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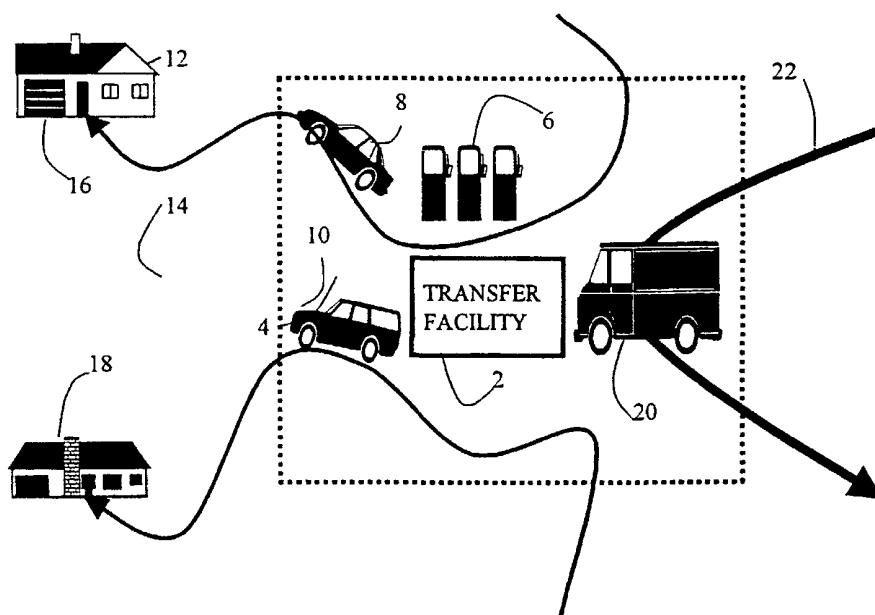
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(54) Title: ASYNCHRONOUS ITEM TRANSFER FACILITY, SYSTEM AND METHOD



(57) Abstract: An asynchronous item transfer facility (2) has a storage structure containing a plurality of non-pre-assigned storage locations for items selected via a communications network for delivery from a sender to an addressee, and includes a first sub-system for receiving items from a sender and for routing the items to available storage locations in the storage structure; a second sub-system associated with the first sub-system, for informing an addressee of the presence of an item in the storage structure; a user interface for facilitating selection by a user of one or more modes of operation, including a pick up request by an addressee; a third sub-system for identification of an addressee; and a fourth sub-system, associated with the third sub-system, facilitating the retrieval by the identified addressee of an item addressed thereto, from the storage structure.



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT IL00/00686

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER		
IPC(7) :G06F 7/00 US CL :Please See Extra Sheet. 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. : 700/216; 700/230		
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) EAST: USPAT,JPO,USOCR,Derwent,EPO		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,472,309 A (BERNARD, II et al.) 05 December 1995, see entire document.	1-17
X	US 5,816,444 A (BUSTOS) 06 October 1998, see entire document.	1-17
X	US 5,158,155 A (DOMAIN et al.) 27 October 1992, see entire document.	1-17
X	US 5,890,136 A (KIPP) 30 March 1999, see entire document.	1-17
-- Y		
X	US 5,113,351 A (BOSTIC) 12 May 1992, see entire document.	1-17
A	US 5,672,039 A (PERRY et al.) 30 September 1997.	1-14, 17
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input type="checkbox"/> 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)	"&"	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 17 MARCH 2001	Date of mailing of the international search report 12 APR 2001	
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 Christopher Ellis <i>Diane Smith for</i> Telephone No. (703) 308-0000	

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/IL00/00686

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5,725,124 A (BUSTOS et al.) 10 March 1998.	1-14, 17
A	US 5,063,857 A (KISSEL, JR.) 12 November 1991.	1-14, 17
A	US 5,282,424 A (O'NEIL) 01 February 1994.	1-14, 17
A	US 4,950,119 A (NORD et al.) 21 August 1990.	1-14, 17
A	US 3,746,130 A (BULLAS) 17 July 1973.	1-14, 17

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/IL00/00686

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This international 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.: 15-16 and 18-19
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:

These dependent claims lack definitive claim scope precluding a more meaningful search than the base claims from which they depend.

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 II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

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

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 an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
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.
 No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/IL00/00686

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER:

US CL :

700/216