

The opinion in support of the decision being entered today was not written for publication and is not binding precedent of the Board.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Ex parte SANAA F. ABDELHADI,
MARITZA BORUNDA AND HYPATIA ROJAS

Appeal No. 2006-0553
Application No. 09/444,121

ON BRIEF

Before KRASS, JERRY SMITH, and RUGGIERO, Administrative Patent Judges.

KRASS, Administrative Patent Judge.

DECISION ON APPEAL

This is a decision on appeal from the final rejection of claims 2-35.

The invention pertains to the printing of web pages, best illustrated by reference to representative independent claim 2, reproduced as follows:

2. A method in a data processing system for printing web pages, the method comprising the data processing system implemented steps of:
receiving a request to print a web page; and
printing the web page and each web page associated with the web page; wherein the printing step automatically and individually prints each of a plurality of web pages associated

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with the web page on selected levels below the web page; and wherein if a first web page of the plurality appears more than once among the plurality, said first web page is only printed once.

The examiner relies on the following references:

Brobst et al. (Brobst)	6,061,700	May 9, 2000
Dubbels et al. (Dubbels)	6,222,634	Apr. 24, 2001
Hoffert et al. (Hoffert)	6,282,549	Aug. 28, 2001
Narayanaswami et al. (Narayanaswami) United Kingdom Patent Application	GB2 332 543 A	Jun. 23, 1999

Claims 2-35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103. As evidence of obviousness, the examiner offers Brobst and Hoffert with regard to claims 8-14, 25-31, and 33-35, adding Dubbels with regard to claims 2-7, 15, 19-24, and 32. With regard to claims 16-18, the examiner offers Brobst, Narayanaswami and Hoffert.

Reference is made to the brief and answer for the respective positions of appellants and the examiner.

OPINION

At the outset, we note that appellants separate the claims into two groups, Group A, comprising claims 2-7, 16-24, and 35; and Group B comprising claims 8-15 and 25-35 (brief-page 3). While claim 35 appears in both groups, it appears, from this

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claim's dependence from claim 2, that perhaps appellants meant to include it only in Group A.

Looking first at the claims of Group A, we take claim 2 as representative thereof. The examiner applies the references against claim 2 in the following manner:

The examiner asserts that column 3, lines 12-40, of Brobst teaches the receipt of a request for a web page; that the abstract of Brobst teaches the printing of the web page and each page associated with the web page; and that column 5, line 42 - column 6, line 42, of Brobst teaches the printing step printing each of a plurality of web pages associated with the web page on selected levels below the web page.

The examiner recognized Brobst's failure to teach that the printing step automatically and individually prints each of the plurality of web pages, so the examiner turned to Dubbels (claim 1 and column 5, lines 21-40) for a teaching of a web page print mechanism automatically generating a web page that contains all the user-selected web pages and a web client print mechanism 320 that is used to print individual web pages.

The examiner found that since Dubbels taught these limitations in an environment of printing related web pages,

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similar to the system of Brobst, it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of Brobst and Dubbels to include the printing step automatically and individually printing each of a plurality of web pages "in order to make the system more efficient" (answer-page 5).

The examiner further recognized that the Brobst/Dubbels combination still failed to teach that if a first web page of a plurality of web pages appears more than once among the plurality, the first web page is only printed once.

The examiner turned to Hoffert, asserting that at column 3, line 28 - column 4, line 23, Hoffert described a hash table scheme to guarantee that only unique new URLs (web pages) are added to a database and that if any URL link that is already found in the hash table is found, the URL is not added to the list of URLs for processing (answer-page 5).

The examiner concluded that it would have been obvious to combine Hoffert with the other references to include the feature that if a first web page of a plurality of web pages appears more than once among the plurality, the first web page is only printed once, because this "would prevent printing duplicate data and also prevent the waste or loss of time and papers" (answer-page 5).

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Appellants contend that the claim limitation, "wherein if a first web page of the plurality appears more than once among the plurality, said first web page is only printed once" is not suggested by any of the applied references. While recognizing the examiner's position that Hoffert allegedly teaches this claimed feature, appellants contend that Hoffert is not properly combinable with Brobst and Dubbels. In particular, it is appellants' position that Brobst and Dubbels teach away from a combination with Hoffert and that Hoffert's hash table serves a different purpose than appellants' hash table, so that Hoffert would need to be modified to reach the instant claimed subject matter but there is no suggestion for any such modification.

We agree with appellants and will not sustain the rejection of claims 2-35 under 35 U.S.C. §103 because, in our view, the examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness.

Assuming all that the examiner has alleged regarding the combination of Brobst and Dubbels to be true, the examiner admits that this combination does not provide for the limitation of "wherein if a first web page of the plurality appears more than once among the plurality, said first web page is only printed once," a limitation appearing in all of the instant claims, in one form or another.

While the examiner relies on Hoffert to supply this teaching, Hoffert is directed to displaying search results for multimedia files in a distributed database. Hoffert is not directed, in any way, to "printing," especially not to the printing of web pages. We do not find Hoffert's search engine indexing mechanism such as the web "crawler" for finding URLs and depositing their contents in a database to be applicable to the operation of printing web pages, as claimed. While it is true that Hoffert employs a "hash table" to prevent redundant indexing of URLs, arguably analogous to appellants' use of a hash table to print a web page only once, there is no indication as to how such a hash table would be used, or why it would be used, to prevent the redundant printing of web pages, as required by instant claim 8, for example.

As explained by appellants, at page 9 of the brief,

Hoffert demonstrates the use of a hash table to keep track of web pages that have been stored in a search database (i.e., indexed web pages). It does not appear to teach the use of a hash table to prevent redundant printing. No suggestion is found in Hoffert to modify the hash table so as to integrate it with a print mechanism for printing multiple web pages.

Accordingly, it would not appear that the skilled artisan would have found Hoffert's teachings useful for modifying either

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Brobst or Dubbels in such a manner as to result in the instant claimed subject matter.

In our view, appellants make a valid point in contending, at page 10 of the brief, that Hoffert's hash table scheme for guaranteeing that only unique URLs are added to the database would not be particularly advantageous when combined with Brobst and Dubbels because they do not search globally for URLs as search engines; and that Hoffert's hash table limits URLs in the index because the crawler will crawl vast numbers of web pages during its work, and redundant pages are very likely to crop up, whereas, in Brobst and Dubbels, only specific web pages are tapped for printing, and general redundancies are not directly dealt with because they are unlikely to occur.

Further, since Brobst combines multiple web pages into a single conglomerate web page for printing as a single document, and Dubbels has the user select the pages to be printed from a list, it is not apparent how or why the artisan would have combined Hoffert's use of a hash table to keep track of web pages that have been stored in a search database, with these teachings of Brobst and Dubbels to arrive at the instant claimed subject matter.

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Since each and every rejection relies, at least in part, on the combination of Brobst and Hoffert, we will not sustain any of the rejections set forth by the examiner, noting that Narayanaswami, relied on in combination with Brobst and Hoffert in the rejection of claims 16-18, does not provide for the deficiencies of the other references.

The examiner's decision rejecting claims 2-35 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 is reversed.

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REVERSED

ERROL A. KRASS)
Administrative Patent Judge)
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) BOARD OF PATENT
JERRY SMITH) APPEALS
Administrative Patent Judge) AND INTERFERENCES
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JOSEPH F. RUGGIERO)
Administrative Patent Judge)

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IBM CORP (YA)
C/O YEE & ASSOCIATES, P.C.
P. O. BOX 802333
DALLAS, TX 75380