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(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR OBTAINING MERCHANDISE INFORMATION

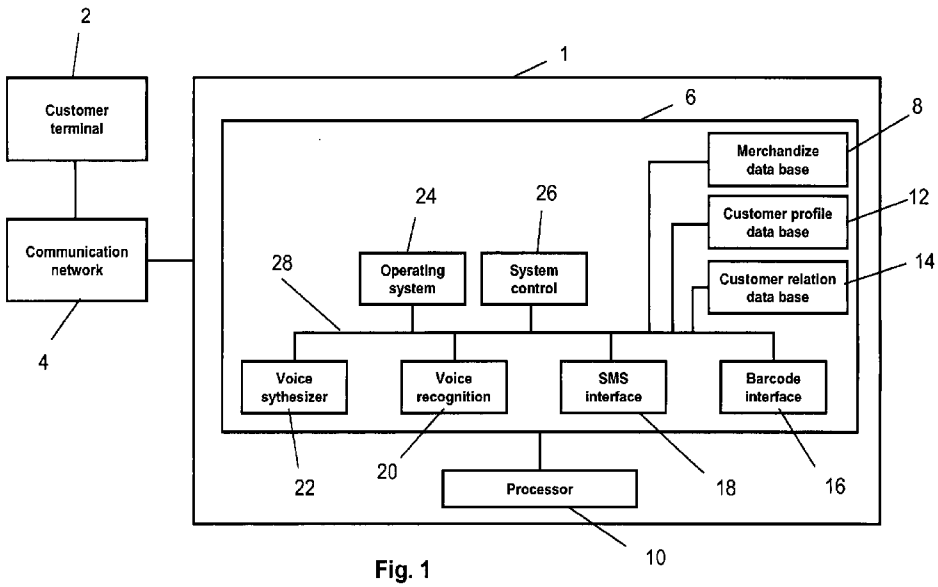


Fig. 1

(57) Abstract: In a method of obtaining merchandise information from a store system using speech processing technology to determine a spoken query entry, an information inquiry from a customer regarding a particular product is received via a communication network. The location of the customer is determined, which is then used to determine a store closest to the customer. A merchandise database is searched for the inquired information regarding the particular product, wherein searching the merchandise database is limited to products available at the store closest to the customer location. The inquired information is retrieved from the merchandise database, and transmitted to the customer.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/EP2008/002771

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
INV. G06Q30/00

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)
G06Q

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 practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2007/008068 A1 (BRICE DAVID G [US] ET AL) 11 January 2007 (2007-01-11) paragraph [0040] - paragraph [0042] paragraph [0060] - paragraph [0064] paragraph [0097] - paragraph [0102] figures 1-5,15	1-19
X	DE 100 20 544 A1 (INNODAS INNOVATIVE DATEN UND A [DE]) 31 October 2001 (2001-10-31) paragraph [0008] paragraph [0017] - paragraph [0019] paragraph [0031] - paragraph [0036] figures	1,2,11

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[X] Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

[X] See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"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)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"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

"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

"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.

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report
23 July 2008	30/10/2008

Name and mailing address of the ISA/	Authorized officer
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Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (April 2005)

C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2002/178013 A1 (HOFFMAN BETH LOUISE [US] ET AL) 28 November 2002 (2002-11-28) paragraph [0006] - paragraph [0007] paragraph [0018] - paragraph [0043] figures 1-4	1,11
A	US 2002/026380 A1 (SU XIAOQIANG [US]) 28 February 2002 (2002-02-28) paragraph [0040] - paragraph [0042] paragraph [0095] - paragraph [0100] figures 6,7A,7B	1,11

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/EP2008/002771

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:

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 additional sheet

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers allsearchable claims.

2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an 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 reportcovers 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.:

1-19

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.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. claims: 1-19

A method and system for obtaining merchandise information from a store system, comprising :
-receiving via a communication network an information inquiry from a customer regarding a particular product;
-determining a location of the customer;
-using the customer location to determine a store closest to the customer;
-searching a merchandise database for the inquired information regarding the particular product, wherein searching the merchandise database is limited to products available at the store closest to the customer location;
-retrieving the inquired information from the merchandise database; and
-transmitting the inquired information to the customer.

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2. claims: 20-23

A method of generating a merchandise database used in a system for obtaining merchandise information, comprising:
-receiving from an operator having a telephony device via a communication network a request for entering information to the merchandise database;
-requesting the operator to speak a current operator location with respect to at least one of an aisle and shelf in a store;
-requesting the operator to enter at least one of a predetermined product indicium and name of a product at the current operator location; and
-storing data representing the current operator location and data representing the product indicium as a data set in the merchandise data base.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No
PCT/EP2008/002771

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 2007008068 A1	11-01-2007	NONE	
DE 10020544 A1	31-10-2001	NONE	
US 2002178013 A1	28-11-2002	NONE	
US 2002026380 A1	28-02-2002	NONE	