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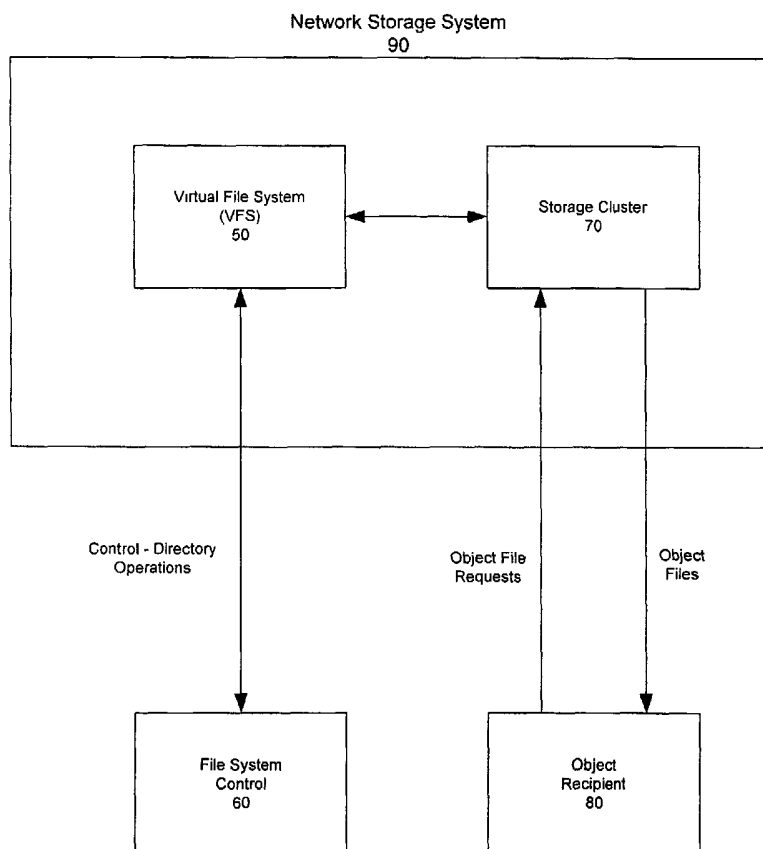
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: A NETWORK STORAGE SYSTEM



(57) Abstract: A network storage system includes a virtual file system ("VFS"), to manage the files of the network storage system, and a storage center that stores the files. The VFS and the storage center are separated, such that a client accesses the VFS to conduct file system operations and the client accesses the storage center to upload/download files. The client accesses the network storage system through one or more storage ports. The storage center includes a plurality of distributed object storage managers (DOSMs) and a storage cluster that includes a plurality of intelligent storage nodes. The network storage system includes additional storage centers at geographically disparate locations. The network storage system uses a multi-cast protocol to maintain file information at the DOSMs regarding files stored in the intelligent storage nodes, including files stored in disparate storage centers.

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 A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
 IPC 7 G06F17/30

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B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G06F H04L

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, INSPEC, IBM-TDB

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X A	WO 99 45491 A (NUVOMEDIA INC) 10 September 1999 (1999-09-10) page 3, line 5-31 page 6, line 17-30 page 11, line 30 -page 12, line 28 figure 3 ---	1-5, 10-16, 21, 22 6-9, 17-20, 23
A	US 5 923 846 A (GAGE BRUCE ET AL) 13 July 1999 (1999-07-13) column 2, line 26-67 column 5, line 64 -column 6, line 17 column 8, line 3-22 column 15, line 56 -column 17, line 27 --- -/--	1-23

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

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C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

Internal

Application No

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