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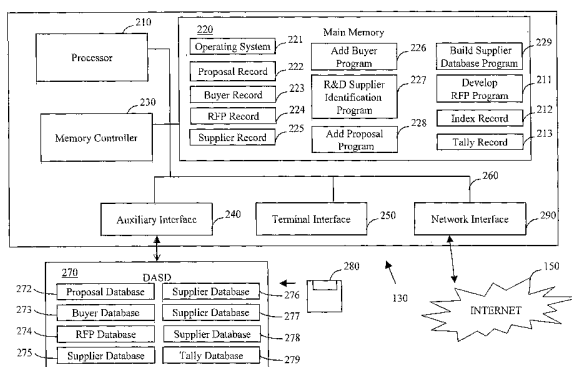
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(54) Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR ACQUISITION OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



(57) Abstract: The present invention facilitates obtaining one or more proposals for research and development (R&D), on behalf of an R&D buyer. A clear understanding of the type of the R&D's buyer's project needs and the associated area of technology may be elicited in support of the creation of a request for proposal announcement, the creation of criteria (e.g. keywords) for searching one or more supplier database to identify one or more potential R&D suppliers, and the creation of criteria for evaluating each identified potential R&D supplier. Evaluation criteria may include frequency of search criteria in association with a potential supplier, type of R&D needed, specialization the associated area of technology, buyer's approval, supplier's knowledge of competition in the associated area of technology, type of supplier, and length of time that a supplier has been supplying R&D in the associated area of technology. One of the searches of the supplier database(s) locates potential R&D suppliers, the potential R&D suppliers may be ordered by frequency of occurrences of the search criteria. Evaluation criteria are applied to each potential R&D supplier to identify which ones are qualified R&D suppliers. Bids for proposal are only solicited from qualified R&D suppliers. Each qualified R&D supplier may be provided with a request for proposal announcements. Further, feedback may be provided to R&D suppliers so that they have an opportunity to modify and resubmit proposals.



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## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/US 01/30867

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER  
 IPC 7 G06F17/30 G06F17/60

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)

IPC 7 G06F

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, PAJ, INSPEC, IBM-TDB

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	EP 0 855 687 A (AT & T CORP) 29 July 1998 (1998-07-29) abstract page 2, line 49 -page 3, line 23 ---	1-50
X	US 4 984 155 A (GEIER RAYMOND R ET AL) 8 January 1991 (1991-01-08) abstract ---	1-50
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X	US 4 992 940 A (DWORKIN ROSS E) 12 February 1991 (1991-02-12) abstract ---	1-50
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Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

Patent family members are listed in annex.

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- \*A\* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
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- \*Z\* document member of the same patent family

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## C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	SALTON G ET AL: "TERM-WEIGHTING APPROACHES IN AUTOMATIC TEXT RETRIEVAL" INFORMATION PROCESSING & MANAGEMENT, ELSEVIER, BARKING, GB, vol. 24, no. 5, 1988, pages 513-523, XP000716208 ISSN: 0306-4573 page 516, line 7 -page 517, line 26 -----	22, 25, 32, 45, 47

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