



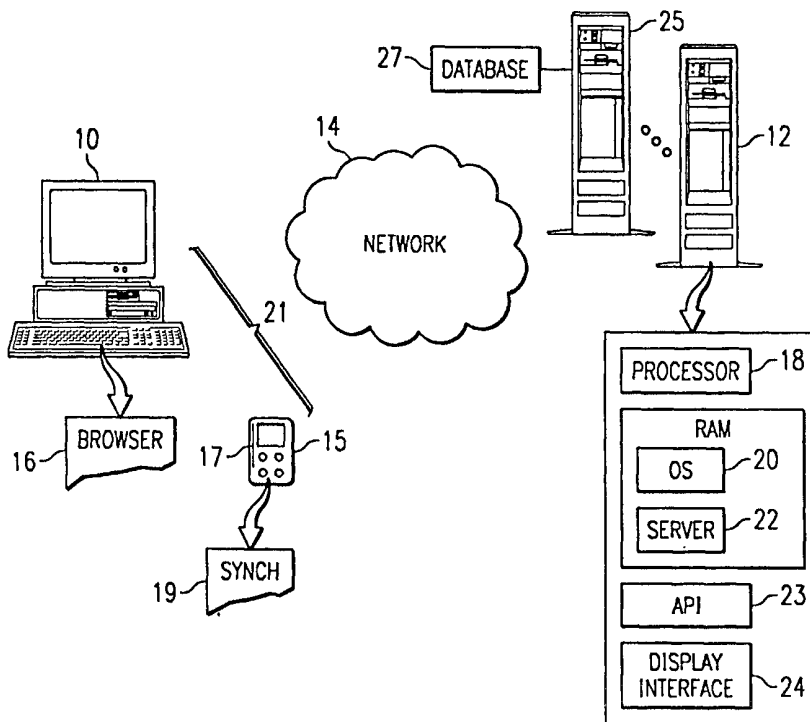
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

<p>(51) International Patent Classification <sup>7</sup> : <b>G06F 17/60</b></p>	<p><b>A1</b></p>	<p>(11) International Publication Number: <b>WO 00/68858</b> (43) International Publication Date: 16 November 2000 (16.11.00)</p>
<p>(21) International Application Number: PCT/US00/12955 (22) International Filing Date: 11 May 2000 (11.05.00) (30) Priority Data: 09/309,989 11 May 1999 (11.05.99) US (71)(72) Applicant and Inventor: MANKOFF, Jeffrey, W. [US/US]; 5330 Pebblebrook, Dallas, TX 75229 (US). (74) Agents: JUDSON, David, H. et al.; Hughes &amp; Luce, L.L.P., 1717 Main Street, Suite 2800, Dallas, TX 75201 (US).</p>		<p>(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).</p> <p><b>Published</b> <i>With international search report.</i></p>

(54) Title: METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR ELECTRONIC DELIVERY OF COUPONS

(57) Abstract

An electronic coupon is obtained when a user selects a given link in a Web page on a client machine (10). The link is an image link embedded in an advertising banner on the Web page such that user click-through on the banner to generate the coupon. The coupon is then saved to a file on the client machine (10). Thereafter, the coupon is downloaded to a PDA via a communication link when the PDA is synchronized (19) to the desktop. When the coupon is downloaded to the PDA, it is saved in a coupon file. Contact information associated with the coupon provider is written to the PDA contact file. Moreover, the coupon's expiration date is stored in PDA's calendar, together with information for generating redemption reminders that are issued to the PDA user when the device is powered on. When the user desires to redeem the coupon, he or she may take the PDA to a terminal located at a retail establishment. By synchronizing the PDA to the terminal, the coupon is redeemed in exchange for a discount on a given product or service.



*FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY*

Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

AL	Albania	ES	Spain	LS	Lesotho	SI	Slovenia
AM	Armenia	FI	Finland	LT	Lithuania	SK	Slovakia
AT	Austria	FR	France	LU	Luxembourg	SN	Senegal
AU	Australia	GA	Gabon	LV	Latvia	SZ	Swaziland
AZ	Azerbaijan	GB	United Kingdom	MC	Monaco	TD	Chad
BA	Bosnia and Herzegovina	GE	Georgia	MD	Republic of Moldova	TG	Togo
BB	Barbados	GH	Ghana	MG	Madagascar	TJ	Tajikistan
BE	Belgium	GN	Guinea	MK	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	TM	Turkmenistan
BF	Burkina Faso	GR	Greece	ML	Mali	TR	Turkey
BG	Bulgaria	HU	Hungary	MN	Mongolia	TT	Trinidad and Tobago
BJ	Benin	IE	Ireland	MR	Mauritania	UA	Ukraine
BR	Brazil	IL	Israel	MW	Malawi	UG	Uganda
BY	Belarus	IS	Iceland	MX	Mexico	US	United States of America
CA	Canada	IT	Italy	NE	Niger	UZ	Uzbekistan
CF	Central African Republic	JP	Japan	NL	Netherlands	VN	Viet Nam
CG	Congo	KE	Kenya	NO	Norway	YU	Yugoslavia
CH	Switzerland	KG	Kyrgyzstan	NZ	New Zealand	ZW	Zimbabwe
CI	Côte d'Ivoire	KP	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	PL	Poland		
CM	Cameroon	KR	Republic of Korea	PT	Portugal		
CN	China	KZ	Kazakstan	RO	Romania		
CU	Cuba	LC	Saint Lucia	RU	Russian Federation		
CZ	Czech Republic	LI	Liechtenstein	SD	Sudan		
DE	Germany	LK	Sri Lanka	SE	Sweden		
DK	Denmark	LR	Liberia	SG	Singapore		
EE	Estonia						

-1-

**METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR ELECTRONIC DELIVERY OF COUPONS**  
**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

**Technical Field**

The present invention relates generally to product and  
5 service merchandising through distribution of electronic  
coupons, gift certificates and the like.

**Description of the Related Art**

Recently, the computer industry has sought to add computer  
processing and communications capabilities to devices other than  
10 what would normally be considered a traditional computer. Such  
devices include, for example, personal digital assistants  
(PDAs), business organizers, watches, PCMCIA-based credit card  
organizers, and other handheld or "palm" devices. These devices  
typically include technology and software (e.g., 3Com HotSync®)  
15 to enable the user to synchronize data between the device and  
desktop software or another personal information manager (PIM)  
such as Microsoft Outlook. To synchronize data, the PDA is  
connected to a desktop either directly (e.g., by placing the PDA  
in a cradle that is connected to the desktop) or indirectly via  
20 an infrared link, a modem or a network. Once the connection is  
established, information or data located in the desktop computer  
may be communicated and stored in the PDA.

It is known in the art to display product or service  
coupons on pages that are available through the Internet's World  
25 Wide Web information retrieval system. A user of a computer may  
access those pages through use of a conventional Web browser.  
The user navigates to a given page, which is then saved to a  
file or printed. The hard copy of the coupon may then be  
carried by the user directly to a retail location and used to  
30 receive a discount on a given purchase.

It would be desirable to provide improved methods and  
systems for electronic delivery and use of coupons (namely,  
discount coupons, gift certificates, redeemable vouchers and the  
like) that could take advantage of the existing state-of-the-art  
35 of Internet and PDA technology.

-2-

**BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

According to one embodiment of the present invention, an electronic or "virtual" coupon is obtained when a user selects a given link in a Web page being displayed on a client machine. Preferably, the link is an image link embedded on a Web site and/or in an advertising banner that is displayed on the Web page such that user click-through on the banner automatically generates the virtual coupon. The virtual coupon is then saved to a file on the client machine. Thereafter, the virtual coupon is downloaded to a PDA via a communication link when the PDA is synchronized to the desktop. When the virtual coupon is downloaded to the PDA, it is automatically saved in a coupon file. In addition, contact information associated with the coupon provider (e.g., address, web site URL, map and e-mail information) is automatically written to the PDA contact file. Moreover, the coupon's expiration date is stored in PDA's calendar, together with information for generating one or more redemption reminders that are periodically issued to the PDA user when the device is powered on. When the user desires to redeem the coupon, he or she may take the PDA to a terminal located at a retail establishment. By synchronizing the PDA to the terminal, the virtual coupon is redeemed in exchange for a discount on a given product or service. Alternatively, the coupon may be redeemed for an online purchase by connecting the PDA to a Web site, e.g., using a wireless connection.

According to another embodiment of the invention, a user of a PDA having a wireless Internet connection may navigate to a Web site and select a link (e.g., a link in an advertising banner) and receive the virtual coupon directly.

According to the invention, a central web site may be used to manage the distribution of the virtual coupons. In particular, an advertiser that desires to issue virtual discounts may register its coupons with the web site, perhaps for a given fee. Later, when users click through banner advertisements that include links to the web site, the users are seamlessly redirected to the site, which records the transactions and issues the virtual coupons. The site maintains a database of users who have downloaded virtual coupons, and

-3-

such information is also available for collateral promotional activities relating to the service.

Alternatively, a given advertiser (e.g., a retail department store) may offer the virtual coupons from its own site. In this case, the user navigates to the advertiser's site and selects the virtual coupon, which is then downloaded to the PDA (either through the user's PC-PDA link) or to the PDA directly as previously described.

The foregoing has outlined some of the more pertinent objects and features of the present invention. These objects should be construed to be merely illustrative of some of the more prominent features and applications of the invention. Many other beneficial results can be obtained by applying the disclosed invention in a different manner or modifying the invention as will be described. Accordingly, other objects and a fuller understanding of the invention may be had by referring to the following Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiment.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a more complete understanding of the present invention and the advantages thereof, reference should be made to the following Detailed Description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings in which:

**Figure 1** is a representative Internet operating environment in which the present invention may be implemented;

**Figure 2** illustrates the transfer of the virtual coupon from the user's desktop computer to his or her PDA;

**Figure 3** is a representative data file comprising a virtual coupon; and

**Figure 4** is an alternative embodiment of the invention wherein a user of a PDA downloads a coupon directly from a server.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

A known Internet client-server system is implemented is illustrated in **Figure 1**. A client machine **10** is connected to a

-4-

Web server **12** via network **14**. For illustrative purposes, network **14** is the Internet, an intranet, an extranet or any other known network. Web server **12** is one of a plurality of servers which are accessible by clients, one of which is  
5 illustrated by machine **10**. A representative client machine includes a browser **16**, which is a known software tool used to access the servers of the network. The web server supports files (collectively referred to as a web site) in the form of hypertext documents and objects. In the Internet paradigm, a  
10 network path to a server is identified by a so-called Uniform Resource Locator (URL).

A representative web server **12** is an IBM Netfinity server comprising a RISC-based processor **18**, the AIX® operating system  
20 **20** and a web server program **22**, such as Netscape Enterprise Server. The server **12** also includes a display **24** supporting a graphical user interface (GUI) for management and  
15 administration, and an Application Programming Interface (API) **23** that provides extensions to enable application developers to extend and/or customize the core functionality thereof through  
20 software programs including Common Gateway Interface (CGI) programs, plug-ins, servlets, active server pages, server side include (SSI) functions or the like.

A representative Web client is a personal computer that is x86-, PowerPC®- or RISC-based, that includes an operating system  
25 such as IBM® OS/2® or Microsoft Windows '95, and that includes a Web browser, such as Netscape Navigator 4.0 (or higher), having a Java Virtual Machine (JVM) and support for application plug-ins or helper applications.

Also illustrated in **Figure 1** is a representative handheld  
30 computing client device **15** such as a personal digital assistant or PDA. The device typically includes a handheld stylus **17** for inputting information to the device. A representative device is marketed by Palm Computing, Inc., a 3Com Company, under the Palm  
V™ Organizer trademark. PDA **15** also includes synchronization

-5-

software **19** that interfaces with an associated routine supported in the desktop computer to facilitate synchronization of data between the desktop and the PDA over a communications link **21** (e.g., an infrared, serial or wireless connection).

5 Representative PDA devices include a x86-, PowerPC<sup>®</sup>- or RISC-based processor, a realtime operating system such as WindRiver VXWorks<sup>™</sup>, QSSL QNXNeutrino<sup>™</sup>, PalmOS, or Microsoft Windows CE, a Web browser or other graphics viewer, device drivers, control software, and a modem. These devices also include non-volatile  
10 memory, as well as system memory (namely, RAM).

While PDA is illustrated as a handheld organizer, any type of portable computing device can be used. These include, without limitation, business organizers, PCMCIA-based organizers, smart watches, Internet appliances, and other such  
15 devices.

A client machine and the PDA implementing the inventive protocol described below includes appropriate software for requesting and/or responding to given messages, and for extracting the data of interest. Such software is executable in  
20 a processor, namely, as a set of instructions (program code) in a code module resident in the random access memory of the computer. Until required by the computer, the set of instructions may be stored in another computer memory, for example, in a hard disk drive, or in a removable memory, or  
25 downloaded via the Internet or other computer network.

As also illustrated in **Figure 1**, one of the servers in the network may be a central or clearinghouse server **25** (which may be a group of such servers). This site includes a database **27** for supporting a set of virtual coupons available for download  
30 to client machines according to the invention. A given virtual coupon **40**, as illustrated in **Figure 3**, may comprise a data file of information including, without limitation, a discount offer **42**, contact information **44** (e.g., e-mail address, customer service or other telephone numbers), an expiration date **46**,  
35 reminder data **48** for generating redemption reminders, retail

-6-

location information **50**, a map **52**, a hyperlink **54** to the provider's web site, and other such useful information.

Providers of virtual coupons preferably store those coupons in the database. The operator of the server **25** may provide the virtual coupon distribution service for a fee. The virtual coupons are served with web pages in a conventional manner. In particular, given web sites contract with the server **25** to access the stored virtual coupons. When those web sites are later accessed by users with client machines, the virtual coupons are selectively served, e.g., as banner advertisements with embedded links to the web server **25**.

Returning now back to **Figure 1**, it is now assumed that a web page displaying a banner advertisement (or other clickable graphic or text) having an associated virtual coupon link is being rendered on a client machine. When the user of that machine selects the advertisement, the client's browser is redirected to the server **25**, which then serves the virtual coupon back to the client. At this point, a pop-up window or other announcement (e.g., an e-mail) may be provided to the user at the client machine indicating that the virtual coupon offer has been delivered. The virtual coupon and, in particular, the data file, is then stored in the client machine. Preferably, the virtual coupon file is maintained in a non-volatile storage area of the client (e.g., the hard disk).

Referring now to **Figure 2**, when the user later synchronizes his or her PDA device to the client, the virtual coupon is automatically downloaded to the PDA. Preferably, the virtual coupon is stored in the memo or notepad section of the PDA (or, alternatively, in a specific PDA coupon organizer), the contact information is automatically supplied to the PDA contact file, and the expiration date information is automatically supplied to the PDA calendaring system. If the PDA has graphics capability (e.g., a browser or rendering engine), the map data may be stored for subsequent recall and display. In addition, the redemption reminder data is provided to the PDA calendar to



-7-

facilitate display of periodic reminders to the user. Thus, for example, when the user powers on the PDA on a given day tagged for a reminder, a message (e.g., "you have 2 days left to redeem your American Airlines travel voucher) is posted to the PDA display. Preferably, expired coupons are automatically deleted from storage, although the contact information is preferably maintained for future use.

As one of ordinary skill will readily appreciate, the present invention offers numerous advantages. With the inventive technique, the consumer is able to "clip" coupons on the web and organize them in a PDA or other portable computing device. In particular, given virtual coupons may be readily organized into different selectable groups (e.g., food, entertainment, travel, retail, etc.) for ease of retrieval and use. The user need no longer worry about locating and carrying the actual paper.

When incorporated within a web page or other application, such as a web calendar, users click through a licensed advertising banner and seamlessly transfer a virtual coupon to a PDA that is ready for redemption. Thus, for example, if a user is already registered with and a user of a web calendar, the user synchronizes his client PIM with his personal web calendar, and the user uses a PDA, the user may click through a virtual coupon banner and transfer the coupon to the PDA directly.

For the advertiser, the present invention provides another distribution mechanism for coupons. The virtual coupon affords advertisers the ability to target their advertisements and reduce costs. Advertisers pay standard web advertising banner fees, but only pay one fee when the coupon is downloaded. Advertisers may share revenues if there is a sale. The inventive distribution technique is a value-added advertising banner that is convenient, accessible, private, and readily integrated into existing web and PDA technologies. As described above, the virtual coupon is not a paper coupon (although it could be) but, rather, is a true digital coupon obtainable on the Internet (or via an intranet or other computer network) by either clicking a banner advertisement or,

-8-

alternatively, navigating to a site that supports the virtual coupon functionality. As noted above, the banner advertisement offers the consumer a free coupon for the product the consumer wants, preferably by clicking the banner.

5           There are many variants of the above-described scheme. Thus, for example, the user may access the Internet directly with a PDA device, such as illustrated in **Figure 4**. In this example, the PDA **60** (e.g., a Palm VII device) has a wireless Internet connection over network **62** to the server **64** from which  
10 coupons are available. As noted above, server **64** may serve coupons directly, or it may cause such coupons to be served to the PDA by redirecting a request to another server **66** that actually serves the coupons. In either case, the coupons are served directly to the PDA, which then stores them as previously  
15 described. In this manner, the user is not required to first download the virtual coupons to his or her PC and then, later, transfer those coupons to the PDA through the infrared or other link.

As used herein, a "coupon" should be broadly construed to  
20 cover any offer that can be redeemed for some product, service, credit or the like. Thus, a coupon includes a gift certificate, a redeemable voucher, a percentage discount, a merchandise credit, and the like.

Although not illustrated in detail, it should be  
25 appreciated that appropriate security techniques may be used to ensure integrity of the coupon delivery mechanism of the present invention. Thus, for example, the coupon may be downloaded (either to the PC or the PDA) as an unalterable digital image or with a verifying code (e.g., a digital watermark, a checksum, or  
30 the like). This would prevent alteration of the coupon's expiration date, for example. If desired, the coupon may be downloaded from the network to the PC or PDA over a secure link (e.g., a secure sockets layer) or using an appropriate encryption scheme (e.g., PGP). Another desirable fraud  
35 prevention technique is to associate a given identifier (e.g., a coupon serial number) with a given user (or user identifier, such as a cookie). Thus, for example, the given identifier may be associated with the given user when the user first downloads

the coupon. When the user desires to redeem the virtual coupon, the coupon is first authenticated before it is honored. One technique for authenticating the coupon (or the user, as the case may be) is to have the redemption site send a message to a server that issued the coupon or that manages such validity checks.

Of course, virtual coupons may also be managed directly through a user's PC, instead of using the PDA. In this way, a user may navigate to a site (e.g., a Neiman-Marcus web site), select an item that generates a virtual coupon to the user's computer, and then later redeem that virtual coupon in a virtual manner (e.g., in an online manner).

Although the various methods described herein are conveniently implemented in a general purpose computer selectively activated or reconfigured by software, one of ordinary skill in the art would also recognize that such methods may be carried out in hardware, in firmware, or in more specialized apparatus constructed to perform the required method steps.

Further, as used herein, a "client" should be broadly construed to mean any computer or component thereof directly or indirectly connected or connectable in any known or later-developed manner to a computer network, such as the Internet. Of course, a "client" should be broadly construed to mean one who requests or gets the file, and "server" is the entity which downloads the file.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent is set forth in the following claims.

-10-

**CLAIMS**

1. A method of distributing and using electronic coupons, comprising the steps of:

5 displaying on a client a Web page having a clickable graphic;

in response to selection of the clickable graphic, serving a digital file to the client, the digital file including a coupon offer and given contact information; at a later time, transferring the digital file from the client to a portable  
10 computing device;

storing the coupon offer and saving the given contact information in a contact database in the portable computing device.

15 2. The method as described in Claim 1 further including the step of redeeming the coupon offer at a retail establishment.

20 3. The method as described in Claim 1 wherein the digital file also includes other data transferred to the portable computing device.

25 4. The method as described in Claim 3 wherein the other data includes a map.

5. The method as described in Claim 3 wherein the other data includes a hyperlink to a provider's web site.

30 6. The method as described in Claim 3 wherein the other data includes reminder dates.

35 7. The method as described in Claim 6 wherein the reminder dates are used to generate reminder messages on the portable computing device.

8. The method as described in Claim 1 wherein the digital file is served from a server at which a plurality of digital files are maintained.

-11-

9. A method of distributing and using electronic coupons, comprising the steps of:

displaying on a portable digital assistant (PDA) information including a link;

5 in response to selection of the link, serving a digital file to the PDA, the digital file including a coupon offer, given contact information, and an expiration date;

storing the coupon offer and saving the given contact information in a contact database in the PDA; and

10 at a later time, but prior to the expiration date, redeeming the coupon offer.

10. The method as described in Claim 9 wherein the digital file includes an unalterable image of a coupon.

15 11. The method as described in Claim 9 wherein the digital file is served to the PDA over a secure link.

20 12. The method as described in Claim 9 wherein the coupon offer is associated with a given user identifier to prevent use of the coupon offer by a third party.

13. The method as described in Claim 12 wherein the given user identifier is a cookie.

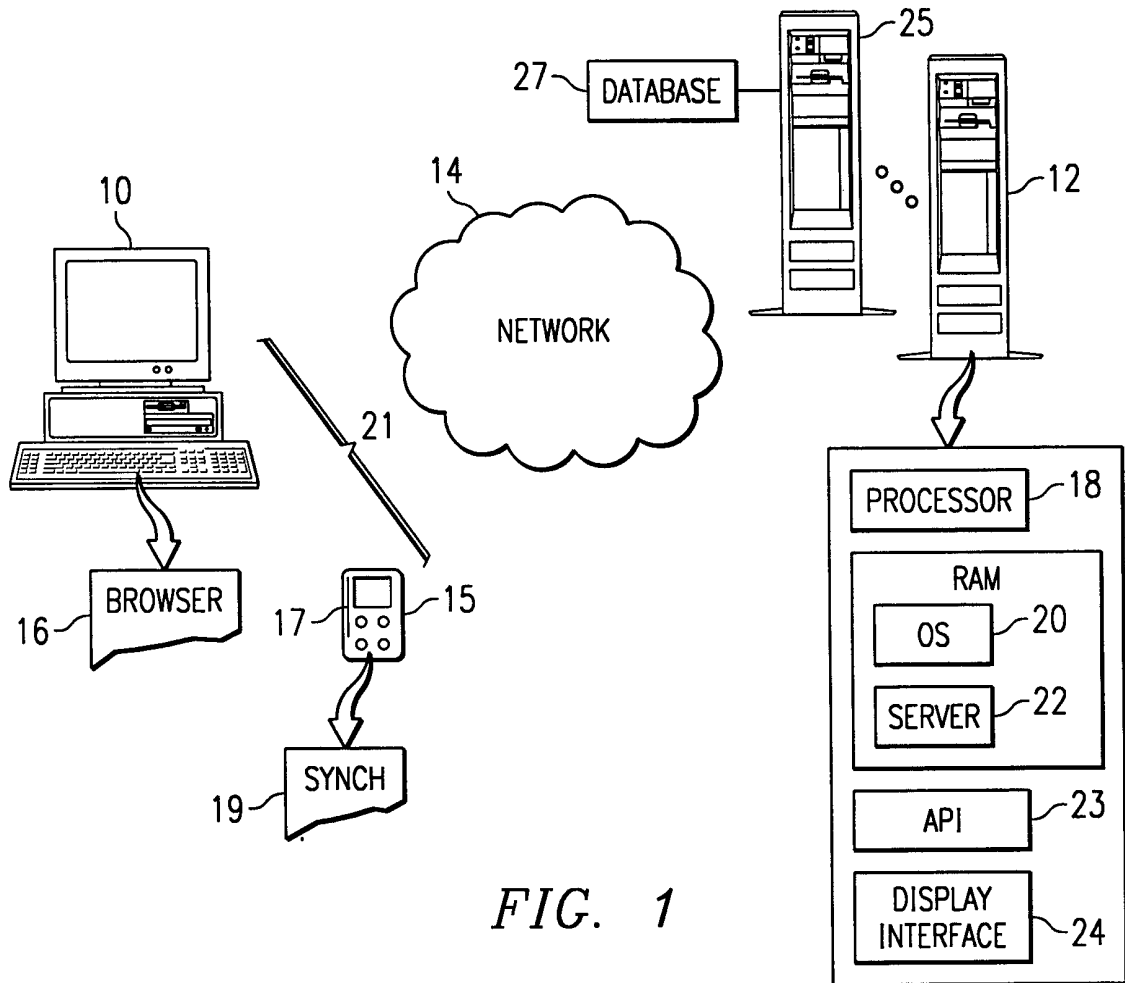


FIG. 1

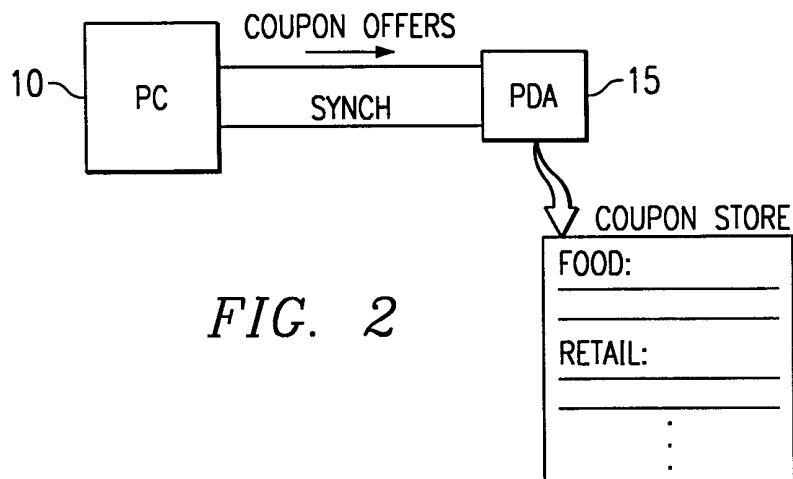


FIG. 2

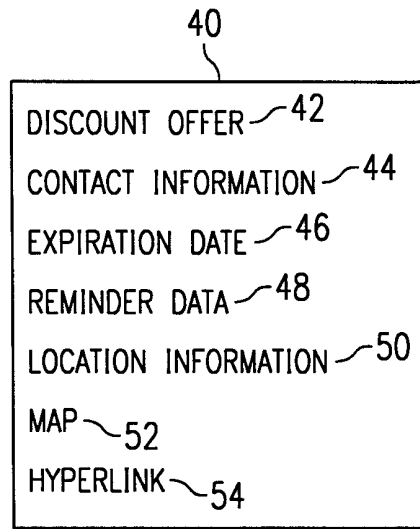


FIG. 3

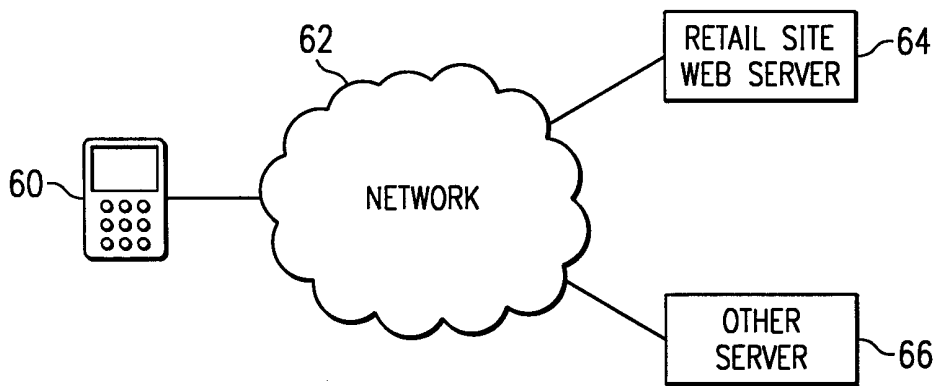


FIG. 4

## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US00/12955

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(7) :G06F 17/60

US CL :705/14

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)

U.S. : 705/14, 1, 16, 26

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Please See Extra Sheet.

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

Please See Extra Sheet.

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 5,806,044 A (POWELL) 08 September 1998, the background and the summary of the invention, fig.1A, col.4 lines 58-67, col.5 lines 6-21 and 32-50, col.6 lines 58-67, col.7 lines 7-30, col.7 line 64 to col.8 line 3, col.9 lines 54-65, col.12 line 61 to col.13 line 11.	1-13
Y,P	US 6,009,410 A (LEMOLE ET AL.) 28 December 1999, the abstract, background and the summary of the invention, col.3 lines 27-65.	1-13
Y,P	US 6,049,779 A (BERKSON) 11 April 2000, col..4 lines 25-43, col.11 lines 14-36.	1-13
Y	US 5,305,197 A (AXLER et al.) 19 April 1994, the background and the summary of the invention, col.2 lines 45-67.	1-13



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:	*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
"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	*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
"E" earlier document published on or after the international filing date	*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
"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)	*G* document member of the same patent family
"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	

Date of the actual completion of the international search

09 AUGUST 2000

Date of mailing of the international search report

23 AUG 2000

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US  
Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
Box PCT  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230

Authorized officer

CUONG H. NGUYEN

Telephone No. (703) 305-4553

*James R. Matthews*



## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.  
PCT/US00/12955

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

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 5,249,044 A (VON KOHORN) 28 September 1993, col.6 lines 23-45.	1-13
Y,P	US 6,026,369 A (CAPEK) 15 February 2000, the description of prior art.	1-13
Y,P	US 5,948,061 A (MERRIMAN et al.) 07 September 1999, col.3 line 64 to col.4 line 11, col.5 lines 10-48, col.7 lines 15-30, col.8 lines 61-67.	1-13
Y,P	US 5,992,888 A (NORTH et al.) 30 November 1999, col.9 lines 8-26.	1-13
Y	US 4,882,675 A (NICHTBERGER et al.) 21 November 1989, col.23 lines 3-10.	1-13
Y,P	US 5,970,469 A (SCROGGIE et al.) 19 October 1999, col.11 1-25.	1-13
Y	US 4,097,067 A (SCHECHTER) 27 June 1978, the background and the summary of the invention, col.1 lines 30-58, col.3 lines 6-23, col.6 lines 18-36.	1-13
Y	US 5,821,513 A (O'HAGAN et al.) 13 October 1998, col.11 lines 14-35.	1-13
A	US 5,734,823 A (SAIGH et al.) 31 March 1998, the background and the summary of the invention.	1-13
A	US 5,773,954 A (VANHORN) 30 June 1998, the background and the summary of the invention.	1-13
A	US 4,010,964 A (SCHECHTER) 08 March 1977, the summary.	1-13
Y	JP 407327094A (KURIHARA) 12 December 1995, the constitution of the invention.	1-13

**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

International application No.  
PCT/US00/12955

**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**

Documentation other than minimum documentation that are included in the fields searched:

DOWNES ET AL., BARRON'S DICTIONARY OF FINANCE AND INVESTMENT TERMS, 5TH EDITION, 1998.  
HARCOURT: AP DICTIONARY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
MICROSOFT PRESS COMPUTER DICTIONARY, 3RD EDITION.

**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**

Electronic data bases consulted (Name of data base and where practicable terms used):

WEST2.0/DERWENT, DIALOG CLASSIC, NPL (PROQUEST DIRECT, CORPORATE RESOURCENET),  
ECOMMERCE-GUIDE.COM, ECOMMERCE WEBOPEDIA, ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA ONLINE.  
search terms: distribute, coupon, redeem, graphic, display, client, Web, clickable, transfer, store, data, hyperlink, map,  
reminder, date, message, secure link, prevent, identifier, user, cookie, offer, PDA or portable digital assistant