This invention relates to the field of computer-based pricing of products.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

gible products, such as services. The invention overcomes the prior art's difficulty in storing, maintaining, and retrieving the large amounts of data required to apply pricing adjustments to determine prices for various products. Because of the invention's method and apparatus, prices for a large number of products can be determined by a laptop computer and the prior art's need to utilize a mainframe computer is alleviated.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention may be implemented on any conventional or general purpose computer system. An example of one embodiment of a computer system for implementing this invention is illustrated in FIG. **3**. A keyboard **10** and

The computer system described above is for purposes of example only. The present invention may be implemented in any type of computer system or programming or processing environment. For example, in one embodiment, the inven-

prior art disadvantage since the invention is not limited in speed or in storage space by the prior art's requirement of retrieving several tables from the database (it is noted that although the invention is discussed in terms of a "database," the invention can be implemented using any data source that may be different from a conventional database). The entries

## 11

adjustments (such as a general discount). According to the present invention, the particular treatment of the value of X1 is determined during run time. In other words, the numbers in the prior art tables are "abstracted" and stored as a denormalized number in the "how much" column (i.e. column **44** in FIG. **5**), and the interpretation of the numbers are left up to the interpretation engine of the present invention. This dynamic interpretation of abstracted numbers during run time along with the invention's feature permitting

## 18

FIGS. **15**A through **15**C illustrate the execution flow of the present invention. The execution flow of the invention begins in step **1502**. In step **1504** the user specifies a pricing

## 19

In step **1512** the present invention performs a database query for retrieving all product records related to user specified products. The database query is directed to user specified products, the user specified purchasing organization, the identified organizational groups, and the effective dates specified by the user. In step **1514** the invention identifies all product groups that are higher than user specified products in the product group hierarchy. In step **1516** the invention performs a database query for retrieving all pricing adjustments applicable to user specified products and the user specified organization. The query is