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(54) Title: AN INTELLIGENT ASSISTANT FOR USE WITH A LOCAL COMPUTER AND WITH THE INTERNET

(57) Abstract

The present invention is an intelligent assistant for use with a local computer and with the Internet. The invention's intelligent assistant process includes various menus and training options for training the intelligent assistant to respond to various text, voice, and mouse gesture commands. In its preferred embodiment, the invention's intelligent assistant is represented by an animated character. The character can communicate back to the user through text, voice, and its own animated gestures. The invention's intelligent assistant automatically and constantly communicates with Internet sites of interest to a user and collects information of interest from those Internet sites. The collected information and updates to the collected information, including information that may not be displayed by a browser, are then communicated to the user in a variety of ways, including changing the behavior and the knowledge base of the intelligent assistant. For example, the invention may communicate the collected information of interest or updates to such information by text, voice, or by simply changing the shape of the animated character. The variety of different ways of communicating the information and updates to the information of interest keeps the user alert and interested in the information. In one embodiment of the invention, only those Internet sites that are authorized can be accessed by the intelligent assistant to gather information or updated information of interest to the user.

