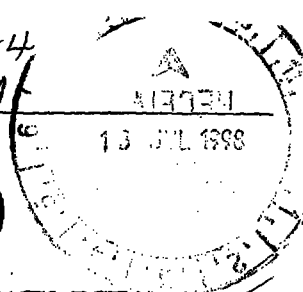


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(54) Title: FLEXIBLE DOWNLOADING OF SOFTWARE

(57) Abstract

In a networked system, such as a telecommunications system, having a first node coupled to a second node, a technique of supplying one or more wanted software files to the second node starts with the first node retrieving a menu of software file identifiers, wherein each software file identifier identifies a corresponding one of a plurality of software files. The software file identifiers are then sent to the second node, where each is examined, and for each a response is formed. The response, which indicates whether the corresponding one of the plurality of software files is alternatively wanted, or not wanted, is then sent back to the first node. The first node examines the response and retrieves the wanted software files. The retrieved software is then sent from the first node to the second node. In another aspect of the invention, the indication of "not wanted" may be expanded to include an indication that an offered file is "already loaded", or "forbidden to be loaded". In yet another aspect of the invention, the steps of offering a menu, receiving a response, and transmitting the wanted files is repeated in each of two phases, so that in a first phase, the second node can request that a more complicated bootstrap program be downloaded and started. Then, during the second phase of downloading, the more complicated bootstrap program running in the second node makes the decisions about what further subfiles to accept from the first node.

