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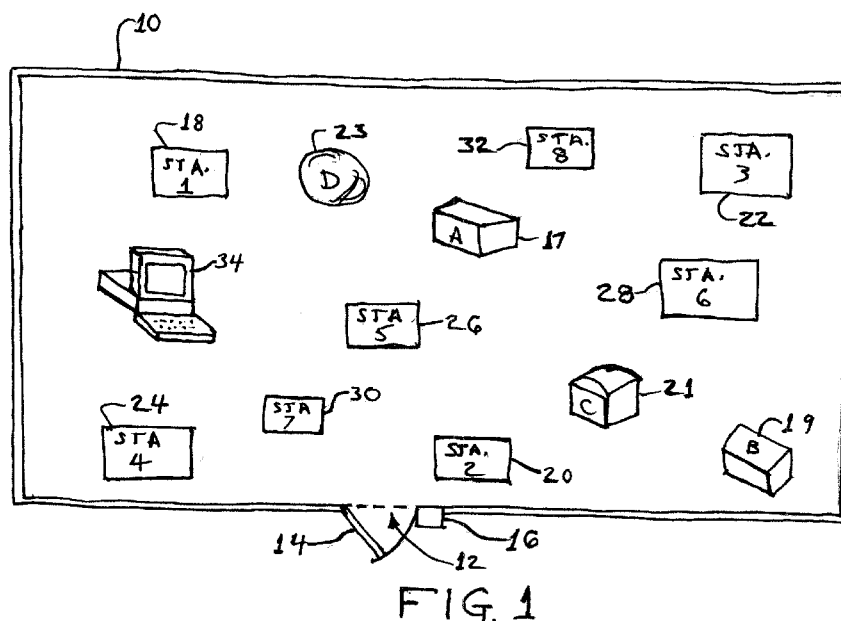
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(54) Title: PUZZLE CHALLENGE EXPERIENCE



(57) Abstract: A method of providing a game experience in which players enter an enclosure/area provided with various puzzle challenges and an exit alarm is set and may be deactivated for exit only upon completion of the puzzle challenge. The game host may be remotely notified if the alarm is tripped.

PUZZLE CHALLENGE EXPERIENCE

BACKGROUND

[0001] The advent of the internet has spawned greater interest in solving puzzles inasmuch as numerous types of puzzles may be accessed on-line from a computer thereby providing the puzzle enthusiast with a greater variety of puzzles. However, this generally requires remaining at the computer station for the length of time required to solve the puzzle. This is particularly true where the puzzle includes a progressive set of clues and challenges to be performed serially by the puzzle player. However, many puzzle enthusiasts prefer the social interaction of group puzzle solving; and, others enjoy the physical or hands-on type of puzzles involving three-dimensional clues and puzzle challenges.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

[0002] The present disclosure describes a puzzle challenge experience in which the player or players enter an enclosure or designated area which by prior contractual arrangement with the host providing the puzzle challenge experience has been provided with numerous physical clues and puzzle objects. The time required to complete the challenge may be varied by the number, nature and difficulty of the puzzles provided in the enclosure or designated area. Certain puzzles and clues may be designed to require internet searching for information needed to solve these latter puzzles. A computer terminal connected for internet access may be provided in the enclosure.

[0003] The players, upon accepting the challenge and entering the enclosure or designated area agree to permit an exit alarm to be set for remote monitoring such that the alarm will be activated and the host will know of the players leaving the enclosure or designated area prior to completing all of the puzzles in the enclosure.

[0004] The enclosure is provided with a plurality of clue objects and puzzle stations which must all be solved in order to obtain a key/code which will deactivate the exit alarm and permit the players to leave the enclosure without activating the alarm having successfully completed the puzzle challenge experience.

[0005] The puzzles and clues presented at the various stations may include combinations of numbers and letters and may also include "lockers", i.e. boxes or containers, which are three-dimensional or physical puzzles which the player must physically figure out how to open to obtain a clue contained therein. Various types of puzzle devices which may be employed in the puzzle challenge experience are presented in the description.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0006] FIGURE 1 is a pictorial of an enclosure with the computer and puzzle stations and exit monitor illustrated;

[0007] FIGURE 2 is a flow diagram of the procedure for the puzzle challenge of the present disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0008] Referring to FIGURE 1, an enclosure 10 such as, for example, a hotel room or conference room is shown with a single entrance/exit indicated generally at 12 with a suitable closure 14 and an alarm 16 which is activated by opening of the closure; and, the alarm may be monitored remotely by the host as for example, by telephone or radio frequency signals. The enclosure contains numerous physical puzzle objects such as boxes or containers A, B, C, D, denoted by reference numerals 17, 19, 21, 23 respectively, dispersed throughout the enclosure and may include those of the type wherein the player must figure out physically how to open the container to obtain a clue or clue object contained therein. In addition, a plurality of puzzle stations denoted by reference numerals 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, are disposed within the enclosure and may contain a puzzle object requiring assembly to obtain a clue or a written clue and may contain instructions for proceeding to another puzzle station. It will be understood that if the players desire a further increased degree of difficulty, certain puzzles may be redesigned, altered, added or eliminated to fit the players' needs.

[0009] The puzzles at any of the stations may optionally require the need for obtaining certain information utilizing internet access.

[0010] The enclosure 10 may also include a computer terminal 34 which is connected for on-line access to the internet if needed for obtaining necessary information for solving certain of the puzzles. Optionally, if desired a computer may be provided for communicating with the host.

[0011] A description of examples of various types of puzzles which may be arranged in the enclosure by the host is presented hereinafter.

[0012] Referring to FIGURE 2, the procedure for the puzzle challenge experience of the present disclosure is described wherein at step 40 the puzzle enthusiast clients/players contact the host provider and contractually arrange to participate in puzzle solving challenge/experience and designate the type and/or level of difficulty by the clients/players. At step 42, the host arranges the enclosure and provides therein the items required for the puzzles of the contracted puzzle experience including clues and clue items; and, if appropriate, the internet access terminal 34 within the enclosure. When the host has arranged the enclosure with the appropriate clue stations and physical clue objects, the players are given a set of basic instructions describing the overall procedure and types of clues encountered at the various stations and physical clue objects. These instructions would inform the players that the puzzles are to be solved in their entirety although not necessarily in the order of arrangement in the room.

[0013] When the enclosure has been provisioned appropriately by the host at step 42 for the desired level of challenge, at step 44 the clients/players enter the enclosure and the host sets the exit alarm. At step 46, the host monitors the exit alarm from a remote location. The clients/players then proceed at step 48 to begin solving the various puzzles using the clues and clue items in the enclosure. At step 50, the clients/players obtain information as needed from the internet based on the clues required to solve particular puzzles. At step 52, if assistance is needed, the host may be contacted remotely at step 54 which may be by internet, email or by telephone. If the clients/players do not require assistance, the clients/players proceed at step 56 to solve the remaining puzzles and obtain a key/code required to deactivate the exit alarm. At step 58, the clients/players exit the enclosure without activating the alarm having successfully completed the puzzle challenge. Alternatively, the completion of the puzzle challenge may offset automatic disablement of the exit alarm. It will be understood that

if the client(s) exit the enclosure without deactivating the exit alarm, the host is notified remotely that the exit closure has been opened without successfully completing the puzzle challenge. The present disclosure thus describes a puzzle challenge experience in which the clients/players solve a group or collection of series of puzzles which may include physical three-dimensional puzzles within an enclosure and can only exit the enclosure without actuating an alarm when all of the puzzles have been successfully solved. The puzzle challenge experience described herein provides puzzle enthusiasts a puzzle solving experience involving others. If the clients/players desire, a greater degree of difficulty of puzzle solving may be provided where puzzles are included which require information that must be obtained by internet access on a terminal provided in order to complete various puzzles within the enclosure.

[0014] In the present puzzle solving game experience, the clients/players may request any of several levels of difficulty of puzzle solving arrangements in the enclosure. For example, the number of clue stations and physical clues may be varied to tailor the expected length of time to complete the puzzles in accordance with the wishes of the players. Players seeking short term entertainment for social purposes may request only a few clue stations and physical clues in order that the puzzles may be solved in a relatively short period of time allotted for entertainment purposes. In contrast, dedicated and experienced puzzle enthusiasts may request a puzzle enclosure arrangement wherein the enclosure enclosure includes many puzzle stations and physical clue objects and requires obtaining numerous items of information from internet search in order to complete all the puzzles and obtain the key/code for deactivating the exit alarm. If the clients/players choose to seek help in puzzle solving from the host by remote communication, they may be subject to additional cost or point penalty if the puzzle solving experience is to be timed for competitive purposes.

[0015] The following presents examples of the types of clues to be found at the various clue stations and physical clue objects. For example, written clues may be found in the form of writing on various objects which may be visible immediately or visible only after treatment with mild chemical solutions such as a mild bleaching agent or a mild acidic solution such as vinegar made available in the enclosure. The puzzles may also include items visible only upon exposure to certain light, such as an ultraviolet

or infrared source or other treatment, for example, dusting with powder provided in the enclosure. The writing may include combinations of letters and numbers which are not directly readable but may provide clue information by the order of presentation or the lack of certain characters or numerals or sequences or combinations of numbers and letters. Clues may thus be provided which are encoded as, for example, with cryptography.

[0016] The puzzles may present the need to provide statistical or historical information about persons, events, trivia or objects which require internet searching on a computer provided in the enclosure in order to obtain the information such as historical, scientific or geographic facts required to solve a particular puzzle. The lockers or boxes, once opened, may contain physical items which comprise a portion of a puzzle and may contain items which must be combined with other physical items from other lockers in order to solve a particular puzzle. Such items, when correctly assembled, may provide alphanumerical clues or combinations of colors, shapes or tactile discernment such as Braille which present further puzzles or give information needed to solve other puzzles.

[0017] Additional puzzles may include physical objects present in more than one locker or box which, when combined, require recognition of shapes, patterns or colors from which information is obtained in letter, numeral or graphic image form. The boxes may contain, or may be arranged themselves, to present a physical puzzle which may be solved only by physical examination of the box or locker in order to open it, for example a box with which can be opened only by sliding certain panels in a particular sequence. The foregoing are intended as merely examples of the types of puzzles that may be presented in the enclosure; and, it will be understood that the nature of and number of the puzzles may be varied to include cryptographic puzzles as desired by the players requested level of difficulty.

[0018] An exemplary version of the puzzle game/challenge experience has been described with reference to the drawings. Obviously, modifications and alterations will occur to others upon reading and understanding the preceding detailed description. It is intended that the exemplary version be construed as including all such modifications and alterations.

CLAIMS:

1. A method of providing a game experience for a group of players comprising:

- (a) providing an enclosure/designated area for the game experience;
- (b) disposing at least one puzzle challenge in the enclosure/designated area and arranging for the players to enter the enclosure/designated area;
- (c) monitoring the enclosure/area with an exit alarm;
- (d) enabling disablement of the exit alarm only when the puzzle challenge has been solved.

2. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of disposing at least one puzzle includes disposing a plurality of puzzles to be solved serially wherein the alarm may be disabled only when the last puzzle in the series has been solved.

3. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of providing the enclosure/area includes providing internet access in the enclosure/area and providing for remote for communication with the host.

4. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of disposing at least one puzzle includes disposing a plurality of puzzles to be solved serially and providing clues as to the identity of the puzzle sequence in the series.

5. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of disposing at least one puzzle includes disposing a three dimensional puzzle.

6. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of disposing at least one puzzle includes disposing a puzzle requiring obtaining information from the internet.

7. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of disposing at least one puzzle includes providing a puzzle which contains instructions for proceeding to another puzzle station.

8. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of monitoring with an exit alarm includes notifying the host remotely if the alarm is tripped.

9. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of disposing at least one puzzle includes providing a cryptographic puzzle.

10. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of disposing at least one puzzle includes providing clues through one of chemical, optical and mechanical processes.

11. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of disposing at least one puzzle includes providing clues through combinations of any of (a) colors, (b) shapes, (c) tactile discernment.

12. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of disposing at least one puzzle includes disposing a physical puzzle.

13. The method defined in claim 1, wherein the step of disposing at least one puzzle includes obtaining information obtained in any of letter, numeric or graphic form.

14. A method of providing a game experience for a group of players/enthusiasts comprising:

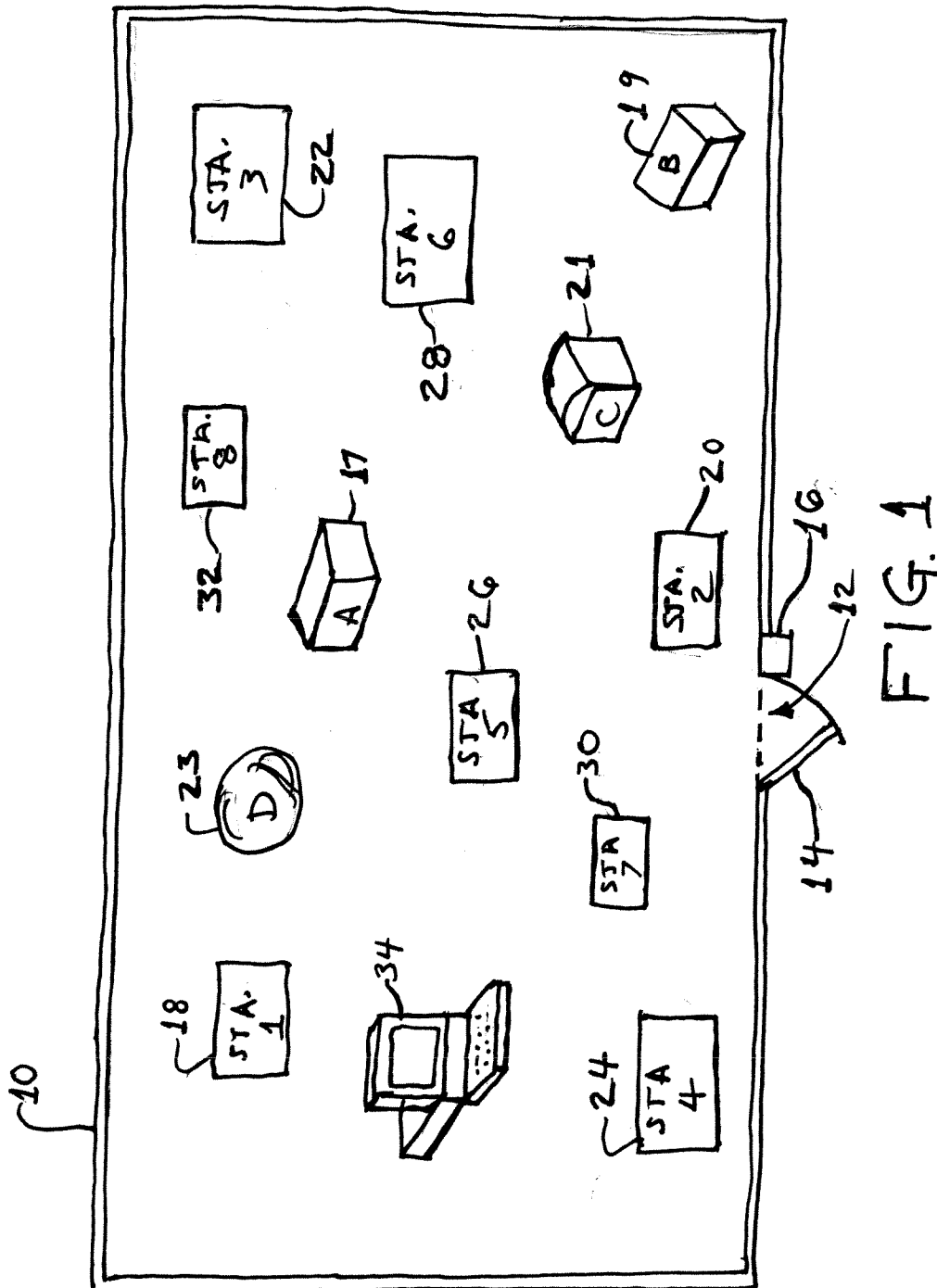
- (a) providing an enclosure/designated area for the game experience;
- (b) providing a puzzle challenge in the enclosure/area and arranging

for the players to enter therein;

(c) monitoring the enclosure/area with an exit alarm;

(d) enabling the players to deactivate the alarm only upon completion of the puzzle challenge.

15. The method defined in claim 14, wherein the step of monitoring includes remotely notifying a host if the alarm is tripped.



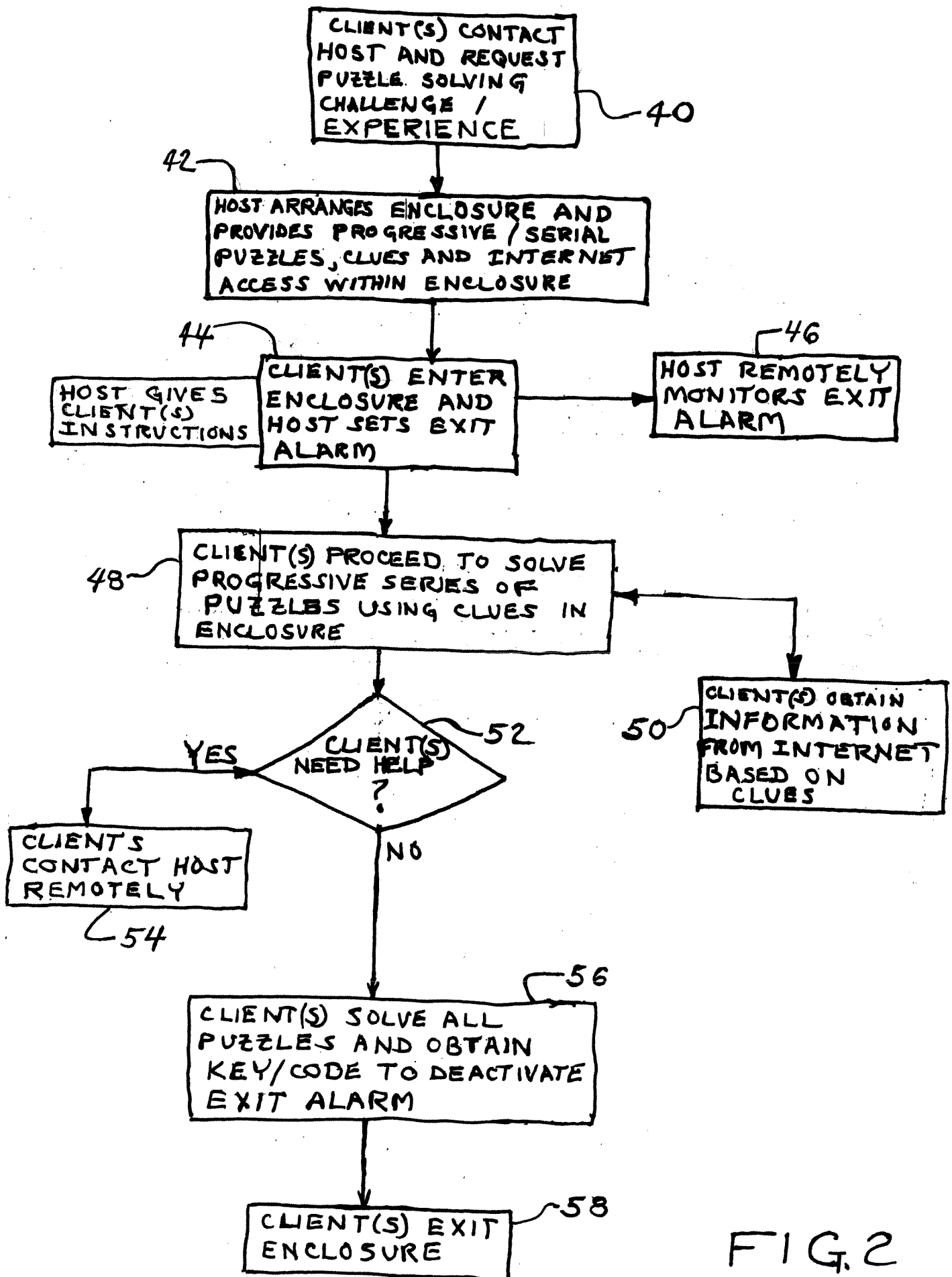


FIG. 2

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US2009/044764

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(8) - A63F 9/18 (2009.01)

USPC - 273/153R

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC(8) - A63F 9/18; A63G 31/00 (2009.01)

USPC - 273/153R; 463/9; 472/137

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)

PatBase

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 2004/0077423 A1 (WESTON et al) 22 April 2004 (22.04.2004) entire document	1-15
Y	US 2007/0276725 A1 (KELLETT) 29 November 2007 (29.11.2007) entire document	1-15
Y	US 2006/0287030 A1 (BRIGGS et al) 21 December 2006 (21.12.2006) entire document	3, 6, 7

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

* Special categories of cited documents:

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"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

"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

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"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

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