

**SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING AND TRACKING THE PROVISION OF  
AUDIO AND VISUAL PRESENTATIONS VIA A COMPUTER NETWORK**

**RELATED APPLICATION**

**[001]** This application is a continuation in-part of co-pending United States Patent Applications Serial Nos. 11/019,655 and 10/015,077, and is related to commonly assigned, co-pending and contemporaneously filed United States Patent Applications entitled: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR AGGREGATING AND PROVIDING AUDIO AND VISUAL PRESENTATIONS VIA A COMPUTER NETWORK; DYNAMIC READ THROUGH DATA COLLECTION AND AD DELIVERY SYSTEM AND METHOD OF SAME; CONTENT, TRAFFIC AND ADVERTISING ENGINE, SYSTEM AND METHOD; SYSTEM AND METHOD OF VALIDATING CONTENT, TRAFFIC AND ADVERTISING IN A COMPUTING APPLICATION ENGINE; SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR TRAFFIC IN A CONTENT AND ADVERTISING ENGINE; and CONTENT, TRAFFIC AND ADVERTISING ENGINE, SYSTEM AND METHOD, all having common inventor Tod C. Turner; and each of which applications is incorporated herein by reference as if set forth herein in the entirety.

**FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

**[002]** The present invention relates generally to the provision of information, and more particularly to the provision of informational, entertainment, educational, business and other audio and visual presentations via a computer network.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

**[003]** The Internet is a global network connecting millions of computers and linking users in more than 100 countries into exchanges of data, news and opinions. Unlike online services, which are centrally controlled, the Internet is decentralized. Each Internet enabled computer is independent, such that its' user can choose which

Internet services to use and which local services to make available to the global Internet community.

[004] There are many types of content available via the Internet, including textual content, graphical content, audio content and video content. The amount of content available via the Internet is virtually unlimited. Accordingly, it can prove difficult for a user of an Internet enabled computer to identify and locate content of a particular type and relating to a particular subject.

[005] A popular solution to finding desired content is to use a publicly available search engine. A search engine searches documents for specified keywords and returns a list of the documents where the keywords were found. Typically, a search engine utilizes a webcrawler to provide it as many documents as possible. An indexer then typically reads the webcrawler provided documents and creates an index based on the words contained in each document. Each search engine typically uses its own methodology to create its indices such that, ideally, only meaningful results are returned for each query. This is not always true though due to the complex nature and nuances of human language and efforts by document authors or providers to fool or trick the indexer into ranking its documents above those of others. Examples of conventional search engines include those made available via [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com), [www.google.com](http://www.google.com) and [www.search.com](http://www.search.com), all by way of non-limiting example only.

[006] Accordingly, there is a need for a system and method of using the Internet as a global network to unite people with common interests. Such a system and method may be used as productivity tools for business, and to educate and entertain for consumers.

## **SUMMARY OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS**

[007] A method for tracking digital media presentations delivered from a first computer system to a user's computer via a network including: providing a corresponding web page to the user's computer for each digital media presentation to

be delivered using the first computer system; providing a identifier data to the user's computer using the first computer system; providing an applet to the user's computer for each digital media presentation to be delivered using the first computer system, wherein the applet is operative by the user's computer as a timer; receiving at least a portion of the identifier data from the user's computer responsively to the timer applet each time a predetermined temporal period elapses using the first computer system; and, storing data indicative of the received at least portion of the identifier data using the first computer system; wherein each provided webpage causes corresponding digital media presentation data to be streamed from a second computer system distinct from the first computer system directly to the user's computer independent of the first computer system; and wherein the stored data is indicative of an amount of time the digital media presentation data is streamed from the second computer system to the user's computer.

#### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

**[008]** Understanding of the present invention will be facilitated by consideration of the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments of the present invention taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like numerals refer to like parts:

**[009]** Fig. 1 illustrates a block diagram of a system of networked computers;

**[0010]** Fig. 2 illustrates an electronic document according to an embodiment of the present invention;

**[0011]** Fig. 3 illustrates an electronic document according to an embodiment of the present invention;

**[0012]** Fig. 4 illustrates a flow diagram of a process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

**[0013]** Fig. 5 illustrates a flow diagram of a process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

[0014] Fig. 6 illustrates a flow diagram of a process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

[0015] Fig. 7 illustrates a block diagram of a system of networked computers in conjunction with telecommunications devices according to an embodiment of the present invention;

[0016] Fig. 8 illustrates a flow diagram of a process according to an embodiment of the present invention;

[0017] Fig. 9 illustrates an electronic document according to an embodiment of the present invention; and

[0018] Fig. 10 illustrates a flow diagram of a process according to an embodiment of the present invention.

#### **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS**

[0019] It is to be understood that the figures and descriptions of embodiments of the present invention have been simplified to illustrate elements that are relevant for a clear understanding of the present invention, while eliminating, for the purpose of clarity, many other elements found in typical website and audio/visual content delivery systems and methods. Those of ordinary skill in the art may recognize that other elements and/or steps are desirable and/or required in implementing the present invention. However, because such elements and steps are well known in the art, and because they do not facilitate a better understanding of the present invention, a discussion of such elements and steps is not provided herein.

[0020] For non-limiting purposes of explanation only, "computer", as referred to herein, refers to a general purpose computing device that includes a processor. "Processor", as used herein, refers generally to a device including a Central Processing Unit (CPU), such as a microprocessor. A CPU generally includes an arithmetic logic unit (ALU), which performs arithmetic and logical operations, and a control unit, which

extracts instructions (e.g., code) from memory and decodes and executes them, calling on the ALU when necessary. "Memory", as used herein, refers to one or more devices capable of storing data, such as in the form of chips. Memory may take the form of one or more random-access memory (RAM), read-only memory (ROM), programmable read-only memory (PROM), erasable programmable read-only memory (EPROM), or electrically erasable programmable read-only memory (EEPROM) chips, by way of further non-limiting example only. Memory may be internal or external to an integrated unit including the processor. Memory may be internal or external to the computer. Such memory may store a computer program, e.g., code or a sequence of instructions being operable by the processor. Such a computer may include one or more data inputs. Such a computer may include one or more data outputs. The code stored in memory may cause the processor, when executed by the processor, to set an output to a value responsively to a sensed input.

**[0021]** One type of computer executable code typically stored in memory so as to be executable by an Internet enabled computer is a browser application. For non-limiting purposes of explanation only, "browser" as used herein generally refers computer executable code used to locate and display web pages. Two commercially available browsers are Microsoft Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator, Apple Safari and Firefox, which all support text, graphics and multimedia information, including sound and video (sometimes through browser plug-in applications). "Plug-in", as used herein, generally refers to computer executable code that adds a specific feature or service to a larger system, in the case of a browser plug-in, the browser application.

**[0022]** The terms "computer" and "computer system" as used herein further generally refer to computing resources of the type discussed, and may take the form of single computing devices or collections of computing devices having a common operator or under common control.

**[0023]** According to certain embodiments of the present invention, content may be aggregated for presentation to users. According to certain embodiments of the

present invention, audio content may be aggregated for presentation to users. According to certain embodiments of the present invention, video content may be aggregated for presentation to users. According to certain embodiments of the present invention, audio and video content may be aggregated for presentation to users.

**[0024]** Referring now to Fig. 1, there is shown a block diagram of a system of networked computers 10. The illustrated system 10 includes a plurality of user computers 20, a plurality of network server computers 30 and a network 40 interconnecting computers 20, 30 together.

**[0025]** Illustrated system 10 includes personal computing devices 22 and a personal digital assistant computer 24 by way of non-limiting example only. Communication links 26 communicatively couple devices 20 with network 40. Links 26 may take the form of wired and/or wireless communications links, including fiber optic, POTS, DSL, cable and/or multiple access or GSM based wireless telephony or data communications systems, for example. Network 40 may include portions of proprietary and service provider networks, as well as the Internet, for example. Illustrated system 10 includes a database server 32, a content or web server 34 and a file server 36, all by way of non-limiting example only. Communication links 26 communicatively couple devices 30 with network 40 as well.

**[0026]** Referring now to Fig. 2, there is illustrated a web page 100 according to an embodiment of the present invention. Web page 100 may be provided to computers 20 by computers 30 via network 40. Illustrated web page 100 aggregates audio and/or video content for presentation to users of computers 20.

**[0027]** Referring still to Fig. 2, web page 200 includes a category selector 205, a ranking selector 210, a new content indicator 215, a content type indicator 220, a page selector 225, particular content graphics 230, particular content type indicators 235 and particular content information 240 organized under a tab 245.

**[0028]** Particular content graphics 230, particular content type indicators 235 and particular content information 240 are organized to indicate individual presentations. In the illustrated case, presentations 265, 270, 275, respectively. A user may have such indicated presentations made to them by selecting an individual presentation for streaming or downloading, such as by clicking on an indicator 235, 240 or 245. For non-limiting purposes of explanation, "streaming", as used herein, generally refers to a technique for transferring data such that it can be processed as a steady and continuous stream and a user's browser or plug-in can start presenting the data before the entire file has been transmitted. For non-limiting purposes of explanation, "downloading", as used herein, generally refers to a technique for transmitting data (e.g., an entire data file) between computers, such as between file server 36 (Fig. 1) and a computing device 22 (Fig. 1). In certain embodiments of the present invention, a commercially available content (e.g., audio and/or video podcast) delivery application, such as the Flash product available from Adobe Systems Inc., may be used to provide selected presentations to users' computers 20 (Fig. 1).

**[0029]** Referring now to Figs. 1 and 2, a user of a device 20 may request page 200 from content server 34 using a browser application in a conventional manner. Server 34 may provide page 200 to the requesting computer 20 in a conventional manner, optionally using database server 32 to populate page 200, for example.

**[0030]** In certain embodiments of the present invention, when a user selects a category in selector 205, content server 34 may request database server 32 identify which presentations should be used to populate page 200 according to the selected category. Server 34 may then provide such a populated page 200 to the requesting user computer 20. Examples of categories that may be included and selected using selector 205 include art, autos and vehicles, bloggers and people, celebrity gossip, comedy, education, gadgets, health, how to and DIY, legal, music, news, and pets and animals, for example. By selecting one of these categories, a user may receive pages 200 populated with content according to the selected category.

[0031] In certain embodiments of the present invention, when a user selects a ranking in indicator 210, content server 34 may request database server 32 identify which presentations should be used to populate page 200 according to the selected ranking. Server 34 may then provide such a populated page 200 to the requesting user computer 20. Examples of rankings that may be included and selected using indicator 210 include most recent presentations and most popular presentations, for example. By selecting one of these rankings, a user may receive pages 200 populated with content according to the selected ranking.

[0032] In certain embodiments of the presentation, a user may select a populated presentation (e.g., 265, 270 or 275, Fig. 2). In response thereto, server 34 may request file server 36 either stream or download the selected presentation to the requesting users computer 20.

[0033] Referring now to Fig. 3, there is shown a view of web page 200 when tab 250 is selected. In the illustrated embodiment of Fig. 3, web page 200 includes a text box 255 and search button 260 under tab 250.

[0034] In certain embodiments of the present invention, when tab 250 is selected, text box 255 and search button 260 may be presented on the user's computer 20 by server 34. A user may enter a search term into window 255 in a conventional manner. A user may then activate search button 260 in a conventional manner. Responsively thereto, content server 34 may request database server 32 identify which presentations should be used to populate page 200 according to the entered search term(s). Server 34 may then provide such a populated page 200 to the requesting user computer 20.

[0035] As will be appreciated by those possessing an ordinary skill in the pertinent arts, there are a number of ways to aggregate and provide content for provision using web page 200.

[0036] In certain embodiments of the present invention, users may be permitted to directly upload and enter information regarding content, e.g., to file server 36 (Fig. 1).



In certain embodiments of the present invention, users may be permitted to link presentations housed elsewhere in memory so as to be accessible to a computer 20 (Fig. 1) via network 40 (Fig. 1) -- essentially registering them with database server 32 (Fig. 1). In certain embodiments of the present invention, presentations may be created using computers 20, 30. And, in certain embodiments of the present invention, presentations housed elsewhere in memory so as to be accessible to a computer 20 (Fig. 1) via network 40 (Fig. 1) may be automatically linked to -- essentially registering them with database server 32 (Fig. 1).

**[0037]** Referring now to Figs. 1 and 4, there is shown a flow diagram of a process 400 according to an embodiment of the present invention. Process 400 is suitable for permitting users to directly upload and enter information regarding content. Process 400 commences with a user providing log on information using a computer 20 at block 405, which is provided to computers 30 via network 40, in certain embodiments to server 34. Computers 30 log the user on at block 410, and communicates this status to the user via network 40, in certain embodiments by serving a page 200 (Figs. 2, 3) to the logged on user's computer 20.

**[0038]** At block 415, the logged on user requests to upload content, *e.g.*, by interacting in a conventional manner with web page 200. This request is provided to computers 30 via network 40. At block 420, computers 30 request information regarding the content to be uploaded. In certain embodiments, the requested information may include a content title, date, series information and description, akin to that to be displayed in a corresponding indicator 240 (Figs. 2, 3). The request may further include a file identifier and location of the content indicative file to ultimately be uploaded. This request may be communicated to the user's computer 20 via network 40.

**[0039]** At block 425, the user provides at least a portion of the requested information, which is communicated to computers 30 via network 40. Some or all of the information provided may be screened or filtered or verified in conventional manners at

block 430. In certain embodiments of the present invention, information provided at block 425 may be received and screened or filtered or verified at block 430 using web server 34. All or a portion of that information may then be stored using database server 32, for later use in populating web pages 200, for example.

**[0040]** At block 430, computers 30 indicate the received information is suitable for use and confirms the content may be uploaded. This indication is provided to the user's computer 20 via network 40. At block 435, the user's computer transmits the content to computers 30 via network 40, e.g., performs a file upload in a conventional manner. The content is received by computers 30 at block 440. In certain embodiments of the present invention, content transmitted and received at blocks 435, 440 may take the form of media file suitable for use as a podcast, for example. Such a file may be received by server 34 for example, and provided to server 36 for storage 450 and later retrieval for downloading and/or streaming pursuant to a user's interaction with webpage 200 (Figs. 2, 3), for example. In such a case, server 32 may associate the stored content indicative information provided at block 425 with the file stored at block 450.

**[0041]** Referring now to Figs. 1 and 5, there is shown a flow diagram of a process 500 according to an embodiment of the present invention. Process 500 is suitable for permitting users to link presentations housed elsewhere in memory so as to be accessible to a computer 20 via network 40.

**[0042]** Process 500 commences with a user providing log on information using a computer 20 at block 505, which is provided to computers 30 via network 40, in certain embodiments to server 34. Computers 30 log the user on at block 510, and communicates this status to the user via network 40, in certain embodiments by serving a page 200 (Figs. 2, 3) to the logged on user's computer 20.

**[0043]** At block 515, the logged on user requests to link or register content, e.g., by interacting in a conventional manner with web page 200. This request is provided to computers 30 via network 40. At block 520, computers 30 request information

regarding the content to be linked. In certain embodiments, the requested information may include a content title, date, series information and description, akin to that displayed in a corresponding indicator 240 (Figs. 2, 3). The request may further include a file identifier and location of the content indicative file to be linked. This request may be communicated to the user's computer 20 via network 40.

**[0044]** At block 525, the user provides at least a portion of the requested information, which is communicated to computers 30 via network 40. Some or all of the information provided may be screened or filtered or verified in conventional manners at block 530. In certain embodiments of the present invention, information provided at block 525 may be received and screened or filtered or verified at block 530 using web server 34. In certain embodiments of the present invention, the file location data (e.g., an Internet address at which the file is available) may be checked to see if a valid media file is located thereat. All or a portion of that information may then be stored using database server 32, for later use in populating web pages 200, for example.

**[0045]** At block 530, computers 30 indicate the received information is suitable for use and confirms the content may be linked. At block 550 the received information may be stored using server 32 for later retrieval and use. Server 32 may also associate the linked content indicative information provided at block 525 with the file address stored at block 550.

**[0046]** Referring now to Figs. 1 and 6, there is shown a flow diagram of a process 600 according to an embodiment of the present invention. Process 600 is suitable for permitting users to create presentations, such as by hosting an audio show that may be recorded to create a podcast, using computers 20, 30.

**[0047]** Process 600 commences with a user providing log on information using a computer 20 at block 605, which is provided to computers 30 via network 40, in certain embodiments to server 34. Computers 30 log the user on at block 610, and communicates this status to the user via network 40, in certain embodiments by serving a page 200 (Figs. 2, 3) to the logged on user's computer 20.

**[0048]** At block 615, the logged on user requests to create content or host a show, e.g., by interacting in a conventional manner with web page 200. This request is provided to computers 30 via network 40. At block 620, computers 30 request information regarding the content to be created. In certain embodiments, the requested information may include a content title, date, series information and description, akin to that displayed in a corresponding indicator 240 (Figs. 2, 3). The request may further include a phone number at which the user may be reached. This request may be communicated to the user's computer 20 via network 40.

**[0049]** At block 625, the user provides at least a portion of the requested information, which is communicated to computers 30 via network 40. Some or all of the information provided may be screened or filtered or verified in conventional manners at block 630. In certain embodiments of the present invention, information provided at block 625 may be received and screened or filtered or verified at block 630 using web server 34. In certain embodiments of the present invention, the user's phone number may be checked to see if it is valid. All or a portion of that information may then be stored at block 635 using database server 32, for later use in populating web pages 200, for example.

**[0050]** At block 640, the requesting user indicates he would like to begin creating the presentation, e.g., by interacting in a conventional manner with web page 200. This indication is communicated to computers 30 via network 40. At block 645 computers 30 initiate a new presentation creation session. At block 650, a voice communications session between computers 30 and the user is commenced. In certain embodiments of the present invention, a telephone call may be automatically placed by computers 30 at block 650 to the phone number indicated at block 625.

**[0051]** Referring now to Fig. 7, there is shown a block diagram of a system of networked computers and telephones 700. Like system 10, illustrated system 700 includes personal computing devices 22 and a personal digital assistant computer 24 by way of non-limiting example only. Communication links 26 communicatively couple

devices 20 with network 40. Links 26 may take the form of wired and/or wireless communications links, including fiber optic, POTS, DSL, cable and/or multiple access or GSM based wireless telephony or data communications systems, for example. Network 40 may include portions of proprietary and service provider networks, as well as the Internet, for example. Illustrated system 10 includes a database server 32, a content or web server 34 and a file server 36, all by way of non-limiting example only. Communication links 26 communicatively couple devices 30 with network 40 as well.

**[0052]** System 700 additionally includes conventional telephone 705 associated with (as indicated by label 720) with a particular computing device 22, e.g., by both corresponding to a given requesting user, for example. In the illustrated embodiment, phone 705 may be communicatively coupled to computers 30 independent of network 40 (e.g., 725). In the illustrated embodiment, phone 705 may be communicatively coupled to computers 30 via network 40 (e.g., 710). In certain embodiments of the present invention phone 705 may take the form of a POTS phones. In certain embodiments of the present invention phone 705 may take the form of a VoIP phone. In certain embodiments of the present invention, phone 705 may take the form of a cellular phone. In certain embodiments of the present invention, phone 705 is independent of the associated computer 22. In certain embodiments of the present invention, phone 705 may be communicatively coupled to computers 30 independent of any connection between the associated computer 22 and computers 30.

**[0053]** Referring now to Figs. 6 and 7, a requesting user may be called at block 650 by computers 650 placing a conventional telephone call to the phone number provided at block 625. Upon the call being answered using phone 705, a pre-recorded audio message indicating the content will be created may be played. Thereafter, the requesting user, or his designee for example, may speak into phone 705, thereby hosting a show, for example. Responsively thereto, computers 30 may digitize the spoken show and store a media file indicative of it (e.g., using file server 36), as indicated at block 655.

[0054] Referring still to Figs. 6 and 7, information provided at block 625 and stored at block 635 may include identifications of intended audience members for the presentation, e.g., an audience for the show to be hosted. This additional information may be used at block 660 to initiate analogous telephone calls to those numbers as well. In this way, a phone audience may hear the show live at a plurality of locations. For non-limiting purposes of explanation, this is shown in Fig. 7 as phone 730, which is associated with PDA 24 by label 740.

[0055] Such a "dial out" functionality allows for an understanding of where the user/viewer/listener can be reached and/or located, may allow for myriad additional features in the present invention. For example, a pinpoint geographic location of broadcast listeners may be placed on a map, such as via website 200 to thereby illustrate where other listeners of the broadcast are specifically located. Such a mapping functionality may be realized using a commercially available mapping application, such as Google Maps, for example.

[0056] It should further be understood such a content generation functionality provides additional advantages. For example, enhanced telephone conferences may be readily achieved according to certain embodiments of the present invention. Such enhanced conferences may exhibit an automatic dial out to conference attendees, including the host and audience. Such enhanced conferences may exhibit automatic recording and archival for later playback as a podcast, for example. Such enhanced functionalities may advantageously be achieved without the host having access to any particular resources other than a general purpose Internet enabled computer and a conventional telephone. Such enhanced functionalities may advantageously be achieved without the any audience member having access to any particular resources other than a conventional telephone. Accordingly, enhanced telephone conferencing may be readily achieved.

[0057] In certain embodiments of the present invention, certain portions of aggregated content may have access thereto restricted to authorized members. For

example, information provided at blocks 425, 525 and/or 625 may include an authorized group identifier or content password. Such an identifier and/or password may be stored using database server 32. When a user seeks to playback such protected content, *e.g.*, by interacting with web page 200 as set forth above, the user may need to log in (*e.g.*, blocks 405, 410, 505, 510, 605, 610) or provide the corresponding password. Where a group identifier is used, database server 32 may indicate what groups a logged in user is authorized for, so as to selectively permit access to protected content to authorized users. Such groups may, by way of non-limiting example only, include businesses and other private organizations.

**[0058]** Referring now to Figs. 1 and 8, there is shown a flow diagram of a process 800 according to an embodiment of the present invention. Process 800 is suitable for automatically aggregating and linking to presentations housed elsewhere in memory so as to be accessible to a computer 20 (Fig. 1) via network 40 (Fig. 1) -- essentially registering them with database server 32 (Fig. 1).

**[0059]** Syndication of Internet content is becoming more commonplace. Really Simple Syndication ("RSS") is a family of Internet feed formats used to publish content that may be frequently updated, such as podcasts (RSS 2.0). RSS utilizes a standardized format. An RSS document (sometimes referred to as a "feed," "web feed" or "channel") typically contains either a summary of content from an associated web site or the full text.

**[0060]** An RSS may itself be used to aggregate content from multiple web sources in one place. RSS content is typically accessed using an RSS reader application. Such an application may be a thin, web-page based application or a downloaded application executed on a user's computer (*e.g.*, 20, Fig. 1). RSS feeds may typically be subscribed to by entering or selecting the feed's link using the reader. The RSS reader typically checks the user's subscribed feeds for new content at predetermined intervals, downloads updates, and provides a user interface to monitor and view the feeds.

[0061] Embodiments of the present invention will be discussed with regard to RSS 2.0 feeds for non-limiting purposes of explanation only. It should be recognized that embodiments of the present invention may be suitable for use with other types of content (e.g., audio/video) feeds.

[0062] Referring again to Fig. 8, process 800 commences with a user providing log on information using a computer 20 at block 805, which is provided to computers 30 via network 40, in certain embodiments to server 34. Computers 30 log the user on at block 810, and communicates this status to the user via network 40, in certain embodiments by serving a page 200 (Figs. 2, 3) to the logged on user's computer 20.

[0063] At block 815, the logged on user requests to link an RSS feed, e.g., by interacting in a conventional manner with web page 200. This request is provided to computers 30 via network 40. At block 820, computers 30 request information regarding the content to be created. In certain embodiments, the requested information may include a content title, series information and description, akin to that displayed in a corresponding indicator 240 (Figs. 2, 3). The request may further include RSS feed identification and/or access information through which the feed may be accessed. This request may be communicated to the user's computer 20 via network 40.

[0064] At block 825, the user provides at least a portion of the requested information, which is communicated to computers 30 via network 40. Some or all of the information provided may be screened or filtered or verified in conventional manners at block 830. In certain embodiments of the present invention, information provided at block 825 may be received and screened or filtered or verified at block 830 using web server 34. In certain embodiments of the present invention, the feed identifier and/or access information may be checked to see if it is valid. All or a portion of that information may then be stored at block 850 using database server 32, for later use in populating web pages 200, for example. At block 850, the feed may further be accessed to acquire information regarding and/or either links to or the feed content itself then present. All of this information may be automatically aggregated using computers



30 in accordance with the methods described herein-above with regard to Figs. 4 and/or 5, where the feed information (e.g., RSS associated XML data) is used in lieu of user provided information. The date and time when content is automatically acquired via such a registered RSS feed may also be stored at block 850 using computers 30, e.g., database server 32.

[0065] At block 855, computers 30 may determine if new content exists for any feed stored at block 850. This may be accomplished in any of a number of conventional manner, including checking when the feed was last updated and/or the content available there-through to data stored at block 850. When new or changed content is found, the data stored at block 855 may be appended or amended to reflect the new content.

[0066] It should further be understood such a content acquisition provides additional advantages. For example, each user wishing to identify and view content available via an RSS feed may conventionally need to obtain and operate an RSS reader application. Further, each such RSS reader application would need to access each identified RSS feed. This leads to substantial bandwidth usage, for example. In contrast, certain embodiments of the present invention permit a user to access RSS content without the need for his own RSS reader. Further, embodiments of the present invention only require that system 30 access each RSS feed, as opposed to each system 30 user computer 20 wishing to access the RSS feeds, leading to substantial savings in network resources. Further, certain embodiments of the present invention allow user to access and compare content available via RSS feeds they are not even aware of, e.g., by their interaction with webpage 200 as discussed above, where webpage 200 includes content added using the methodology of process 800, for example. Accordingly, certain embodiments of the present invention provide for enhanced content syndication and aggregation, as compared to even RSS feeds themselves, for example. And, certain embodiments of the present invention provide for automatic aggregation of RSS fed content in combination with non-RSS fed content in a single application independent of any user RSS reader application.

**[0067]** In certain embodiments of the present invention, web page views and/or web site visits (e.g., sessions) may be tracked. A page view, as used herein, generally refers to a request made to a web server for a web page, as opposed to just a page component, such as a graphic, for example. A visit, as used herein, generally refers to a sequence of web page and/or component requests from a particular user's computer, within some predetermined period of time. Commercially available server log file analysis applications may be used to gather such information, for example.

**[0068]** In certain embodiments of the present invention, more detailed tracking information may be desired. For example, it may be desirable to know not only that a certain number of users requested and accessed certain presentations, but also how long a user actually watched, and/or listened, to a presented program, after selection via webpage 200 (Figs. 2, 3), for example. Certain embodiments of the present invention may provide the ability to track the number of visitors to the platform of the present invention, and additionally the number of visitors per content via the platform of the present invention, and additionally information regarding how long presentations were watched and/or listened.

**[0069]** For example, and referring now to Fig. 9, there is shown a view of a web page 900 according to an embodiment of the present invention. Web page 900 generally includes portions 910, 920, 930 and 940. Web page 900 may be provided to a user's computer 30 responsively to user selection of a presentation shown on a populated web page 200 (Fig. 2). By way of non-limiting explanation, should a user viewing web page 200 (Fig. 2) select a presentation 265 for viewing and/or listening, a suitably populated web page 900 may be served by computers 20. In such a served web page 900, portion 930 may be utilized to playback the selected presentation in a conventional manner, e.g., by downloading the content into or streaming the content to a media player application or plug-in. Portions 910, 940 may be used to display related information, such as advertisements for example. In such a case, it may be desirable to be able to reliably identify how long the media was actually, or may typically be played, in order to appropriately value portions 910, 920 as available advertising billboard

space. By way of further, non-limiting example, while a per-click or per-display pricing schedule for portions 910, 940 may be used, where portion 920 is used to play-back content a typical user watches and/or listens to for ten minutes, portions 910, 940 may be worth more than where content play-back is typically for less than thirty-seconds.

**[0070]** Where content is directly stored using an operator's system (e.g., computers or computer system 20, Fig. 2), such as by using the methodology of process 400 (Fig. 4) or process 600 (Fig. 6), such a tracking may be achieved by tracking requests from and pages viewed by each visitor, such as in a tabular format. As a system operator maintains control over the operation of system 30 in such a case, system 30 may be monitored to determine how long data is streamed therefrom, for example. Data indicative of this period, such as a presentation identifier and a value indicative of the time the presentation was actually streamed for, may be logged by system 30 (e.g., using database server 32, for example). For example, it may be determined when a user begins and ends listening to and/or watching a presentation, e.g., a podcast, by tracking when a web page was loaded and for example by determining when streaming of data to such a loaded web page ceases. Where a selected presentation is streamed from computers 20, such a methodology may be directly implemented by system 20, by confirming the content streaming is progressing as expected, for example.

**[0071]** Where content is not uploaded to an operator's system (e.g., computers or computer system 20, Fig. 2) and is instead remotely stored from yet aggregated by system 30, e.g., using the methodology of process 500 (Fig. 5) or process 800 (Fig. 8), for example, tracking may not be so straight forward. As an operator of system 30 does not necessarily exercise control over the content data storage resource, the operator may not be able to directly operate the storage resource in a manner to directly track how long content is streamed therefrom to a particular user.

**[0072]** In certain embodiments of the present invention, aggregated content playback may advantageously be tracked in a substantially same manner, regardless of

whether it is streamed from system 30 or otherwise unrelated computer systems operated by third parties. In certain embodiments of the present invention, tracking information may be continuously or substantially continuously updated for as long as a user continues to watch or listen to a particular show, regardless of whether the content data is streamed from an operator's computer system 30 or a third party's computer system.

**[0073]** Referring now to Fig. 10, there is shown a block diagram of a process 1000 according to an embodiment of the present invention. Process 1000 commences with a user's computer 20 receiving a web page from system 20 (Fig. 2) at block 1010. Such a received web page may take the form of page 900 (Fig. 9), for example. As is shown in Fig. 9, page 900 includes portion 930, which may be used to play-back user selected content via his computer 20 and a suitable plug-in or media player, for example. As explained herein, data indicative of the content played using portion 920 may be supplied by system 30 or a third party's computer system. Regardless, page 900 may include a timer applet. "Applet", as used herein, generally refers to a software component that runs in the context of another program, in the case of page 900 of Fig. 9, a web browser. Such an applet may typically used to perform a specific function or task, usually narrow in scope. In the case of Figs. 9 and 10, such a timer applet may be used to indicate when a pre-determined temporal period has elapsed. For example, such an applet may be used to indicate each time some temporal period, such as 10, 15 or 30 seconds, elapses. Such a timer applet may be started at block 1020.

**[0074]** At block 1030, when the applet determines the predetermined temporal period has elapsed, it signals its continued execution to system 20. In response, system 30 may log receipt of this indication, such as by using database server 32. In certain embodiments of the present invention, web page 900 (Fig. 9) may be accompanied with identifying data, such as in form of a cookie. A "cookie", as used herein, generally refers to a message provided to a web browser by a web server. The browser stores the message in a data or text file. In certain embodiments of the present invention, the applet may cause the cookie, or associated data, to be transmitted from

the user's computer 20 to system 30, where upon receipt it, or data associated with it, may be logged, such as by using database server 32.

**[0075]** By way of further non-limiting example, at each expiration of temporal period as determined by the timer applet, such as every 15 seconds, a table entry may be made of the user, the page the user is on, and, to the extent the user is on the same page as was the user upon the last expiration of the timer, the user's total time, to the current time, spent on that same page using database server 32. The user may be identified by, for example, any of a number of known methodologies, such as the information the user used to login, the user's IP address, the user's response to an identifying query, or the like.

**[0076]** In certain embodiments of the present invention, the timer applet may cause data indicative of the total time spent on the web page presenting the presentation that has elapsed. In certain embodiments of the present invention, the timer applet may cause data indicative of another temporal cycle having passed while the web page presents the presentation. In the latter, a value indicative of the number of cycles that have passed in database 32 may be incremented each time the data is received, for example.

**[0077]** Thus, certain embodiments of the present invention provide the capability to know that a viewer began viewing a particular show at a certain time, and to know when a user began viewing a different page, or show, thereby providing knowledge of how long a particular viewer spent on a particular page. Such knowledge is not conventionally available, and the provision of such knowledge by certain embodiments of the present invention allows for an increasing scale of payments for advertising displayed on a given page correspondent to how long a viewer or viewers remain, or typically remain, on that particular page or like pages. Thus, the tabular tracking of the present invention allows for the knowledge of how long viewer spends on a page, what the viewer was viewing or listening to on the given page, the ads shown while the

viewer was viewing or listening, how long the ads were shown, and what ads were shown to the view correspondent to that viewer's identification and/or login.

[0078] Those of ordinary skill in the art may recognize that many modifications and variations of the present invention may be implemented without departing from the spirit or scope of the invention. Thus, it is intended that the present invention covers the modifications and variations of this invention provided they come within the scope of the appended claims and their equivalents.

## CLAIMS

### What is claimed is:

1. A method for tracking digital media presentations delivered from a first computer system to a user's computer via a network comprising:
  - providing a corresponding web page to the user's computer for each digital media presentation to be delivered using the first computer system;
  - providing a identifier data to the user's computer using the first computer system;
  - providing an applet to the user's computer for each digital media presentation to be delivered using the first computer system, wherein the applet is operative by the user's computer as a timer;
  - receiving at least a portion of the identifier data from the user's computer responsively to the timer applet each time a predetermined temporal period elapses using the first computer system; and,
  - storing data indicative of the received at least portion of the identifier data using the first computer system;
  - wherein each provided webpage causes corresponding digital media presentation data to be streamed from a second computer system distinct from the first computer system directly to the user's computer independent of the first computer system; and
  - wherein the stored data is indicative of an amount of time the digital media presentation data is streamed from the second computer system to the user's computer.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein each stored data is indicative of a cumulative time the corresponding web page was displayed by the user's computer.
3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the storing comprising incrementing a stored value dependently upon the receiving.

4. The method of Claim 3, wherein the received data is indicative of a temporal cycle passing.



ABSTRACT

A method for tracking digital media presentations: providing a corresponding web page for each digital media presentation to be delivered; providing identifier data to the user's computer; providing a timer applet to the user's computer; and, storing data indicative of received identifier data; wherein each provided webpage causes corresponding digital media presentation data to be streamed from a second computer system distinct from a first computer system directly to the user's computer independent of the first computer system; and stored data is indicative of an amount of time the digital media presentation data is streamed from the second computer system to the user's computer.

## Electronic Patent Application Fee Transmittal

**Application Number:**

**Filing Date:**

**Title of Invention:**

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING AND TRACKING THE PROVISION OF  
AUDIO AND VISUAL PRESENTATIONS VIA A COMPUTER NETWORK

**First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:**

Tod C Turner

**Filer:**

Justin C. Allen/Lisa Stanton

**Attorney Docket Number:**

107453-63989

Filed as Small Entity

### Provisional Filing Fees

**Description**

**Fee Code**

**Quantity**

**Amount**

**Sub-Total in  
USD(\$)**

**Basic Filing:**

Provisional Application filing fee

2005

1

105

105

**Pages:**

**Claims:**

**Miscellaneous-Filing:**

**Petition:**

**Patent-Appeals-and-Interference:**

**Post-Allowance-and-Post-Issuance:**

**Extension-of-Time:**

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Description	Fee Code	Quantity	Amount	Sub-Total in USD(\$)
Miscellaneous:				
Total in USD (\$)				105

## Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

<b>EFS ID:</b>	3816568
<b>Application Number:</b>	61090672
<b>International Application Number:</b>	
<b>Confirmation Number:</b>	8771
<b>Title of Invention:</b>	SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING AND TRACKING THE PROVISION OF AUDIO AND VISUAL PRESENTATIONS VIA A COMPUTER NETWORK
<b>First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:</b>	Tod C Turner
<b>Customer Number:</b>	26345
<b>Filer:</b>	Justin C. Allen/Lisa Stanton
<b>Filer Authorized By:</b>	Justin C. Allen
<b>Attorney Docket Number:</b>	107453-63989
<b>Receipt Date:</b>	21-AUG-2008
<b>Filing Date:</b>	
<b>Time Stamp:</b>	12:47:44
<b>Application Type:</b>	Provisional

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Payment was successfully received in RAM	\$ 105
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File Listing:					
Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1		Provisional_application_63989.pdf	1260297 e85f7cee32dd09f47f2e7a854edc48868f9ce8e9	yes	37
	<b>Multipart Description/PDF files in .zip description</b>				
	<b>Document Description</b>		<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>	
	Provisional Cover Sheet (SB16)		1	2	
	Specification		3	24	
	Claims		25	26	
	Abstract		27	27	
	Drawings-only black and white line drawings		28	37	
<b>Warnings:</b>					
<b>Information:</b>					
2	Fee Worksheet (PTO-06)	fee-info.pdf	30138 01adf4c8af5e3128fd7c192475996d4c4c3e141	no	2
<b>Warnings:</b>					
<b>Information:</b>					
<b>Total Files Size (in bytes):</b>			1290435		
<p><b>This Acknowledgement Receipt evidences receipt on the noted date by the USPTO of the indicated documents, characterized by the applicant, and including page counts, where applicable. It serves as evidence of receipt similar to a Post Card, as described in MPEP 503.</b></p> <p><b><u>New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111</u></b>  <b>If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.</b></p> <p><b><u>National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371</u></b>  <b>If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.</b></p> <p><b><u>New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office</u></b>  <b>If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.</b></p>					

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All Inventors Must Be Listed – Additional Inventor Information blocks may be generated within this form by selecting the Add button.					<input type="button" value="Add"/>
<b>Title of Invention</b>		SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING AND TRACKING THE PROVISION OF AUDIO AND VISUAL PRESENTATIONS VIA A COMPUTER NETWORK			
<b>Attorney Docket Number (if applicable)</b>		107453-63989			
<b>Correspondence Address</b>					
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<input checked="" type="radio"/> The address corresponding to Customer Number			<input type="radio"/> Firm or Individual Name		
<b>Customer Number</b>			26345		

The invention was made by an agency of the United States Government or under a contract with an agency of the United States Government.	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> No:	
<input type="radio"/> Yes, the name of the U.S. Government agency and the Government contract number are:	

**Entity Status**

Applicant claims small entity status under 37 CFR 1.27

☒ Yes, applicant qualifies for small entity status under 37 CFR 1.27☐ No**Warning**

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Please see 37 CFR 1.4(d) for the form of the signature.

Signature	/tjm/			Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2008-08-21
First Name	Thomas J	Last Name	McWilliams	Registration Number (If appropriate)	44930

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Fig. 1

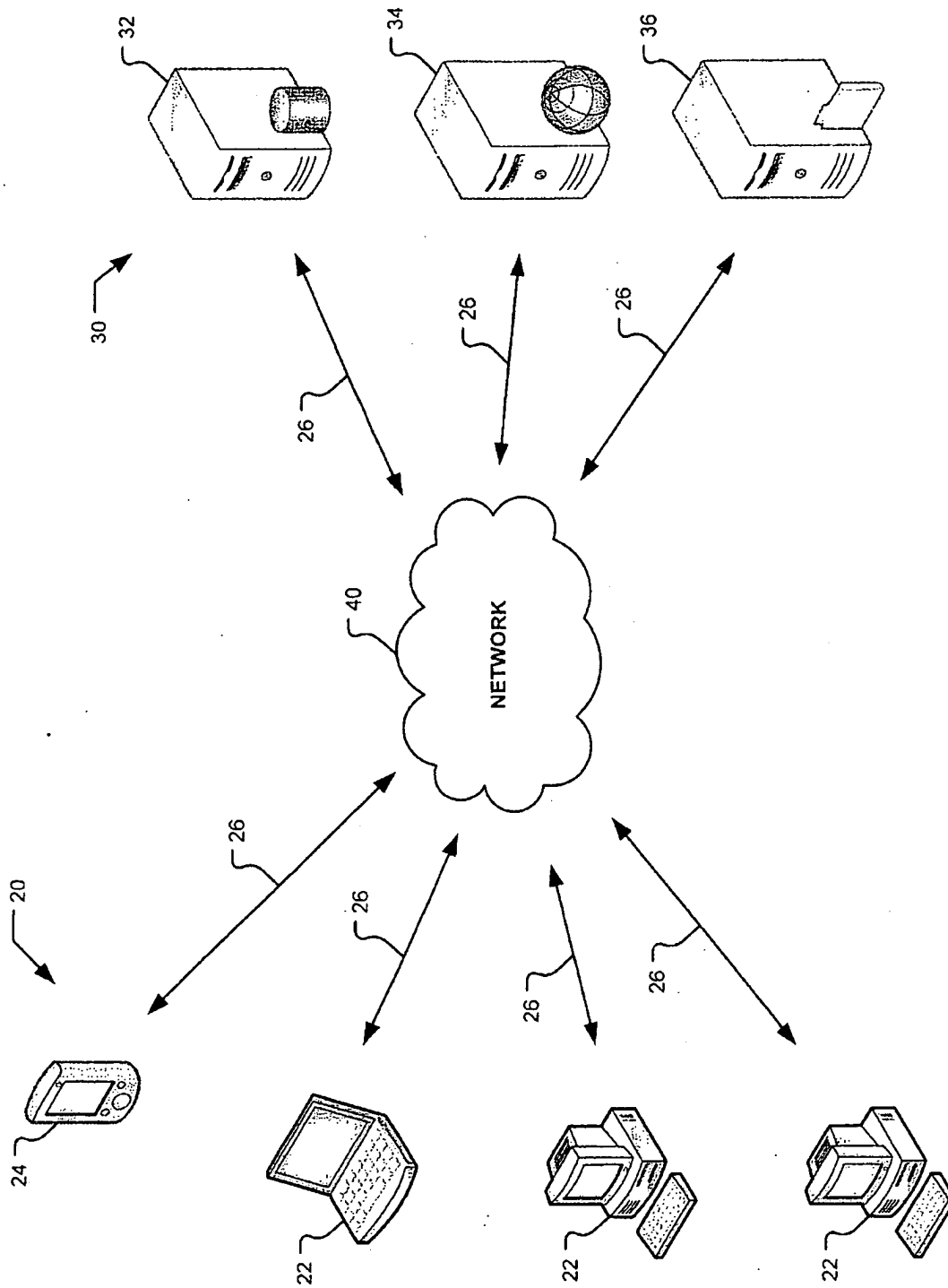




Fig. 2

200

Website - browser name

BROWSE SEARCH

205

215

225

230

235

240

265

270

275

210

220

240

240

240

265

270

275

SELECT A CATEGORY

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
Category 4	Category 5	Category 6
Category 7	Category 8	Category 9

Ranking 1  
Ranking 2

X New Shows

Page 1 of Y 1 2 3 ... Y

☒ ALL ☐ AUDIO ☐ VIDEO

Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: XX/YY/ZZZZ  
Series: \_\_\_\_\_  
Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: XX/YY/ZZZZ  
Series: \_\_\_\_\_  
Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: XX/YY/ZZZZ  
Series: \_\_\_\_\_  
Description: \_\_\_\_\_

**Fig. 3**

200




Website: browser name

BROWSE SEARCH

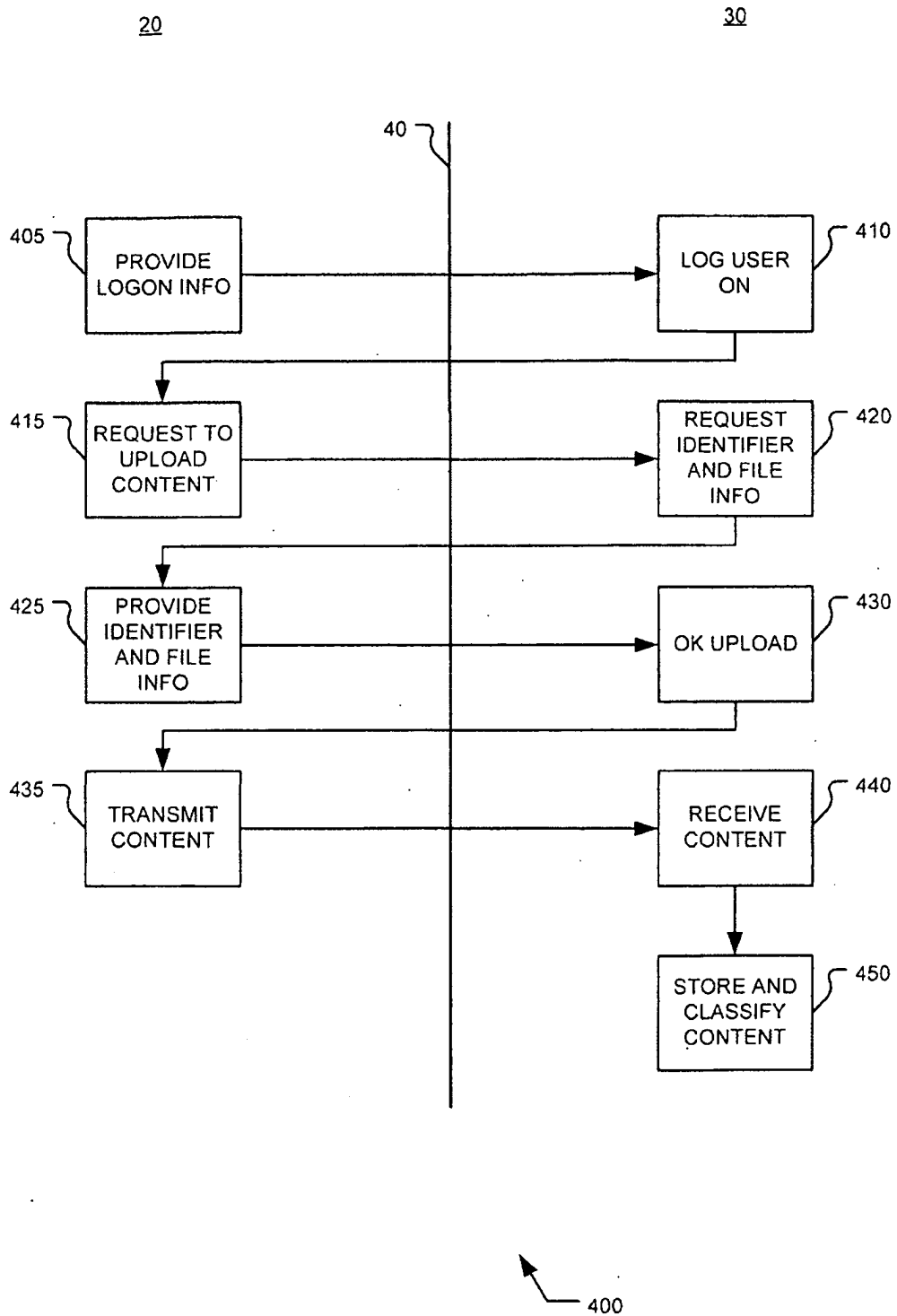
255 } Enter Text 260 } SEARCH

X New Shows ☒ ALL ☐ AUDIO ☐ VIDEO

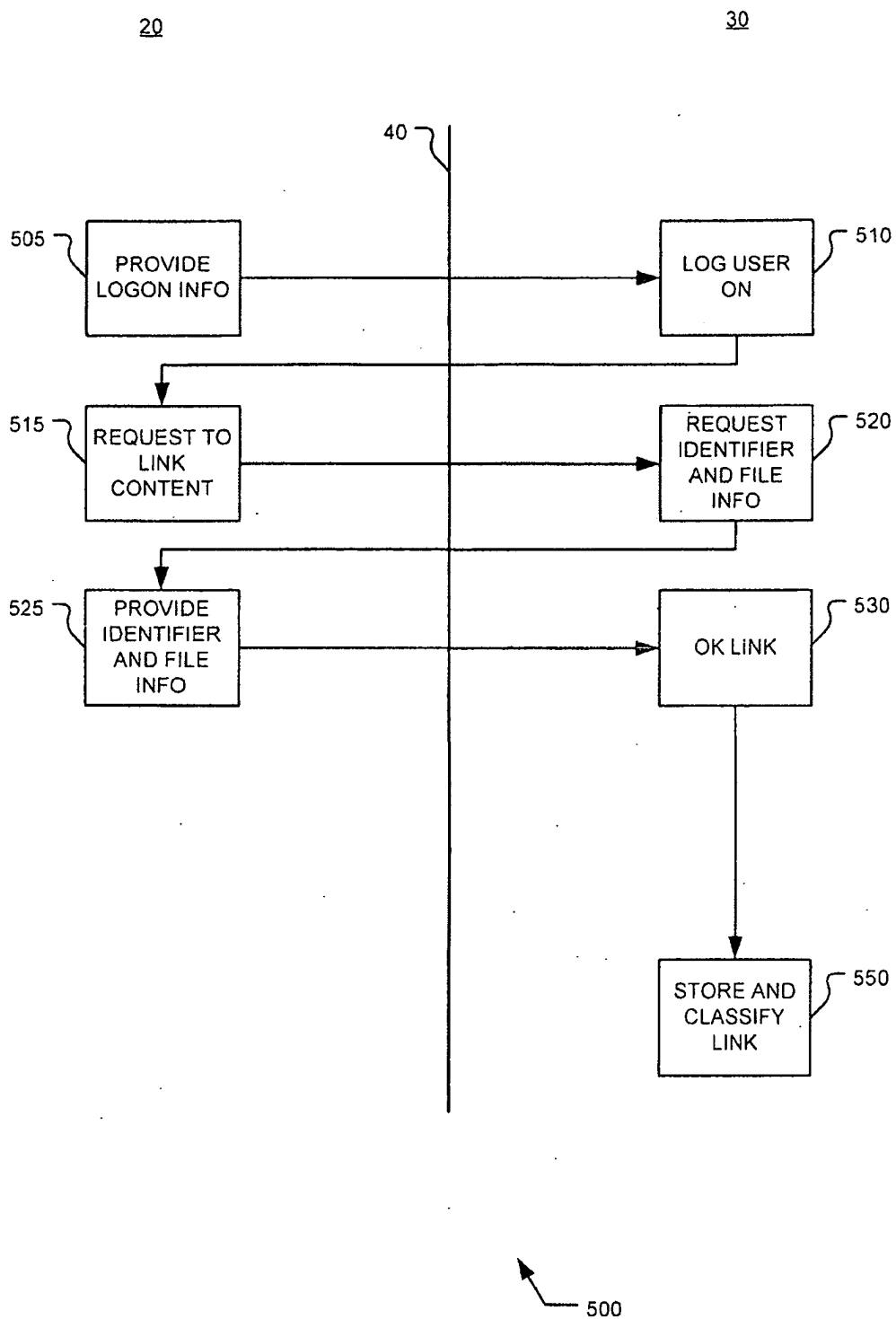
Page 1 of Y 1 2 3 ... Y

	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title: _____ Date: XX/YY/ZZZZ Series: _____ Description: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title: _____ Date: XX/YY/ZZZZ Series: _____ Description: _____
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Title: _____ Date: XX/YY/ZZZZ Series: _____ Description: _____

**Fig. 4**



**Fig. 5**



**Fig. 6**

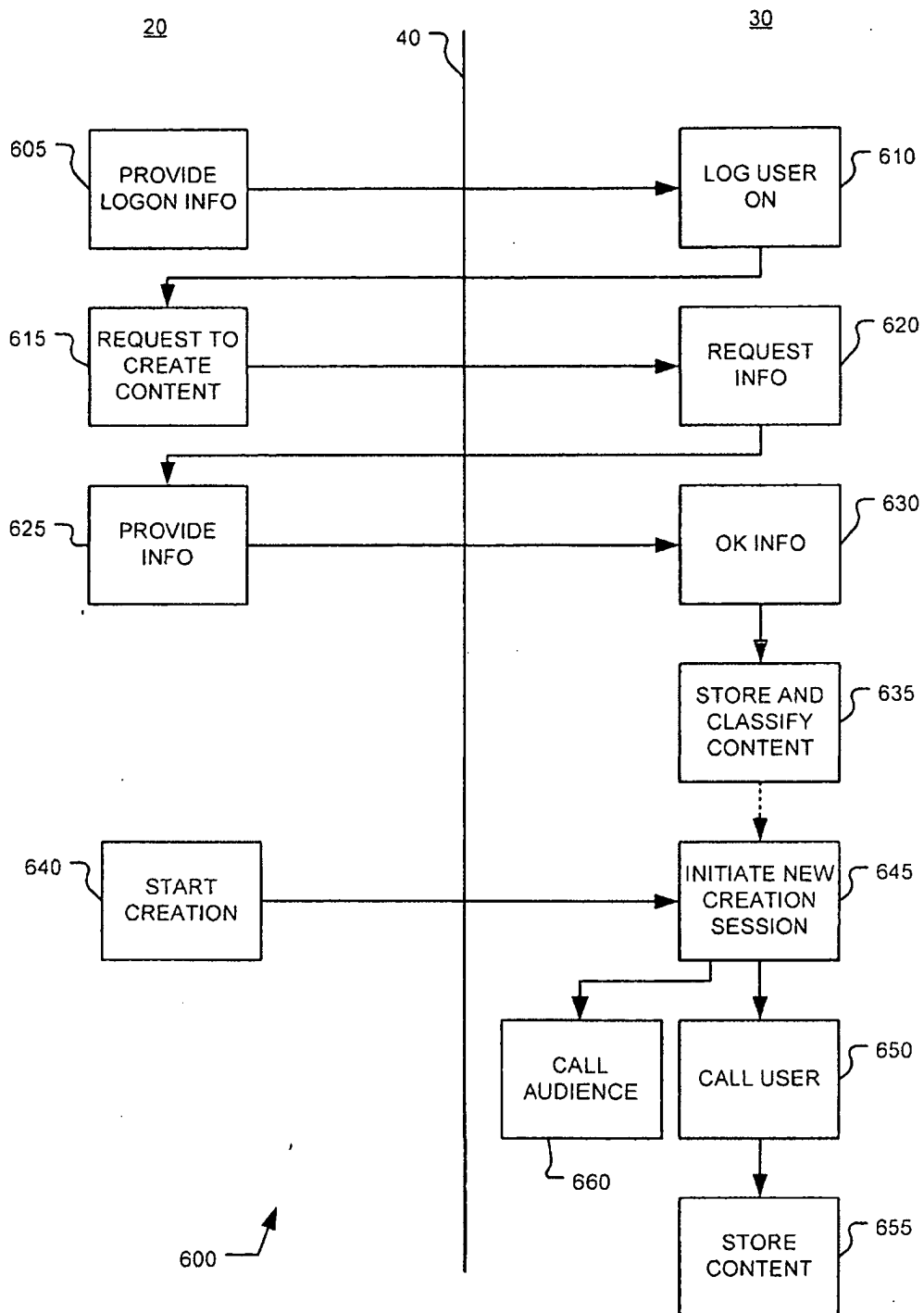
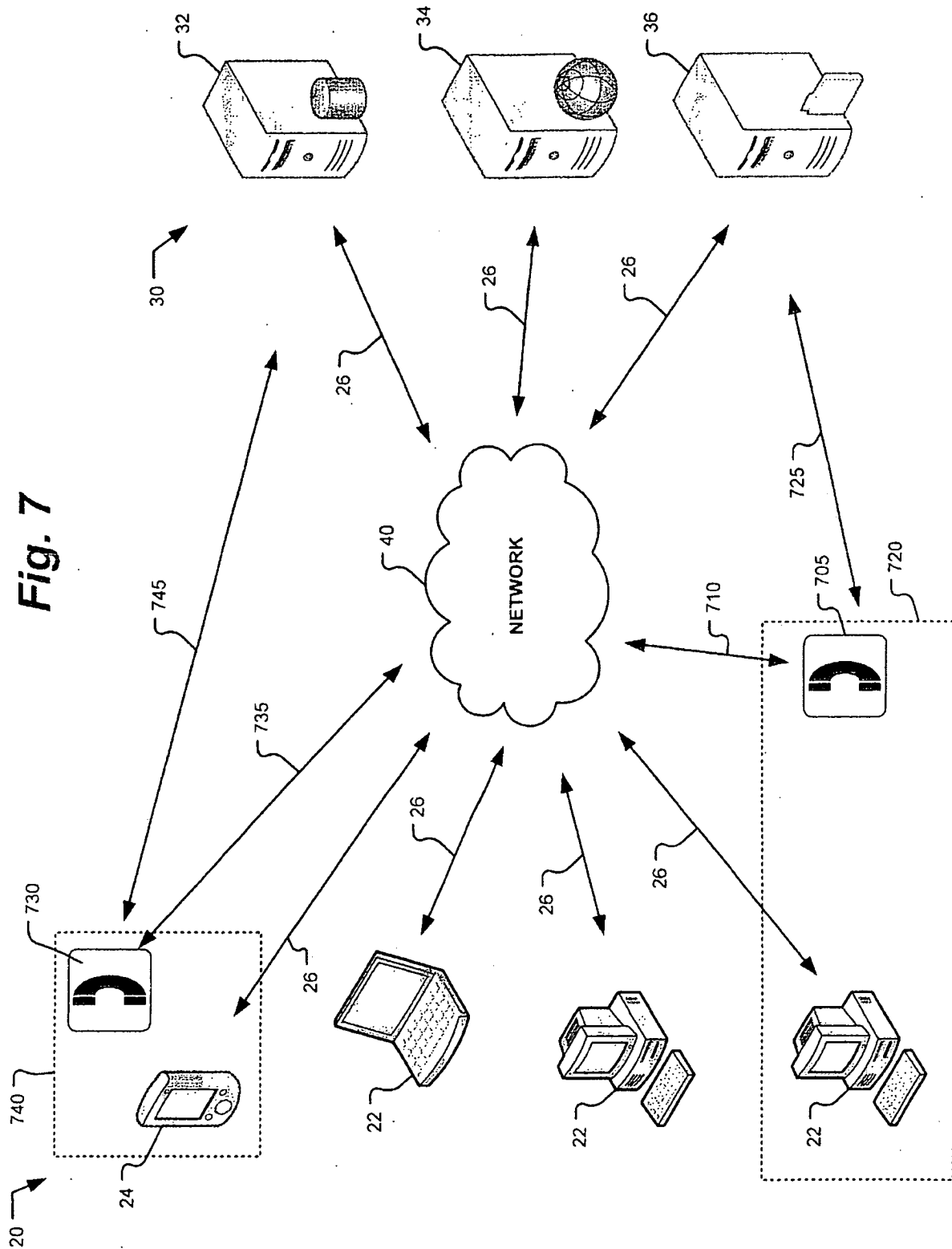
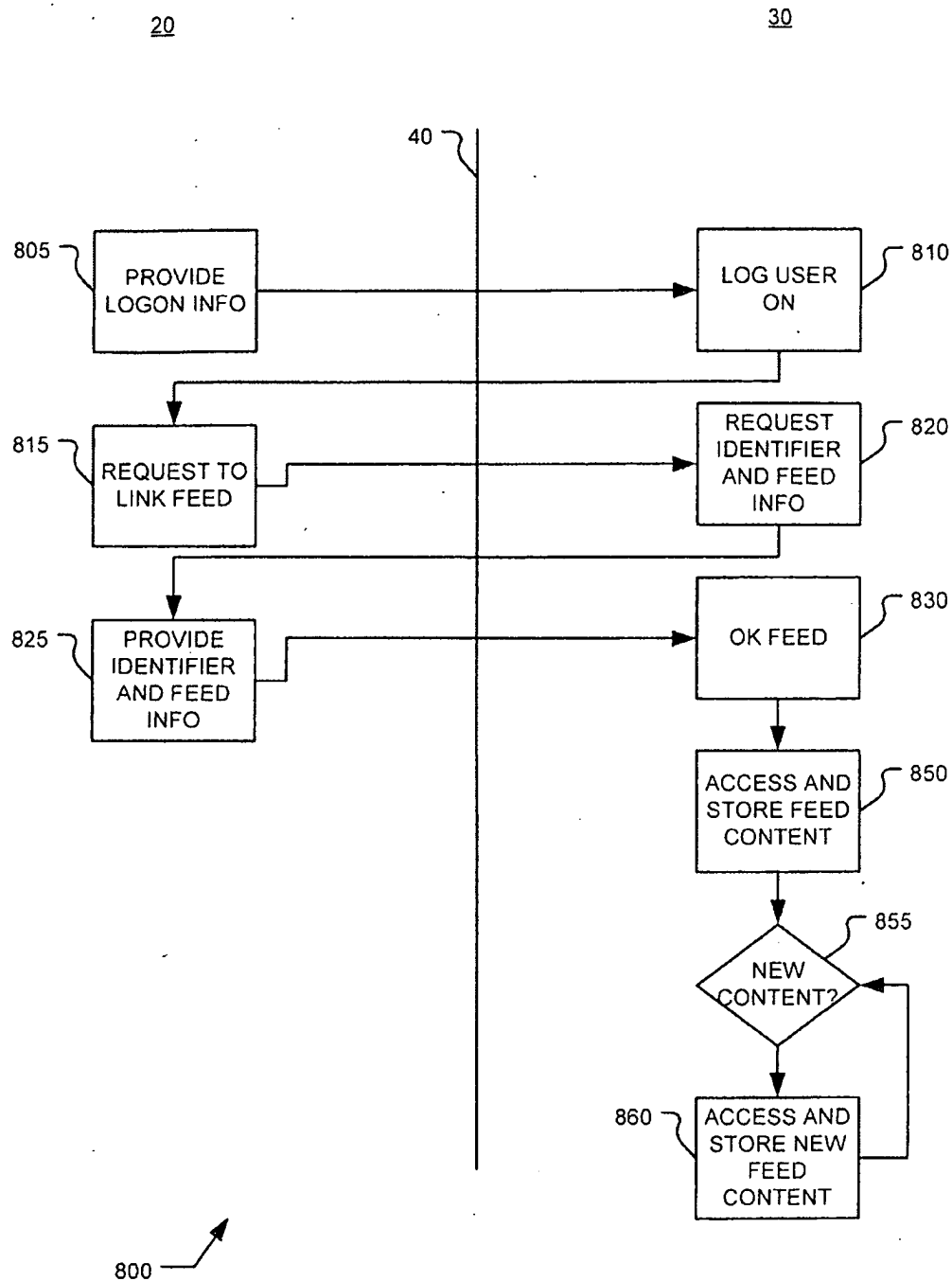


Fig. 7

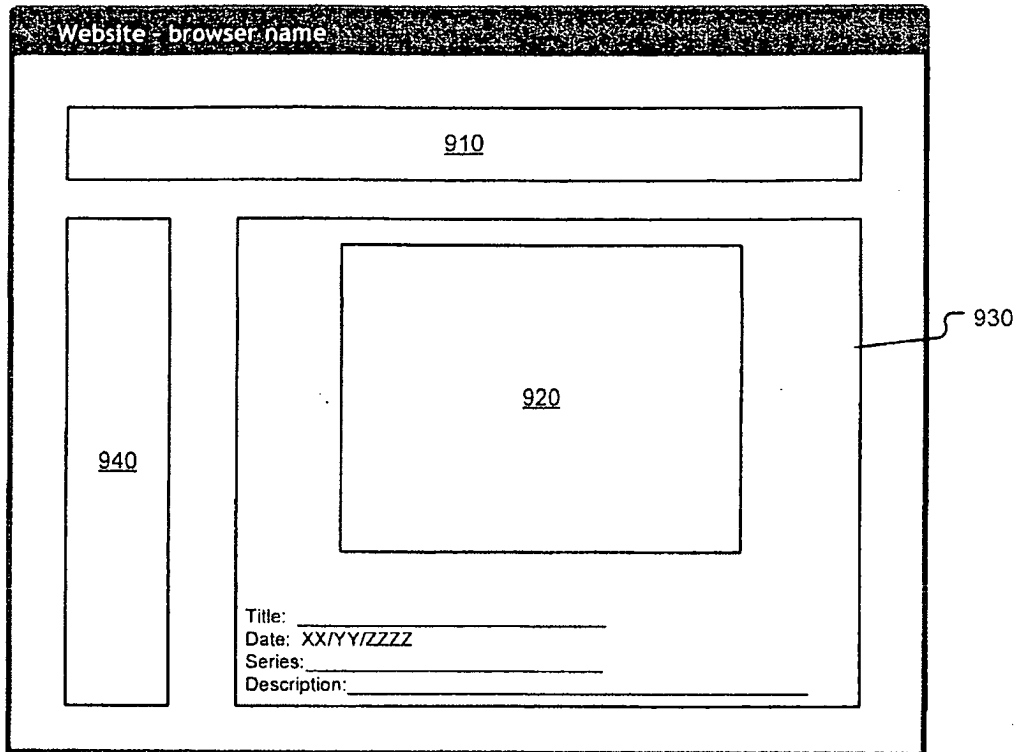


**Fig. 8**



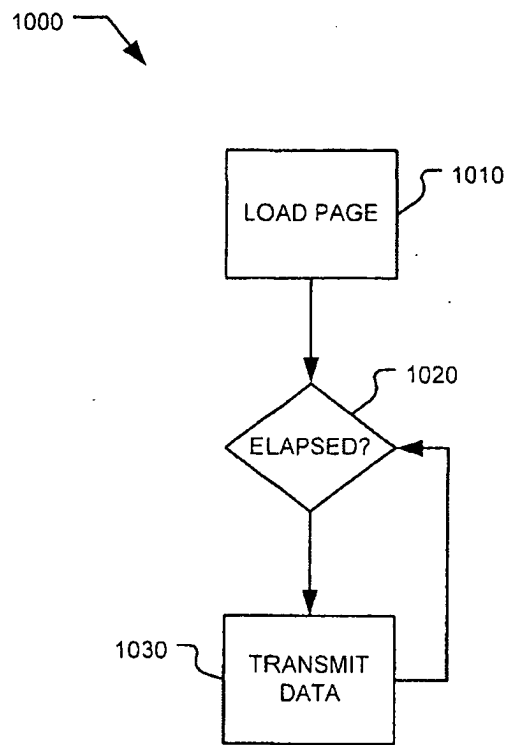
**Fig. 9**

900





**Fig. 10**





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APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING or 371(c) DATE	GRP ART UNIT	FIL FEE REC'D	ATTY. DOCKET NO	TOT CLAIMS	IND CLAIMS
61/090,672	08/21/2008		105	107453-63989		

CONFIRMATION NO. 8771

26345  
GIBBONS P.C.  
ONE GATEWAY CENTER  
NEWARK, NJ 07102

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Date Mailed: 09/05/2008

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### Applicant(s)

Tod C. Turner, Kenmore, WA;

### Power of Attorney:

Thomas McWilliams--44930

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**Projected Publication Date:** None, application is not eligible for pre-grant publication

**Non-Publication Request:** No

**Early Publication Request:** No

**\*\* SMALL ENTITY \*\***

### Title

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING AND TRACKING THE PROVISION OF AUDIO AND VISUAL PRESENTATIONS VIA A COMPUTER NETWORK

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