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(54) Title: A COMPUTER IMPLEMENTED METHOD OF GENERATING VIRTUAL FILES FOR SHARING INFORMATION OF A PHYSICAL INFORMATION FILE

(57) Abstract

A computer implemented method for generating virtual files to provide more flexibility and efficiency in the sharing of data within a physical information file. In a computer system, a large physical file contains many separate data portions that need to be shared. In one case, the data portions can correspond to video and audio information of multi-media scenes. An application can need to jump within the physical file from scene to scene when composing user interactive multi-media applications, such as story-book applications. The present invention provides a mechanism allowing a user to define a virtual file containing certain data portions of the physical file. The user inputs an offset value representing a byte offset from the start of the data portion in the physical file and also the size of the data portion is input. The offset value, the size and the file name of the virtual file are recorded into an index file. This can be performed for a number of virtual files thereby constructing a number of index files. For each index file, the computer system then generates a file entry representing the virtual file. The file entry contains a file name of the virtual file and a physical location on disk of where the virtual file exists. The offset value is translated into a physical location for each virtual file. The operating system of the computer then accesses the virtual file in the conventional manner as any other disk file is accessed to efficiently access the associated data portion within the physical file.

