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(54) Title: TELEVISION MESSAGE SYSTEM

(57) Abstract

A television message system is provided that allows users at user television equipment devices that are connected to a television distribution facility to transmit messages to each other relating to a television program or other suitable subject. The television message system permits users to participate in evaluations, contests, promotions, and surveys related to a television program while watching that television program. The television message system also permits users to compose and send a message to a television program entity. Users can send messages through the television message system to users at personal computers who are connected to the user's television distribution facility through a communications network. The television message system also allows a user to purchase a gift related to television programming for a recipient. The gift may be an electronic gift certificate for pay-per-view programming. The television message system may be based on an interactive television program guide or a set-top box application implemented on a set-top box.

