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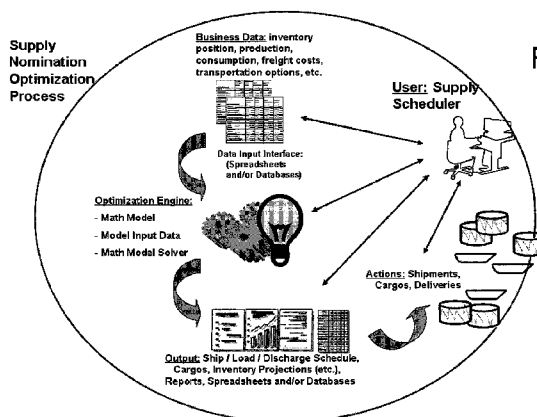


FIG. 1

(57) **Abstract:** A method and apparatus for optimal transporting of cargo is provided. The method includes optimizing a plurality of transportation decisions and mechanically transporting cargo through movement of a plurality of vehicles in accordance with a set of optimized transportation decisions. The decisions include transportation routes and schedules for the transportation vehicles, allocation of cargo to be transported to one or more demand locations by the transportation vehicles, nomination of cargo pickup by the transportation vehicles from the one or more supply locations, the use of specialized transportation locations, and vehicle assignments for each of the transportation vehicles. The set of decisions is optimized by collecting data relating to the various transportation decisions, using the data collected as part of a mixed integer linear programming model, and obtaining a solution to the model to arrive at a set of optimized transportation decisions.