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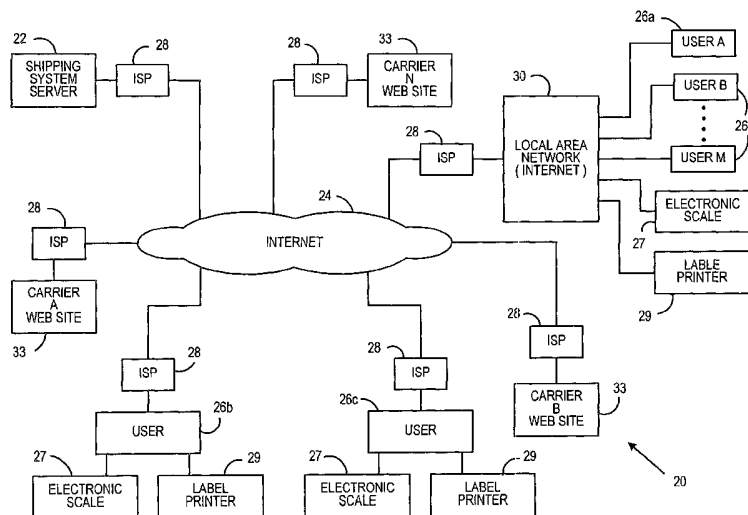
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(54) Title: INTERFACE FOR FACILITATING TRANSFER OF INFORMATION RELATED TO SHIPPING OF PACKAGES




(57) Abstract: A shipping system (20) having a server (22) with an application programming interface that allows XML formatted data to be used with the shipping server (22), so as to facilitate the retrieval and presentation of shipping information to a user (26), is disclosed. The shipping system server (22) is accessible to users (26) via the Internet (24), wherein package rating and shipping information is obtained by one or more information request queries that can be made by the user (26) using a client software program, such as, for example, a Web browser, and standard Internet protocol such as Hypertext Markup Language (HTTP). Responses to the queries are provided in a well defined XML format having beginning and ending tags, thereby allowing easy parsing of the information contained in the responses by the client software program for presentation to the user (26).

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US02/36193

<p>A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC(7) : G06F 17/60 US CL : 705/1, 26, 400, 406, 407, 408, 410 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC</p>																			
<p>B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) U.S. : 705/1, 26, 400, 406, 407, 408, 410</p> <p>Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched</p> <p>Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used) EAST, Google</p>																			
<p>C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category *</th> <th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th> <th>Relevant to claim No.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>X,P ✓</td> <td>WO 02/17045 A2 (UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE) 28 February 2002 (28.02.2002), see Figs. 1-3, 5, 7, 9, 12; pages 33-34; claims.</td> <td>1-23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A ✓</td> <td>US 6,047,264 A (FISHER et al.) 04 April 2000 (04.04.2000), see Figs. 1-5; col. 1, lines 16-53; col. 1, line 63 - col. 2, line 41; col. 2, line 65 - col. 4, line 27.</td> <td>1-23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A,P ✓</td> <td>US 6,418,448 B1 (SARKAR) 09 July 2002 (09.07.2002), See Figs. 1, 3, 7a-12; col. 1, line 19 - col. 5, line 47; col. 5, line 53 - col. 7, line 14.</td> <td>1-23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A,P ✓</td> <td>US 6,463,420 B1 (GUIDICE et al.) 08 October 2002 (08.10.2002), see Figs. 1, 3-5; col. 1, line 18 - col. 2, line 27.</td> <td>1-23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A,P ✓</td> <td>WO 02/21388 A1 (UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE) 14 March 2002 (14.03.2002), see Figs. 1-3; para. [002] - [011]; claims.</td> <td>1-23</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.	X,P ✓	WO 02/17045 A2 (UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE) 28 February 2002 (28.02.2002), see Figs. 1-3, 5, 7, 9, 12; pages 33-34; claims.	1-23	A ✓	US 6,047,264 A (FISHER et al.) 04 April 2000 (04.04.2000), see Figs. 1-5; col. 1, lines 16-53; col. 1, line 63 - col. 2, line 41; col. 2, line 65 - col. 4, line 27.	1-23	A,P ✓	US 6,418,448 B1 (SARKAR) 09 July 2002 (09.07.2002), See Figs. 1, 3, 7a-12; col. 1, line 19 - col. 5, line 47; col. 5, line 53 - col. 7, line 14.	1-23	A,P ✓	US 6,463,420 B1 (GUIDICE et al.) 08 October 2002 (08.10.2002), see Figs. 1, 3-5; col. 1, line 18 - col. 2, line 27.	1-23	A,P ✓	WO 02/21388 A1 (UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE) 14 March 2002 (14.03.2002), see Figs. 1-3; para. [002] - [011]; claims.	1-23
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<p>* Special categories of cited documents:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance</td> <td>"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</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"E" earlier application or patent published on or after the international filing date</td> <td>"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</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"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)</td> <td>"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</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means</td> <td>"&" document member of the same patent family</td> </tr> <tr> <td>"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		"A" 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 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									
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