MONITORING ELECTRONIC MAIL MESSAGE DIGESTS

A method for monitoring electronic mail messages, each mail message comprising header information and a main body, particularly for protection against virus attacks and unsolicited commercial email (UCE). The method comprises generating a summary digest of only the subject line and the message content of the main body, wherein the message content may comprise textual content and/or attached files. The generated summary digest is stored in a memory, and compared with existing summary digests stored in memory. If the number of matches exceeds a threshold value, an alert signal is raised and appropriate action initiated. A timestamp may be stored with each summary digest, together with sender/recipient details and the internet protocol (IP) address of origin, to aid detection of the originator of the message.
Published:
— with international search report

(88) Date of publication of the international search report: 9 October 2003

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.
# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

**IPC 7** G06F1/00

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 7** G06F

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 practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. Patent family members are listed in annex.

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

Date of the actual completion of the international search: 31 January 2003

Date of mailing of the international search report: 20/02/2003

Name and mailing address of the ISA:
European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel: (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx: 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer: Meis, M
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>WO 99 33188 A (BRIGHT LIGHT TECHNOLOGIES INC) 1 July 1999 (1999-07-01) &lt;br&gt;the whole document</td>
<td>1-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patent document cited in search report</td>
<td>Publication date</td>
<td>Patent family member(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>AU 1631199 A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>EP 1040584 A2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>JP 2001527257 T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>WO 9933188 A2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>