

SIMPLE, AUTOMATED, DIRECT PURCHASE OF CONSUMABLES

Xerox Corporation

Initial Bidding Guidance: Mid to High 6 Figures

This portfolio is directed to improved methods for shopping, ordering, and paying for consumables. In particular, the portfolio offers:

1. Methods and systems for efficiently purchasing supplies (consumables) for a supply-consuming device, such as a printer, copy machine, facsimile machine, or MFD.
2. An improved method for the identification of consumable suppliers based on a user request and allows the device itself to display, on a user interface, useful information about the requisite consumables and an appropriate supplier. Additional information can be provided to the operator, such as the price of each consumable at each of the identified suppliers, the quantity of each consumable at each of the identified suppliers, and directions to each of the identified suppliers, thus making the operator's purchase of the necessary consumables much more efficient and expedient.
3. A superior system for consumable purchases for "pay-as-you-go" or pre-paid devices, whereby a user may purchase consumables over a network. The user prints an invoice or confirmation page directly at the device such that the device can detect a payment code embedded in the incoming print job, so as to instantly authorize the purchase and consumption of the required supplies and to enable the continued operation of the device.
4. An electronic supply ordering system for ordering a consumable component or replaceable part. For example, an electronic order system may include a consumable component, sensor, processor, software system, and a communications link. The order system communicates with the consumable component and predicts a future condition of the consumable component. The sensor, processor, software system, and communications link interrogate the consumable component and, upon identifying a particular condition of the consumable component, automatically communicate an electronic inquiry or an electronic offer to purchase a replacement of the consumable component. Alternatively, a display system with the device can display the status of the consumable component and information about ordering the consumable when a predetermined condition occurs. A monitoring system can monitor inputs indicating that an order for the consumable has been placed. The ordering system can submit the order for the consumable to a supplier if the monitored input indicates an order should be placed.
5. A method of providing support and help to a user of a device. The condition of the user's device is automatically sensed, and a communications browser is launched to access a server at an address defined by the detected condition of the device. The user is provided with context-sensitive, web-based support. Any additional information may be stored at the user's device for subsequent use without the need to access the server. This automatic provisioning of support reduces the need for costly, manned "help lines".

Forward Citing Companies: Assa Abloy AB, Beverage Works Inc., Boeing, Brother Industries, Canon, Dell, Eastman Kodak, Electronics For Imaging Inc., Facebook, Fujifilm, Fujitsu, Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Intellectual Ventures, Konica Minolta, Lenovo, Lexmark International, LG Electronics, Microsoft, NEC, Panasonic, Polaroid, Ricoh, Samsung Electronics, Seiko, Sharp, Siemens AG, Sony, Toshiba, Western Union, Zebra Technologies

TECHNOLOGY

SHOPPING, PAYMENT, AND ORDERING SYSTEMS

NOVELTY

METHODS AND SYSTEMS FOR SHOPPING AND AUTOMATICALLY ORDERING A CONSUMABLE FOR AT A DEVICE INTERFACE. ALSO, A SYSTEM FOR PROVIDING AUTOMATIC PROOF OF PAYMENT FOR CONSUMABLES WITHIN 'PAY-AS-YOU-GO' DEVICES WITHOUT MANUALLY SUPPLYING A CODE OR REQUIRING THE DEVICE CONTACT A PAYMENT CENTER

IMPORTANCE

A VALUABLE PORTFOLIO FOR ECOMMERCE COMPANIES, OR COMPANIES PRODUCING OR SELLING CONSUMABLE PRODUCTS

NUMBER OF ASSETS

17

PATENTS (17)

US 6,629,134
US 6,798,997
US 6,985,877
US 7,013,092
US 7,124,097
US 7,663,770
US 7,822,645
US 8,205,797
CA 2318025
DE 60046652.3
EP 1085442
FR 1085442
GB 1085442
JP 4307854
JP 4798827
JP 5312361
MX 221882

Priority Date: 09-16-1999

Representative Claim: US 6,985,877 – Claim #13

A method of ordering a part of an apparatus comprising: identifying electronically a condition in an apparatus; automatically launching an electronic communications to initiate at least one of an inquiry and an offer to purchase based on the condition to a URL address of a computer associated with a condition of the part. the URL address defined by a condition of the part; displaying a purchase order screen including a part number automatically filled out on the purchase order screen based on the identified condition; sending an electronic purchase order for the part using the URL address of a computer associated with the condition of the part; and sending a digital electronic signature associated with the electronic purchase order.

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