A METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SEARCH AND DISPLAY OF HIERARCHICALLY ORGANISED INFORMATION OF ARBITRARY DEPTH USING GRAPHICAL USER INTERFACES

ABSTRACT

A method for displaying hierarchal data involves displaying information at each level of hierarchy in a separate search frame. Several search frames (220, 240, 260) are displayed side by side, either vertically or horizontally, providing visual separation of data between hierarchal levels. As the items are displayed in separate frames, the items at any level can be seen without getting cluttered by data from other levels. Selecting an item in a given search frame displays data at the next level in the next frame. To traverse the hierarchy, the user moves from one frame to the next by clicking on the item of interest at each level. A toolbar frame (202) is provided to display the cumulative selection of items. A rollover mechanism is provided to reuse the frames when the number of search frames specified is less than the depth of the search hierarchy.

Fig.6