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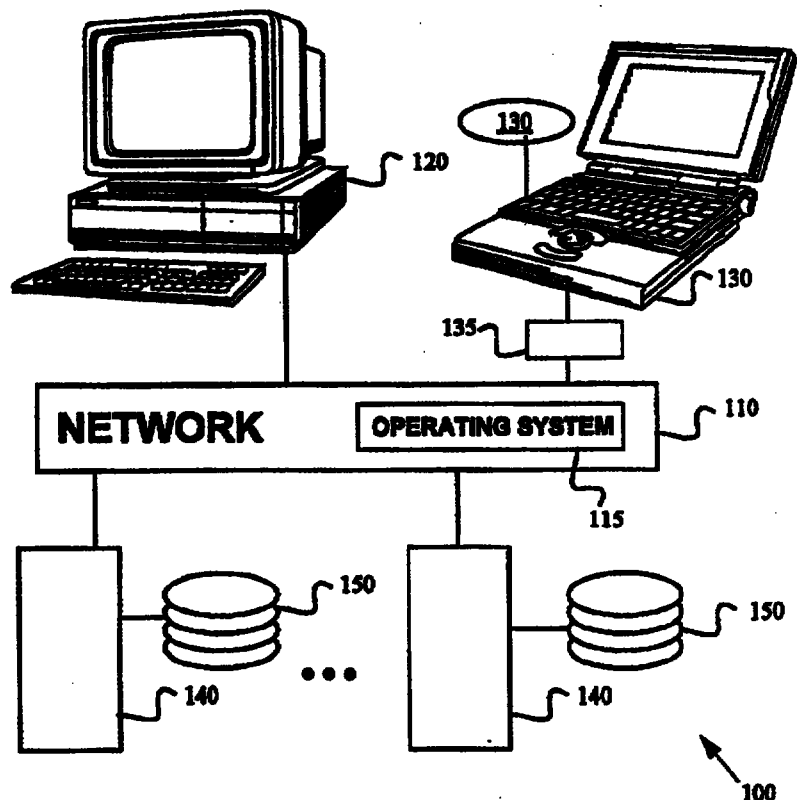
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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ENCODING HISTORY OF FILE ACCESS TO SUPPORT AUTOMATIC FILE CACHING ON PORTABLE AND DESKTOP COMPUTERS

(57) Abstract

A file access history attribute may be encoded and stored with a file in a computer memory. The file access history attribute may provide information as to the date of most recent access and the level of access on which date. In addition, the file access history attribute may provide information concerning recent file history (e.g., previous nine days), quarterly history (e.g., 80 days preceding the previous nine days), as well as long-term history (e.g., beyond the 80 day period). The encoding technique of the present invention may compress file access history information into a compact file access history attribute (e.g., six to twelve bytes). Disk caching software, for maintaining files in a hard drive of a local computer coupled to a network, may utilize the file access history attribute in deciding which files are to be stored in the local hard drive and which should be migrated to network storage or archive. A file history maintenance program may operate as a background job to periodically update file access history relative to a known maintenance start date.



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