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(54) Title: DATA RETRIEVAL METHOD AND APPARATUS WITH MULTIPLE SOURCE CAPABILITY

(57) Abstract

Generation of output or reports on information contained in a data source which may be any of two or more types of source data, in a standardized or uniform manner is provided. A plurality of drivers (804a-804d) are provided specific to different types of source data sources (806a-806d) e.g. for use in defining a new database (808). Preferably the new database (808) is configured to permit highly flexible and/or rapid output or reporting or is otherwise optimized for reporting purposes. In one embodiment, the present invention includes conversion of one or more data sources (806a-806d) into one or more uniform databases (808), preferably generating one or more key categories for organizing the data, optionally generating category groupings or rollups and additional data or optional references (815). In another embodiment, one or more databases (901-910) are created which have a degree of uniformity of structure, eventhough they may be based on two or more different data sources which may have very different structures. The different data sources are automatically analyzed and this analysis can be used to identify and/or create categories of data for use in organizing the information.

