WORKFLOW MECHANISM FOR A STATELESS ENVIRONMENT ABSTRACT

A workflow mechanism (100) for a stateless or connectionless environment such as the Internet or an Intranet. The workflow mechanism (100) comprises an inference engine (106) and a justification based truth management system. The inference engine (106) and the justification based truth management system are packaged in the workflow item (103) together with the data and business rules components (105), and downloaded with the workflow item to a client. The inference engine informs the truth maintenance system about the justifications relevant to workflow items. When the time comes to determine state of a workflow item, the inference engine (106) queries the truth maintenance system which provides the state of the workflow item based on the various antecedents which are currently believed in for the workflow item. Because the truth maintenance system carries the justifications, continuous network connection is not required.

Fig.2