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(54) **METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR EXECUTING A GUIDED PARAMETRIC SEARCH**

(75) Inventors: **Mohamed Sherif Danish**, Los Altos Hills, CA (US); **Kris Walter Kimbrough**, Sunnyvale, CA (US)

(73) Assignee: **Partsrivier Inc.**, Menlo Park, CA (US)

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
G06F 17/30 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **707/3**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** None
See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

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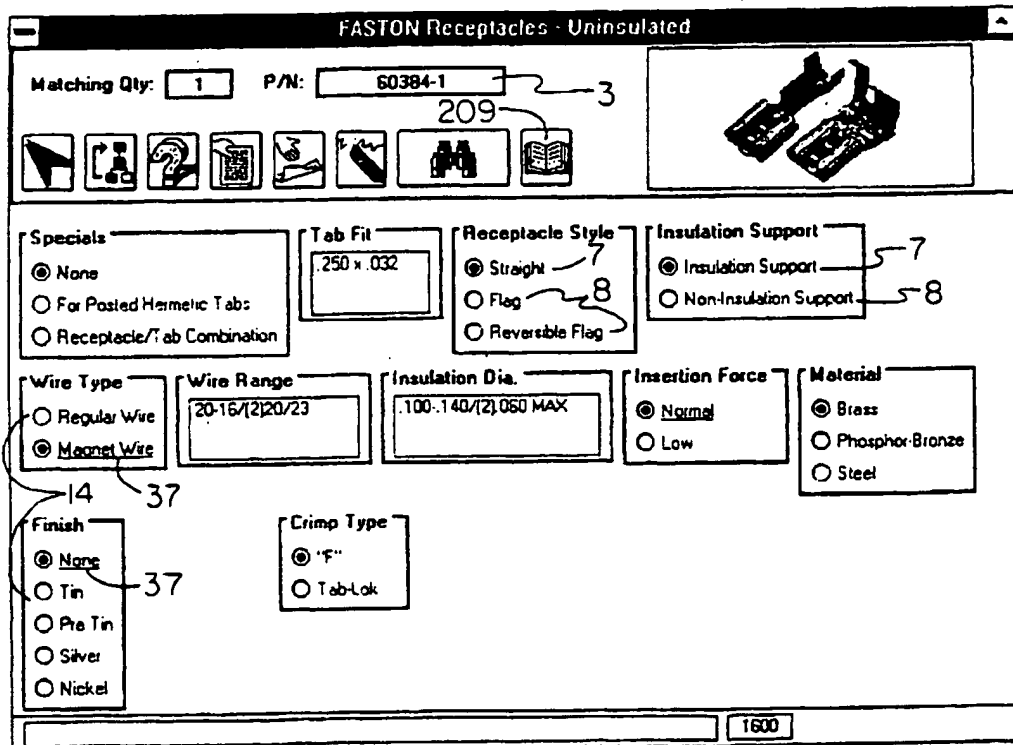
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Primary Examiner—B. James Peikari

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A process for identifying a single item from a family of items presents a user with a feature screen having a series of groupings. Each grouping represents a feature having a set of alternatives from which to select. Selected alternatives are used as a selection criteria in a search operation. Results of the search operation is a revised feature screen indicating alternatives that remain available to the user for further selection and searching. The feature screen and search process, therefore, presents the user with a guided nonhierarchical parametric search to identify matching items based upon user specified criteria and priorities. Also disclosed is an adaptation of the claimed method and system appropriate in an Internet environment.



**EX PARTE
REEXAMINATION CERTIFICATE
ISSUED UNDER 35 U.S.C. 307**

THE PATENT IS HEREBY AMENDED AS
INDICATED BELOW.

Matter enclosed in heavy brackets [] appeared in the patent, but has been deleted and is no longer a part of the patent; matter printed in italics indicates additions made to the patent.

AS A RESULT OF REEXAMINATION, IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED THAT:

Claim 1 is determined to be patentable as amended.

Claim 2, dependent on an amended claim, is determined to be patentable.

New claim 9 is added and determined to be patentable.

Claims 3-8 were not reexamined.

1. A method for assisting a user in identifying a subfamily of items within a family of items *said method performed with a server connected to a client computer through a computer network*, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a computer readable data file of stored information representing at least one family of items, said data file identifying at least one alternative for each item,
- (b) reading said data file,
- (c) displaying a feature screen indicating said alternatives represented in the family,
- (d) accepting a first selection criteria of at least one alternative,
- (e) determining a first subfamily of items wherein each said item in the first subfamily satisfies said first selection criteria,
- (f) determining available alternatives represented in the first subfamily,
- (g) revising said feature screen to indicate the available alternatives of the first subfamily,
- (h) accepting a second selection criteria [comprising] *from said client computer via said computer network at said server wherein the second selection criteria comprises a resubmission to the server of the alternative or alternatives of the first selection criteria plus at least one alternative selected from the revised feature screen,*

(i) determining a second subfamily of items of the family wherein each item in the second subfamily satisfies said second selection criteria,

(j) determining available alternatives represented in the second subfamily, and

(k) revising said feature screen to indicate the available alternatives of the second subfamily.

9. *A method for assisting a user in identifying a subfamily of items within a family of items, the method comprising the following steps which are performed with a server connected to a computer network:*

(a) *providing a computer readable data file of stored information representing at least one family of items, said data file identifying at least one alternative for each item,*

(b) *reading said data file,*

(c) *displaying a feature screen indicating said alternatives represented in the family wherein data is output to a client computer via said computer network,*

(d) *receiving and accepting a first selection criteria of at least one alternative from said client computer, said first selection criteria being received by said server from said client computer via said computer network,*

(e) *determining a first subfamily of items wherein each said item in the first subfamily satisfies said first selection criteria,*

(f) *determining available alternatives represented in the first subfamily,*

(g) *revising said data for said feature screen to indicate the available alternatives of the first subfamily and outputting said revised data for said feature screen to said client computer via said computer network,*

(h) *receiving and accepting a second selection criteria from said client computer via said computer network, in which said second selection criteria comprises (1) a resubmission by said client computer of the alternative or alternatives of the first selection criteria along with (2) at least one alternative selected from the revised feature screen,*

(i) *determining a second subfamily of items of the family wherein each item in the second subfamily satisfies said second selection criteria,*

(j) *determining available alternatives represented in the second subfamily, and*

(k) *revising said data for said feature screen to indicate the available alternatives of the second subfamily and outputting said revised data for said feature screen to said client computer via said computer network.*

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