

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 KEITH A. CARPENTER and AMY C. BEISENHERZ

Appeal No. 2007-0645
Application No. 10/242,898
Technology Center 2100

Decided: April 9, 2007

Before ANITA PELLMAN GROSS, STUART S. LEVY, and ROBERT E. NAPPI
Administrative Patent Judges.

NAPPI, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

DECISION ON APPEAL

This is a decision on appeal under 35 U.S.C. § 134 of the final rejection of claims 1 through 24. For the reasons stated *infra* we affirm the Examiner's rejection of these claims.

INVENTION

3 The invention is directed to a document exchange system in which security
4 is integral to the system. See pages 3 and 4 of Appellants' Specification. Claim 1
5 is representative of the invention and reproduced below:

1. A document exchange environment for allowing a user to access documents, the document exchange environment comprising:
 - a web server;
 - a document vault database coupled to the web server, the document vault database storing information regarding whether a user is authorized to access a document file;
 - a file server coupled to the web server, the file server providing a user access to the document file via the web server based upon the information regarding whether the user is authorized to access the document file.

REFERENCES

The references relied upon by the Examiner are:

Prompt	US 2001/0034733 A1 (filed Mar. 02, 2001)	Oct. 25, 2001
Sitka	US 6,330,572 B1 (effectively filed Jul. 15, 1998)	Dec. 11, 2001

REJECTION AT ISSUE

27 Claims 1 through 24¹ stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as
28 unpatentable over Prompt and Sitka. The Examiner's rejection is set forth on

¹ We note that the statement of the rejection identifies claims 1-17 as being rejected, but the reasoning in support of the rejection also addresses claims 18 through 24. Appellants' arguments similarly address the rejection as applied to claims 1 through 24. Accordingly, we consider the Examiner's rejection on appeal to apply to claims 1 through 24.

1 pages 3 through 6 of the Answer. Throughout the opinion we make reference to
2 the Brief and Reply Brief (filed March 13, 2006 and August 4, 2006 respectively),
3 and the Answer (mailed June 5, 2006) for the respective details thereof.

ISSUES

5 Appellants contend that the Examiner’s rejection based upon Prompt in view
6 of Sitka under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is in error. Specifically, Appellants argue that
7 while Sitka discloses that the DSM server provides for security access, Sitka does
8 not “disclose or suggest a document vault database storing information regarding
9 whether a user is authorized to access a document file or providing a user access to
10 a document file via a web server based upon the information regarding whether the
11 user is authorized to access the document file, as required by claim 1.” (Br. 5)

12 The Examiner contends that the rejection is proper. The Examiner states
13 that "Sitka teaches 'security manager 38 interfaces to a DSM security database' -
14 col. 11, lines 40-57 (the security database and algorithm portion providing access
15 to information regarding whether the user is authorized to access the documents
16 and preventing unauthorized access - col. 9, lines [sic] 37-67)." (Answer 9)

17 Initially, we note that Appellants' arguments on pages 5 through 7 of the
18 Brief recite limitations in independent claims 6, 12, and 18, and broadly state that
19 the limitations are not taught by the references. Appellants' arguments directed to
20 these claims do not provide any specificity as to how the limitations are to be
21 interpreted and differentiate from the art, other than what is argued for claim 1.
22 37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(vii) states “[a] statement which merely points out what a
23 claim recites will not be considered an argument for separate patentability of the
24 claim.” Thus, we do not consider claims 6, 12, and 18 to be separately argued.
25 Further, Appellants have presented no arguments directed to dependent claims

1 2 through 5, 13 through 17, and 19 through 24. In accordance with 37 C.F.R.
2 § 41.37(c)(1)(vii) we group all of the rejected claims together, and we will treat the
3 claims as one group and select claim 1 as representative of the group.

4 The Appellants' contention presents us with the issue of whether Sitka
5 teaches the claim limitation of "a document vault database coupled to the web
6 server, the document vault database storing information regarding whether a user is
7 authorized to access a document file."

FINDINGS OF FACT

10 Sitka teaches a system for storing data on a server. (col. 28, ll. 3-12). The
11 server can be accessed through the internet via a web server. (See for example
12 figure 8). The system makes use of a Directed Storage Management (DSM) system
13 to access data in a database and to provide the data to the user over the web. (col.
14 8, ll. 14-20 and col. 29, l. 64 through col. 30, l. 30) The DSM performs security
15 features such as verifying passwords and determines which store and files the user
16 has access to. (col. 12, ll. 39-58). Sitka states in column 13, ll. 45-50:

When a user connects to DSM system 10, his Logon and password are verified, and his ActiveGroup ID is set to the User's Default GroupID. The Stores that the user can access and the permissions for those Stores are obtained once from the GroupMember and StoreAnalysis tables and cached by DSM system 10 for the open connections.

23 We find the GroupMember and StoreAnalysis tables to be a form of a database that
24 contains information regarding user authorization to access files. Further, Sitka
25 teaches that algorithms are employed to determine permissions for file access.
26 (col. 14, ll. 1-9).

1 PRINCIPLES OF LAW

2 Office personnel must rely on Appellants' disclosure to properly determine
3 the meaning of the terms used in the claims. *Markman v. Westview Instruments,*
4 *Inc.*, 52 F.3d 967, 980, 34 USPQ2d 1321, 1330 (Fed. Cir. 1995). “[I]nterpreting
5 what is *meant* by a word *in* a claim ‘is not to be confused with adding an
6 extraneous limitation appearing in the specification, which is improper.’” *In re*
7 *Cruciferous Sprout Litigation*, 301 F.3d 1343, 1348, 64 USPQ2d 1202, 1205, (Fed.
8 Cir. 2002) (emphasis in original) (citing *Intervet Am., Inc. v. Kee-Vet Labs., Inc.*,
9 887 F.2d 1050, 1053, 12 USPQ2d 1474, 1476 (Fed.Cir.1989)).

10 ANALYSIS

11 Claim 1 recites “the document vault database storing information regarding
12 whether a user is authorized to access a document file.” Appellants’ specification
13 provides no special meaning to the term “document vault database” other than
14 identifying that it stores information regarding whether a user is authorized to
15 access the document file. Accordingly, we construe the term to include any
16 database which stores information regarding user authorization to a document file.

17 As discussed *supra*, we find that Sitka teaches that the GroupMember and
18 StoreAnalysis tables contain information regarding user authorization to access
19 files and that these tables are a database. Thus, contrary to Appellants’ arguments,
20 we find ample evidence to support the Examiner’s finding that Sitka teaches the
21 claimed document vault database.

22 We note that independent claims 6, 12, and 18 (which we do not consider to
23 be argued separately) recite “a security database and algorithm portion.”

1 Appellants' specification on page 7 states “[t]he algorithm determines
2 whether the user is explicitly assigned to the requested file or folder.” Thus, the
3 scope of the term security algorithm includes an algorithm that checks user access
4 to a file or folder. As discussed *supra*, we find that Sitka teaches the use of
5 algorithms to determine a user's authorization to access files. Thus, contrary to
6 Appellants' arguments, we find ample evidence to support the Examiner's finding
7 that Sitka teaches the claimed security database and algorithm.

CONCLUSION

10 We find for the Examiner as we find that Sitka teaches the claimed
11 “document vault database” and “security database and algorithm portion.” Thus,
12 Appellants’ arguments have not persuaded us of error in the Examiner’s rejections
13 of claims 1 through 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Accordingly, we sustain this
14 rejection. The decision of the Examiner is affirmed.

15 No time period for taking any subsequent action in connection with this
16 appeal may be extended under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a)(1)(iv) (2006).

AFFIRMED

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