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Intellectual Property Analysis of Alberti Anemometer, LLC Internet Query Optimization Patent Portfolio

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A Brief Background of the Patent System

When most people consider the patent system, they often think of a structure in which large corporations make money selling products based on proprietary knowledge, licensing the technology to others, or suing others who infringe on the patent rights behind their most cutting-edge products. In recent years, the importance of patents and intellectual property rights as an important variable in the marketplace has come to the forefront of the public consciousness as world leaders declare their country's lead in the innovation race. The temporary nature of patents is a reflection of the implicit social contract that dictates that these innovations be used for the public good once their time-limited monopoly has expired.

Key elements of the patent system hinge on the rights bestowed upon the general public. In the United States, patent terms are limited to 20 years from the date of application. By statutory intention, once a patent has expired, the patent holder loses the right to exclude others from utilizing the invention described within the patent. Likewise, a large number of patents are "abandoned" when owners discontinue paying patent maintenance fees. Even when maintained and within their statutory term, patents only provide protection in the country for which the patent is filed. Accordingly, an innovation disclosed in a European patent, for example, can be utilized anywhere in the world other than the European market. Whether through expiration, abandonment or non-filing, once these innovations enter the public domain, they are fair game, requiring no license or sale to implement. As demonstrated by the Global Innovation Commons (G.I.C.), using intellectual property legally available in the public domain reduces, if not eliminates, the need to pay licensing fees – particularly to those entities whose sole business interest is to intimidate (through threat of litigation or International Trade Commission action) other businesses into licensing or purchasing IP that is invalid or has lost its value to a public domain option.

Until the recent emergence of the G.I.C., many companies failed to leverage the numerous public domain options that may provide alternatives to the purchase or license of costly cutting-edge technologies. By overlooking these options, companies all too often incur costs and burden which impugn their business at best or, at its worst, keep globe altering solutions out of the world's hands. This scenario, which has defined the landscape for solution abundance against a backdrop of inaction, could be potentially avoided entirely thanks to the vast trove of viable technologies available for the taking, free of cost, in the public domain.

Technology Area: Internet Query Optimization

Ever since the invention of the computer, interface designers have attempted to devise better and more natural ways to make the interaction between man and machine as seamless as possible. As computer innovation moves forward, novel user interfaces that compliment these new usage patterns are required. As the internet becomes increasingly integrated into daily life, system designers have seen the importance of incorporating real-world internet usage trends into the way data is presented to users. By predicting user activity patterns and recognizing similar search patterns from other users having the same goals, innovators hope to augment web exploration, make it more efficient, and streamline the process by which users find information on the web.

Intellectual Property Analysis

Alberti Anemometer, LLC currently possesses intellectual property concerning internet query optimization with priorities dating back to 1996. These intellectual properties describe a back-end database system and front-end user interface that records and displays on demand a historical timeline of each user's web session. This history may also be enhanced via additional information derived from the crowd-sourced records of users who performed similar searches. This system attempts to take into account the way users actually look up information concerning various subjects on the Internet and visualize the results and suggestions in a way that parallels a user's real search habits. An integrated system as described in these intellectual properties would be a marked improvement over existing UIs and competing systems, saving time and reducing frustration on the part of its user base. While it is not transparent to the market what commercial intent Alberti Anemometer, LLC has for these patents, it is reasonable to assume that they will pursue sales or licensing models. Entities interested in Alberti Anemometer, LLC's holdings would likely also be interested in similar innovations that lie in the public domain, some of which are listed in the following section.

Patent Information

As of March 2010, according to the electronic output of the United States Patent and Trademark Office's Public PAIR system reports on patent assignment, Alberti Anemometer, LLC holds six granted U.S. patents and two pending U.S. patent applications.

Alberti Anemometer, LLC U.S. Patent Holding related to Internet Query Optimization:

<u>Document #</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Assignee Name</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Issue</u>
US 7,596,533	Personalized multi-service computer environment	Not Available	30-May-00	28-Aug-06	29-Sep-09
US 7,181,438	Database access system	Alberti Anemometer, LLC	30-May-00	30-May-00	20-Feb-07
US 7,062,475	Personalized multi-service computer environment	Alberti Anemometer LLC	30-May-00	17-Nov-03	13-Jun-06
US 6,868,525	Computer graphic display visualization system and method	Alberti Anemometer LLC	26-May-00	26-May-00	15-Mar-05
US 6,326,962	Graphic user interface for database system	Doubleagent LLC	23-Dec-96	13-Jul-99	4-Dec-01
US 5,966,126	Graphic user interface for database system	Andrew J. Szabo	23-Dec-96	23-Dec-96	12-Oct-99
US20070143439	PERSONALIZED MULTI-SERVICE COMPUTER ENVIRONMENT	ALBERTI ANEMOMETER LLC	30-May-00	28-Aug-06	21-Jun-07
US20060253594	PERSONALIZED MULTI-SERVICE COMPUTER ENVIRONMENT	ALBERTI ANEMOMETER LLC	30-May-00	13-Jun-06	9-Nov-06

Analysis of the Alberti Anemometer, LLC patent has led to the identification of a number of innovations from multiple assignees residing in the public domain due to abandonment or expiration that also concern aspects of a system to optimize internet queries similar to the one described. A sampling of these patent holdings is included in the table below. Any process or technology specifically designated in these patents is available for public domain use and is not subject to any restrictions from Alberti Anemometer, LLC. Please note that the assignee shown is the assignee to which the patent was originally granted.

Sample of Patent Holdings in the Public Domain related to Internet Query Optimization:

<u>Document #</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Assignee Name</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Issue</u>
US6718324	Metadata search results ranking system	International Business Machines Corporation	14-Jan-00	30-Jan-03	6-Apr-04
US6546388	Metadata search results ranking system	International Business Machines Corporation	14-Jan-00	14-Jan-00	8-Apr-03
US6041323	Information search method, information search device, and storage medium for storing an information search program	International Business Machines Corporation	17-Apr-96	17-Apr-97	21-Mar-00
US6094654	Data management system for file and database management	International Business Machines Corporation	6-Dec-96	24-Jun-98	25-Jul-00
US6088693	Data management system for file and database management	International Business Machines Corporation	6-Dec-96	6-Dec-96	11-Jul-00
US6078917	System for searching internet using automatic relevance feedback	International Business Machines Corporation	18-Dec-97	18-Dec-97	20-Jun-00
US6067539	Intelligent information retrieval system	Vigil, Inc.	2-Mar-98	2-Mar-98	23-May-00
US6055542	System and method for displaying the contents of a web page based on a user's interests	International Business Machines Corporation	29-Oct-97	29-Oct-97	25-Apr-00
US5983221	Method and apparatus for improved document searching	WordStream, Inc.	13-Jan-98	13-Jan-98	9-Nov-99
US6986102	Method and configurable model for storing hierarchical data in a non-hierarchical data repository	International Business Machines Corporation	21-Jan-00	21-Jan-00	10-Jan-06
US6973472	Data synchronization system and method based on modification records and common formatting	Penbex Data Systems, Inc.	27-Aug-02	27-Aug-02	6-Dec-05
US6968340	Technique for navigating components of a model having complex relationships	International Business Machines Corporation	26-Jun-98	26-Jun-98	22-Nov-05
US6957334	Method and system for secure guaranteed transactions over a computer network	MasterCard International Incorporated	23-Jun-99	20-Jun-00	18-Oct-05
US6839680	Internet profiling	Fujitsu Limited	30-Sep-99	30-Sep-99	4-Jan-05
US6788313	Method and apparatus for providing on line help for custom application interfaces	International Business Machines Corporation	28-Sep-00	28-Sep-00	7-Sep-04
US6669832	Electronic transaction system	Fujitsu Limited	2-Oct-97	10-Mar-98	30-Dec-03
US6633316	Method and apparatus for implementing direct link selection of cached, previously visited links in nested web pages	International Business Machines Corporation	13-May-99	13-May-99	14-Oct-03
US6397264	Multi-browser client architecture for managing multiple applications having a history list	rStar Corporation	1-Nov-99	1-Nov-99	28-May-02
US6385642	Internet web server cache storage and session management system	YouDecide.com, Inc.	3-Nov-98	19-Apr-99	7-May-02
US6321237	Recording and reproducing apparatus and method for accessing data stored on a randomly accessible recording medium, and for managing data thereon	Sony Corporation	31-Oct-94	23-Dec-98	20-Nov-01
US6310630	Data processing system and method for internet browser history generation	International Business Machines Corporation	12-Dec-97	12-Dec-97	30-Oct-01
US6279005	Method and apparatus for generating paths in an open hierarchical data structure	PaulZellweger	4-Mar-97	3-Mar-98	21-Aug-01
US6247047	Method and apparatus for facilitating computer network transactions	Control Commerce, LLC	18-Nov-97	18-Nov-97	12-Jun-01
US6226750	Secure session tracking method and system for client-server environment	ProAct Technologies Corp.	20-Jan-98	20-Jan-98	1-May-01

Conclusion

With vast amounts of information available at our fingertips, one of the biggest challenges facing members of the knowledge economy is finding ways to discover, compile, and organize the truly relevant data in the shortest amount of time. Luckily, technological advances can aid in this endeavor. The pace of business continues to move faster, and network-aided information gathering provides significant advantages over existing methods and practices in use today and will continue to do so into the future. Incorporating public domain technologies into query optimization systems can provide cost savings over proprietary alternatives, minimize licensing costs, and overcome other existing barriers to entry that exist in this technology area.

Without an informed knowledge of the surrounding landscape, efforts to move forward in any discipline are prone to go off-course. By cultivating awareness of the full spectrum of options available from the public domain as they advance their research, technology innovators are empowered to create truly novel solutions to the world's problems. To that end, M•CAM's analysis has shown that the Alberti Anemometer, LLC patent contains innovations that may be approximated in part by innovations that currently lie in the public domain. Accordingly, we believe that it is in the public's best interest to see these innovations integrated into today's solutions to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of technology not only in the United States but across the globe.

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