

CLAIMS

1. A computer system, comprising:
at least one processor;
memory associated with the at least one processor; and
a plurality of application programs supported in the memory that can be executed by the at least one processor, each of the application programs capable of processing data and displaying data to a user of the computer system, at least one of said application programs being configured to post data on a bulletin board for use by another one of said application programs in response to a user input, and wherein said another one of said application programs is configured to (i) listen for data posted by another application program, (ii) determine independently and for itself if the data posted is semantically relevant to said another one of said application programs, and (iii) when the data is determined to be semantically relevant to said another one of said application programs to process the data and display results to the user.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein one of said plurality of application programs includes a bulletin board program providing the bulletin board on which data is posted.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein the posted data includes one or more type:value pairs, and an application program listening for the data determines whether the data is semantically relevant based on the type specified.
4. The system of claim 1, wherein the plurality of application programs are selected from a larger group of available application programs.
5. The system of claim 1, wherein the application programs are configured such that windows generated by the application programs can be joined by the user to enable the application programs to communicate with each other through the bulletin board.
6. The system of claim 1, wherein the computer system comprises a user-operated device and one or more remote computers connected to the user-operated device over a communications network, and wherein the application programs execute entirely on the user-operated device, partly on the user-operated device and partly on the one or more remote computers, or entirely on the one or more remote computers.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the data comprises financial data.
8. The system of claim 1, wherein a plurality of said application programs are configured to post data on a bulletin board for use by a plurality of other application programs in response to a user input, and wherein a plurality of application programs are each configured to (i) listen for data posted by another application program, (ii) determine independently if the data posted is semantically relevant to itself, and (iii) when the data is determined to be semantically relevant to process the data and display results to the user.
9. A data processing method, comprising the steps of:
 - (a) executing a plurality of application programs on a computer system, said application programs displaying data to a user;
 - (b) receiving an input from the user comprising data posted by the user on a bulletin board from one of the application programs;
 - (c) broadcasting the posted data to the plurality of application programs;
 - (d) determining independently through each of the plurality of application programs whether the posted data is semantically relevant to that application program;
 - (e) when the data is determined to be semantically relevant to an application program by the application program, processing the posted data through the application program and displaying results to the user.
10. The method of claim 9, wherein broadcasting the posted data comprises posting the data on a bulletin board.
11. The method of claim 9, wherein the posted data includes one or more type:value pairs, and data is determined to be semantically relevant based on the type specified.
12. The method of claim 9, further comprising providing a larger set of application programs from which the plurality of application programs are selected.
13. The method of claim 9, further comprising displaying to the user a window for each of the plurality of application programs, and receiving from the user an input to join application programs to enable the application programs to communicate with each other.
14. The method of claim 9, wherein the computer system comprises a user-operated device and one or more remote computers connected to the user-operated device over a

communications network, and wherein the application programs execute entirely on the user-operated device, partly on the user-operated device and partly on the one or more remote computers, or entirely on the one or more remote computers.

15. The method of claim 9, wherein the data comprises financial data.

16. A computer program product residing on a non-transitory computer readable medium having a plurality of instructions stored thereon which, when executed by a computer processor, cause that computer processor to:

- (a) execute a plurality of application programs on a computer system, said application programs displaying data to a user;

- (b) receive an input from the user comprising data posted by the user on a bulletin board from one of the application programs;

- (c) broadcast the posted data to the plurality of application programs;

- (d) determine independently through each of the plurality of application programs whether the posted data is semantically relevant to that application program;

- (e) when the data is determined to be semantically relevant to an application program by the application program, process the posted data through the application program and display results to the user.

17. The computer program product of claim 16, wherein (c) comprises post the data on a bulletin board.

18. The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the posted data includes one or more type:value pairs, and data is determined to be semantically relevant based on the type specified.

19. The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the instructions further cause the processor to display to the user a window for each of the plurality of application programs, and receive from the user and input to join application programs to enable the application programs to communicate with each other.

20. The computer program product of claim 16, wherein the data comprises financial data.