(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau

(43) International Publication Date
17 July 2003 (17.07.2003)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 03/058464 A1

(51) International Patent Classification[7]: G06F 13/00

(21) International Application Number: PCT/US02/41625

(22) International Filing Date:
27 December 2002 (27.12.2002)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/344,197 28 December 2001 (28.12.2001) US

(71) Applicant *(for all designated States except US)*: **INTERNET ACCESS TECHNOLOGIES, INC.** [US/US]; Suite 300, 5450 Northwest Central, Houston, TX 77092 (US).

(72) Inventors; and

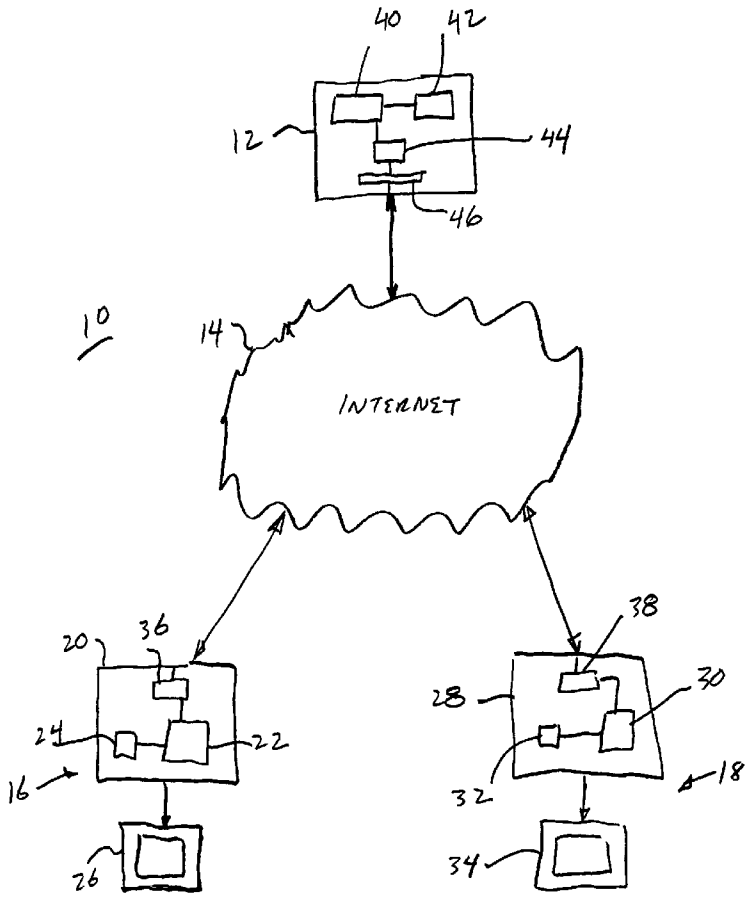
(75) Inventors/Applicants *(for US only)*: **BELL, John, Francis, III** [US/US]; 5406 Crooms, Houston, TX 77007 (US). **MESERVY, David, Albert** [US/US]; 12354 Jones Road #133, Houston, TX 77070 (US).

(74) Agents: **STEVENS, Scott, J.** et al.; Woodard, Emhardt, Naughton, Moriarty & Mcnett, Suite 3700, Bank One Center/Tower, 111 Monument Circle, Indianapolis, IN 46204 (US).

(81) Designated States *(national)*: AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: INSTANT MESSAGING SYSTEM



(57) Abstract: An instant messaging system (10) is disclosed that provides a means for presenting information to a user (16) about current conversants and for managing the handling of multiple messages from different parties. A priority hierarchy is established and set by a user (16) with respect to each conversant. Message from high priority conversants are delivered and displayed (26) prior to messages from lower priority conversants. In a business setting, messages may be routed to particular individuals (18) or with particular priority based on characteristics or attributes of the message sender (16).

WO 03/058464 A1

(84) Designated States *(regional)*: ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:
— *with international search report*

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.