SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

Image Data Distributing Method, and Image Processing Terminal and Mobile Terminal

[0001]

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to an image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving the image data of an object either between an image processing terminal and a mobile terminal or between the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal and an external terminal, and to an image processing terminal and a mobile terminal.

[0002]

Related Art

Today, there appear on the market not only an image print feeding apparatus, as developed by the Applicant and called the "print club", but also a number of similar apparatus for synthesizing the image of an object and frame data (or title data) and for printing and feeding the synthesized image. As a type for transmitting/receiving the data between a server and an image printable play apparatus by providing the play apparatus with communication means, there has been developed

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an apparatus in Unexamined Published Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 84521/1999 or 234602/1999.

[0003]

However, the invention, as disclosed in Unexamined Published Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 84521/1999, relates to the generation of sample data on the synthesized data of the image data of an object and the frame data. In this embodiment, the stored content on the frame image in frame image storage means belonging to the apparatus body is updated with new frame image data sent through communication lines or are exchanged with a server for storing a number of frame image data and are printed/generated as a plurality of frame image sample sheets. The data to be distributed between the apparatus body and the server are not only limited to the frame image data but also cannot exchange the data with another user. Thus, the apparatus lacks an interest in the image selection or the working treatment.

[0004]

On the other hand, the invention, as disclosed in Unexamined Published Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 234602/1999, relates to an apparatus for printing and feeding the synthesized data of title data of the same kind as that of the aforementioned frame data and the image data of the object, although more or less, by using an printing device belonging to the apparatus body. In an embodiment of the

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invention, between a plurality of units disposed in one casing and having a common function, the image data transmitted from another unit can be synthesized through a communication device. Since a plurality of units are disposed in the common casing, however, there is no degree of freedom for the image selection such that the targets capable of distributing or working the data are limited to the adjoining users or such that the image data to be transmitted are limited to those photographed on the spot.

[0005]

Thus in the method or apparatus of the prior art, what can be done is to synthesize the image data photographed and selected by the user with the frame image received from the server, to transmit/receive the image data between the adjoining users in the common casing, and to synthesize the image data with the title image, so that the range of the users capable of transmitting/receiving the image data is limited. Since the generated image data can be neither stored nor transmitted to others, on the other hand, the favorite image data can be only enjoyed, even generated, by printing out them on the spot, but can be neither transmitted to a friend nor enjoyed by transmitting them together with messages. On the other hand, most of the methods or apparatus of the related art for distributing the image data are to transmit/receive the image data between the image data feeding device or a

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personal computer and a server, and there is not any method, apparatus or system which can make transmissions to the mobile terminal or the external terminal. In recent years, moreover, there has been developed a system for storing the image data, as photographed with a digital camera, in a WEB server. It is, however, to bring the image data to a data center or to upload the same to the personal computer. The generated image data cannot be transmitted/received on the spot with a desired partner so that the transmissions/receptions are troublesome but not timely. In addition, the data to be synthesized and other imaging treatments are not novel over those of the various image print feeding apparatus (as usually called the "print club") which have already been provided by the Applicant.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Therefore, an object of the invention is developed to enable various image data to be transmitted/received timely and widely by making it possible to transmit the image data generated at an image processing terminal, instantly to a mobile terminal or another external terminal and by reading out the generated data on the spot or the image data to be stored, from the mobile terminal. In the computerized society, various businesses utilizing informations have been established to make a high contribution to the society, as already spread in USA, and the invention has a characteristic

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as one of such business patents.

[0007]

As the means for solving the aforementioned problems, according to the invention of Claim 1, there is proposed an image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising: for the image processing terminal as a transmitter, the step of urging the selection of a receiver or a transmission destination, the step of urging the generation of the image data to be transmitted to the receiver or the selected transmission destination, and the step of storing the generated image data in the mail album of the receiver or the selected transmission destination; and for the mobile terminal as the receiver, the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the receiver for storing the image data transmitted to the receiver, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

[0008]

According to the invention of Claim 2, there is proposed

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an image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising: for the image processing terminal as a transmitter, the step of reading out the mail album of the transmitter for storing the image data transmitted to the transmitter, the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album, the step of urging the selection of a receiver or a transmission destination or a return destination therefrom, the step of urging the generation of the image data to be transmitted to the receiver or the selected transmission destination or return destination, and the step of storing the generated image data in the mail album of the receiver or the selected transmission destination or return destination; and for the mobile terminal as the receiver, the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the receiver for storing the image data transmitted to the receiver, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

[0009]

According to the invention of Claim 3, there is proposed

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an image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising: for the image processing terminal as a transmitter, the step of reading out the keep album of the transmitter for storing the image data generated by the transmitter, the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album, the step of urging the new generation of the image data, the step of urging the selection of a receiver or a transmission destination of the generated image data, and the step of storing the generated image data in the mail album of the receiver or the selected transmission destination; and for the mobile terminal as the receiver, the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal,. the step of reading out the mail album of the receiver for storing the image data transmitted to the receiver, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

[0010]

According to the invention of Claim 4, there is proposed an image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving

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image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising: for the mobile terminal as a transmitter, the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the transmitter for storing the image data transmitted to the transmitter, the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album, the step of urging the selection of a receiver or a transmission destination or a return destination therefrom, the step of reading out the keep album of the transmitter for storing the image data generated by the transmitter, the step of outputting the image data in the read keep album, the step of urging the selection of the image data desired to be transmitted therefrom, and the step of storing the selected image data in the mail album of the receiver or the selected transmission destination or return destination; and for the mobile terminal as the receiver, the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the receiver for storing the image data transmitted to the receiver, and

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the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

[0011]

According to the invention of Claim 5, there is proposed an image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising: for the image processing terminal as a transmitter, the step of urging the generation of the image data to be transmitted to a bulletin board contributor, the step of reading out various bulletin boards separately for hobbies or genres, the step of outputting the image data of the bulletin board contributor, as opened and posted to the read bulletin board, the step of urging the selection of the bulletin board contributor desiring the transmission of the image data therefrom, and the step of storing the generated image data in the mail album of the selected bulletin board contributor; and the image processing terminal as the bulletin board contributor, the step of urging the generation of the image data to be contributed to the bulletin board, the step of reading out the various notices separately for the hobbies or genres, the step of outputting the image data of the bulletin

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board contributor, as opened and posted to the read bulletin board, the step of urging the selection of the bulletin board desiring the contribution of the image data therefrom, the step of storing the contributed image data in the selected bulletin board, the step of reading out the mail album of the bulletin board contributor for storing the image data transmitted to the bulletin board contributor, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

[0012]

According to the invention of Claim 6, there is proposed an image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising: for the image processing terminal as a transmitter, the step of urging the generation of the image data to be transmitted to a bulletin board contributor, the step of reading out various bulletin boards separately for hobbies or genres, the step of outputting the image data of the bulletin board contributor, as opened and posted to the read bulletin board, the step of urging the selection of the bulletin board contributor desiring the transmission of the image data

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therefrom, and the step of storing the generated image data in the mail album of the selected bulletin board contributor; and for the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor, the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the bulletin board contributor for storing the image data transmitted to the bulletin board contributor, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

[0013]

According to the invention of Claim 7, there is proposed an image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising: for the mobile terminal as a contest applicant, the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out various contests, the step of outputting the read contests, the step of urging the selection of the contest desired to be applied therefrom, the step of reading out the keep album of the contest applicant for storing the

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image data generated by the contest applicant, the step of outputting the image data in the read keep album, the step of urging the selection of the image data to be applied for the contest therefrom, the step of storing the selected image data in the selected content, and the step of distributing the mail, as transmitted to the contest applicant, to the address of the contest applicant; and for the mobile terminal as a contest voter, the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the various contests, the step of outputting the read contest, the step of urging the selection of the contest applicant desiring a vote therefrom, the step of urging the generation of a mail addressed to the selected contest applicant, the step of transmitting the generated mail to the address of the contest applicant, and the step of totalizing and displaying the results of votes. [0014]

According to the invention of Claim 8, there is proposed an image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network,

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comprising: for the image processing terminal as a transmitter, the step of urging the selection of a template for a home page, the step of urging the generation or selection of the image data to be synthesized with the selected template, the step of urging an upload of the template to be synthesized with the generated or selected image data, and the step of storing the uploaded template as a home page by attaching the URL to the template; and for the mobile terminal as the receiver, the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the home page corresponding to said URL by clicking the URL, and the step of outputting the read home page.

[0015]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 6 and Claim 8, according to the invention of Claim 9, there is proposed an image data distributing method comprising: for the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the transmitter or the receiver, or the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor, the step of editing, working or deleting the image data.

[0016]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 9, according to the invention of Claim 10, there is proposed an image data distributing method wherein said image data comprises: the step

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of inputting additional data such as letters, drawings and messages with input means of each terminal; the step of synthesizing the same with synthesizing means; or the step of synthesizing frame data stored in each terminal or downloaded from the server.

[0017]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 10, according to Claim 11, there is proposed an image data distributing method wherein said image data are or contain motion images.

[0018]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 11, according to Claim 12, there is proposed an image data distributing method wherein said image data contain musical data or voice data.

[0019]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 12, according to Claim 13, there is proposed an image data distributing method wherein said image data have the URL attached thereto.

[0020]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 13, according to Claim 14, there is proposed an image data distributing method wherein said image data contain reservation data for print reservations.

[0021]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 8, according to Claim 15, there is provided an image data distributing method

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comprising: for the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the transmitter or the receiver, or the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor, or the mobile terminal as the contest applicant or the contest voter the step of urging the inputting authentication data composed of each ID and/or password; and the step of determining the allowance/inhibition of the generation of an album or the transmission/reception of the image data by passing the inputted authentication data.

[0022]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 7, according to Claim 16, there is provided an image data distributing method wherein said mail album and said keep album are temporary albums for storing the image data temporarily or long-term albums for storing the image data for a long term.

[0023]

In the invention of Claim 16, according to Claim 17, there is proposed an image data distributing method wherein said long-term album includes, for perusing or storing the image data: a private album indispensable for inputting said authentication data; an open album dispensable for inputting said authentication data or indispensable for inputting only the ID; and a group album of a simultaneous communication type indispensable for inputting the group authentication data of the ID and/or password common only in a specific group.

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[0024]

In the invention of Claim 16 or 17, according to Claim 18, there is proposed an image data distributing method further comprising, when it is desired to generated hold said long-term album said mail album or keep album is the temporary album and when it is desired to move the image data stored in said temporary album to said long-term album, for the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the transmitter or the receiver, or the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor, the step of urging the selection of the image data desired to be moved, from the mail album or the keep album; the step of moving the selected image data to the long-term album; and the step of updating the movement.

[0025]

In the inventions of Claims 16 to 18, according to Claim 19, there is proposed an image data distributing method further comprising, when it is desired to generate/hold said long-term album, for the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the transmitter or the receiver, or the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor, the step of urging the inputting of member authentication data composed of each member ID and/or member password; and the step of determining the allowance/inhibition of the generation/holding of said long-term album by passing

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the inputted member authentication data.

[0026]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 3, Claim 5 or 6 and Claim 8, according to Claim 20, there is proposed an image data distributing method further comprising, when said generated image data are to be printed, for the image processing terminal as said transmitter or said receiver, or the image processing terminal as said bulletin board contributor, at least the step of urging the inputting the printing instruction of the generated image data; and the step of urging the selection of the printing layout.

[0027]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 6, according to Claim 21, there is proposed an image data distributing method further comprising, when the print reservation is made on the image data stored in said mail album or keep album, for the mobile terminal as said transmitter or said receiver, or the mobile terminal as said bulletin board contributor, the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal; the step of reading and perusably outputting the image data to be stored in the mail album or the keep album; and the step of urging the inputting of the reservation data for the print reservation on the outputted image data.

[0028]

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In the invention of Claim 14, according to Claim 22, there is proposed an image data distributing method further comprising, when the image data containing the reservation data for the print reservation are to be printed, for the image processing terminal as said transmitter or said receiver, or the image processing terminal as said bulletin board contributor, the step of notifying the presence/absence of the image data relating to the print reservation, at the time of printing the image data newly generated at the image processing terminal; the step of urging the selection of whether or not the image data containing the reservation data of the print reservation are to be simultaneously printed; and the step of urging the selection of the printing layout.

[0029]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 6, according to Claim 23, there is proposed an image data distributing method further comprising, when said image data are transmitted, the step of notifying the transmission to the mobile terminal as the receiver or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor.

[0030]

In the inventions of Claims 1 to 9, Claim 15 and Claims 18 to 23, according to Claim 24, there are proposed an image processing terminal and a mobile terminal wherein said image processing terminal and said mobile terminal comprise infrared

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or wireless transmission control means capable of transmitting the image data mutually between themselves and another external terminal.

[0031]

In the invention of Claim 24, according to Claim 25, there are proposed an image processing terminal and an external terminal wherein said transmission control means is an IrDA interface or a Bluetooth interface.

[0032]

Prior to the detailed description of the invention, here will be briefly described the terminologies to be used in the invention. The transmission/reception of the image data are performed through the server between a transmitter for transmitting the image data and a receiver for receiving the image data. The image processing terminal or mobile terminal to be manipulated by the transmitter for transmitting the image data is expressed by "the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the transmitter", and the mobile terminal to be manipulated by the receiver for receiving the image data is expressed by "the mobile terminal as the receiver". Here, when "the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the transmitter" receives the image data transmitted from others, it is also "the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the receiver". On the other hand: the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal to be manipulated

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by the person desiring the opening and posting on the bulletin board is expressed by "the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor"; the mobile terminal to be manipulated by the person desiring the application for a contest is expressed by "the mobile terminal as the contest applicant"; and the mobile terminal to be manipulated by the person desiring the voting to the image data applied for the contest is expressed by "the mobile terminal as the contest voter".

[0033]

The invention of Claim 1 relates to an image data distributing method of the case in which a new user to generate the image data at first by using the image processing terminal generates and transmits the image data. The image data (generally, a mail with an image) generated by the transmitter or the new user to manipulate the image processing terminal are stored in a mail album of the receiver or a selected transmission destination, whereas their mail album is outputted to the receiver to manipulate the mobile terminal so that the received image data (generally, a mail with an image) are perusably displayed. According to the invention, the image data, as generated by the image processing terminal, can be instantly transmitted on the spot to a desired partner, and the partner having received can observe the image data instantly. It is, therefore, unnecessary unlike the related

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art to go to the data center at each time or to upload the image data to a personal computer. Thus, the invention is remarkably timely and has a wide using range.

[0034] The invention of Claim 2 relates to an image data distributing method, in which when the image data are transmitted to the mail album of the transmitter, the image data or a return are generated at the image processing terminal and are stored in the mail album of the receiver or the return destination, whereas the image data are perusably outputted to the mobile terminal owned by the receiver. When the image data are transmitted from a friend to the transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal, the image data (generally, a mail with an image) to be returned are generated at the image processing terminal and are stored in the mail album of the receiver or the return destination, whereas the mail album is outputted to the receiver to manipulate the mobile terminal so that the received image data are perusably displayed. According to the invention, the image data or the return can be instantly transmitted to the partner having transmitted them so that the communications can be made without any interruption.

[0035]

The invention of Claim 3 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which when the image data are not transmitted to the mail album of the transmitter, the

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keep album of the transmitter is outputted, and in which the image data are newly generated at the image processing terminal and stored in the mail album of the receiver or the selected transmission destination, whereas the image data are perusably outputted to the mobile terminal owned by the receiver. According to the invention, even when the image data (generally, a mail with an image) are not transmitted from others, new image data can be generated and transmitted to the mobile terminal of friend or the like. Therefore, closer communications can be made with a larger width.

[0036]

The invention of Claim 4 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which when the image data are transmitted to the mail album of the transmitter, the transmitter owning the mobile terminal selects the receiver or the return destination from the mail album, and in which the image data or a return selected from the keep album of the transmitter are stored in the mail album of the receiver or the selected transmission destination, whereas the image data are perusably outputted to the mobile terminal owned by the receiver. When the image data (generally, a mail with an image) are transmitted from a friend or the like to the transmitter to manipulating the mobile terminal, more specifically, an access is made to the server by the mobile terminal to select the image data to be used as a return from

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the keep album for storing the image data of the transmitter, and the selected image data are stored in the mail album of the receiver or the return destination, whereas the mail album is outputted to the receiver to manipulate the mobile terminal so that the received image data (generally, a mail with an image) are perusably displayed. According to the invention, it is possible to call up and to send or return the image data which are generated in advance at the image processing terminal and stored in the keep album of the user.

[0037]

The invention of Claim 5 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which when the transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal generates and transmits the transmitter's image data to a bulletin board contributor having contributed the image data generated at the image processing terminal to a desired bulletin board, the transmitted image data are stored in the mail album of the bulletin board contributor, whereas the mail album is outputted to the bulletin board contributor and displayed. According to the invention, the image data generated at the image processing terminal can be transmitted not only to the receiver as an individual but also to the bulletin board contributor having opened and posted the contributor's own image data to the bulletin board.

[0038]

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The invention of Claim 6 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which when the transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal generates and transmits the transmitter's own image data to the bulletin board contributor already having contributed the image data to the bulletin board and owned the mobile terminal, the transmitted image data are stored in the mail album of the bulletin board contributor, whereas the mail album is outputted to the bulletin board contributor and is displayed. According to the invention, the image data generated at the image processing terminal can be transmitted not only to the bulletin board contributor to manipulate the image processing terminal but also to the bulletin board contributor owning the mobile terminal.

[0039]

The invention of Claim 7 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which when the image data are selected from the keep album called up from the mobile terminal owned by a contest applicant and are applied for a contest, a contest voter generates/transmits a mail to the contest applicant, whereas the mail is perusably outputted to the contest applicant. According to the invention, like the invention of Claim 5, so long as the image data are already been stored in the keep album of the contest applicant, the image data can be called therefrom to apply for the contest,

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and the contest voter can transmit the mail to the contest applicant.

[0040]

The invention of Claim 8 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which when a home page is generated by synthesizing the image data generated at the image processing terminal by the transmitter with a template for a home page, the URL is attached to the home page uploaded to the server and is clicked to output the home page to the mobile terminal owned by the receiver. According to the invention, the template or the character can be synthesized with the image data to generate the home page simply and to peruse the same.

[0041]

The invention of Claim 9 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the image data generated at the image processing terminal or the image data stored in the album are edited, worked or deleted. According to the invention, when the image data are to be stored or transmitted, the album can be arranged by changing the contents of the image data or by deleting the unneeded image data.

[0042]

The invention of Claim 10 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the image data to be transmitted/received in the invention are used to write letters or drawings to the taken photograph object, to add a

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message or frame or to synthesize the image data. According to the invention, it is possible to enhance the familiarity by adding words to the image data to be transmitted/received or to enrich the variety of the content of the image data.

[0043]

The invention of Claim 11 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the image data to be transmitted/received in the invention are the motion image or contain motion images. Usually, when the image data of the object are motion images, they are photographed by photograph means of the image processing terminal, but can be motion images which are downloaded from a server (e.g., a data server or a contents server) so that the motion images contain not only the image data of the object but also the real or animation motion images.

[0044]

The invention of Claim 12 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the image data to be transmitted/received in the invention contain musical data or voice data. The musical data are estimated by downloading the MP3 data or the like from the server, but the voice data can be added simultaneously with the generation of the image data by providing the image processing terminal with voice acquiring means and voice data converting means. On the other hand, the musical data or the voice data may be downloaded from

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the server (e.g., the data server or the contents server).

[0045]

The invention of Claim 13 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the image data are quickly distributed by adding the URL to the image data to be transmitted/received in the invention and by clicking the same. Since the mobile terminal has a small button, it is troublesome to input an address or the like when the image data are to be distributed. This problem can be solved by attaching the URL.

[0046]

The invention of Claim 14 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the image data to be transmitted/received in the invention contain reservation data on the print reservation. Since the preservation data of the print reservation are automatically contained in the image data to be transmitted/received, the image data relating to the print reservation are automatically called up at the printing time. It is, therefore, possible to eliminate the troubles which might otherwise be involved by calling up the image data relating to the print reservation at each time, by retrieving the image data desired to be printed, or by setting the print reservation.

[0047]

The invention of Claim 15 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which when the album is

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to be generated or the image data are to be transmitted/received in the invention, the transmitter or the receiver is urged to input the authentication data such as the ID or the password, and the authentication data are passed by the server to determine the generation or the allowance/inhibition of the transmission/reception. According to the invention, it is made effective to account/charge the services provided or to secure or manage the user data.

[0048]

The invention of Claim 16 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the mail album and the keep album for storing the image data are a temporary album for storing the image data temporarily or a long-term album for storing the same for a long term. According to the invention, it is possible to separately use the album as a receiver of the image data and the album as a warehouse, and it is easy to arrange the image data.

[0049]

The invention of Claim 17 relates to the kind of the long-term album, as mentioned in Claim 16, and to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the long-term album is divided into: a private album to be perused by no one so long as the authentication data are not inputted; an open album requiring the inputting of no authentication data or only the ID; and a group album to be perused by no one so long as the

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common authentication data given to a specific group are not inputted. As a result, the image data to be kept secret, the image data to be opened to an acquaintance or the image data to be shared in a specific group such as the image data of a wedding party can be stored in the long-term albums according to the individual applications/purposes.

[0050]

The invention of Claim 18 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which when the mail album or the keep album is a temporary storing album containing image data to be stored for a long term, the desired image data are moved to the long-term album. The movement of the image data can be instructed not only from the image processing terminal but also from the mobile terminal and is updated in the data by the server. According to the invention, the image data can be separately stored in the temporary album and the long-term album in accordance with the kind or importance thereof, or the contents of the album can be arranged.

[0051]

The invention of Claim 19 relates to an image data distributing method of the type, in which at the time of generating and holding the long-term album, the authentication data as the member are inputted separately of the aforementioned authentication data so that their allowance/inhibition is authenticated by the server. As a

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result, it is effective that the services to be given to the user or formal member are accounted/charged, and that the member is secured and managed.

[0052]

The invention of Claim 20 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the image data generated at the image processing terminal are printed on the spot. According to the invention, not only the generated image data can be instantly printed, but also the desired printing layout can be selected, so that the types of the image data to be printed according to the applications or tastes can be separately used.

[0053]

The invention of Claim 21 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the image data to be stored in the mail album or the keep album are to be reserved for their printing. According to the invention, when the image data to be stored in the mail album or the keep album are perused from the mobile terminal, the favorite image data can be reserved in advance for their printing. When the image processing terminal is called at some day, therefore, it is possible to eliminate the troubles of retrieving the inside of the album at each time to search the image data.

[0054]

The invention of Claim 22 relates to an image data

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distributing method of the case, in which the image data containing the reservation data of the print reservation, as mentioned in Claim 14, are printed. According to the invention, when the image data generated newly at the image processing terminal are printed, they can be printed together with the image data relating to the print reservation. Therefore, this image data distributing method is economical and spares the time.

[0055]

The invention of Claim 23 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which when the image data (generally, a mail with an image) are to be transmitted, this transmission is positively notified to the receivers. As a result, when the image data are transmitted, this transmission is instantly notified to the receiver so that the image data can be timely perused.

[0056]

The invention of Claim 24 relates to an image data distributing method of the case, in which the image processing terminal and the mobile terminal are individually provided with infrared or wireless transmission control means so that the image data can be mutually transferred between themselves and another external terminal. As a result, the image data stored in another external terminal are transferred to the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal and are stored in

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and read out from the mail album or the keep album so that they can be perusably outputted as the image data suited for the kind of the mobile terminal. As a result, it is possible to further enlarge the kind of the image data and the width of the transmission/reception.

[0057]

The invention of Claim 25 relates to the case in which the IrDA or Bluetooth interface is sued as the transmission control means having been mentioned in Claim 24. By giving the infrared or wireless transmission function, the image data or the personal data such as addresses can be easily exchanged.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is an entire diagram showing the flow of image data in the invention;

Fig. 2 shows a system construction for practicing the invention;

Fig. 3 is a schematic side elevation of an image processing terminal;

Fig. 4 is a flow chart showing the processing flow of a main program of the image processing terminal;

Fig. 5 is a flow chart showing the processing flows of the image processing terminal and a server in the "new" case;

Fig. 6 is a flow chart showing the processing flows of the image processing terminal and the server of the case in

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which the "registered user" and the transmission of the image data are present;

Fig. 7 is a flow chart showing the processing flows of the image processing terminal and the server of the case in which the "registered user" and the transmission of the image data are absent;

Fig. 8 is a flow chart showing the processing flow of the image processing terminal 1 to be manipulated by a bulletin board contributor indicated at C in Fig. 4;

Fig. 9 is a flow chart of the main program of a mobile terminal;

Fig. 10 is a flow chart showing the processing flows of the mobile terminal and the server at the time when authentication data are to be acquired from the mobile terminal;

Fig. 11 is a flow chart showing the processing flow of the case in which the authentication data as the "toll member" are to be acquired from the mobile terminal 5;

Fig. 12 is a flow chart showing the processing flow of the case in which a long-term album is made from the mobile terminal;

Fig. 13 is a flow chart showing the processing flow of the mobile terminal of the case in which the image data to be stored in a temporary album are moved to and stored in the long-term album;

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Fig. 14 is a flow chart showing the processing flow of the mobile terminal of the case in which the individual image data in the album are edited/deleted from the mobile terminal;

Fig. 15 is a flow chart showing the processing flow of the mobile terminal of the case in which a simple WEB mail is transmitted from the mobile terminal;

Fig. 16 is a flow chart showing another processing flow of the main program of the image processing terminal;

Fig. 17 presents a select screen and printing layout screens on the printing of the image data or on the printing of the image data for a print reservation;

Fig. 18 is a flow chart showing different processing flows of the case in which the image data in an album are perused from the mobile terminal; and

Fig. 19 is a flow chart showing the processing flow of the case in which a keep album is read from the mobile terminal and designated on the print reservation.

[0058]

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Here will be described an embodiment of the invention.

Entire Construction

Fig. 1 is an entire diagram showing the flow of image data in the invention. The invention is in the network environment, in which a plurality of image processing terminals

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1, 1a, 1b and so on and a server 3 are individually connected through the communication network and in which a plurality of mobile terminals 5, 5a, 5b and so on and the server 3 are individual connected through the carrier communication network. In the flow of the image data in the invention, basically, the image data generated at the image processing terminal 1 (of the INPUT system) are stored through a communication network 2 in the server 3 and are finally outputted from the server 3 through the carrier communication network 4 to the mobile terminal 5 (of the OUTPUT system). In the invention, there are modes of flows of the image data, which do not always follow the aforementioned flows. Nevertheless, the invention is absolutely different in the distribution method from the image data distribution method or system of the related art, in which the image data are merely transmitted/received between the personal computer and the server or between the image processing terminals disposed in a common BOX, in that the image data are always received through the carrier communication network 4 from the server 3 for storing the image data generated at the image processing terminal 1. In the invention, specifically, the image data can be stored in the album in an image database 13 of the server 3 . When the image data having been generated at the image processing terminal 1 are already stored in the album, therefore, the image data need not always be generated at the

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image processing terminal 1, but the desired image data can be selected from the own album not by generating them at the image processing terminal 1 but by making an access to the server 3 from the mobile terminal 5, and message data or the like can be added to the selected image data and transmitted to another mobile terminal 5a or 5b. In this case, too, there never fails to be a step of storing the image data generated by the image processing terminal 1, in the album in the server 3. In short, for realizing the invention, there are indispensable the image processing terminal 1, the server 3, the mobile terminal 5, and the communication network 2 and the carrier communication network 4 for relaying the former. It is illustratively and technically possible to transmit the image data from the mobile terminal 5 through the server 3 to the image processing terminal 1. So long as the mobile terminal 5 is included, however, the album can be practically called by the server 3, and the image data can be observed at hand at all times. It is hardly necessary to go to the image processing terminal 1 installed at a fixed position and to peruse the image data. In the invention, therefore, here will not be positively mentioned the mode in which the image data are transmitted from the mobile terminal 5 through the server 3 to the image processing terminal 1. However, the mode of the transmission of the image data from one mobile terminal to another will be mentioned because the transmission uses the

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image data which has been generated by the image processing terminal 1 and inputted, as described above.

[0059]

Fig. 2 shows a system construction for practicing the invention.

Construction of Image Processing Terminal

The image processing terminal 1 is constructed to include: a camera 6 as means for generating the image data containing the image data of an object; control means 7; a monitor 8 as display means; and a printer 9 as printing means. Further included are communication means 10 for connecting the communication network 2 with the server 3, and storage means 11 for storing the various data processed at the control means 7. The storage means 11 is stored with not only various message data or frame data but also the various data outputted from the server 3. In the shown image processing terminal 1, there are shown two cameras 6 and two monitors 8, the numbers and kinds of which are not asked in the invention. The image processing terminal 1 is provided with infrared or wireless transmission control means 16 of IrDA or Bluetooth, by which it is enabled to transfer the image data with the mobile terminal 5 or another external terminal 24. The camera 6 is also provided with a function to take not only a still image but a motion image (AV1), so that it can also transmit the motion image or the image data containing the motion image. The

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control means 7 has not only a function to download the frame data or the character data from the server but also a function to regenerate the download such as MP3, ATRAC3 or TWIN-VQ. The image processing terminal 1 is further provided with input means 22 which is used for inputting letters, drawings or messages and for inputting personal data or authentication data when a member is to be registered.

[0060]

Construction of Server

The server 3 is mainly constructed to include: a WEB server 12; an image database 13; a member database 26; control means 14 for processing the various data; and communication means 15 for connecting with the image processing terminal 1 through the communication network 2 or with the mobile terminal 5 through the carrier communication network 4. On the other hand, the server is estimated to involve not only the server 3 or the manager of the present services but also a contents server 27 for servicing the various data such as motion images or musics to be synthesized with the image data. The WEB server 12 is assigned for managements/administrations of services on the bulletin boards, the contests or the home pages stored in the WEB pages, and the image database 13 is given not only a function to make/retrieve/update the albums for storing the image data but also a function to store/retrieve the various data on the motion images / the voices / the musics. The member

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database 26 is given a function to manage/register/update the member data and the personal data of the user. As the albums, there are involved in the invention: mail albums for temporarily storing the image data transmitted (generally, mails with images); keep albums for temporarily storing the image data generated at the image processing terminal 1; and long-term albums including private albums, open albums and group albums for moving the image data, as stored in those temporary albums, and for storing them for a long term. In addition, the image data generated at the image processing terminal 1 cannot be displayed, as they are, in a monitor 17 of the mobile terminal 5 in the least because of their capacity or resolution. On the basis of the data on the kind of the terminal , as transmitted from the carrier of the mobile terminal 5, therefore, it is performed by the aforementioned control means 14 to discriminate and determine that kind of the image data which is suited for the distribution. In the image database 13, there are stored the frame data or the character data, as downloaded from the various contents server 27 to the image processing terminal 1 or the mobile terminal 5, and the data on the motion images / the musics / the voices.

[0061]

Construction of Mobile Terminal

The mobile terminal 5 ordinarily means the mobile telephone or PDA, which corresponds to the WEB managed by the

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carriers of NTT DOCOMO, for example. The mobile terminal 5 is mainly constructed to include: a monitor 17 for displaying the image data; input means 18 capable of inputting messages or authentication data; control means 19 for processing the input data; and communication means 20 for making it possible to communicate with the server 3 through the carrier communication network 4. The mobile terminal 5 is further provided with storage means 21 for storing the image data or the like outputted from the server 3. Moreover, the mobile terminal 5 is provided with infrared or wireless transmission control means 23 of IrDA or Bluetooth for making it possible to transfer the image data not only between the mobile terminal 5 and the image processing terminal 1 but also between the mobile terminals or between the mobile terminal 5 and the external terminal 24.

[0062]

Here will be described the individual steps for practicing the invention.

Transmission/Reception of Image Data

Fig. 4 is a flow chart of the main program of the image processing terminal 1. In the invention, as the action procedures of the case in which the image data generated at the image processing terminal 1 are transmitted, there are three patterns of: the case in which the image data are utilized by the "new" user; the case in which the user is the already

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"registered" person and in which the image data (or a mail with images) have arrived at the user from another person; and the case in which the user is "registered" and in which the image data have not arrived yet at the user from another. In the invention, for the transmission/reception of the image data, the user is not always obliged to acquire the authentication data. In the practical embodiment, however, it seems that the user to receive services is requested to acquire the authentication data from the standpoints for accounting/charging the services or the for managing/protecting the personal data of the user. In the description of the embodiment relating to the transmission/reception of the image data, therefore, here will be described according to the practice the case which premises the input of the authentication data. In the practical embodiment of the invention: there are present on the side of the image processing terminal 1 a "new" user or an registered user and a "registered" user capable of generating and transmitting/receiving the image data; and there are on the side of the mobile terminal 5 a "free member" capable of holding the keep album for storing the image data of the user, as generated at the image processing terminal, and a "toll member" capable of holding the mail album for storing for a long term either the generated image data the received image data, and the members are individually requested to acquire the

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authentication data for receiving the separate authentications. The "free member" and the "toll member" at the mobile terminal will be described hereinafter. Here will be exclusively described the "new" user and the "registered" user at the image processing terminal. The "new" user means the user which receives the aforementioned generation and transmission/reception of the image data at first and which has not acquired yet the authentication data making the services possible. The "registered" user means the user who has received the services and who has already acquired the authentication data for receiving the services. When the image processing terminal 1 is brought into its usable state by inserting a coin into an accounting unit 25 of the image processing terminal 1, it is automatically connected with the server 3 so that a main menu (100) for selecting the "new" user or the "registered" user is displayed in the display means 8. Here will be described the processing flow of the case in which the transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal 1 is the "new" user.

[0063]

First of all, here will be described the processings of the case of the user who uses the aforementioned services at first but has not acquired the authentication data yet. In this case, in the main menu (100), the actions are proceeded along the flow chart of "new" in Fig. 4 by clicking the "new"

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icon with an input pen or the like belonging to the input means 22. On the other hand, Fig. 5 is a flow chart showing the processing flows of the "new" case at the image processing terminal 1 and at the server 3. In the "new" case, there is no image data to be transmitted to friends or bulletin boards, so that the image data for the transmission have to be generated at first. First of all, when the "new" icon is clicked and selected from the main menu (100) displayed in the display means 8, there is displayed a screen (101) for explaining the using procedures or the like. When this step is ended, there is displayed a screen (102) for urging the photographing and the scribbling of letters/drawings. Therefore, the image data are generated by acquiring the photographic data with the camera 6 and by scribbling the letters and drawings over the photographic data with the input means 22. When the generation of the image data is ended, the next action is to acquire the authentication data, and there is displayed a screen (103) for urging the inputting of the personal data. When the personal data are inputted by using the input means 22, therefore, there is then displayed a screen (104) for inputting hobbies, which are also inputted by the input means 22. When the inputting of the photograph and the personal data is thus ended, there is given the keep album for storing the generated image data, and a screen (105) therefor is displayed. As shown in Fig. 5, the authentication data of the user are given by inputting

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the aforementioned personal data, so that the keep album is given by the authentication. Subsequently, the step at and after C of Fig. 4, that is, after the generated image data are printed by the printing means 9, as shown in Fig. 8, there is displayed a screen 601 for urging the selection of the receiver or the transmission destination. If an "individual"icon is selected, there is displayed a screen (604) for urging the inputting of the address and ID of the receiver or the transmission destination. If this is inputted by using the input means 22, therefore, the aforementioned image data are transmitted/stored in the mail album of the receiver or the transmission destination. Here, the image data in the invention are characterized as the "mail with the image". As described above, it is possible, if desired, to include (Claim 10): the step of inputting the additional data such as the letters or drawings, the message data or the hobby data to the taken photograph data of the transmitter by the input means 22 included; and the step of synthesizing the photograph data with the frame data read from the storage means 11 or the various frame data downloaded from the server 3 or the contents server 27, by the synthesizing means included in the control means 7. When the input means 22 is a liquid crystal monitor with a digitizer, the letters/drawings are inputted by using an input pen on the desired coordinates of the photograph data, and the message data or frame data, as read from a ROM or SDRAM,

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or the various frame data, as downloaded from the server 3 or the contents server 27, are inputted by clicking the coordinates displaying them with the input pen. Moreover, the image data can be made (Claim 11) the motion images by making the camera 6 correspond to the motion images (AV1), and the image data can be made (Claim 12) those with the musical data or the voice data by downloading and regenerating the voice data such as MP3, ATRAC3 TWIN-VQ from the server. The transmitter can also print the generated image data, after transmitted, by the printing means 9. After this, the transmitter can contribute the generated image data to the bulletin board by himself or herself, as will be described hereinafter.

[0064]

When the individual generates the image data and acquires the authentication data to become "registered", the keep album corresponding to the individual is generated in the image data base 13 of the server 3. The keep album is the album for storing the image data which were generated with the image processing terminal 1 by the individual, as has been described hereinbefore. As the result that the user became "registered" and transmitted the generated image data to the friends or the contributors of the bulletin board, when the image data are transmitted or returned from the friends or the bulletin board contributors, there is generated not only the aforementioned

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keep album but also the mail album. This mail album is the album for storing the image data transmitted from others. Subsequent to the main menu (100), the mail album (204) is outputted/displayed from the server, when the image data are transmitted from others, and the keep album (301) is outputted/displayed from the server when the image data are not transmitted from others.

[0065]

Here, in order that the image data generated and stored at the image processing terminal 1 may be perused at the mobile terminal 5, the receiver for manipulating the mobile terminal 5 has to be the "free member" having acquired the authentication data. Fig. 9 is a flow chart of the main program of the mobile terminal 5, and Fig. 10 is a flow chart showing the processing flows of the mobile terminal 5 and the server 3 of the case in which the authentication data are to be acquired from the mobile terminal 5. First of all, when the mobile terminal 5 is turned ON and connected with the server 3, the main menu is displayed in the monitor 17. If an "register member" icon (401) is selected from the menu screen, there is displayed a screen (402) for urging the inputting of the personal data such as nickname and password, and sex, date of birth, hobby and occupation, and these personal data are inputted by the input means 18. When these personal data are inputted, the profile registration is made by the server 3, and there is displayed

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a screen (403) indicating that the registration was completed. When the user thus acquires the status of the "free member" given the authentication data, the main menu is again displayed on the screen, from which the "page of members" is selected. Then, there is displayed a screen (501) for urging the inputting of the acquired authentication data, and this inputting is done. Subsequently, the authentication data inputted at the server 3 are authenticated, and the perusal of the image data is allowed if the authentication is passed. Thus, in the case of receiving the services from the mobile terminal 5, too, there two members of "free members" and "toll members". As shown in Figs. 9 to 11, the former means the member who can peruse the keep album storing the image data generated at the image processing terminal 1, and the latter means the member who can peruse the mail album, transmit/receive the image data or the simple WEB mails, hold the long-term album, and apply for or vote the contest. In order for the mobile terminal 5 to peruse the image data which have been transmitted/stored in the mail album of the receiver or the transmission destination from the image processing terminal 1 or the transmitter, therefore, the receiver to manipulate the mobile terminal 5 has to acquire the status as the "toll member". The acquirement of the status of the "toll member" is conditioned (Claim 19) by acquiring authentication data different from those for the "free member". Alternatively, the acquirement may be conditioned by the

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"agreement to the regulations for the toll member", as will be described hereinafter. On the other hand, the ranges of services to be given to the "free member" and the "toll member" are not limited to those of the aforementioned embodiment.

[0066]

When the image data generated at the image processing terminal 1 as the transmitter are thus transmitted/stored, they are transmitted through the following steps to the mobile terminal 5 owned by the receiver. First of all, if the mobile terminal 5 is turned ON and connected with the server, as shown in Fig. 9, the kind of the image data suited for the distribution is determined by discriminating the kind of the mobile terminal 5. Subsequently, the top page is displayed to urge to select the menu. From the menu, therefore, the "authentication" icon is clicked and selected. Next, there is displayed the screen (501) for urging the inputting the authentication data, which are inputted by using the input means 18. When the inputting of the authentication data is thus completed to pass the authentication, the top page screen of the toll member menu is displayed (i.e., the screen "Hallow ! Mr. TARO !"), as shown in Fig. 18. If the "mail album" icon is clicked, the mail albums of the receiver are read out sequentially of the arrivals, and the image data stored therein are outputted in the mode suited for the mobile terminal 5 and displayed in the monitor 17. The top page of the mobile terminal 5 in the case of the "toll

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member" is estimated by the invention to adopt not only the screen (701) shown in the embodiment of Fig. 12 but also the "TOP" screen shown in Fig. 19, but these screens are not limitative. If the top page of Fig. 12 is adopted, the "album manipulation" icon is clicked and selected from the top page screen (701) so that a screen of the "album manipulation" (702) is displayed. If the "peruse/edit" icon is clicked and selected, as shown in Fig. 14, therefore, it is confirmed whether or not the album exists, and it is urged to select the mail album and the keep album. By selecting the mail album, therefore, the mail album of the receiver is read out so that the internally held image data are outputted in a mode suited for the mobile terminal 5. When the image data to be perused are to be selected, the URL is attached (Claim 13) to the individual image data and is clicked to output the image data. Thus, it is possible to eliminate the troubles, as might otherwise be involved by manipulating the key button at each time. In the shown embodiment, there are attached to the image data in the mail album the ID of the transmitter together with the date and time of the transmission, which are displayed sequentially of the arrivals, but the invention should not always be limited thereto. On the other hand, here will be briefly described the discriminations/determinations of the image data which are suited for the kind of the mobile terminal 5. The contents are absolutely different in: the image data

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of high resolution generated at the image processing terminal 1; the image data capable of being displayed in the mobile terminal; and even in the same mobile terminal, the image data of the mobile terminals of the color image type, the binary image type and the gray scale (of four gradations) type. Therefore, the server 3 and the image processing terminal 1 have to be associated to adjust and determine the image data which are suited for the used mobile terminal. When the image data are generated, more specifically, the image data of at least the aforementioned three types are generated at the image processing terminal 1, and the server 3 discriminates/determines the image data which are suited for the mobile terminal 5 owned by the receiver, from the aforementioned three types on the basis of the data which have been received from the carrier/data center of the relay mobile terminal 5.

[0067]

In the aforementioned embodiment, on the other hand, the flows of the transmission/reception of the image data continue, in Fig. 4, from the step of the "new" screen (101) to the screen (102) of "photograph/scribble" for urging the inputting of the personal data, through the step of the screen (103) of "input personal data" to the steps after C shown in Fig. 8, i.e., the steps of a screen (601) for selecting the partner to which the image data are transmitted, and the screen (604). As shown

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in Fig. 16, however, the flows may be modified as follows. Subsequent to the screen (101) of "new", there is provided the step (or the screen 103 of Fig. 4) of urging the inputting the "nickname/sex" or a portion of the personal data. Then, subsequent to the step (or the screens 601 and 604 in Fig. 8) of selecting the partner to which the image data are to be transmitted, the flows continue through the step (or the screen 102 in Fig. 4) of the "photograph/scribble" for urging the generation of the image data to the transmission step of the image data. The order of these steps should not be limited to the shown one.

[0068]

Here will be described the case (Claim 2) in which there are the image data which are transmitted from others. Fig. 6 is a flow chart showing the processing flows of the image processing terminal 1 and the server 3 of that case. If the "registered user" icon is clicked and selected from the main menu (100), there is displayed a screen (201) for urging the inputting the authentication data such as the ID or password in the display means 8. When the authentication data are inputted, the mail album stored with the image data transmitted to the transmitted to the is read from the image database 13 of the server 3 and is outputted/displayed in the display means 8. At this time, there is additionally made a display informing the presence/absence and number of the image data

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transmitted. Next, there is made a display which urges the selection of the receiver or the return destination, which is then selected. Here, this selection screen may display the image data transmitter in a list form or may display their titles in a list so that the image data may be sequentially read out by clicking the titles individually. When the receiver or the return destination is selected, there is displayed the screen for urging the generation of the image data to be returned. Therefore, the photograph is taken with the camera 6 belonging to the image processing terminal 1, and the input means 22 is used to write the letters/drawings or to add suitable messages selectively (202 to 206). When the image data are thus completed, they are stored the mail album of the receiver or the return destination selected.

[0069]

For the receiver to manipulalte the mobile terminal 5, on the other hand, the image data are distributed through the steps similar to the aforementioned ones to the mobile terminal 5. When the mobile terminal 5 is turned ON and connected with the server, more specifically, its kind is discriminated to determine the kind of the image data suited for the distribution. Subsequently, the main menu is displayed to urge the selection of the menu, and the "authentication" icon is selected. Next, there is displayed the screen (501) urging the inputting of the authentication data, which are inputted by using the input

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means 18. When the inputting of the authentication data is thus completed to pass the authentication, the mail album stored with the image data transmitted to the receiver is read out either by clicking the "mail album" icon from the top page of the toll member menu of the embodiment of Fig. 18 or by clicking the "peruse/edit" icon from the "album manipulation" screen (702) of the embodiment of Fig. 12, as has been described hereinbefore. As a result, the image data stored therein are outputted as the image data suited for the mobile terminal 5 and are displayed in the monitor 17. The receiver is enabled to peruse the desired image data stored in the mail album, by clicking the URL of each image data, the ID of the displayed transmitter, or the title, as has been described hereinbefore. In the embodiment of the invention, on the other hand, it is necessary for peruse the mobile terminal 5 or the receiver to peruse the transmitted image data, that the user is the "toll member", as has been described hereinbefore.

[0070]

In the embodiment thus far described, too, the processing flow (202 to 207) shown in Fig. 4 or 6 may be modified to such one shown in Fig. 16 that the step of urging the selection of the receiver or the transmission destination comes after the "photographing/scribbling step of urging the generation of the image data. In the foregoing embodiment, the transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal is the registered user

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having used the present services in the past, and the personal data such as "nickname and sex" have already been stored/registered in the server so that the step of inputting them is not required.

[0071]

Here will be described the case (Claim 3) in which the image data transmitted from others are not in the foregoing case. Fig. 7 is a flow chart showing the processing flows of the image processing terminal 1 and the server 3 of that case. When the transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal 1 is already "registered" and when there is no transmission of the image data from others, subsequent to the display of the screen informing the presence/absence and the number of the image data transmitted from the main menu (100), not the mail album of the transmitter but the keep album of the transmitter is displayed in the screen of the display means 8, and there is made the display (301) indicating that the image data are not transmitted. Subsequently, there is display a screen (302) which urges the generation of the image data, and the image data are generated by taking a photograph with the camera 6 and by inputting letters/drawings with the input means 22. When the image data are thus completed, they are stored in the keep album, and there is displayed the screen (601) which urges the selection either the "bulletin board mail" or the "personal mail", as indicated at C in Fig. 4, i.e., after C

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in Fig. 8. When the "personal main" icon is clicked, therefore, there is displayed the screen (604) which urges the selection of the receiver or the transmission destination. By inputting the ID and password or the address of the receiver with the input means 22, therefore, the generated image data are stored in the mail album of the receiver or the transmission destination. Here, the generated image data can be printed the printing means 9 included.

[0072]

For the receiver owning the mobile terminal 5, on the other hand, the kind of the image data suited for the distribution is determined like before by discriminating the kind of the mobile terminal 5. Then, the mail album for storing the image data sent to the receiver is read out, and the image data stored therein are outputted in a perusable manner and displayed in the monitor 17. At this time, like before, it is desired that the URL is attached (Claim 13) to the image data so that the image data can be outputted by clicking the URL. In the embodiment of the invention, the ID of each transmitter and the date of transmission are displayed like before in the arrival order for each image data so that the corresponding image data are outputted by clicking the desired transmitter ID.

[0073]

In the aforementioned embodiment, the processing flows

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of Fig. 7 continue after the display (301) of the screen indicating no transmission of the image data, through the step of the "photograph/scribble" screen (302) urging the generation of the image data, to the screens (601) and (604) which urge the selection of the transmission destination, as shown in Fig. 8. As shown in Fig. 16, however, the flows at and after the display of the screen (301) indicating no transmission of the image data can continue, after the step (i.e., the screens 601 and 604 of Fig. 8) of urging the selection of the partner to which the image data are transmitted, to the processing of the "photograph/scribble" step (i.e., the screen 302 of Fig. 7) of urging the generation of the image data. The order of those steps should not be limited to the shown one. [0074]

Here will be described the case (Claim 4) in which the image data are selected from the mobile terminal 5 owned by the transmitter and are transmitted to the mobile terminal 5a or 5b owned by the receiver. For the transmitter owning the mobile terminal 5, when the power is turned ON to make the connection with the server 3, as described hereinbefore, the kind of the mobile terminal 5 is discriminated at first, and the kind of the image data suited for the distribution is determined. Next, there is outputted/displayed the mail album which is stored with the image data transmitted to the transmitter and from which there is displayed the screen for

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urging the selection of the receiver or the return destination. When the receiver or the return destination is selected, there is then read out the keep album which is stored with the image data generated at the image processing terminal 1 by the transmitter, and the keep album is outputted/displayed in the monitor 17 to display the screen urging the selection of the image data used in the return. When the selections of the receiver or the transmission destination and the image data used in the return are finished, the image data are stored in the mail album of the receiver. For the selection of the image data from the mail album or the keep album, the capacity of the mobile terminal 5 and the performances of the monitor 17 are considered. It is desired that the image data in those albums are sequentially outputted/displayed by displaying them in the list of the URL or the title and by clicking them. [0075]

For the receiver owning the mobile terminal 5a or 5b, on the other hand, there is determined the kind of the image data which are suited for the mobile terminal 5a or 5b. Next, by selecting the "peruse/edit" from the top page of the toll member menu in the case of the embodiment of Fig. 18 and from the "album manipulation" screen (702) in the case of the embodiment of Fig. 12, the mail album of the receiver is read out, and the corresponding image data are outputted/displayed by clicking the URL of each image data and the ID of the

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transmitter. In the embodiment of the invention, there is not included the step of generating the image data at the image processing terminal 1, but the transmitter and the receiver are the users for manipulating the mobile terminal. In the practical embodiment, therefore, there is retain the status of the "toll member" on the side of the mobile terminal, as has been described hereinbefore.

[0076]

Here will be described the case in which the image data are transmitted from others to the image data contributed to the bulletin board by the contributor. The bulletin board is the services given at the server 3, and the bulletin board contributor in the invention is positioned as the person who has contributed the personal image data. The transmission of the image data from others to the contributed image data can be effected by the image data of the transmitter if the transmitter manipulates the image processing terminal 1. When the bulletin board contributor manipulates the mobile terminal 5, however, what can be transmitted is the mail of only letters without any image data. The invention has a main object to transmit/receive the image data (i.e., the mail with the image). Therefore, there is positively omitted the mention of the mode of the case in which the mobile terminal 5 is manipulated by the transmitter capable of transmitting only the letter mail. For the transmission of the image data generated at the image

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processing terminal 1 to the bulletin board contributor or the contribution to the bulletin board, in order to reduce the troubles of the user, as caused by generating the image data newly at the image processing terminal 1, or to lighten the burden of the cost, it is possible in the practical embodiment, as shown in Fig. 4, to transmit the image data to the individuals such as the bulletin board contributor or friends subsequently after the transmitter transmitted the image data to the receiver or the transmission destination. It is also desirable that the image data can be contributed to the bulletin boarder. According to the practical embodiment, here will be separately described the case in which the bulletin board contributor is the image processing terminal and the case in which the same is the mobile terminal.

[0077]

First of the two, here will be described the case (Claim 5) in which the bulletin board contributor manipulates the image processing terminal 1. The image processing terminal 1 manipulated by the bulletin board contributor has passed, at the step up to C of Fig. 4, through the step (102, 205 or 302 in Fig. 4) of urging the generation of the image data, so that the image data have already been generated according to that instruction. However, this accords to the practical embodiment, as has been described, so that the step of generating (or "photographing/scribbling") the image data can

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be made independent for contributing to the bulletin board. As shown in Fig. 8, at the step just before the processings are ended, there is then displayed a screen (605) for urging whether or not the open bulletin board is desired. If the "desire" icon is clicked and selected, the notice is posted to the bulletin board of the selected hobby or genre. At the it is possible to select the kind of bulletin which is not desired to e publicly noticed. Thus, the image data are generated and are transmitted/contributed to the selected bulletin board. Then, the generated image data are stored in the desired bulletin board and are publicly noticed. When the image data are transmitted from others to the contributor, on the other hand, the authentication data are inputted (201), as shown in Fig. 4, and the mail album for storing the image data transmitted to the contributor is read out (202), so that the internal image data are contributably outputted/displayed in the display means 8.

[0078]

For the transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal 1a or 1b, on the other hand, the various bulletin boards are read out separately on the hobbies and genres and are contributably outputted. From these, there are displayed screens (602) and (603) which urge the selection of the bulletin board contributor desiring the transmission of the image data. Thus, this selection is made by clicking the image of the

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desired bulletin board contributor separately of the hobbies and the genres. At the step up to C of Fig. 4, the image data have already been generated so that the image data are transmitted/stored in the mail album of the bulletin board contributor selected. In order to lighten the burden on the user, as has been described hereinbefore, the image data generated at the step (102, 205 or 302 in Fig. 4) up to C of Fig. 4 can be transmitted to the contributor of the bulletin board at the step at and after C of Fig. 4, i.e., at the step at or after the screen (601) urging the selection of the selection of the partner of the transmission, as shown in Fig. 8. Therefore, the step of preparing the independent image data to be transmitted to the bulletin board contributor is absent but can naturally be independently provided. This is similar even at the image processing terminal 1 as the bulletin board contributor. In the embodiment, the generated image data can also be contributed to the bulletin board by the contributor. At this time, the kind of the bulletin board to be left uncontributed can be designated (606), and the image data are desired to happen to be transmitted to others. On the other hand, the mode may be modified to set the time, for which the image data can be transmitted not only to the bulletin board but to the individuals. Here, it is desirable that the bulletin board contributor can be automatically selected by clicking the image data of the bulletin board contributor

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displayed in the screen.

[0079]

In the aforementioned embodiment, the processing flow includes the step (102, 205 or 302 in Fig. 4) of urging the generation of the image data, up to C of Fig. 4. As shown in Fig. 16, for example, before the "photographing/scribbling" step of urging the generation of the image data, there may be a step ("partner on bobbies" and "select genre" in Fig. 16) of urging the selection of the bulletin board contributor separately for the hobbies or the genres, and the order of these steps should not be limited to the shown one.

[0080]

Here will be described the case (Claim 6) in which the bulletin board contributor manipulates the mobile terminal 5. In this case, the bulletin board contributor has already contributed the contributor's own image data to the bulletin board so that the transmitter observes the data and transmits the image data generated at the image processing terminal 1. The transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal 1 generates the image data through some step (102, 205 or 302 in Fig. 4), as shown in Fig. 4, and stores them in the keep album. When the transmitter finds a bulletin board contributor, to whom the transmitter wants to transmit the transmitter's own image data, when transmitter peruses the bulletin board at the step after C in Fig. 4, the transmitter

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transmits the generated image data along the flow of the aforementioned screens (602) and (603). After the image data were generated at any step of (102), (205) or (302) in Fig. 4, the various image data of the bulletin board contributors of different tastes or genres are read out and outputted. After this step, the screen (602) and (603) urging the selection of the desired bulletin board contributor are displayed. By selecting either of the screens, the image data are transmitted/stored in the mail album of the desired bulletin board contributor selected. After the image data were thus transmitted to the mail album of the selected bulletin board contributor, they can also be contributed to the bulletin board.

[0081]

On the other hand, the bulletin board contributor owning the mobile terminal 5 connects the mobile terminal 5 with the server, as shown in Fig. 9, and the kind of the image data suited for the distribution is determined by discriminating the kind of the terminal. Subsequent to this step, the authentication (501) is passed by inputting the authentication data. In the case of embodiment of Fig. 18, the top page of the toll member menu is displayed, and the icon of the mail album is clicked. In the case of the embodiment of Fig. 12, the "peruse/edit" icon is clicked from the top page screen (701) through the "album manipulation" screen (702). Then, the transmitter

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lists for the URL of the individual image data and each transmitter ID are displayed in the arrival order, as described hereinbefore. By clicking the desired URL or the like, therefore, the corresponding image data are perusably outputted in the monitor 17 so that the image data transmitted from the image processing terminal 1 as the transmitter to the bulletin board contributor can be perused.

[0082]

Here will be described the case (Claim 7) in which a contest applicant applies for a contest from the applicant's own mobile terminal 5 whereas a contest voter votes for the contest from the voter's mobile terminal 5a or 5b. For the use of the contest, the "popularity contest" icon is clicked and selected like before from the "toll menu" screen (701) of Fig. 12 through the step (i.e., the my menu registration in Fig. 9) for the "toll member" of Fig. 9. For the mobile terminal 5 owned by the contest applicant, the kind of the image data suited for the distribution is determined at first by discriminating the kind of that terminal. Next, the various contests are read out and are perusably outputted. There is displayed a screen which urges the selection of the contest desired to apply for. When the kind of the contest is selected according to the instruction, the keep album of the contest applicant is then perusably read out, and there is displayed a screen which urges the selection of the image data to be

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applied for the contest. When the image data selected from the screen, they are transmitted to and stored in the desired contest. If there is a mail which has been transmitted to the contest applicant, on the other hand, it is transmitted to the address of the contest applicant. For the selection of the image data, in view of the abilities of the mobile terminal, as described hereinbefore, it is desired that the image data in the keep album are displayed in a list of titles or URL, which are clicked by the simple keying manipulation so that the corresponding image data are read out and outputted. Likewise, for the selection of the kind of the contest, it is desired to display the titles for the individual contests. [0083]

For the mobile terminal 5a or 5b owned by the contest voter, on the other hand, by discriminating the kind of the terminal like before, the kind of the image data suited for the distribution is determined at first, and the various contests are then read out and are perusably outputted to the monitor 17. Subsequently, there is displayed a screen which urges the selection of the contest applicant desiring the voting, so that the selection is made by clicking the image or identifier of the desiring contest applicant. When the contest applicant is selected, there is then displayed a screen which urges the generation of a mail addressed to the content applicant. Therefore, that mail is generated by the input

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means 18 corresponding to the keys of the mobile terminal 5a or 5b. When the contest applicant is thus selected to generate the mail, this main is transmitted to the address of the contest applicant. On the other hand, the results of the contest are collected, and their data are outputted and displayed at the mobile terminal. For the image data and the contest, it is desired that they are displayed in terms of the titles or URL, as described hereinbefore, so that their content may be outputted by clicking the titles or URL.

[0084]

Here will be described the case (Claim 8) in which the transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal 1 generates a home page containing the transmitter's image data and outputs it to the receiver owning the mobile terminal 5. The transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal 1 is urged to select the template for the home page, which is read out from the storage means 11 of the image processing terminal 1 or downloaded from the server 3 or the contents server 27, and selects the desired template by clicking it with the input pen of the input means 22. Next, there is displayed a screen which urges the generation of the image data to be synthesized with the selected template, and the transmitter generates the transmitter's own image data in the manner similar to the aforementioned one. When the image data are generated, they are synthesized at a predetermined position

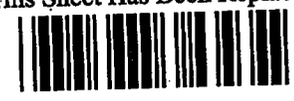
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of the template by synthesizing means contained in the control means 7. The image data are stored with the URL in the server 3 by uploading them. Here, it is desired that the template for the home page to be downloaded from the server 3 or the contents server 27 has the title, icon or URL attached thereto so that it can be easily selected by clicking it.

[0085]

For the receiver owning the mobile terminal 5, as shown in Fig. 9, on the other hand, when the connection is made with the server 3 from the top menu through the authentication, the kind of the mobile terminal is discriminated to determine the kind of the image data suited for the distribution. In the embodiment of Fig. 18, the "mail album" is then clicked from the top page of the toll member menu. In the embodiment of Fig. 12, on the other hand, the "peruse/edit" is selected from the top page screen (701) through the "album manipulation" screen. Then, the selected content is stored in the terminal. The home page uploaded by the transmitter is read out together with the other image data and is displayed in its URL, ID or title. By clicking this, therefore, the home page of the corresponding transmitter is perusably outputted. Here in the embodiment of the invention, the home page uploaded by the transmitter has the corresponding URL or title attached thereto and is perusably outputted by clicking it, but its selecting method is not limited thereto.

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[0086]

Easy WEB Mail

In the invention, not by the function of the server 3 to transmit/receive the image data but by the mail service function serviced by the carriers of the mobile terminal 5, the easy WEB mail can be transmitted/received between the mobile terminals. This is the menu which can be used by the user as the "toll member", as will be described hereinafter. When the transmission of the image data is desired by the easy WEB mail, the "easy mail" icon is clicked and selected from a toll menu (901), as shown in Fig. 15. Next, the later-described long-term album is displayed, and a selection urging screen (902) is displayed so that the desired album is selected. Next, the image data stored in the selected long-term album are outputted/displayed, and there is displayed a screen (903) which urges the selection of the image data to be added to the easy mail. If the desired image data are selected, therefore, there is displayed a confirmation screen (904) for confirming whether or not the image data are to be made into the easy mail, so that a "YES" icon is clicked. Next, there is displayed a screen (905) which urges the inputting of the address, title or message of the receiver or the transmission destination, so that an "OK" icon is clicked. Thus, the completed easy mail is transmitted to the mobile terminal of the receiver or the transmission destination.

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[0087]

Acquisition of Authentication Data

The acquisition of the authentication data have already been described, but the invention has, in the practical embodiment the acquisition of the authentication data at the image processing terminal 1 for the "new" user to become the "registered user", and the acquisitions of the authentication data at the mobile terminal 5 for becoming the "free member" and the "toll member", as will be described in the following. First of all, for the acquisition of the authentication data at the image processing terminal 1 for becoming the "registered user", the transmitter to manipulate the image processing terminal 1 is given the authentication data such as the ID or password to acquire the status of the "registered user", as has been described hereinbefore, by inputting the personal data such as the name, the nickname, the sex, the age and the hobbies demanded, with the input means 22 when the transmitter generates and transmits the transmitter's own image data at the image processing terminal 1, as shown in Fig. 5. Next, for the acquisition of the authentication data for the transmitter/receiver manipulating the mobile terminal 5 to become the "free member", the transmitter/receiver is given the authentication data to acquire the status of the "registered user" (403) by accessing to the server 3 from the mobile terminal 5 through the carrier communication network

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4, by selecting (401) the "register member" icon from the screen of the main menu, and by inputting (402) the personal data such as the nickname, as shown in Fig. 9 or 10.

On the other hand, the conditions for the transmitter/receiver manipulating the mobile terminal 5 to become the "toll member" are estimated to include: the case in which the authentication data are acquired by inputting the various personal data as for the "free member"; and the case in which the status as the "toll member" is acquired by clicking the "register my menu" icon from the "my menu" of the free member page and by clicking the "agree" icon on the "regulations" screen, as shown in Fig. 11. Thus, the services provided by the server 3 and the services provided by the carriers of the mobile terminal are different in contents so that the authentication data relating to the "register member" for the different two have to be acquired in the practical embodiment.

[0088]

Thus, the authentication data have to be acquired individually at the image processing terminal 1 and at the mobile terminal 5. By becoming the "registered user" at the image processing terminal 1, however, it is made possible to use both the keep album for storing the generated image and the mail album for storing/perusing the image data transmitted from others. By becoming the "free member" at the mobile terminal 5, it is made possible to peruse the keep album for

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storing the image data generated at the image processing terminal 1. By becoming the "toll member", on the other hand, it is made possible to vote the contest, to make the easy mail, to edit the album, as will be described hereinafter, and to hold the long-term album. These services relate exclusively to the mobile terminal 5 or the receiving of the image data excepting the case (Claim 5) in which the bulletin board contributor is the image processing terminal 1. Therefore, the acquisition of the status as the "toll member" is performed only through the mobile terminal 5. It is, however, possible to acquire the authentication data of the "toll member" from the image processing terminal 1. In the invention, this point is not limited to the case from the mobile terminal 5.

[0089]

Long-Term Album

Here will be described the long-term album (Claim 16) in the invention. As the long-term album for storing the image data for a long term, in the invention, there are a private album, an open album and a group album. For the private album to allow the perusal thereinto or to store the image data therein, it is dispensable to input the authentication data as the aforementioned "toll member". For the open album to allow the perusal thereinto or to store the image data, it is indispensable to make it unnecessary either to input the aforementioned authentication data or to input only the ID.

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The group album means (Claim 17) the simultaneous communication type album in which it is indispensable, for allowing the internal image data to be perused or stored, to input the group authentication data composed of the ID and/or the password common only in a specific group. Ordinarily, the private album is used when the only its owner stores the image data for a long term. The open album is used when it stores the image data which may be opened to the friends, if reliable. The group album is used when it stores the common image data which a special group such as the attendants to a wedding party desires to peruse. Here will be briefly described the actions of the case (Claim 18) in which the long-term album is generated so that the image data stored in the temporary album are moved to and stored in the long-term album. Fig. 12 is a flow chart showing the processing flow of the mobile terminal of the case in which the long-term album is newly generated, and Fig. 13 is a flow chart showing the processing flow of the mobile terminal of the case in which the image data stored in the temporarily album are moved to and stored in the generated long-term album. When the mail album or the keep album is the temporary album for storing the image data temporarily, the transmitter, the receiver or the bulletin board contributor owning the mobile terminal 5 clicks and selects (701) the "album manipulation" icon from the toll menu if the owner desires the movement to and the storage in the long-term album. Then, the

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screen on the album is displayed, and the "renew" icon is selected (702). Subsequently, there is displayed a screen (703) which urges the inputting the album name, which is inputted by using the input means 18. Next, there is displayed a screen (704) which urges the selection whether the character of the long-term album to be newly generated is "private" or "open", which is inputted with the input means 18. When the name and kind of the album are thus inputted, the long-term album is newly generated at the server 3. When the image data to be stored in the temporary album are moved to and stored in the generated long-term album, the "album manipulation" icon is likewise selected from the toll menu, and the "store photograph" icon is selected (801) from the displayed screen. Then, the presence/absence of the temporary album is confirmed (802) at the server 3. If present, there is then displayed (803) a screen which urges the selection of the image data desired for a long-term storage. If the desired image data are selected, they are read out from the temporary album and are outputted/displayed in the monitor 17, and there is displayed (804) a screen for confirming the desire for the storage. If the "store" icon is clicked, the long-term album already owned is displayed in a list, and the desired long-term album is selected (805). At this time, it is possible to input (806) the "keyword" for making it possible to retrieve the stored image data or the "comment" on the contents of the image

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data. When the inputting of the keyword or comment is thus ended, the selected image data move from the temporary album to the desired long-term album so that they are stored (807) for a long term.

[0090]

Perusal/Edition of Albums

In the invention, the album can be perused from the mobile terminal 5, as has been described hereinbefore. The keep album can be perused even by the "free member", if it is stored with the member's own image data. In order to peruse the mail album stored with the image data transmitted from others, however, the user has to acquire the status as the "toll member". When the user acquires the "toll member" through the aforementioned step and when the screen arrives at the output screen of the image data from the top page screen, the "edit/delete" at the lower portion is selected in the embodiment of Fig. 19. In the embodiment of Fig. 14, on the other hand, the "album manipulation" icon is clicked and selected, and the "peruse/edit" is selected when the "album manipulation" screen is reached. Next, the presence/absence of albums is confirmed, and, if any, all the albums stored by the user are displayed with titles. If the title of the desired album is clicked and selected, the album is read out and is perusably outputted. In Fig. 14, the "keep album" is selected, and its internal image data are displayed in the separate titles from the server 3.

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By clicking the desired title, the image data can be perused. When the perused image data are to be edited, on the other hand, the "delete" and "work" icons are displayed in the lower portion of the image data. Therefore, the image data can be edited (Claim 9) by selecting the "delete" if unneeded and by selecting the "work" if worked.

[0091]

Printing

In the invention, the image data generated at the image processing terminal can be basically printed out (Claim 20) on the spot with printed mean 9. In this case, at the step of urging the inputting of the printing instruction of the image data, the printing can be performed by inputting the printing instruction. At the step of urging the selection of the printing layout, the printing can also be performed by making the selection. Here, the printing layout has contents of selecting the printing forms such as one fourth, one sixth, one tenth and one sixteenth, as shown in Fig. 17. In the printing case on the spot, there is displayed a layout screen 29 in Fig. 17. At the time of selecting the printing layout, on the other hand, it is arbitrary to input the personal data such as the date of birth or hobbies.

[0092]

Print Reservation

In the invention, moreover, the image data stored in the

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mail album or the keep album can be reserved for their printing from the mobile terminal 5. As has been described hereinbefore, the mail album is stored with the image data transmitted from others, and the keep album is stored with the image data generated by the owner. The transmitter, the receiver or the bulletin board contributor to manipulate the mobile terminal 5 can designate (Claim 14) the print reservation, the favorite image data, if any, as transmitted from others or generated by the manipulator, from the mobile terminal 5 when the manipulator peruses the data at the mobile terminal 5.

Fig. 19 shows an embodiment of the case in which the print of the image data to be stored in the keep album is reserved. In the specific procedure, when the keep album is selected from the top page of the toll member menu, the image data stored therein are displayed in the arrival order, and the desired image data are selected and are outputted to and displayed in the monitor 17. Then, the "reserve print" icon is displayed in the lower portion of the screen and is clicked to designate the "reserve print". In the case of the embodiment of Fig. 12, the "reserve print" can be designated by selecting the "album manipulation" screen (702) from the top page screen (701) and by clicking and selecting the "reserve print" icon. In the invention, there is described only the print reservation from the mobile terminal 5. It is, however, also possible to add the reservation data of the print reservation automatically

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when the image data are generated and transmitted at the image processing terminal 1, or to designate the print reservation by calling the mail album or the keep album.

[0093]

By thus designating the print reservation on the desired image data from the mobile terminal 5, the reservation data for the print reservation are added (Claim 14) to the image data so that they are printed out at the image processing terminal 1. For printing out the image data relating to the print reservation, the user having reserved the print can generate new image data at the image processing terminal 1 and can print out the reserved image data together with the new image data. In the specific processing flow, as shown in Fig. 17, the presence of the print-reserved image data is noticed in a print processing screen 28, to urge the selection whether or not the image data are to be printed out together. and the "together" icon is clicked and selected. If there is outputted a layout screen 30 which displays the image data indicating the newly generated image data and the image data relating the print reservation, these newly generated image data and the print reservation image data can be printed out (Claim 22) by selecting the desired printing form.

[0094]

Notification of Image Data Reception

When the image data are desired, when transmitted, to

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be instantly observed by the receiver or the transmission destination, it is possible (Claim 23) to notify the receiver or the transmission destination quickly of the desire at the instant of the transmission of the image data. Even if the image data are transmitted, they are not distributed to the receiver so long as the receiver or the transmission source makes an access to the server 3. When the image data are desired to be instantly observed as the special delivery, the transmission of the image data can be notified to the mobile terminal 5 owned by the receiver or the transmission source. In the invention, as shown in Figs. 4 and 6, the image data are generated at the image processing terminal 1 and are transmitted to the receiver or the desired transmission destination. At the subsequent step, there is displayed the screen (207) asking "Hot line ?" to urge the selection of whether or not "hot (direct) line". By clicking and selecting the "hot line" icon, therefore, the mobile terminal 5 of the receiver or the transmission destination is informed of the "hot line" quickly after the transmission. From the characteristics of the "hot line", it is nonsense to notify the image processing terminal 1, the user of which is unknown. The destination of the notification is only either the receiver owning the mobile terminal 5 or the bulletin board contributor owning the mobile terminal 5. In the invention, on the other hand, it is considered to make a setting that the effect of

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the "hot line", if selected, is continued for several days. Within this period, the image data are notified, each time they are transmitted, to the mobile terminal 5 of the receiver or the transmission source. The "hot line" is estimated by issuing an arrival call, when the image data are transmitted, or by displaying its message in the monitor 17 of the mobile terminal 5.

[0095]

Transfer of Image Data between Other External Terminals

Finally, the invention is estimated (Claim 24) to include infrared or wireless transmission control means for transferring the image data of the image processing terminal 1 and the mobile terminal 5 mutually with another external terminal 24. This external terminal can be exemplified by a small-sized terminal which is provided with transmission control means of the same kind as that of an image memory for storing the image data to be transmitted to the mobile terminal 5, such as a small-sized terminal for computer games or an image camera of a wrist watch type. The external terminal 24 is enabled, by the transmission control means 16 disposed in the image processing terminal 1, as shown in Fig. 3, or by the transmission control means 23 disposed in the mobile terminal 5, as shown in Fig. 2, to transfer the image data mutually with those terminals. As a result, for example, the image data are

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transferred from the external terminal to the image processing terminal 1 and stored in the album of the server so that the image data suited for the kind of the terminal can be outputted to the mobile terminal. Here, the transmission control means is estimated by the IrDA or the Bluetooth (Claim 25).

[0096]

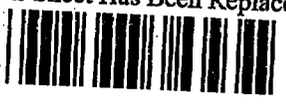
By the image data distribution method according to the invention, as has been described hereinbefore, the image data generated at the image processing terminal can be instantly transmitted to the mobile terminal. With the mobile terminal being owned, therefore, the image data can be transmitted to anywhere so that the method of the invention is extremely timely and rich in directivity. It is also possible to read out and transmit the image data, as generated in the past at the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal, from the album, to open them in the bulletin board, to apply for the contest and to generate the home page, and further to peruse the data from any place, to contribute the same or to vote. Therefore, the communications can be held anywhere to share the topics. Moreover, here are prepared a plurality of kinds of albums for storing the image data, which can be separately used for the applications. With the transmission control means being provided, moreover, the image data can be exchanged with the external terminal, and the image data can be made into motion images with the music/voice data added. In the related art,

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the seals are printed with images and are adhered to seal albums or the like. In the invention, however, the medium for displaying and storing the image data can be changed (to paperless) and made interactive, by outputting (or printing) the image data to the mobile terminal and by storing (or applying) the outputted image data in the image database as the album managed by the server. On the other hand, the image data in the album owned by the user can be rearranged and edited from the mobile terminal. Since the print reservation is made possible, moreover, the user having perused the image data at the mobile terminal is enabled, by designating the print reservation if the user desires the printing-out, to print the desired image data together with the image data generated newly some day.

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WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising:

for the image processing terminal as a transmitter,

the step of urging the selection of a receiver or a transmission destination, the step of urging the generation of the image data to be transmitted to the receiver or the selected transmission destination, and the step of storing the generated image data in the mail album of the receiver or the selected transmission destination; and

for the mobile terminal as the receiver,

the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the receiver for storing the image data transmitted to the receiver, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

2. An image data distributing method for

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transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising:

for the image processing terminal as a transmitter,

the step of reading out the mail album of the transmitter for storing the image data transmitted to the transmitter, the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album, the step of urging the selection of a receiver or a transmission destination or a return destination therefrom, the step of urging the generation of the image data to be transmitted to the receiver or the selected transmission destination or return destination, and the step of storing the generated image data in the mail album of the receiver or the selected transmission destination or return destination; and

for the mobile terminal as the receiver,

the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the receiver for storing the image data transmitted to the receiver, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

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3. An image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising:

for the image processing terminal as a transmitter,

the step of reading out the keep album of the transmitter for storing the image data generated by the transmitter, the step of outputting the image data in the read keep album, the step of urging the new generation of the image data, the step of urging the selection of a receiver or a transmission destination of the generated image data, and the step of storing the generated image data in the mail album of the receiver or the selected transmission destination; and

for the mobile terminal as the receiver,

the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the receiver for storing the image data transmitted to the receiver, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

4. An image data distributing method for

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transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising:

for the mobile terminal as a transmitter,

the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the transmitter for storing the image data transmitted to the transmitter, the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album, the step of urging the selection of a receiver or a transmission destination or a return destination therefrom, the step of reading out the keep album of the transmitter for storing the image data generated by the transmitter, the step of outputting the image data in the read keep album, the step of urging the selection of the image data desired to be transmitted therefrom, and the step of storing the selected image data in the mail album of the receiver or the selected transmission destination or return destination; and

for the mobile terminal as the receiver,

the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the

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terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the receiver for storing the image data transmitted to the receiver, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

5. An image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising:

for the image processing terminal as a transmitter,

the step of urging the generation of the image data to be transmitted to a bulletin board contributor, the step of reading out various bulletin boards separately for hobbies or genres, the step of outputting the image data of the bulletin board contributor, as opened and posted to the read bulletin board, the step of urging the selection of the bulletin board contributor desiring the transmission of the image data therefrom, and the step of storing the generated image data in the mail album of the selected bulletin board contributor; and

for the image processing terminal as the bulletin board contributor,

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the step of urging the generation of the image data to be contributed to the bulletin board, the step of reading out the various notices separately for the hobbies or genres, the step of outputting the image data of the bulletin board contributor, as opened and posted to the read bulletin board, to urge the selection of the bulletin board desiring the contribution of the image data therefrom, the step of storing the contributed image data in the selected bulletin board, the step of reading out the mail album of the bulletin board contributor for storing the image data transmitted to the bulletin board contributor, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

6. An image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising:

for the image processing terminal as a transmitter,

the step of urging the generation of the image data to be transmitted to a bulletin board contributor, the step of reading out various bulletin boards separately for hobbies or

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genres, the step of outputting the image data of the bulletin board contributor, as opened and posted to the read bulletin board, the step of urging the selection of the bulletin board contributor desiring the transmission of the image data therefrom, and the step of storing the generated image data in the mail album of the selected bulletin board contributor; and

for the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor,

the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the mail album of the bulletin board contributor for storing the image data transmitted to the bulletin board contributor, and the step of outputting the image data in the read mail album.

7. An image data distributing method for transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising:

for the mobile terminal as a contest applicant

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the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out various contests, the step of outputting the read contests, the step of urging the selection of the contest desired to be applied therefrom, the step of reading out the keep album of the contest applicant for storing the image data generated by the contest applicant, the step of outputting the image data in the read keep album, the step of urging the selection of the image data to be applied for the contest therefrom, the step of storing the selected image data in the selected content, and the step of distributing the mail, as transmitted to the contest applicant, to the address of the contest applicant; and

for the mobile terminal as a contest voter,

the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the various contests, the step of outputting the read contest, the step of urging the selection of the contest applicant desiring a vote therefrom, the step of urging the generation of a mail addressed to the selected contest applicant, the step of transmitting the generated mail to the address of the contest applicant, and the step of totalizing and displaying the results of votes.

8. An image data distributing method for

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transmitting/receiving image data containing at least photographic data of an object, among: an image processing terminal including generation means, display means, input means and print means for the image data; a server connected with said image processing terminal through a communication network; and a mobile terminal connected with said server through a carrier communication network, comprising:

for the image processing terminal as a transmitter,

the step of urging the selection of a template for a home page, the step of urging the generation or selection of the image data to be synthesized with the selected template, the step of urging an upload of the template to be synthesized with the generated or selected image data, and the step of storing the uploaded template as a home page by attaching the URL to the template; and

for the mobile terminal as the receiver,

the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal, the step of reading out the home page corresponding to said URL by clicking the URL, and the step of outputting the read home page.

9. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 6 and Claim 8, comprising: for the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the transmitter or the

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receiver, or the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor, the step of editing, working or deleting the image data.

10. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 9, wherein said image data comprises: the step of inputting additional data such as letters, drawings and messages with input means of each terminal; the step of synthesizing the same with synthesizing means; or the step of synthesizing frame data stored in each terminal or downloaded from the server.

11. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 10, wherein said image data are motion images or contain motion images.

12. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 11, wherein said image data contain musical data or voice data.

13. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 12, wherein said image data have the URL attached thereto.

14. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 13, wherein said image data contain reservation data for print reservations.

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15. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 8, comprising: for the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the transmitter or the receiver, or the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor, or the mobile terminal as the contest applicant or the contest voter, the step of urging the inputting authentication data composed of each ID and/or password; and the step of determining the allowance/inhibition of the generation of an album or the transmission/reception of the image data by passing the inputted authentication data.

16. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 7, wherein said mail album and said keep album are temporary albums for storing the image data temporarily or long-term albums for storing the image data for a long term.

17. An image data distributing method according to Claim 16, wherein said long-term album includes, for perusing or storing the image data: a private album indispensable for inputting said authentication data; an open album dispensable for inputting said authentication data or indispensable for inputting only the ID; and a group album of a simultaneous communication type indispensable for inputting the group authentication data of the ID and/or password common only in

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a specific group.

18. An image data distributing method according to Claim 16 or 17, further comprising, when said mail album or keep album is the temporary album and when it is desired to move the image data stored in said temporary album to said long-term album,

for the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the transmitter or the receiver, or the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor,

the step of urging the selection of the image data desired to be moved, from the mail album or the keep album; the step of moving the selected image data to the long-term album; and the step of updating the movement.

19. An image data distributing method according to Claims 16 to 18, further comprising, when it is desired to generate/hold said long-term album,

for the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the transmitter or the receiver, or the image processing terminal or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor,

the step of urging the inputting of member authentication data composed of each member ID and/or member password; and the step of determining the allowance/inhibition of the

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generation/holding of said long-term album by passing the inputted member authentication data.

20. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 3, Claim 5 or 6 and Claim 8, further comprising, when said generated image data are to be printed,

for the image processing terminal as said transmitter or said receiver, or the image processing terminal as said bulletin board contributor,

at least the step of urging the inputting the printing instruction of the generated image data; and the step of urging the selection of the printing layout.

21. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 6, further comprising, when the print reservation is made on the image data stored in said mail album or keep album,

for the mobile terminal as said transmitter or said receiver, or the mobile terminal as said bulletin board contributor,

the step of determining the kind of the image data suited for the distribution, by discriminating the kind of the terminal; the step of reading and perusably outputting the image data to be stored in the mail album or the keep album; and the step of urging the inputting of the reservation data for the print reservation on the outputted image data.

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22. An image data distributing method according to Claim 14, further comprising, when the image data containing the reservation data for the print reservation are to be printed,

for the image processing terminal as said transmitter or said receiver, or the image processing terminal as said bulletin board contributor,

the step of notifying the presence/absence of the image data relating to the print reservation, at the time of printing the image data newly generated at the image processing terminal; the step of urging the selection of whether or not the image data containing the reservation data of the print reservation are to be simultaneously printed; and the step of urging the selection of the printing layout.

23. An image data distributing method according to Claims 1 to 6, further comprising, when said image data are transmitted, the step of notifying the transmission to the mobile terminal as the receiver or the mobile terminal as the bulletin board contributor.

24. An image processing terminal and a mobile terminal according to Claims 1 to 9, Claim 15 and Claims 18 to 23, wherein said image processing terminal and said mobile terminal comprise infrared or wireless transmission control means

capable of transmitting the image data mutually between themselves and another external terminal.

25. An image processing terminal and a external terminal according to Claim 24, wherein said transmission control means is an IrDA interface or a Bluetooth interface.

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