Claims

~~CLAIM~~ 1. A computer implemented method for selection of a service provider ~~computer~~ for performance of a job from a plurality of service providers ~~computers~~, the method comprising:

receiving user preferences including an indication of importance of each attribute for ;

~~collecting~~ attributes for the plurality of service providers ~~computers~~;

receiving collected attributes for the plurality of service providers;

identifying, with one or more processors, a service request for the performance of a job and an associated user;

receiving an annotated document that includes a sequence of points or segments of strokes;

determining, with the one or more processors, the job in a workflow by extracting

metadata associated with the annoted document that includes workflow instructions and status;

determining, with the one or more processors, ~~with a service provider selection module~~ at least one service provider to perform the job by comparing the user preferences to the collected attributes based on the importance of the service provider attributes; and

sending the job to the ~~determined~~ at least one service provider for performance of the job.

~~CLAIM~~ 2. The method of claim 1, further comprising determining a list of service provider ~~computers~~ from the plurality of service provider ~~computers~~ that are currently connected to a network and available to perform the service request, and wherein the step of determining ~~with a service provider selection module~~the at least one service provider to perform the job uses the list of service providers ~~computers~~.

~~CLAIM~~ 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of determining the at least one service provider is automatic and determines a service provider ~~computer~~ to perform the job, the ~~determined~~ service provider ~~computer~~ having attributes that best match ~~close to~~ the user preferences, and wherein the step of sending sends the job to the ~~determined~~ service provider ~~computer~~.

~~CLAIM 4~~. The method of claim 1, wherein: the step of determining the at least one service provider is semi-automatic and generates a list having a defined number of service providers ~~computers~~ to perform the job, the list of service providers ~~computers~~ having attributes that best match ~~close to~~ the user preferences,

the method includes receiving from a the associated user a selection of a service provider ~~computers~~ from the list, and

the step of sending sends the job to the ~~selected~~ service provider ~~computer~~.

~~CLAIM 5~~. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one service provider is determined~~ing~~ by calculating a weighted sum for each service provider ~~computer~~.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one service provider is determined using fuzzy logic.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one service provider is determined using probabilistic modelling.

~~CLAIM 6~~8. A computer program product comprising a non-transitory computer usable medium including a computer readable program, wherein the computer readable program when executed on a computer causes the computer to:

receive collected user preferences including an indication of importance of each attribute for attributes of the plurality of service providers;

receive collected attributes for the plurality of service providers ~~computers~~;

identify a service request for the performance of a job and an associated user;

receive an annotated document that includes a sequence of points or segments of strokes;

determine the job in a workflow by extracting metadata associated with the annotated document that includes workflow instructions and status;

determine ~~with a service provider selection module~~ at least one service provider to perform the job by comparing the user preferences to the collected attributes based on the importance of the service provider attributes; and

send the job to the ~~determined~~ at least one service provider for performance of the job.

~~CLAIM 7~~9. The computer program product of claim ~~6~~8, wherein the computer readable program when executed on a computer also causes the computer to:

determine a list of service provider~~s computers~~ from the plurality of service provider~~s computers~~ that are currently connected to a network and available to perform the service request, and

wherein the computer determines the at least one service provider to perform the job using the list of service provider~~s computers~~.

~~CLAIM 8~~10. The computer program product of claim ~~8~~6, wherein the step of determining the at least one service provider is automatic and determines a service provider ~~computer~~ to perform the job, wherein the ~~determined~~ service provider ~~computer~~ has attributes that best match ~~close to~~ the user preferences, and wherein the step of sending sends the job to the ~~determined~~ service provider ~~computer~~.

~~CLAIM 9~~11. The computer program product of claim ~~8~~6, wherein:

the step of determining the at least one service provider is semi-automatic and generates a list having a defined number of service provider~~s computers~~ to perform the job, the list of service provider~~s computers~~ having attributes that best match~~close to~~ the user preferences,

the computer receives from ~~a user~~the associated user a selection of a service provider ~~computers~~ from the list, and the computer sends the job to the ~~selected~~ service provider computer .

~~CLAIM 10~~12. The computer program product of claim ~~6~~8, wherein the computer determines the at least one service provider to perform the job by calculating a weighted sum for each service provider ~~computer~~.

13. The computer program product of claim 8, wherein the computer determines at least one service provider to perform the job using fuzzy logic.

14. The computer program product of claim 8, wherein the computer determines the at least one service provider to perform the job using probabilistic modelling.

~~CLAIM 11~~15. ~~An~~ system for selection of at least ~~a~~ one service provider ~~computer~~ for performance of a job from a plurality of service provider~~s computers~~, the system comprising:

one or more processors;

a user preference collector stored on a memory and executable by the one or more processors, the user preference collector for receiving collected user preferences including an indication of importance for each attribute for attributes of the plurality of service providers~~information about a user's preference for automatic selection of the service provider computer~~, the user preference collector coupled to receive information from a user;

a service provider attribute collector for monitoring performance of the plurality of service provider ~~computers~~ in completing jobs and receiving collected attributes for the plurality of service providers, the service provider attribute collector coupled to the plurality of service provider~~s computers~~; ~~and~~

a document transfer module for receiving an annotated document from a portable computing system that includes a sequence of points or segements of strokes on the portable computing system;

a workflow module for determining the job in a workflow by extracting metadata associated with the annotated document that includes workflow instructions and status; and

a service provider selection engine for selecting the service provider to perform the job ~~of the workflow~~, the service provider selection engine comparing the user~~'s~~ preferences to the collected attributes based on the importance of ~~and~~ the service provider attributes to determine at least one service provider ~~computer~~ in which the collected attributes ~~are close to~~best match the user~~'s~~ preferences, the service provider selection engine coupled for communication with the service provider attribute collector and the user preference collector.

~~CLAIM 12~~16. The system of claim ~~11~~15, further comprising a service provider availability detector for monitoring a network to determine which service provider~~s computers~~ are accessible and available for performing athe job ~~of a workflow~~, the service provider availability detector coupled to the plurality of service provider~~s computers,~~ and the service provider selection ~~module~~engine; and wherein the service provider selection engine uses input~~s~~ from the service provider availability detector to determine the at least one service provider computer that has attributes ~~close to~~that best match the user's preferences.

~~CLAIM 13~~17. The system of claim ~~11~~15, wherein the user preference collector cooperates with ~~the~~ a presentation module of ~~a~~ the portable computing system to generates a graphic

user interface that allows the user to input a preference for automatic, semi-automatic or manual operation of the service provider selection engine.

~~CLAIM 14~~18. The system of claim ~~14~~15, wherein the user preference collector cooperates with the presentation module of a portable computing system to generates a graphic user interface that allows the user to input an attribute and a corresponding level of importance for the attribute.

~~CLAIM 15~~19. The system of claim ~~14~~15, further comprising:

a user preference storage for storing the user's preferences and other information, the user preference storage coupled to the user preference collector to receive and store information, and coupled to provide the information to the service provider selection engine;

a service provider attribute storage for storing attributes about the plurality of service providers' ~~computer~~ completion and performance of jobs, the service provider attribute storage coupled to the service provider attribute collector to receive and store service provider attribute information and coupled to provide the service provider attribute information to the service provider selection engine; and

wherein the service provider selection engine is coupled to the user preference storage to retrieve the user's preferences and the other information and is coupled to the service provider attribute storage to retrieve information about attributes and their importance to the user.

20. The system of claim 15, wherein the service provider selection engine uses at least one of a weighted sum algorithm, fuzzy logic or probabilistic modelling to select the at least one service provider to perform the job.