

The opinion in support of the decision being entered today
is *not* binding precedent of the Board.

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS
AND INTERFERENCES

Ex parte RONALD L. REUTER and TAMARA J. FULLER

Appeal 2007-1543
Application 08/699,261
Technology Center 2600

Decided: July 31, 2007

Before FRED E. McKELVEY, Senior Administrative Patent Judge, ALLEN R. MacDONALD, 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. § 6(b) of the Final Rejection of claims 1, 3, 4, 6 through 8, 12, 20, 21, 23, 24 and 27 through 30.¹ For the reasons stated *infra*, we affirm the Examiner's rejection of these claims.

¹ As the Examiner notes on page 2 of the Answer, the claims appendix to the Brief contains an error, claims 3 and 4 should both be identified as

INVENTION

The invention is directed a system and method of annotating text documents where there is a visual link between the annotation and a portion of the text. One aspect of the invention allows a user to move the annotation and associated annotation box relative to the document. When the annotation and box move, the link is adjusted to follow the annotation while still pointing to the portion of text. See pages 2 and 3 of Appellants' Specification. Claim 1 is representative of the invention and reproduced below:

1. A method for annotating at least a first portion of a first electronic document displayable to a first person via a display screen, comprising the steps of:

receiving at least a first input from the first person;

generating, in response to at least the first input, at least one of a first annotation and a first annotation box displayable to the first person via the display screen, wherein the first annotation is displayable within the first annotation box, the first annotation box being positioned a distance away from the first text portion of the first electronic document, over a second text portion of the first electronic document, such that the first text portion of the first electronic document and said at least one of the first annotation and the first annotation box are displayable simultaneously;

dependent upon claim 1 (see Amendment dated December 30, 1999). Further, we note that claim 20 is dependent upon canceled claim 19. Appellants are encouraged to correct the dependency of claim 20 should there be further prosecution of this application.

linking said at least one of the first annotation and the first annotation box with the first text portion of the first electronic documents via a displayable first referencer, wherein the first referencer comprises one of a displayable arrow and a displayable line extending between the first text portion of the first electronic document and said at least one of the first annotation box and the first annotation;

receiving at least a second input from the first person, the second input corresponding to relating at least one of the first annotation and the first annotation box with the first portion of the first electronic document via the first referencer;

generating, from the second input, the first referencer to link at least one of the first annotation and the first annotation box with the first portion of the first electronic document;

receiving at least a third input from the first person, wherein the third input corresponds to moving at least one of the first annotation and the first annotation box from a first location relative to the first portion of the first electronic document to a second location relative to the first portion of the first electronic document, and reconfiguring the first referencer to link at least one of the first annotation box and the first annotation at the second location with the first text portion of the first electronic document, wherein the first end of the first referencer moved from a first position proximate the first location to a second position, where the second location is determined relative to at least one of the first position of the first end and the first text portion of the first electronic document, and is proximate the second location; and

positioning the first end of the first referencer at the second position, proximate the second location, along with at least one of the first annotation box and the first annotation.

REFERENCE

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The reference relied upon by the Examiner is:

Rivette US 5,806,079 Sep. 8, 1998

THE EXAMINER'S REJECTIONS

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6 through 8, 12, 20, 21, 23, 24, and 27 through 30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as being anticipated by Rivette.

CONTENTIONS

Appellants contend that the Examiner's rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is in error. Appellants argue that Rivette does not teach moving of the notes on a display screen from one position to another as claimed. Further, Appellants assert that the functionality of the referencer end associated with the annotation box moving with the annotation box is not taught by Rivette. Brief, p. 4.

Appellants also argue that the claimed invention would not have been obvious in light of Rivette because the displays in Rivette are designed such that it is not necessary to move notes so that displays on the screen are viewable. Brief, p. 4.

ISSUES

Thus, issue before us is whether Appellants' have shown that the Examiner erred in finding that Rivette discloses that the user can move an annotation on a display screen from one location to another with the referencer arrow following the annotation box.

Appellants' contention regarding what is obvious in light of Rivette does not raise an issue for us to consider as there is no rejection based upon obviousness before us.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Rivette teaches a system where notes or annotations can be created and associated with portions of a document. Abstract.
2. These notes are linked to specific portions of the documents. See figures 30, 31A-B, 32, and col. 18, ll. 39-49.
3. Rivette teaches that there are several modes for viewing the information. The standard note view is depicted in figures 6-13, in this view links are depicted and navigated by linking buttons. col. 17, l. 43 and col. 15, ll. 8-15.
4. Rivette also teaches several other views including a modified note view depicted in figure 30, a object view, depicted in figures 31 A, B, and a user defined view depicted in link view, depicted in figure 32. col. 17, l. 50, col. 18, l. 41, and col. 19, l. 50.
5. Rivette teaches that the links in the modified note view, object view and user defined views can be represented as double ended arrows. See figures 30, 31A-B, 32, and col. 11, ll. 25-37, col. 18, ll. 10-21, 57-67, and col. 19, ll. 54-67.
6. Rivette teaches that the notes may be manipulated and that the links are updated accordingly. See col. 37, ll. 21-33.

7. Rivette describes that during the operation of the system, when the user selects to see the modified notes view, the system retrieves and displays the linked data object including the bi-directional arrow. Col. 35, ll. 51-55.

8. In describing an example of a user manipulating a note depicted in the note view of figure 13, Rivette states:

[A]ssume that the user wishes to move Sub-note B1 so that it is displayed between Sub-notes B3 and B4. In this case, the user selects Sub-note B1 in a well known manner, and then drags selected Sub-note B1 until it is located between Sub-notes B3 and B4. The user then drops Sub-note B1 between Sub-notes B3 and B4.

Col. 37, ll. 38-43.

9. From facts 5 and 8, we find that Rivette teaches an input, dragging and dropping, where a note associated with a portion of the document is moved from one location to another on the display of the document while still being linked to the same portion of the document.

ANALYSIS

Appellants on page 4 of the Appeal brief present arguments as to why Rivette does not anticipate. First Appellants contend that the Rivette does not teach moving of the notes or sub-notes on a display screen from one position to another. Specifically, Appellants argue that Rivette does not teach a third input where the first annotation and box are moved from a first location to a second. The Examiner in response, states on page 7 of the Answer, that “Rivette discloses the user can modify and rearrange notes and

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sub-notes by drag and drop process, col. 37, lines 20-57 and modifying the notes within a note group and the linkage.” We agree with the Examiner, as discussed in fact 8 and 9, Rivette describes moving a note on a display screen from one position to another while still being linked to the same portion of the document, e.g., moving sub-note B1 from the top position of figure 13 to a position between notes B3 and B4 changes the position of the note but not the association of the note to the portion document.

Second Appellants contend on page 4 of the Appeal Brief that the functionality of the referencer end associated with the annotation box moving with the annotation box is not taught by Rivette. Brief, p. 4. The Examiner responds on page 9 of the Answer stating that Rivette discloses linking a note to the portion of a document by an arrow, citing figures 30 and 32. Answer, p. 9. We agree with the Examiner, as discussed in fact 4, Rivette describes several views. These views also make use of bi-directional arrows (a referencer). Fact 5. Given that the system of Rivette teaches that the system depicts the links between note and content based upon the view selected by the user, (Fact 7) we find that the system does automatically depict the referencer to the new location of a moved sub-note.

Thus, we find that there is ample evidence to support the Examiner’s finding that Rivette teaches that the user can move an annotation on a display screen from one location to another with the referencer arrow following the annotation box.

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CONCLUSION

Appellants' contentions have not convinced us of error in the Examiner's rejection as there is substantial evidence to support the Examiner's findings. Accordingly, we affirm the Examiner's rejections of claims 1, 3, 4, 6 through 8, 12, 20, 21, 23, 24 and 27 through 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). The decision of the Examiner is affirmed.

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

AFFIRMED

gw

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