USER-AUTHORED NOTES ON SHARED DOCUMENTS

Field of Invention

The present invention relates to a computer-implemented method for providing document information and a system for providing information about a word-processing document.

Background of Invention

User-authored notes on shared documents represent a process for exposing comments about a document to users of the document. In some situations, there is no intuitive way for a document's author to notify readers about information pertaining to the whole document. For example, document authors may wish to notify other users of updated sections or provide background details. Thus, the conventional strategy is to send email or include messages within the document. This often causes problems because the conventional strategy does not necessarily provide the information in a readily accessible or intuitive manner. For example, emails may not remain associated with the document.

It is generally desirable to overcome or ameliorate one or more of the above described difficulties, or to at least provide a useful alternative.

Summary of Invention

According to the present invention, there is provided a co mputer-implemented method for providing document information, the method comprising :

storing at least one note associated with a word-processing document accessible by a plurality of users, wherein the at least one associated note is not an e-mail note.

retrieving the word-processing document and the at least one associated note;

displaying the word-processing document;

providing an interface element that is selectable to display a note board comprising :

the at least one associated note;

an author of the at least one associated note;

an edit control operative for editing content of the at least one associated note;

a command control operative for changing a priority of the at least one associated note; and

a communicator icon operative for initiating an instant message with the author of the at least one associated note; and

determining whether the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note; and

if the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note, displaying the high priority note with the word-processing document prior to receiving a selection of the interface element, wherein displaying the high priority note does not obscure the word-processing document.

According to the present invention, there is also provided a provides a system for providing information about a word-processing document, the system comprising :

a memory storage; and

a processing unit coupled to the memory storage, wherein the processing unit is operative to :

store the word-processing document, wherein the word-processing document is accessible to a plurality of users;

store at least one note associated with the word-processing document, wherein the at least one associated note is not an e-mail note;

display the word-processing document;

provide an interface element that is selectable to display a note board comprising :

the at least one associated note;

an author of the at least one associated note;

an edit control operative to edit content of the at least one associated note;

a command control operative to change a priority of the at least one associated note ; and

a communicator icon operative to initiate an instant message with the author of the at least one associated note;

determine whether the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note; and

if the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note, display the high priority note with the word-processing document prior to receiving a selection of the interface element, wherein the high priority note is displayed as an overlay of the word-processing document.

According to the present invention, there is also provided a computer-implemented method for providing document information, the method comprising :

storing at least one note associated with a word-processing document accessible by a plurality of users, wherein the at least one associated note is not an e-mail note;

retrieving the word-processing document and the at least one associated note ;

displaying the word-processing document;

providing an interface element that is selectable to display a note board comprising :

the at least one associated note;

an edit control operative for editing content of the at least one associated note;

a command control operative for

changing a priority of the at least one associated note; and

a communicator icon operative for initiating an instant message with an author of the at least one associated note; and

determining whether the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note ; and

if the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note, displaying the high priority note with the word-processing document prior to receiving a selection of the interface element, wherein displaying the high priority note comprises obscuring at least a portion of the word-processing document by the high priority note.

User-authored notes on shared documents may be provided. A shared document may be saved and at least one note may be associated with the document. When a user displays the document, the associated note may be retrieved and a user interface element may be provided to allow the user to view the note.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Preferred embodiments of the present invention are hereafter described, by way of non-limiting example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which :

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a user-authored note display;

Figure 2 is a flow chart of a method for providing user-authored notes on shared documents;

Figure 3A is a block diagram of a user-authored note displayed as an overlay;

Figure 3B is a block diagram of an alternate arrangement of a user-authored note displayed as an overlay;

Figure 4 is a block diagram of a user-authored note displayed adjacent to a shared document; and

Figure 5 is a block diagram of a system including a computing device.

Detailed Description of Preferred Embodiments of the Invention

The following detailed description refers to the accompanying drawings. Wherever possible, the same reference numbers are used in the drawings and the following

description to refer to the same or similar elements. While embodiments of the invention may be described, modifications, adaptations, and other implementations are possible. For example, substitutions, additions, or modifications may be made to the elements illustrated in the drawings, and the methods described herein may be modified by substituting, reordering, or adding stages to the disclosed methods. Accordingly, the following detailed description does not limit the invention. Instead, the proper scope of the invention is defined by the appended claims.

User-authored notes on shared documents may be provided. Consistent with embodiments of the present invention, FIG. 1 shows a block diagram of a user-authored notes display 100. Display 100 may comprise a note board including a first note 105, a reply note 150, and a second note 155. Consistent with embodiments of the invention, reply note 150 may be located below and/or indented relative to first note 105 when reply note 150 comprises a reply to first note 105. First note 105 may comprise a priority indicator 110, a user icon 115, a communicator icon 120, a note origin field 125, a priority icon 130, an edit button 135, a note text 140, and a command button 145. For example, priority indicator 110 may comprise a colored line across the top of first note 105 that may be colored red for a high priority note, yellow for a normal priority note, and green for a low priority note. Alternate color schemes are consistent with further embodiments of the invention, and embodiments of the invention may

embodiments of the invention.

Throughout this specification and the claims which follow, unless the context requires otherwise, the word “comprise”, and variations such as “comprises” and “comprising”, will be understood to imply the inclusion of a stated integer or step or group of integers or steps but not the exclusion of any other integer or step or group of integers or steps.

The reference in this specification to any prior publication (or information derived from it), or to any matter which is known, is not, and should not be taken as an acknowledgement or admission or any form of suggestion that that prior publication (or information derived from it) or known matter forms part of the common general knowledge in the field of endeavour to which this specification relates.

Claims Defining the Invention

1. A computer-implemented method for providing document information, the method comprising:

storing at least one note associated with a word-processing document accessible by a plurality of users, wherein the at least one associated note is not an e-mail note;

retrieving the word-processing document and the at least one associated note

displaying the word-processing document;

providing an interface element that is selectable to display a note board comprising :

the at least one associated note;

an author of the at least one associated note;

an edit control operative for editing content of the at least one associated note;

a command control operative for changing a priority of the at least one associated note; and

a communicator icon operative for initiating an instant message with the author of the at least one associated note; and

determining whether the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note; and

if the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note, displaying the high priority note with the word-processing document prior to receiving a

selection of the interface element, wherein displaying the high priority note does not obscure the word-processing document.

2. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1, wherein the at least one associated note comprises information about the word-processing document to be shared with the plurality of users of the word-processing document.

3. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1, wherein displaying the high priority note further comprises displaying a high priority indicator.

4. The computer-implemented method of Claim 3, wherein the high priority indicator comprises at least one of : a colored line, an icon, a background color, a background pattern, and a border.

5. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1, further comprising :

receiving at least one second note;

determining whether the at least one second note is a reply to the high priority note; and

if the at least one second note is a reply to the high priority note, displaying the at least one second note below the high priority note prior to receiving a selection of the interface element, wherein displaying the at least one second note below the high priority note does not obscure the word-processing document.

6. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1, further comprising:

receiving at least one new note ;

storing the at least one new note; and

associating the at least one new note with the word-processing document.

7. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1, wherein displaying the high priority note comprises displaying at least one of a name of an author of the high priority note, a picture of the author of the high priority note, a high priority icon, and a communicator icon.

8. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1, further comprising:

determining whether at least one new note has been associated with the word-processing document; and

retrieving the at least one new note associated with the word-processing document.

9. The computer-implemented method of Claim 8, wherein determining whether the at least one new note has been associated with the word-processing document occurs at a periodic time interval.

10. The computer-implemented method of Claim 8, wherein determining whether the at least one new note has been associated with the word-processing document occurs in response to a request from a user.

11. A system for providing information about a word-processing document, the system comprising:

a memory storage; and

a processing unit coupled to the memory storage, wherein the processing unit is operative to :

store the word-processing document, wherein the word-processing document is accessible to a plurality of users;

store at least one note associated with the word-processing document, wherein the at least one associated note is not an e-mail note;

display the word-processing document;

provide an interface element that is selectable to display a note board comprising :

the at least one associated note;

an author of the at least one associated note;

an edit control operative to edit content of the at least one associated note;

a command control operative to change a priority of the at least one associated note; and

a communicator icon operative to initiate an instant message with the author of the at least one associated note;

determine whether the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note; and

if the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note, display the high priority note with the word-processing document prior to receiving a

selection of the interface element, wherein the high priority note is displayed as an overlay of the word-processing document.

12. The system of Claim 11, wherein the system comprises a shared document server.

13. The system of Claim 12, further comprising a client system, wherein the client system comprises :

a second memory storage; and

a second processing unit coupled to the second memory storage, wherein the second processing unit is operative to :

receive a command from at least one of the plurality of users to open the word-processing document;

send a request to the shared document server for the word-processing document;

receive the word-processing document;

receive the at least one note associated with the word-processing document, wherein the at least one note associated with the document comprises the high priority note; and

display the word-processing document with the high priority note.

14. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1, wherein displaying the high priority note further comprises displaying the high priority note above the

word-processing document.

15. The system of Claim 11, wherein the overlay is operative to receive at least one of at least one new note, at least one edit to the high priority note, and a request to delete the high priority note.

16. A computer-implemented method for providing document information, the method comprising:

storing at least one note associated with a word-processing document accessible by a plurality of users, wherein the at least one associated note is not an e-mail note;

retrieving the word-processing document and the at least one associated note;

displaying the word-processing document

providing an interface element that is selectable to display a note board comprising :

the at least one associated note;

an edit control operative for editing content of the at least one associated note;

a command control operative for changing a priority of the at least one associated note; and

a communicator icon operative for initiating an instant message with an author of the at least one associated note; and

determining whether the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note; and

if the at least one associated note comprises a high priority note, displaying the high priority note with the word-processing document prior to receiving a selection of the interface element, wherein displaying the high priority note comprises obscuring at least a portion of the word-processing document by the high priority note.

17. The computer-implemented method of Claim 1, further comprising :

if the at least one associated note is not a high priority note, displaying the at least one associated note upon receiving a selection of the interface element.

18. The system of Claim 11, wherein the processing unit is further operative to :

if the at least one associated note is not a high priority note, display the at least one associated note upon receiving a selection of the interface element.

19. The computer-implemented method of Claim 16, further comprising:

if the at least one associated note is not a high priority note, displaying the at least one associated note upon receiving a selection of the interface element.

20. The computer-implemented method of Claim 16, further comprising :

receiving at least one second note;

determining whether the at least one second note is a reply to the high priority note; and

if the at least one second note is a reply to the high priority note, displaying the at least one second note below the high priority note prior to receiving a selection of the interface element, wherein displaying the high priority note and the at least one second note comprises obscuring at least a portion of the word-processing document by the high priority note and the at least one second note.

21. A computer-implemented method for providing document information substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

22. A system for providing information about a word-processing document substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.