



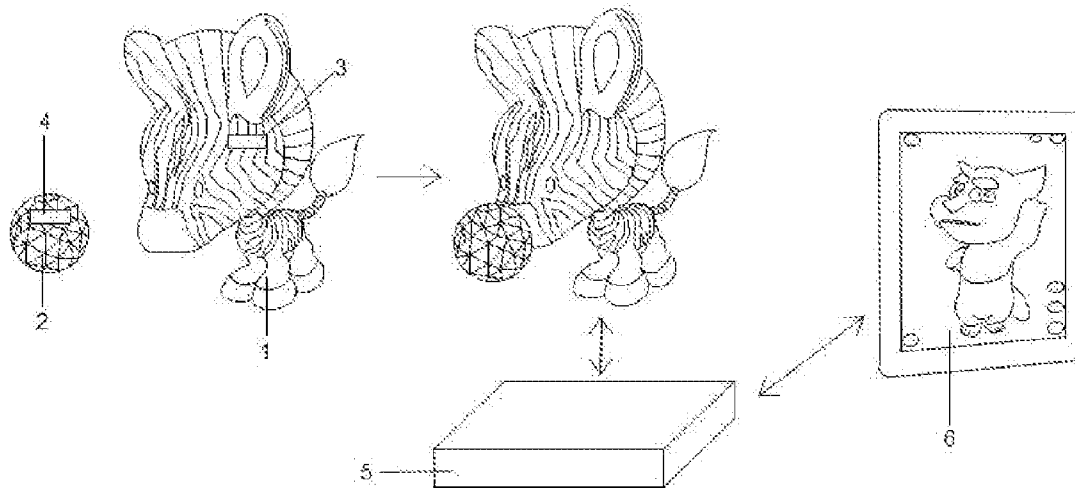
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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication****Katan et al.**(10) **Pub. No.: US 2014/0273721 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Sep. 18, 2014**(54) **SYSTEM, METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROVIDING INTERACTIVE AND ONLINE EXPERIENCE WITH TOYS CONTAINING UNIQUE IDENTIFIERS**(71) Applicants: **Foo Katan**, Beverly Hills, CA (US); **Cos Lazouras**, Beverly Hills, CA (US)(72) Inventors: **Foo Katan**, Beverly Hills, CA (US); **Cos Lazouras**, Beverly Hills, CA (US)(21) Appl. No.: **13/835,961**(22) Filed: **Mar. 15, 2013****Publication Classification**(51) **Int. Cl.**
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(57)

ABSTRACT

An apparatus for providing a user with the ability to interact with a virtual representation of a toy is disclosed. The apparatus comprises at least two toy figures, each toy figure having at least one detachable part and a unique identifier that identifies information about a user, a user's interaction with the toy figures, or location of the toy figure and each detachable part being interchangeable with other detachable parts and containing a unique identifier, configuration or marking that identifies information about the detachable part; a transmission device that is capable of detecting and receiving information from the unique identifier of the toy figures and the unique identifier, configuration or marking of the at least one detachable part of the toy; and an electronic platform that is capable of receiving information from the transmission device.



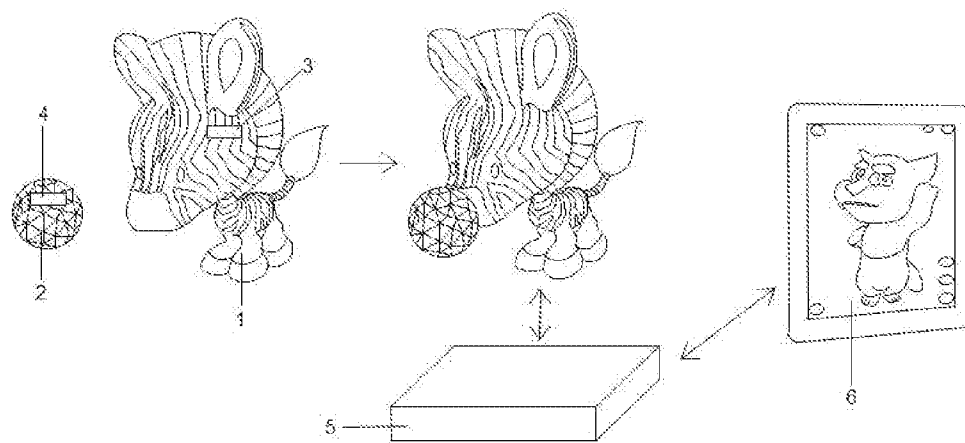


FIG. 1

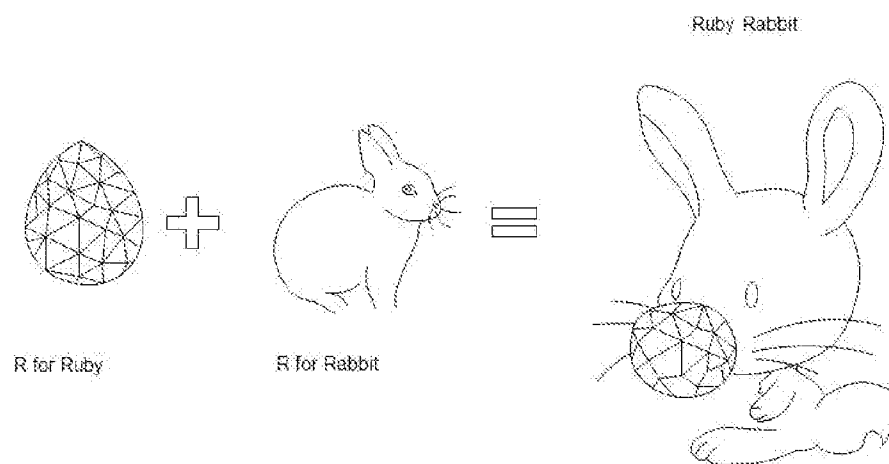


FIG. 2

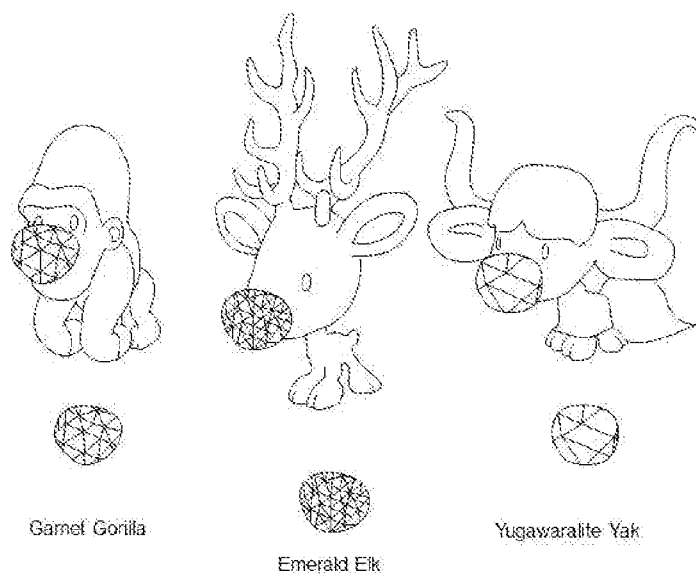


FIG. 3

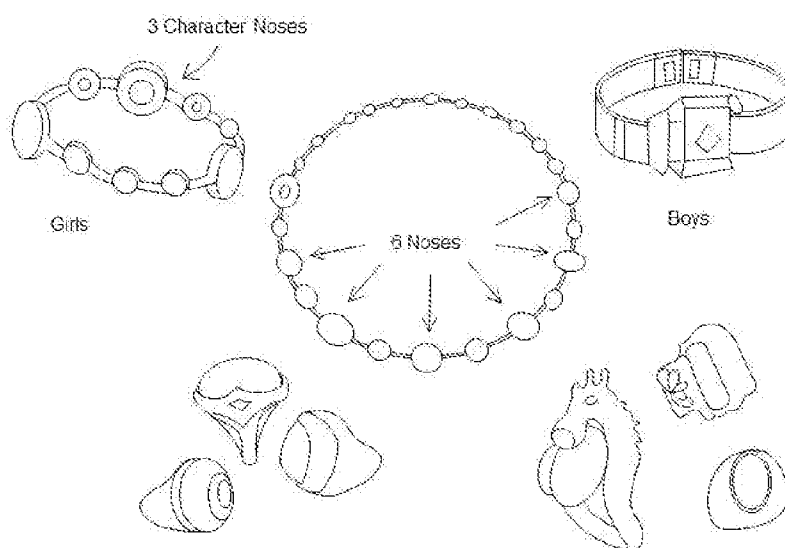


FIG. 4

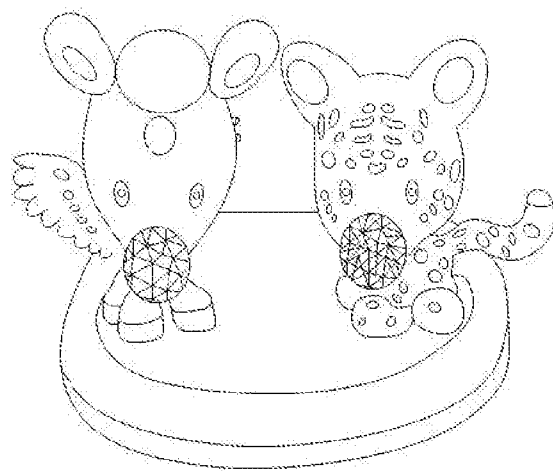


FIG. 5

SYSTEM, METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROVIDING INTERACTIVE AND ONLINE EXPERIENCE WITH TOYS CONTAINING UNIQUE IDENTIFIERS

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Disclosure

[0002] This disclosure relates generally to systems, methods, and apparatus for providing an interactive toy. More specifically, the present disclosure relates to a series of interactive toys, an online website and social media platform, interactive books, and a mobile application that provide a unique interactive experience unique to the user.

[0003] 2. General Background

[0004] Generally speaking, user's interaction with a toy, such as a plush animal, was limited to physical interaction and imaginative thinking. With the advance of the internet and the introduction of interactive entertainment platforms online, a user's means of playing with a toy have extended to a virtual world offering a more varied experience. The benefits in offering users such a world include not only an increase in the user's toy usage, but also an increase in the manufacturer's potential marketing opportunities and revenue sources.

[0005] Prior toys have tied physical toys to a virtual replica in an online world. Other toys include collectible charms bearing unique codes that allow the purchaser to engage in online play. The user must have previously purchased a specific toy and registered to play online in order to enter the virtual online world. However, the user of the toy does not have an experience that is customized to his or her toy and there is no way to know for what the user does with his or her toy.

[0006] There exists a need for a toy providing a unique identifier associated with the user and a unique name tied to a unique physical trait on each toy that connects it to the virtual world. Also, a need exists for the manufacturer/seller of the toy to understand and know what the user does with the toy and its accessories, location and interaction with other toys and users, both in the physical and online world. There also exists a need for the manufacturer/seller of the toy to deepen and improve the relationship between the toy and the user of the toy and capitalize on opportunities to encourage additional/related purchases by the same user.

[0007] There also exists a need to personalize each toy figure and establish an ongoing relationship between the toy figure and the user of the toy figure. There also exists need for user to be able to identify and track each and every individual toy figure and their accessories (e.g. gem, portion of the toy, accessory, packaging, unique paw prints and/or a registration code on the packaging on the animal) that further personalizes each toy figure. This sets the stage for a deeper connection between the user and the toy figure.

[0008] There also exists enormous marketing and sales and relationship potential for a manufacturer to enhance a user's experience and bond with a toy by introducing a unique naming matrix, uniquely identifiable detachable component of a toy apparatus, and connection to a customizable virtual world along with other non-traditional toy, gaming, and social networking. Additionally, there exists a need for a toy that is uniquely identifiable and personalized to the user of the toy. The present disclosure provides these features along with other related benefits and advantages.

SUMMARY

[0009] In at least one embodiment, the present disclosure is an apparatus for providing owners/users of an animal toy figure and related play items access to a virtual world for story driven entertainment and social interaction.

[0010] In another embodiment of the present disclosure, an apparatus for creating an interactive platform that ties a unique toy figure and its unique gem nose to a virtual world that encourages the user to continue to build upon the relationship and attachment to the toy is provided.

[0011] In one aspect of at least one embodiment, the virtual world strengthens the relationship between the user and the toy by tracking the history of each toy figure (for example, its age, ownership, and places traveled) and rewarding the user with special collectible aspects of the figure if the user has engaged in enough virtual play time. These collectible aspects include the ability to build a virtual home for the figure and the ability to combine two different figures to form a customized new figure (for example, a tiger and a zebra combined to form a ziger").

[0012] In yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, if the user travels to another location, city or country and logs in from the new location, the user's online figure will unlock rewards unique to that location, city or country. The location of the user can be tracked and verified by the IP address, GPS tag, or other known method of providing location based information of the device, or with a separate device having location tracking capabilities (e.g., a phone with GPS capabilities) that determines the user's location when. For example, the user logs into a program that identifies it or a website that identifies the device (e.g., the Planet Geminose World website). As the user's collection of toy figures expands, its online commodities in the virtual world also expand.

[0013] In yet another embodiment of the present invention, access to a virtual world in which user of the toy can build a life for the virtual version of a toy animal is provided. Electronic books ("ebooks") that can serve as a medium to the virtual world in addition to a general-purpose computer. The ebooks offer customized content for the reader and based on the reader's play habits with the toy animal. Further, actions taken by the user in an ebook, for example, touching a treasure chest will correspond with changes in the virtual world, for example, unlocking the chest online. Interacting with a customized ebook will further increase the bond between the user and the toy, and increase the opportunity for the manufacturer to advertise in the virtual world in a manner tailored to the user's play habits in order to make sales of related or unrelated products.

[0014] In yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, a series of various animal toy figures is provided. Each animal toy figure has a gem in the place of a nose that is detachable and may be added to customizable jewelry depending on the amount of gems collected by the user.

[0015] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, the first letter of each animal's name and the gemstone on the animal are the same, and depend on the type of animal depicted in the apparatus. Thus, a rabbit character toy figurine may have a ruby gem in lieu of a nose and may have the unique name of "Ruby Rabbit." The toy additionally includes two human figurine characters meant to serve as young custodians of the various animal characters.

[0016] Another apparatus of the present disclosure includes items making up a physical environment for the toy figures.

These include doll houses, play sets, and additional toy environments. The gemstones can also be used in doll houses and play sets to act like puzzles and trigger things to happen in both the real and virtual world (e.g., a door opening in the doll house). Combination of multiple gems together can also result in different events occurring. The user with more gems can receive more bonuses such as benefits, incentives, or prizes from the game or manufacturer of the toy.

[0017] In at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, each toy figure in the present disclosure contains at least a type of unique and specific corresponding radio frequency identifier (RFID), and a unique code present in the packaging of each specific toy figure.

[0018] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment, each toy figure also contains unique paw prints that are identifiable through a visual coding system held up to a webcam.

[0019] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, the paw prints on the toy figures have one or more redundancy patterns on the toy (e.g., marking on 2 or 4 feet/hands or other parts of the toy that are repeated). As a result, if one marking is rubbed off or damaged, the toy will still be identifiable by the webcam or the transmission device of the interactive toy apparatus.

[0020] In addition, each toy figure's specific detachable gem nose contains a unique system allowing identification of each gem when placed on a transmission device that serves as a receptor. Thus, various receptors transmission devices will cause each gem to react differently. For example, an LED may light, or a tune may play depending on the specific type of gem placed on the specific type of receptor, including but not limited to water, human touch or a specific type of interactive device. This is evidenced in accompanying toy environments and play sets.

[0021] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment, the apparatus of the present disclosure includes character books, presented as a printed version. The stories will revolve around the adventures of the two human custodians of the animal toy figures.

[0022] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment, the apparatus of the present disclosure includes an electronic book containing the story of the same two young custodians.

[0023] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, the apparatus includes a transmission device to serve as a medium between the physical and the virtual world. The transmission device will interact with the toy figure's uniquely identifiable code to create a connection with real-world and virtual play.

[0024] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, the transmission device can be wireless and be Bluetooth enabled. The transmission device could be called anything including but not limited to, "Magic Mat", "Magic Cube" or "Magic Jewel Box"

[0025] The present disclosure also embodies an apparatus for providing the owners of the aforementioned animal toy figures a virtual world that includes a virtual representation of the toy figure, where the interactive device uses the RFID chip, other known method of identifying an object or paw prints to uniquely identify an animal and digitize a collectible virtual representation of the animal toy figure in the virtual world. Any physical object in the series of toy apparatuses will be recognized by the interactive device when placed upon it and perform an action in the digital world to replicate the movement in the virtual world. Alternatively, a virtual animal toy figure may be identified by registering that figure's unique

code in the virtual world. As the user's collection of physical toy figures expands, the user will be able to increase the size and amount of homes for such figures online upon inputting purchase confirmation in the virtual world.

[0026] In yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, when the user purchases an animal figure, an ID card associated with the purchased animal figure is provided. The ID card has similar identification features as the animal figure which allows the user to use the ID card as a replacement for the physical animal figure when the physical animal figure is not presented. In other words, the ID card allows the user to access the virtual world and enjoy the same aforementioned benefits just as if the user is accessing the virtual world with the physical animal figure. This feature creates the convenience of allowing users to bring only their ID cards to different locations rather than the entire collection of physical toys.

[0027] In yet another embodiment the present disclosure, the user can download a new virtual toy figure in advance before receiving the real physical toy. Each real toy received by downloading the virtual toy also has a unique identifier code. The user can then tag the unique toy and link them to his collection.

[0028] In yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, an apparatus providing a virtual world, presenting various activities for the consumer to participate in through interaction with a computer and electronic book. The virtual world comprises: a general purpose computer server utilizing an internet connection that is tied to a unique identifier in the user's virtual world. Thus, the content of an electronic book can change depending on actions taken in the online world, and vice versa. In addition, the electronic book contains customized content for users based on their play habits.

[0029] In yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, an apparatus is provided to enable the user to socially interact with other users in the virtual world. Users will be able to communicate directly with each other and engage in various online activities. The apparatus may also contain parental control features so that the ability to communicate with other users can be disabled at any time by a minor's parents or guardians.

[0030] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, an apparatus is provided allowing the user to trade actual physical toy figures for customized mash-up toy figures created online. The user can trade one or more toy figures (i.e. Real for virtual or real, or a combination). The user can trade the one rare extinct real toy for two virtual customizable toy figures and one original toy. When the user trades a real toy, the virtual representation of that toy is also traded at the same time. A protection system is also employed to ensure that the trade is fair and honest. For instance, the user needs to mark the toy to be traded online and facilitate a mutual online pre agreement, and then when the user swaps the toy figures and reintroduces them to the interactive toy apparatus, it will finalize the trade.

[0031] In yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, an apparatus is provided to monitor the playing habits of all users and it will adjust play options presented to each user in order to direct promotions and advertising. Games and activities are promoted and priced according to play habits, where those played less often will be offered at cheaper prices.

[0032] In yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, an apparatus is provided allowing the user to have a

virtual passport for each toy figure which gets stamped based on the user's location. When the user logs in from a particular location the virtual passport is stamped and the user will be given content that is unique to that location, if any. For example, if the user travels to Mexico a specific content for this country such as Mexican inspired wallpaper or rug, or clothing, or a recipe that the user is given to customize their animals home, avatar or recipe page. If no content has been created for a specific place, the location can still be logged in the passport and perhaps with a congratulations message.

[0033] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, an apparatus is provided wherein when a user uses the animal toy figure or ID card onto the interactive toy figure from different locations, the users receives incentives and prizes which could be virtual and/or real including but not limited to virtual money and new game play features. The location could be any including but not limiting to a specific country, city, town, or even a specific location like a retail store.

[0034] In one aspect of at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, the virtual world contains items that, when selected or clicked by the user, send information back to the server and manufacturer about the user's playing habits. Based on the user's playing habits, customized content is created specific for that user and presented to that user.

[0035] In yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, an apparatus is provided that facilitates the interaction between the user and the streamed entertainment. If the user is watching content (e.g. TV, movie, web video) live or pre-recorded, the user may be asked to interact with the video using the toy figure and by doing so the user receives incentives and prizes which could be virtual and/or real including but not limited to virtual money and new game play features. An apparatus is provided for real time interaction between the online world and the video stream, allowing the user to change the way the content plays out of a video stream (i.e. Branch Streaming) or effect future episodes.

[0036] It should be appreciated that the apparatus of the present disclosure provide, among other things, the additional benefit of allowing the user to receive focused and targeted content and advertising to the user and a way of exposing a user to additional content and advertising that and the user's interaction with the content and advertising can be confirmed through the user's interaction with the toy before, during or after the content or advertising is being displayed.

DRAWINGS

[0037] The above-mentioned features and objects of the present disclosure will become more apparent with reference to the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings wherein like reference numerals denote like elements and in which:

[0038] FIG. 1 shows, in accordance with at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, the interactive toy apparatus which comprises a toy figure with a detachable part, a transmission device, and an electronic platform.

[0039] FIG. 2 shows, in accordance with at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, animal toy figurines. Each toy figure has a unique gem in place of a nose depending on a naming matrix where the first letter of the gem and the type of animal are the same. Additionally, each toy figure has a unique RFID, code, and paw print identifier.

[0040] FIG. 3 shows, in accordance with at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, a closer image of the

type of gem placed on each animal toy figure, as well as a receptor embedded in the gem that recognizes and reacts to various surfaces (e.g., human touch, water, the interactive device).

[0041] FIG. 4 shows, in accordance with at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, various forms of jewelry the consumer may create after having collected a given number of gems. The jewelry may consist of a bracelet, necklace, ring, or earrings, and the type of jewelry marketed to the consumer may be gender specific.

[0042] FIG. 5 shows, in accordance with at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, a smooth surfaced interactive device that is able to read the RFID, unique code, or paw prints of each animal toy figure and digitize a collectible virtual representation of the animal toy figure in the virtual world when the animal toy figure is placed on the interactive device.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0043] The present disclosure is directed to an interactive toy apparatus for providing individuals with the ability to interact with a virtual representation of a toy figures online or on a mobile or desktop application. The toy in the present disclosure contains at least one unique identifier that grants individual access to a virtual world for story driven entertainment and social interaction. The toys can be any types of toy such as animal toy figures or action figures.

[0044] As illustrated in FIG. 1, the interactive toy apparatus of the present disclosure comprises at least two toy figures 1, each toy figures 1 having at least one detachable part 2 and a unique identifier 3 that identifies information about a user, a user's interaction with the toy FIG. 1, or location of the toy figures 1 and each detachable part 2 being interchangeable with other detachable parts and containing a unique identifier 4, configuration or marking that identifies information about the detachable part 2. The interactive toy apparatus also comprises a transmission device 5 that is capable of detecting and receiving information from the unique identifier 3 of the toy figures 1 and the unique identifier 4, configuration or marking of the at least one detachable part 1 of the toy. Lastly, an electronic platform 6 that is capable of receiving information from the transmission device 5 is provided, and the user has the ability to interact with a virtual representation of the toy figures 1 on the electronic platform 6 both as online game and offline game.

[0045] As illustrated in FIG. 3, the individual toy apparatuses can consist of a series of animal toy figures that have a detachable gem in place of a nose. The gem of each animal toy figure can be interchanged with the gem of another animal toy figure. The gem and the animal are based on a unique naming matrix where the first name of the animal and the gem are the same (e.g., T for Topaz and T for Tiger combine to form Topaz Tiger). Each animal toy figure contains unique identifiers such as a paw print, RFID, or code in the packaging that tie it to the virtual world, where the individual toy user may engage in various activities via the animal toy figure's virtual representation. The unique identifier identifies information about the animal toy figure's user, the user's interaction with the animal toy figure, or location of the animal toy figure. The individual toy apparatuses also comprise a transmission device, which can be attached to the toy figure or separated from the toy figure as an individual unit that is capable of detecting and receiving information from the unique identifier. The transmission device serves as a medium between the

toy character and its virtual representation by transmitting the information received to an electronic platform such as computer or mobile device. The present apparatus also contains two additional human toy figures, shown in FIG. 3, whose virtual counterparts serve as guardians of the animal toy figures in the virtual world. The virtual world can be online or on a mobile or desktop application. The user can choose to play the game as offline when internet connectivity is unavailable.

[0046] FIG. 4 shows, in accordance with one aspect of the present disclosure, that each animal toy figure's detachable gem nose may be added to customizable jewelry depending on the amount of gems collected by the individual.

[0047] The jewelry ranges from various rings, bracelets, necklaces, earrings and bands etc. which can equip at least one gem. For example, in one embodiment, a ring can only hold one gem whereas a bracelet or necklace can hold multiple gems. It should be appreciated that both the jewelry and the gem stones can be sold separately and do not have to be sold with the toy figure.

[0048] The jewelry may target a particular gender by virtue of the apparatus design holding the gems. Thus, a bracelet targeting a young female may be a different color and/or material than that targeting a young male. The gems, however, remain gender neutral and are determined entirely by the naming matrix associated with the animal toy figure from which they have been detached.

[0049] In one embodiment, each toy figure and detachable gem, an example of which is described in FIG. 2, contains a receptor that recognizes what the toy figure or gem comes into communication with. Any known method of determining what the toy figure or gem comes into communication with can be used, including, but not limited to, (1) detecting contact with various surfaces, including but not limited to human touch and water, (2) the specific configuration of an item as it comes into contact with, or in close proximity to another item, (3) receiving a signal from a transmission device of the item it comes into contact or close proximity with or presently know or future ways of knowing the toy figure or gem come into communication with or close proximity to another item of the system. When the toy figure or the detachable gem is placed on a specific receptor, it will react accordingly. Thus, different receptors invoke various reactions ranging from LED's placed within the gem lighting up, to tunes playing within an animal character's home or stable. In addition, the electronics for achieving this might be built into the toy figure rather than the detachable gem.

[0050] Once the user has purchased a physical animal toy figure, the user must confirm the purchase and register online in order to enter the Planet Geminose World.

[0051] In one of the preferred embodiments of the present disclosure, the present disclosure has an introductory webpage where users interested in engaging in the virtual world offered by the present disclosure are introduced to various features and activities. The webpage requires the user to login in order to enter the Planet Geminose World and option to create an account with password for future entry. Upon entering the website, the user will be presented with the terms, conditions and basic rules of the Planet Geminose World as well as a description or images of the products and services provided in the virtual world. As part of the registration process, the user will input contact, demographic, and other personal information (i.e., age, gender) pertaining to the user's hobbies and interests. The user must also verify the

purchase of an animal toy figure, either via the unique code placed on the packaging of the physical toy or by placing the animal's paws on a visual coding system able to read to its paw prints.

[0052] In the current embodiment, the user is granted access to the Planet Geminose World upon registration where the user may play with a virtual, computer-generated representation of the toy, such as an avatar. The Planet Geminose World is an interactive website available on various electronic platforms that have access to the internet such as a computer, mobile phone, PDA, electronic book, tablet computer, or transmission on which the physical toy animal is placed. It consists of a massive multi-player online world that is inspired by planet Earth. The Planet Geminose World essentially creates an interactive play land for the toy user that encourages imagination and interactive learning by using the toy, engaging in various storybook activities.

[0053] In yet another embodiment of the present invention, access to a virtual world in which user of the toy can build a life for the virtual representation of a toy animal is provided. Electronic books ("ebooks") that can serve as a medium to the virtual world in addition to a general-purpose computer. The ebooks offer customized content for the reader and based on the reader's play habits with the toy animal. Further, actions taken by the user in an ebook, for example, touching a treasure chest will correspond with changes in the virtual world, for example, unlocking the chest online. Interacting with a customized ebook will further increase the bond between the user and the toy, and increase the opportunity for the manufacturer to advertise in the virtual world in a manner tailored to the user's play habits in order to make sales of related or unrelated products. In addition, advertisers interested in placing advertising in electronic books can also do so.

[0054] In addition, the Planet Geminose World incentivizes users to purchase additional toys to participate in the Entertainment System. Throughout a user's logon time in the Planet Geminose World, the option for purchasing more products to enhance a user's experience, including additional toy figures or accessories for toy figures already purchased, will be available.

[0055] In the current embodiment, the Planet Geminose World provides a virtual representation of the toy that is able to participate in activities and games online. The Planet Geminose World also provides various means to care for the wellbeing of animal toy figures, including engaging in work out activities and building homes for the virtual animals a user has collected, ranging from small cottages for small groups to large palatial estates for bigger groups.

[0056] As shown in FIG. 5, in accordance with one aspect of the present disclosure, the user may interact with the Planet Geminose World via a smooth surfaced interactive device that is able to read the RFID, unique code, or paw prints of each animal toy figure and digitize a collectible virtual representation of the animal toy figure in the virtual world when the animal toy figure is placed on the interactive device. Accordingly, actions taken by a user holding an animal toy figure on the interactive device will translate into actions taken by the virtual counterpart of the toy figure in the Planet Geminose World. Additionally, the wireless device ties to a series of interactive books, allowing the user to unlock hidden stories, sub-plots, and information by using the device in conjunction with the animal toy figure.

[0057] Furthermore, in the current embodiment, the user becomes virtual friends with the toy figure in Planet Gemi-

nose World, and the virtual representation of the toy figure talks and interacts with the user in order to establish a deeper bond between the toy and the user. Upon parental approval, a user may connect with a “best friend,” another live user with whom the user may engage in playtime activities and general online chat. The online chat is achieved through a webpage displaying a user interface for real time online chat communication with other user to the virtual world.

[0058] Additionally, in the current embodiment, the Planet Geminose World provides a system for tracking the travel history of each animal toy figure and places it in a unique virtual passport. If the user travels to another location, city or country and logs into the Planet Geminose World using the unique ID card or using the animal toy figure, either by manually entering a unique identifying code, holding an animal toy figure’s paw to a visual scanning device such as a webcam, or placing the animal toy figure to an interactive device able to read the animal’s unique RFID code, the animal character’s virtual character passport will make note of the travel. In travelling to different locations and logging on to the Planet Geminose World from such locations, the user will unlock special prizes and activities unique to that locale. In doing so, the virtual world in the present embodiment will encourage consistent playtime between a user and the toy animal toy figure that will extend even to family vacation time, and deepen the bond between the toy and the user. Ultimately, the existence of such a system will encourage a user’s time online in the virtual world and increase the marketing opportunities for the manufacturer. Also based on the first use of the animal toy figure by the user, each toy figure is assigned a unique date of birth.

[0059] Further, in accordance with one aspect of the present disclosure, the Planet Geminose World ties to a series of interactive books containing stories for each individual toy figure in the Geminose World. The interactive books employ visual story telling techniques that include toy figure to page interaction, where actions taken with a toy figure in the physical world translate to changes in the story of the interactive books as well as the disposition of the virtual representation of the animal in the Planet Geminose World. Thus, each toy figure tells the user a story and conveys a message that can ultimately affect the virtual animal in the Planet Geminose World. In addition, the interactive books may be updated online periodically. Through the update, users may receive new chapters, toy figure or items for the game periodically. The interactive book is also capable of customizing the content for the user based on how the user is playing with the user’s collection, what toy figures user collects and other data we glean from user’s play habits. Also tertiary toy figures will be built into the stories that can be named after the user or even feature the user’s will be.

[0060] Additionally, in accordance with one aspect of the present disclosure, the present disclosure makes information and statistics pertaining to a user’s play and activity habits available to the manufacturer. This information will be collected from both the self-selected hobbies and interests input by the user during registration as well as via records of the type of activities most frequently engaged in by the user in the Planet Geminose World. The manufacturer will use such information to adjust a user’s play options to maximize entertainment and ultimately generate more revenue (e.g., games played most often by a particular user will be promoted and priced accordingly, whereas games played less frequently will be offered at cheaper rates). The manufacturer can also

modify various aspects of its advertising campaigns and promotions accordingly. Thus based on the user’s activity and information provided, dynamic personalized content of each animal toy character is generated.

[0061] Accordingly, actual user session and gameplay will involve infinite combinations of the various embodiments of the inventions and their interactions with one another. By incorporating multiple mediums to create an interactive story driven entertainment platform, there exists enormous marketing and sales potential for a manufacturer to enhance a user’s experience and bond with a toy in order to increase revenue and overall profit.

[0062] Additionally in accordance with one embodiment of the present disclosure, the users can also create customized mash up animal toy figures by using two different already existing toy animal toy figures and make their own collectible toy. For example the user can combine tiger and zebra to form a ‘ziger’. The customized mash-up toy figures possess special characteristics to the toy animal toy figure like the unique identifier and can also be traded online with other users like the toy figures. In one aspect of at least one embodiment, the mash-up toy figure can be created using game credits or through special events. The game credits, such as the “Mash-Up credit” in the illustration, can be obtained through any known way. As one non-limiting example, the user may obtain free game credits with the purchase of the toy initially, through in game purchase, or by purchasing gift cards in stores. The game credits may also be earned by achieving objectives or other milestones in the game or as part of the virtual or real world.

[0063] In accordance with yet another aspect of the present disclosure, the user can download a new virtual toy figure and then receive the real toy. Each real toy received by downloading the virtual toy also has a unique identifier code on it. The user can then tag the unique toy and link them to his collection.

[0064] Additionally in accordance with at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, a webpage providing hyperlinks to a number of games and activities a user may click on, including but not limited to, work out activities and interactive stories wherein the user can engage himself in work out activities along with the toy figure.

[0065] Additionally, in yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, an apparatus is provided wherein when a user brings the animal toy figure or an ID card into close proximity to the interactive device from any location that the user is at, the user then receives incentives and prizes which could be virtual and/or real. The location could be any including but not limiting to a specific country, city, town, or even a specific location like a retail store. The location of the user can be tracked and verified by the IP address, GPS tag, or other known method of providing location based information of the device, or with a separate device having location tracking capabilities (e.g., a phone with GPS capabilities) that determines the user’s location when, for example, the user logs into a program that identifies it or a website that identifies the device (e.g., the Planet Geminose World website).

[0066] In yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, an apparatus providing the interaction between the interactive device and the streamed entertainment. If the user is watching live or pre-recorded videos (e.g. TV, movie, web video), the user may be asked to interact with the video using the interactive device or paw prints, and by doing so the user receives incentives and prizes which could be virtual and/or

real including but not limited to virtual money and new game play features. An apparatus is provided for real time interaction between the online world and the video stream, allowing the user to change the way the content plays out of a video stream (i.e. Branch Streaming) or effect future episodes.

[0067] It should be appreciated that the apparatus of the present disclosure provide, among other things, the additional benefit of allowing the user to receive focused and targeted content and advertising to the user and a way of exposing a user to additional content and advertising that and the user's interaction with the content and advertising can be confirmed through the user's interaction with the toy and the interactive device before, during or after the content or advertising is being displayed.

[0068] Additionally, in one aspect of the present disclosure, the user can trade any toy figure for one or more toy figures (i.e. Real for virtual or real, or a combination). The user can trade the one rare extinct real toy for multiple virtual customizable toy figures and one original toy. When the users trade a real toy, the virtual representation of that toy in the game is also traded. A system is also provided for fair and honest trade, i.e. the user needs to mark the toy to be traded online and facilitate a mutual online exchange and then when the user swaps the toy figures and reintroduces them to the interactive device that will finalize the trade of the virtual toys.

[0069] Additionally in accordance with one aspect of the present disclosure, when the user purchases an animal toy figure or an interactive device, an ID card associated with the purchased animal toy figure or interactive device is provided. The ID card has similar identification features as the animal toy figure which allows the user to use the ID card as a replacement for the physical animal toy figure when the physical animal toy figure is not presented. In other words, the ID card allows the user to access the virtual world and enjoys the same aforementioned benefits just as if the user is accessing the virtual world with the physical animal toy figure. This feature creates the convenience of allowing users to bring only their ID cards to different locations rather than the entire collection of physical toys.

[0070] In yet another embodiment of the present disclosure, each toy figure in the present disclosure contains a unique and specific corresponding radio frequency identifier (RFID), and a unique code present in the packaging of each specific toy figure.

[0071] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, each toy figure also contains unique paw prints that are identifiable through a visual coding system held up to a webcam and the interactive device.

[0072] In yet another aspect of at least one embodiment of the present disclosure, the paw prints on the toy figures have one or more redundancy patterns on the toy (e.g., marking on 2 or 4 feet/hands or other parts of the toy that are repeated). As a result, if one marking is rubbed off or damaged, the toy will still be identifiable by the webcam and the interactive device.

What is claimed is:

1. An interactive toy apparatus, the apparatus comprising: at least two toy figures, each toy figure having at least one detachable part and a unique identifier that identifies information about a user, a user's interaction with the toy figures, or location of the toy figure and each detachable part being interchangeable with other detachable parts and containing a unique identifier, configuration or marking that identifies information about the detachable part;

a transmission device that is capable of detecting and receiving information from the unique identifier of the toy figures and the unique identifier, configuration or marking of the at least one detachable part of the toy; an electronic platform that is capable of receiving information from the transmission device; and wherein the apparatus provides the user with the ability to interact with a virtual representation of at least one of the toy figures online or on a mobile or desktop application.

2. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein the transmission device can be attached to the toy figure or separated from the toy figure as an individual unit.

3. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein the electronic platform is a separate component, computer, mobile device or tablet computer.

4. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein each toy figure has a shape of an animal.

5. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 4, wherein the first letter of the detachable part is the same as the first letter of the name of the animal.

6. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein the detachable part is used with other detachable parts to create jewelry or accessories.

7. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein changing the detachable part causes one or more things to occur with the toy figure physically, online or on a mobile or desktop application.

8. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein the detachable part lights up or creates a physical response when the detachable part is detected by the transmission device.

9. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein the unique identifier of the toy figure or the detachable part is a special shape that can be recognized by visual coding system or by using a webcam.

10. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein when the electronic platform detects that the toy figure is identified as being in a new location, the user of the toy figure is provided with content and features that are specific to the new location.

11. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein the electronic platform detects the location based on the IP address, GPS tag or location tracking device.

12. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein the electronic platform send information about the user, the user's interaction with the toy figures, or the location of the toy figure and the user receives targeted or personalized advertising to the user based on the information received from the user.

13. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein a user can create a customizable toy figure by combining two or more toy figures to create a new customized toy figure online or on a mobile or desktop application.

14. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein upon registering the toy figure online, a virtual representation version of the toy figure is created online or on a mobile or desktop application.

15. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 14, wherein the virtual representation of the toy figure can talk and interact with the user and the movement of the user is monitored or detected.

16. The interactive toy apparatus of claim 1, wherein the unique identifier can be a radio frequency identifier, a unique design, print or code for each of the toy figure.

17. An interactive toy method, the method comprising:
providing at least two toy figures, each toy figure having at least one detachable part and a unique identifier that identifies a user, a user's interaction with the toy figures, or location of the toy figure; each detachable part containing a unique identifier, configuration or marking that identifies the detachable part and is interchangeable with detachable parts of other toy figures;

receiving information from the unique identifier of the toy figures and the unique identifier, configuration or marking of the at least one detachable part of the toy to a transmission device; and

wherein the method provides the user with the ability to interact with a virtual representation of at least one of the toy figures online or on a mobile or desktop application.

18. The method of claim **17**, wherein changing the detachable part causes one or more things to occur with the toy figure physically or online or on a mobile or desktop application.

19. The method of claim **17**, wherein when the electronic platform detects that the toy figure is identified as being in a

new location, the user of the toy figure is provided with content that is specific to the new location.

20. An interactive toy apparatus, the apparatus comprising:
at least two toy figures, each toy figure having at least one detachable part and a unique identifier that identifies information about a user, a user's interaction with the toy figures, or location of the toy figure and each detachable part being interchangeable with other detachable parts and containing a unique identifier, configuration or marking that identifies information about the detachable part;

a transmission device that is capable of detecting and receiving information from the unique identifier of the toy figures and the unique identifier, configuration or marking of the at least one detachable part of the toy;

an electronic platform that is capable of receiving information from the transmission device and deliver the information to at least manufacture, designer or retailer of the toy figure; and

wherein a targeted or personalized advertising is delivered to the user based on the information.

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