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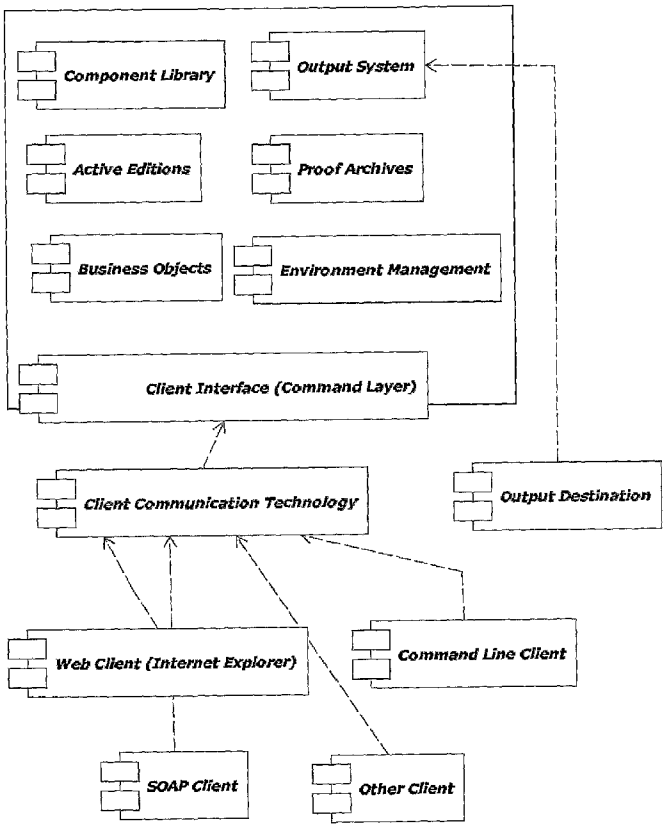
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(54) Title: AN AUTOMATED PUBLISHING SYSTEM THAT FACILITATES COLLABORATIVE EDITING AND ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH VIRTUAL DOCUMENT ARCHITECTURE



(57) Abstract: The present invention automates the publishing of financial, legal, and governmental documents and any other publications that are structured and require compliance with corporate or external standards and may share content elements. It gives users control in an always-on, familiar environment: the Internet. Due to its virtual document architecture and ability to operate over the Internet and intranets, the system facilitates collaborative work and traces accountability. The key concept behind automating publishing is to control scheduling and costs by better content management. The present invention handles document content as small, reusable components, down to the paragraph and table cell level. The interface helps users assemble documents from these version-controlled components with automated support. The system applies context and filtering criteria stored with each component to locate and apply content fragments to a current document. The system of the present invention can apply structural rules and content requirements to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and company business rules. A working virtual document within the system always incorporates the current version of all constituent elements.

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