USER INTERFACE MANAGEMENT THROUGH VIEW DEPTH

ABSTRACT

Several methods for presenting a hierarchical structure are presented. The hierarchical structure defines hierarchical relationships between multiple elements. The structure may be embodied within an electronic document, an interactive application program, or a map divided into sections. Each element has a "presentation property" which may be a value or a function. A single element has "focus". A "view depth" method includes forming a model (e.g., a tree structure (30)) of the structure, having multiple levels (0, 1, 2, 3,) ranked with respect to one another, multiple nodes (40) representing elements, and at least one branch (42). A given branch (42) connects a node (40) in a first level to a second node (40) in the next level, and represents a hierarchical relationship between connected nodes. A "focus node" represents the element receiving focus. The presentation property of each element represented by a node in the same level of the model as the focus node is presented.

FIG 3