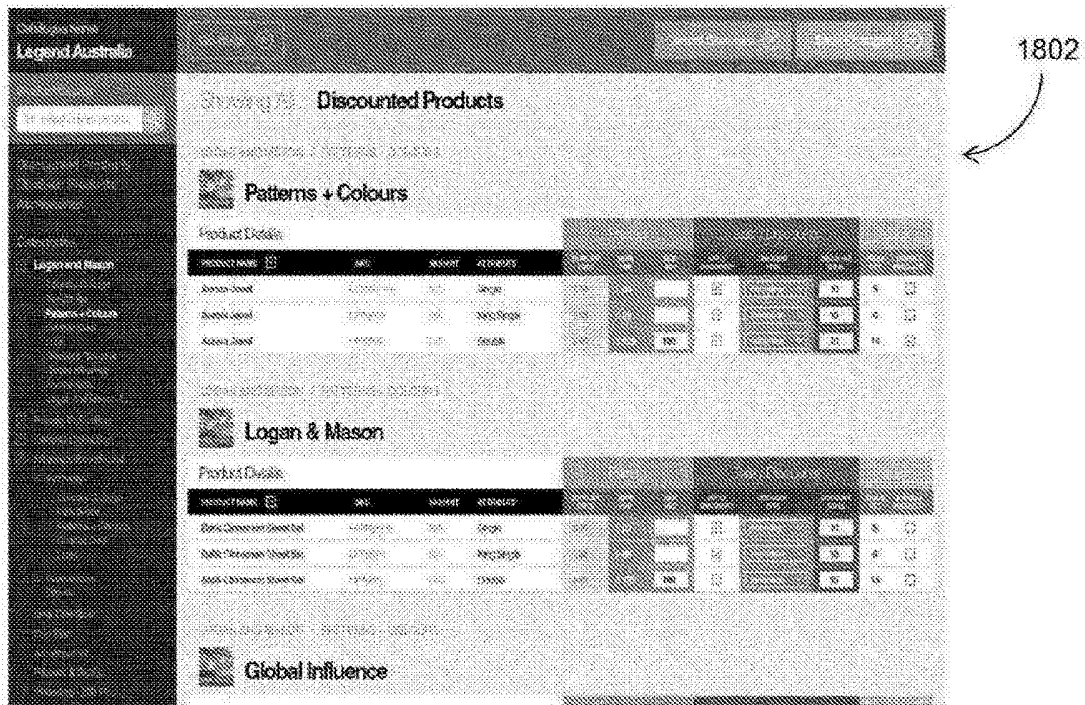


图 18A

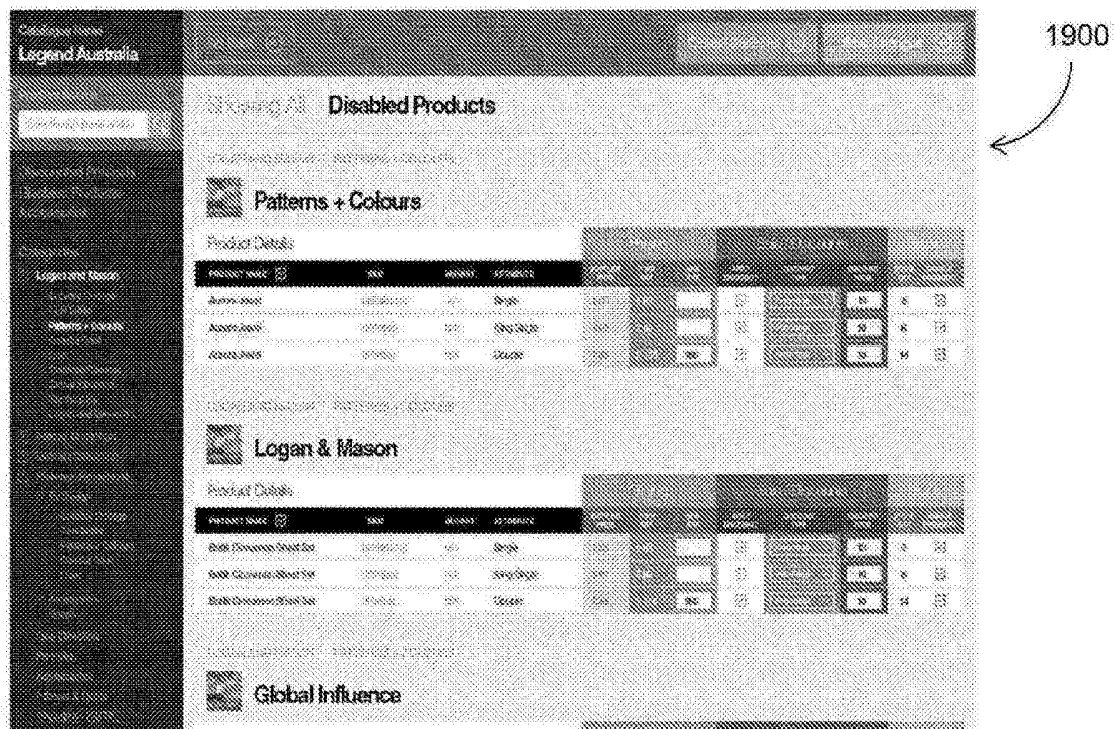


图 19

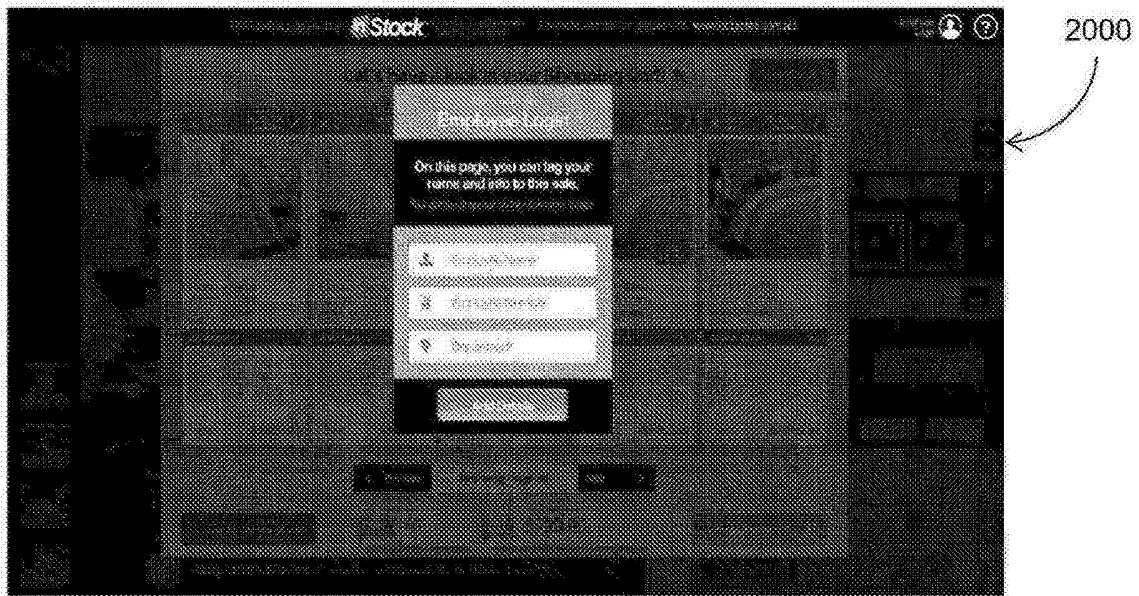


图 20



图 21

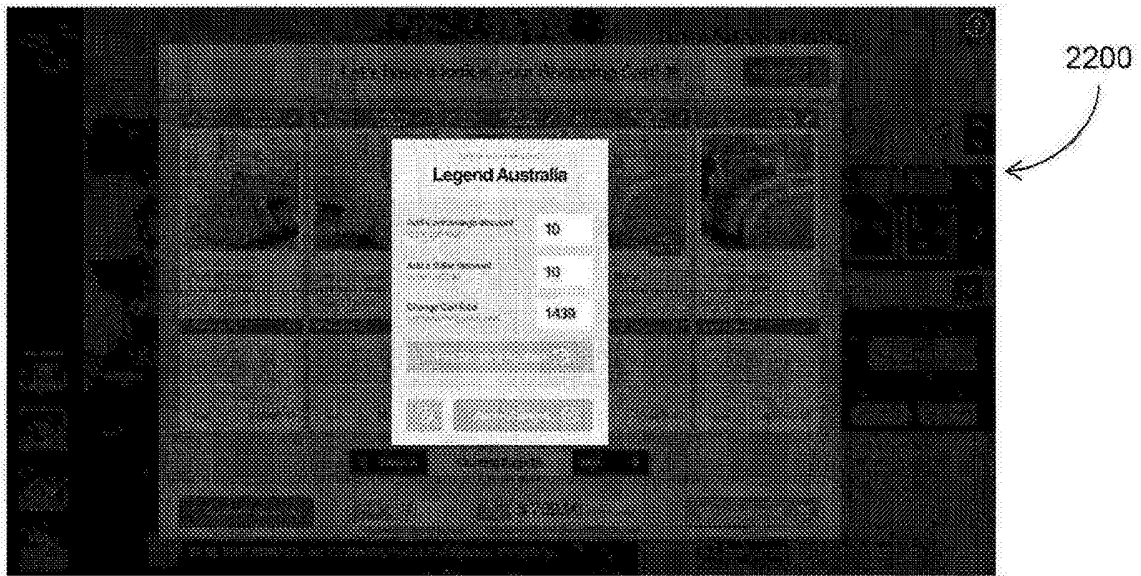


图 22

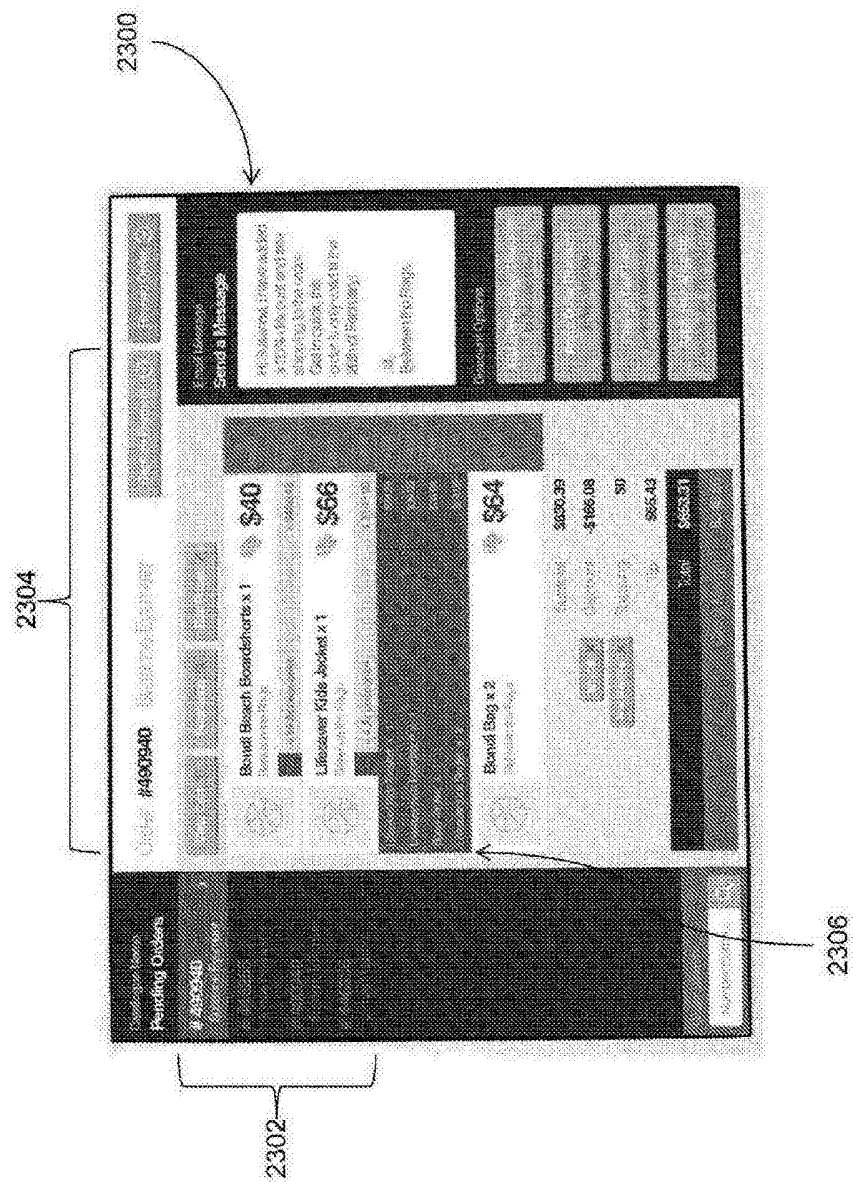


图 23

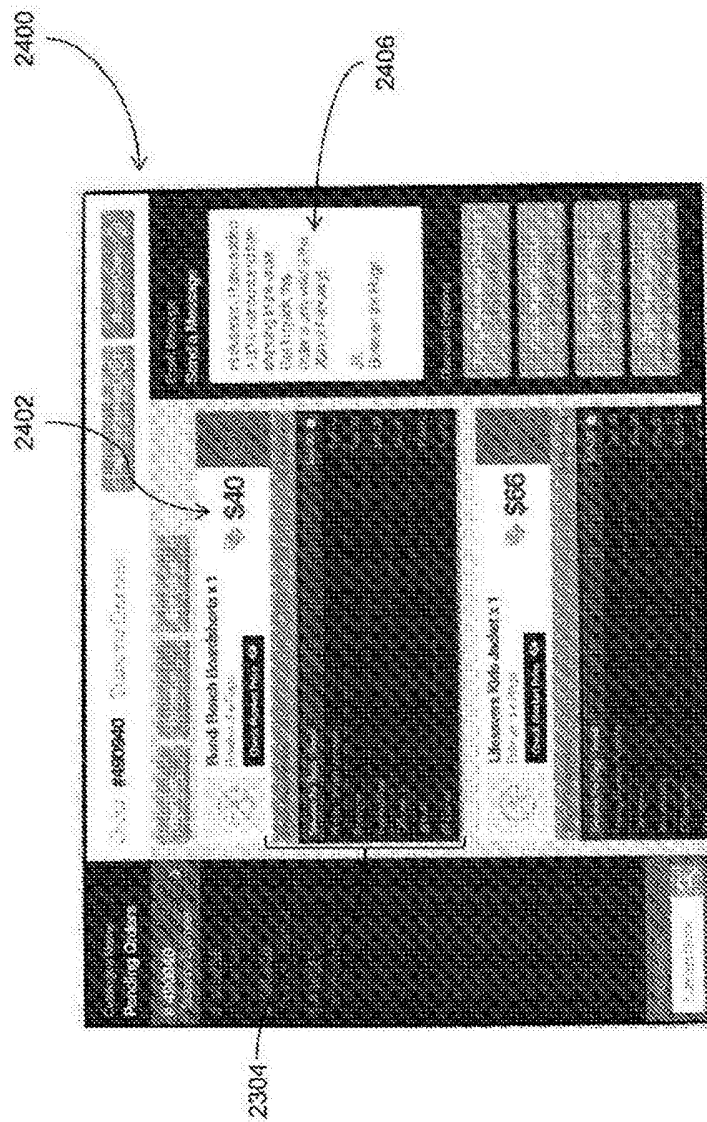


图 24

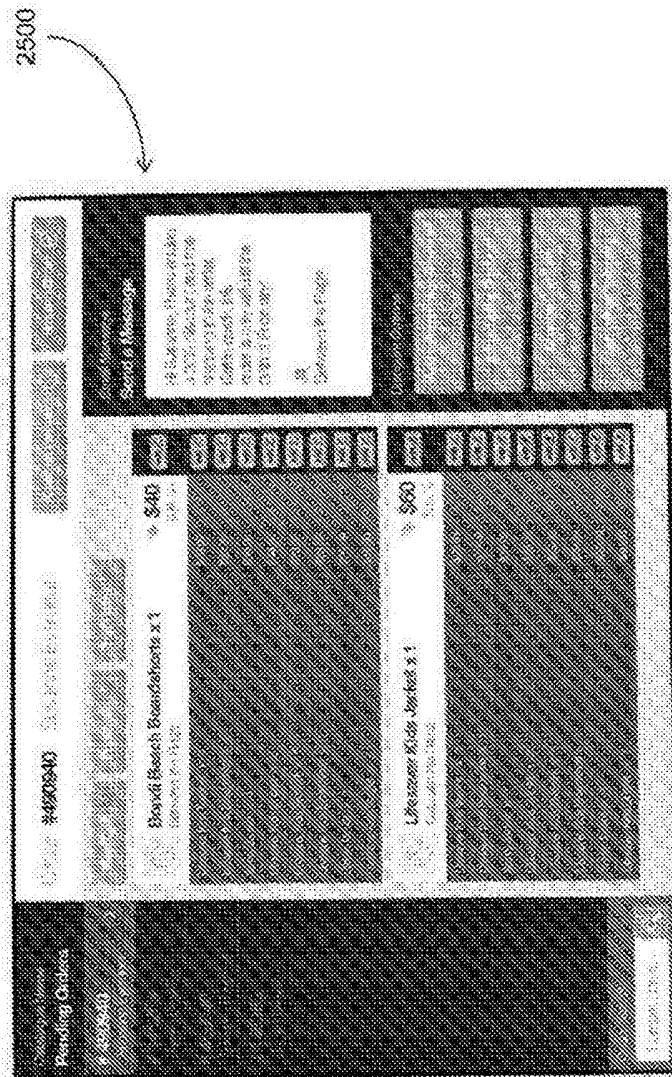


图 25

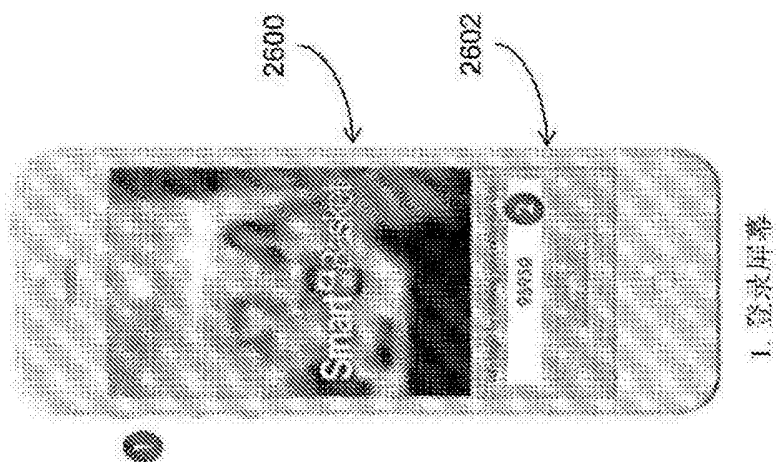


图 26A

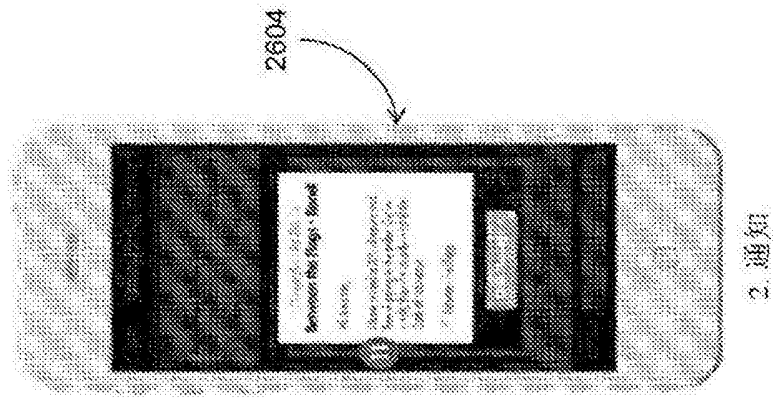


图 26B

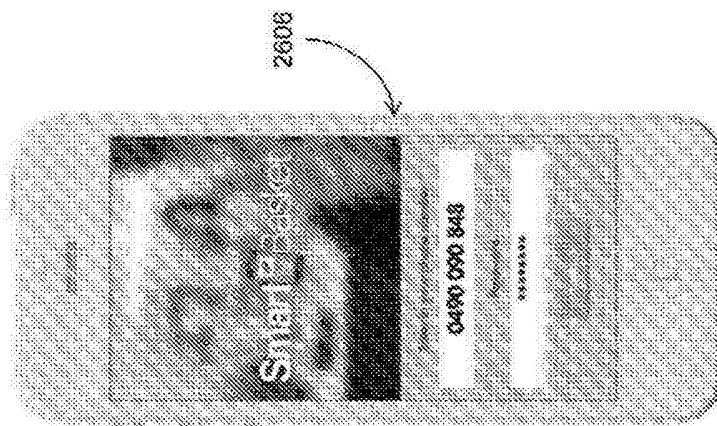


图 26C

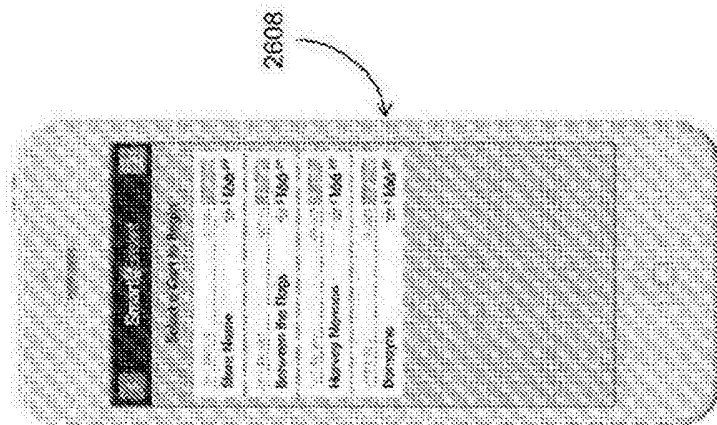


图 26D

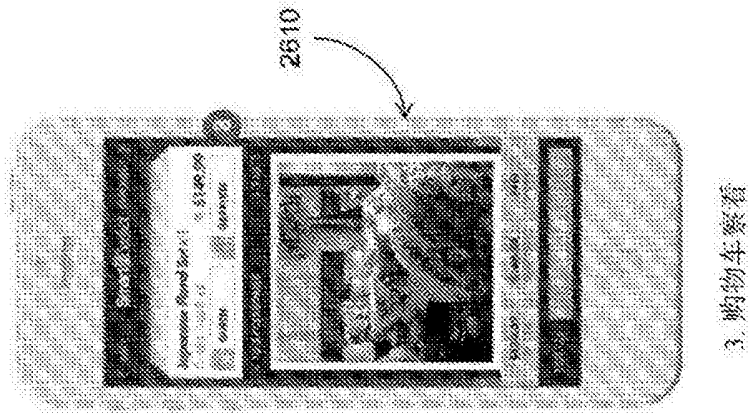


图 26E

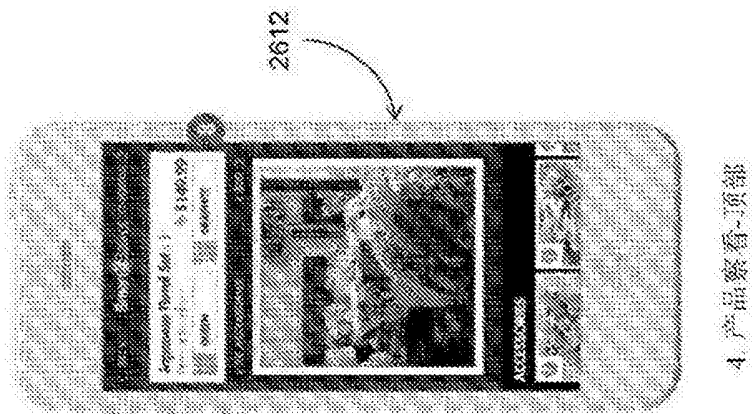


图 26F

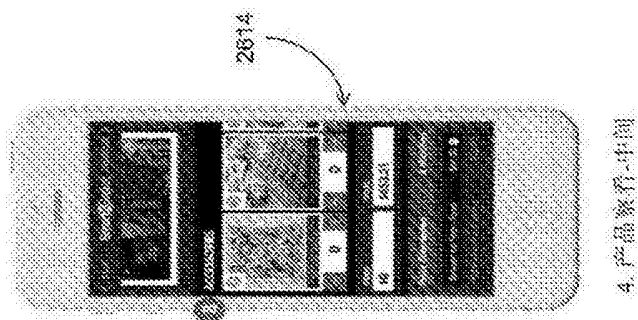


图 26G

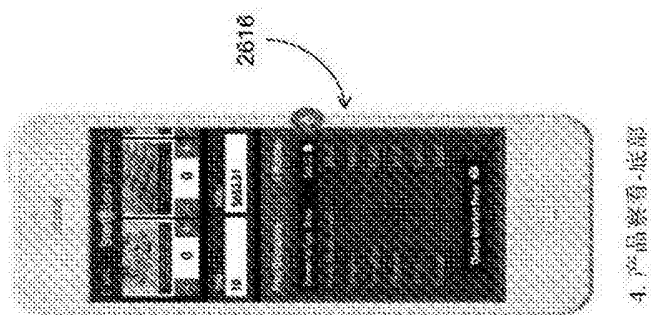


图 26H

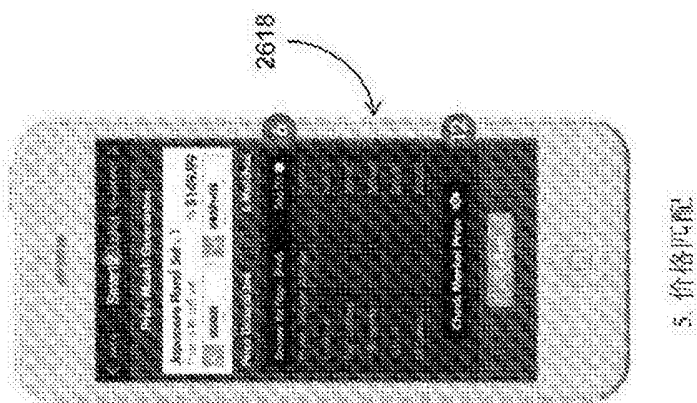


图 26I

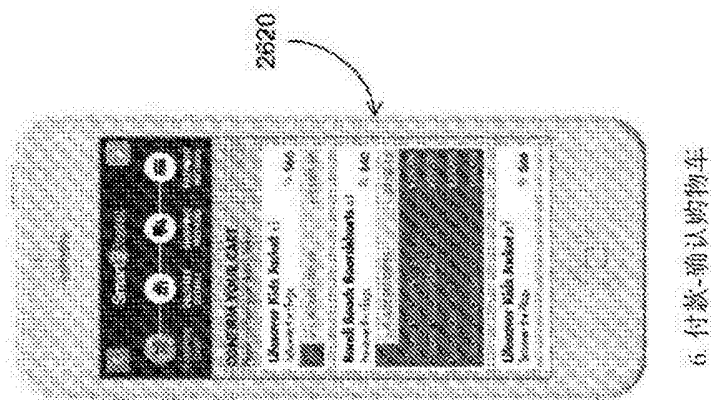


图 26J

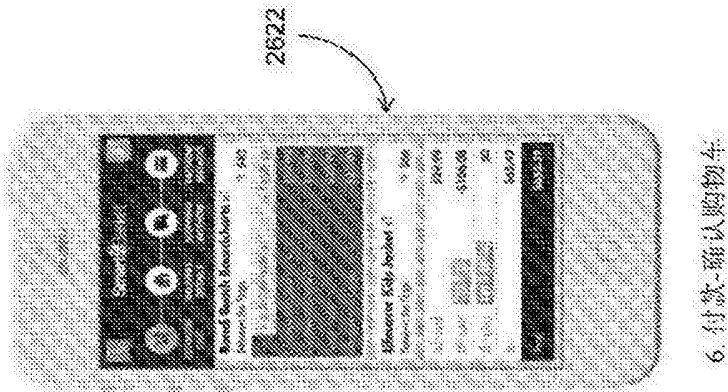


图 26K

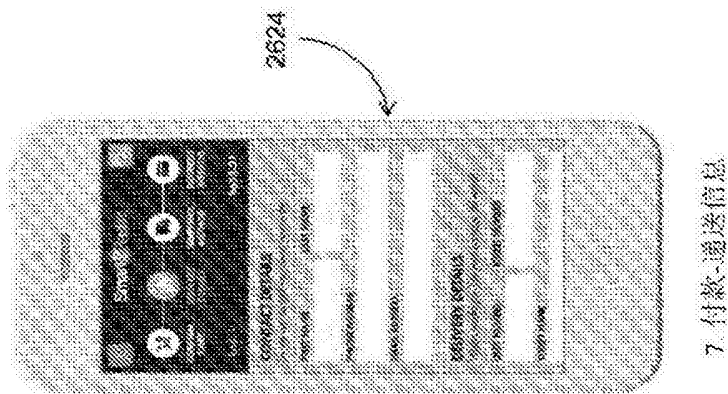


图 26L

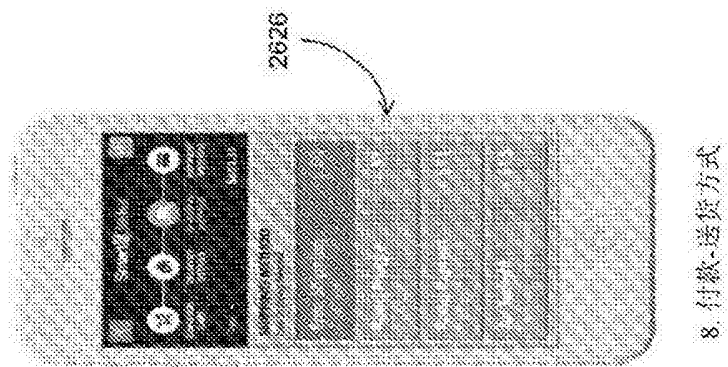


图 26M

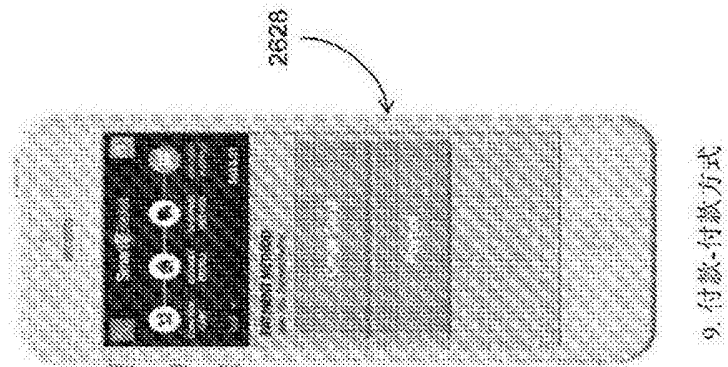


图 26N

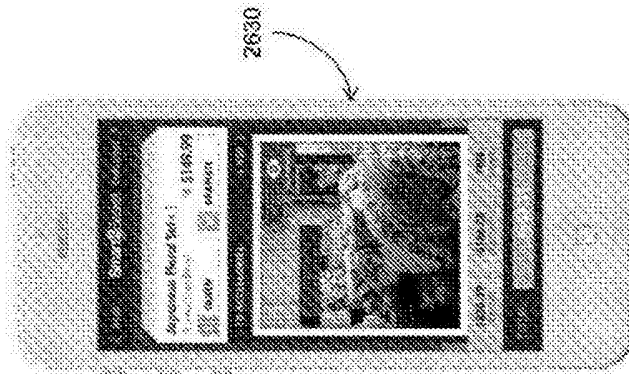


图 26O

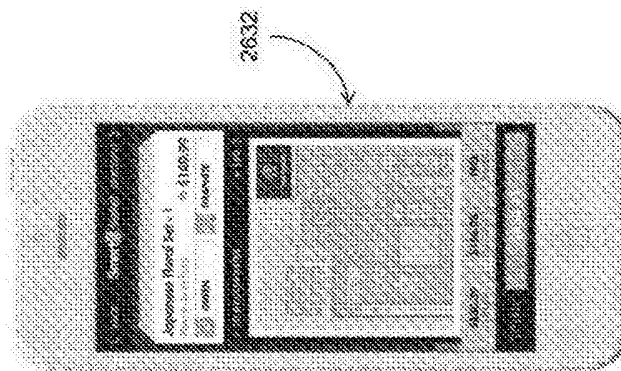


图 26P