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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR FACILITATING COMPUTER NETWORK TRANSACTIONS

(57) Abstract

A method and apparatus for facilitating computer network transactions are disclosed herein. The computer network connects a host node and at least one user node. The host node has access to a database including records having predetermined contents, each record associated with a unique identification indicia. Each user node includes a display for displaying an icon and an input device for selecting the icon. The icon is typically an advertising banner having graphics related to an advertised product or service. The icon has embedded therein the network address of the host node, and the indicia for a record associated with the advertised product or service. The icon displayed on one user node is selected by actuating the respective input device (e.g., a mouse). The host network address embedded in the selected icon is used to contact the host node. Then, the record associated with the selected icon is retrieved by searching the database using the indicia embedded in the selected icon as a pointer. An input form is dynamically generated which includes at least one input field requesting data from the user, a portion of the input form depending on the contents of the retrieved record. The input form is presented on the display of the one user node. After entry, at least a minimum set of the requested data is communicated to the host node over the network. The requested data may be validated, with the user requested to provide any needed corrections. Once the data is valid, a confirmation form is generated based on the requested data and is displayed to the user. If the user acknowledges the confirmation form, an acknowledgment form is generated and displayed. The acknowledgment form may include a second cascaded icon.

