

IMPROVED USER INTERFACES FOR TOUCH SCREENS

Xerox Corporation

Initial Bidding Guidance: Low to Mid 6 Figures

This portfolio discloses improved user interfaces for multifunctional devices (“MFDs”), such as multifunctional printers which can photocopy, print, and scan documents. These MFDs combine multiple functions that previously were typically the primary function of separate devices. The user interfaces of MFDs need to make available to users each of the control buttons that enable users to make choices with respect to each of the separate functions of the device. In many devices, this leads to control panels with many buttons which can confuse users. To simplify complex interfaces, some high end MFDs include a touch screen display. However, visually impaired users often have difficulty operating devices using touch screen displays as the touch screen selections have to be first read before the appropriate selection can be made. Therefore, this portfolio addresses a need for improved user interfaces for MFDs.

Value Proposition: This portfolio discloses simplified user interfaces for MFDs with audible feedback that enables visually impaired users to navigate touch screen menu displays. The disclosed user interfaces direct users attention to only those control buttons that are available for selection in respect to the service to be performed. This may be achieved by illuminating only available control buttons, or by highlighting, within a group of available features, the button that controls the feature that is currently selected. For example, if a “COPY” button is selected on a multifunction printer, then the “COPY” button itself is illuminated to inform the user that the “COPY” service is currently available. Also, buttons available for use with the “COPY” service are illuminated to show their availability for control of features associated with the “COPY” service. Further, if the user interfaces are provided on a touch screen display, then an audio feedback is provided with the selection of each menu option on the user interface to enable a visually impaired user to navigate and select menu options on the display by listening to the audio feedback.

Forward Citing Companies: Apple, Canon, IBM, Konica Minolta, Lexmark, Nokia Corporation, Toshiba

Priority Date: 06-24-2002

Representative Claim: US 6,999,066 – Claim #1

A system for providing audible feedback to enable a visually impaired person to operate a multi-function machine, comprising: touchable elements means for selecting a plurality of selectable system options associated with features of the multi-function machine; audible feedback means for generating electrical signals that provide audible instructions to the visually impaired person as to one or more options are selected; means for enabling/disabling said audible feedback means such that when said audible feedback means is disabled, no electrical signals corresponding to the audible instructions to the visually impaired person are generated and when said audible feedback means is enabled, electrical signals corresponding to the audible instructions to the visually impaired person are generated; and a controller to control navigation of said selectable system options and to provide instructions for the operation of the multi-function machine; said controller checking whether audible feedback is disabled; said controller, if said audible feedback is disabled, activating a process associated with a selection made on said touchable elements; said controller

TECHNOLOGY

TOUCH SCREEN/USER INTERFACES

NOVELTY

SYSTEMS AND METHODS THAT DIRECT ATTENTION TO SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS ON A USER INTERFACE AND ENABLE VISUALLY IMPAIRED USERS TO NAVIGATE TOUCH SCREEN MENU DISPLAYS

IMPORTANCE

IMPORTANT PORTFOLIO FOR COMPANIES PROVIDING ELECTRONIC DEVICES THAT ARE OPERABLE VIA TOUCH SCREEN ENABLED USER INTERFACES, INCLUDING MULTI-FUNCTIONAL PRINTERS AND OTHER OFFICE EQUIPMENT

NUMBER OF ASSETS

3

US PATENTS (2)

6,999,066
7,353,463

APPLICATIONS (1)

BR 20030305400

providing audible feedback corresponding to the selection made when said audible feedback is enabled; said controller, when said audible feedback is enabled, comparing the selection made with a previous selection made; said controller providing, when said audible feedback is enabled and the selection made and the previous selection made are different, only audible feedback corresponding to the selection made and not activating the process associated with the selection made; said controller, if the selection made and the previous selection made are the same, providing audible feedback corresponding to the selection made and activating a process associated with the selection made.

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