

The opinion in support of the decision being entered today was not written for publication and is not binding precedent of the Board.

Paper No. 12

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Ex parte VANCE FINCH

Appeal No. 2003-0205
Application 09/504,502

ON BRIEF

Before BARRETT, OWENS and DIXON, *Administrative Patent Judges*.
OWENS, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

DECISION ON APPEAL

This appeal is from the final rejection of claims 1-16, which are all of the claims in the application.

THE INVENTION

The appellant claims a method for providing and updating equipment ownership data in a computer database title record.

Claim 1 is illustrative:

1. A computer-implemented method of operation for a user production of a title record of preselected data associated with an equipment piece transaction comprising the steps of:

- a. providing a title record format for data to be associated with a transaction of an equipment piece;
- b. providing a database for storing a plurality of title records with said format therein;
- c. placing said database in a central computer available for access by a plurality of users on a computer network;
- d. determining whether a user on the network is authorized to fashion a title record in said database, otherwise displaying a selected title record for viewing only to the user on the computer network;
- e. if said user is authorized to fashion a title record, accessing said title record from said database for a particular equipment piece;
- f. if said title record for said equipment piece is not in said database, creating a new title record for said equipment piece by entering said data to be associated with said equipment piece inclusive of ownership from an available outside source into said new title record;
- g. if the transaction of said equipment piece is a sale transaction, choosing data from an available bill of sale inclusive of at least old ownership data for comparison with corresponding ownership data in said title record;
- h. comparing said chosen bill of sale data to said corresponding data in said title record inclusive of at least said old ownership data previously entered in said title record;

of the equipment piece's old ownership data in the computer database. Claims 1 and 9 require checking the prior ownership data by comparing it to data in a bill of sale which includes old ownership data, and claim 16 requires checking the prior ownership data by comparing it to sales-oriented data which includes purchaser and seller data from outside sale transaction sources.

Rose, Jr. discloses a method for tracking transactions for items of value such as motor vehicles, wherein the items' title histories, which include all previous owners and the current owner, are maintained in a centralized computer database (col. 1, lines 10-13; col. 7, lines 19-20 and 34-35). If the transaction is the sale of a used item, the current owner is converted to the prior owner and the new owner's name and address and other appropriate information are entered into the database (col. 13, lines 23-26). The computer then validates all existing data to make sure it is accurate (col. 14, lines 23-25). "Once verification of authenticity of the [used vehicle] asset and its current owner is made, a digital code is then given to the asset (and all of its pertinent information) so that, in a future search application a simple mathematical comparison of the unique digital coding of the alpha-numeric symbols of the VIN [vehicle

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identification number], the title and the registration tag numbers are taken from the system and automatically accepted or rejected by mathematical means" (col. 15, lines 9-16).

The examiner argues: "(Column 13, lines 24-28) state that, 'if it is a sale of a used vehicle, the "current owner" is converted to the prior owner 112 and the new owner's name and address and other appropriate information are entered 114', and (column 15, lines 9-19) show that 'verification and [sic, of] authenticity of the asset and its current owner is performed [sic, made]'" (answer, page 9).

The examiner has not established that Rose, Jr.'s disclosure that "the 'current owner' is converted to the prior owner **112** and the new owner's name and address and other appropriate information are entered" (col. 13, lines 24-26) discloses, either expressly or inherently, that the current ownership (the seller) is verified before it is converted to the prior ownership and replaced by the new ownership (the buyer). As for Rose, Jr.'s disclosure of verifying the authenticity of the asset and its current owner, this verifying takes place after the current owner (the seller) has been replaced by the new owner (the buyer). Hence, the current owner referred to by Rose, Jr. regarding this verification step is the buyer, and it is the inputted buyer data

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that is verified. This verification step also includes verifying the authenticity of the asset. The examiner, however, has not established that the disclosure of verifying the authenticity of the asset includes, either expressly or inherently, a disclosure of verifying the old ownership data before it is replaced by the new ownership data.

The examiner argues that the appellant has admitted (parent application no. 08/960,492, response filed January 4, 2000, paper no. 8, pages 2-4), in response to a nonenablement rejection, that a title record and a bill of sale both include the seller's name, and that to enhance the title process in the appellant's method a comparison of ownership data in the bill of sale to ownership data in the title record must be made (answer, pages 9-10). The examiner, however, has not established that Rose, Jr. discloses, either expressly or inherently, this title process enhancing step.

For the above reasons we find that the examiner has not carried the burden of establishing a *prima facie* case of anticipation of the appellant's claimed method.

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DECISION

The rejection of claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over
Rose, Jr. is reversed.

REVERSED

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LEE E. BARRETT)	
Administrative Patent Judge)	
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)	
)	BOARD OF PATENT
TERRY J. OWENS)	
Administrative Patent Judge)	APPEALS AND
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)	INTERFERENCES
)	
JOSEPH L. DIXON)	
Administrative Patent Judge)	

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