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(12) **United States Patent**
Sakakibara

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(54) **VALUE POINTS EXCHANGING MANAGING METHOD AMONG FIRST AND SECOND BUSINESS ENTITIES WHERE VALUE POINTS AVAILABLE TO ON-LINE CUSTOMER OBTAINING GOODS OR SERVICES**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 472 days.

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(30) **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Mar. 24, 2000 (JP) 2000-085057

(51) **Int. Cl.**⁷ **G06F 17/30**

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **707/10; 707/102; 705/14; 705/26; 705/37; 705/39; 709/217**

(58) **Field of Search** **707/1-10, 100-104.1, 707/200-205, 501.1, 512-514; 709/203-210, 217-219; 705/1-15, 25-37, 39, 400; 713/200-202**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A customer-use terminal unit **20** managed by a customer transmits exchange instructing information, which instructs an exchange of valuable points obtained by the customer for communication points used for receiving on-line services, to a central unit **10** that manages the communication points (**S202**). The central unit **10** transmits valuable point request information according to the received exchange instructing information to a cooperate-use terminal unit **30** that manages the valuable points (**S204**). The cooperate-use terminal unit **30** transmits valuable points corresponding to the received valuable point request information to the central unit **10** (**S206**). The central unit **10** exchanges the received valuable points for communication points according to a predetermined exchange rate (**S209**). Accordingly, it is possible to achieve point management capable of reducing the loss of valuable points given to the customer as a reward for consumption activity, due to the expiration of the term of validity of the valuable points, and improving the frequency in use of on-line services.

10 Claims, 11 Drawing Sheets

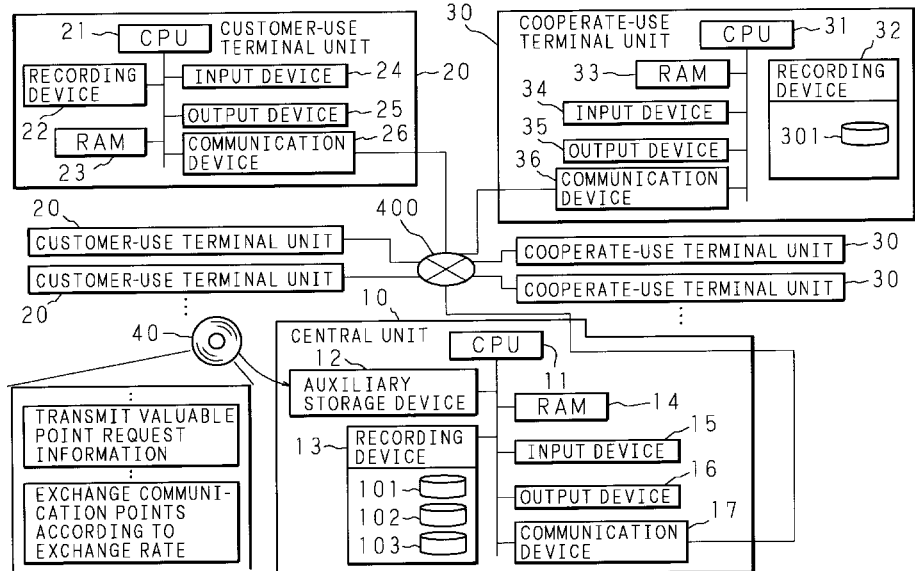


FIG. 1

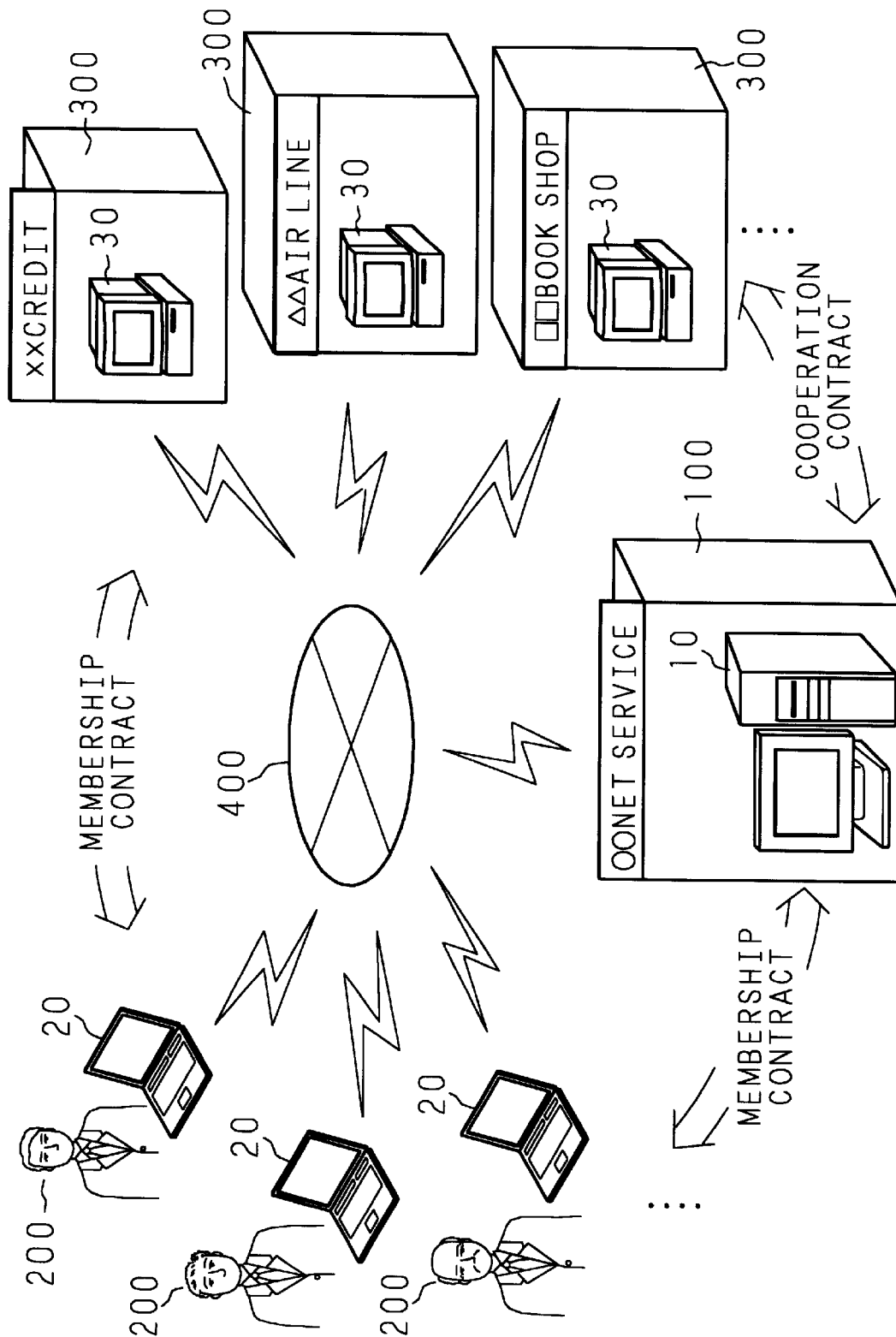


FIG. 2

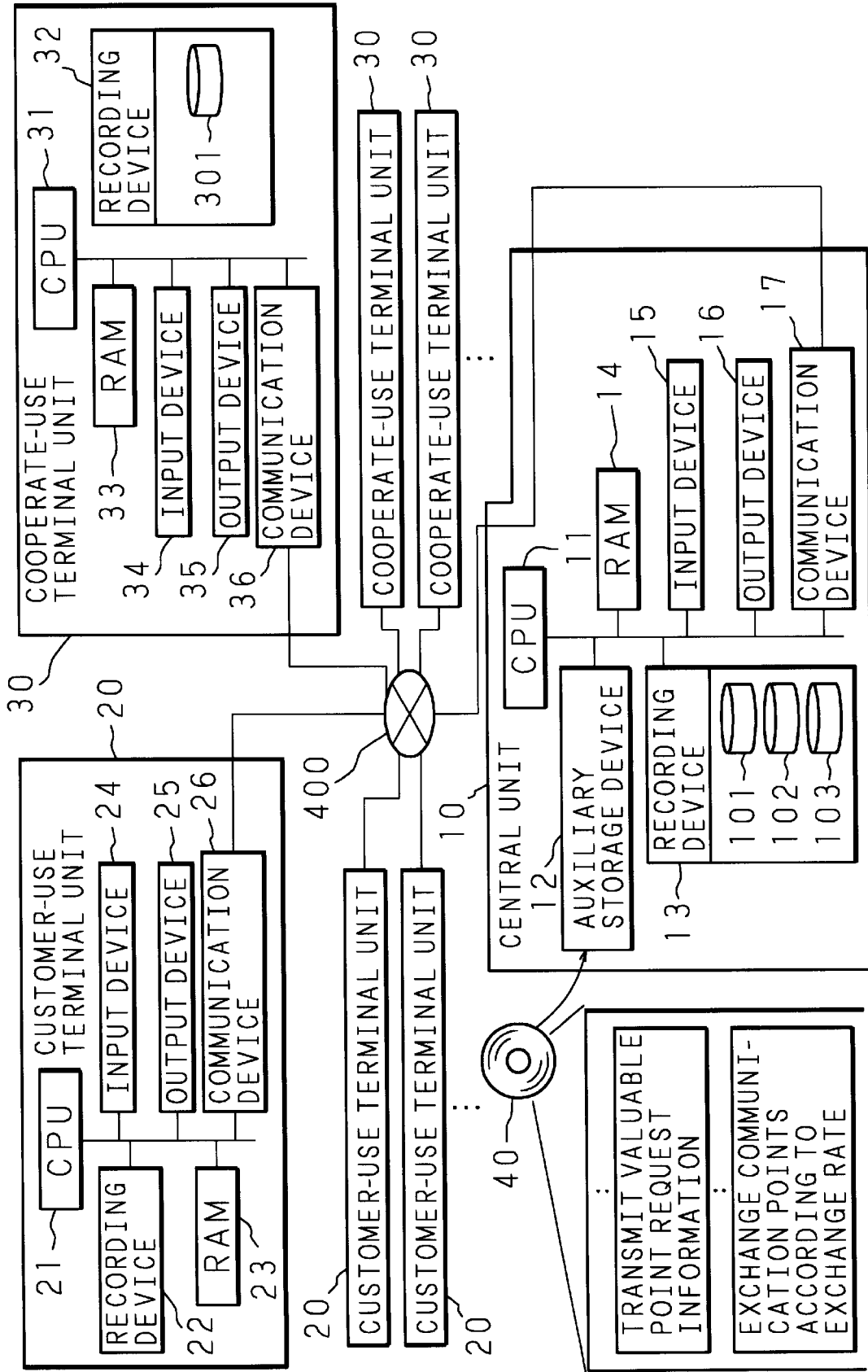


FIG. 3

CUSTOMER ID	COMMUNICATION POINT	
ID00001	10,050	
ID00002	300	
ID00003	40,200	
⋮	⋮	

FIG. 4

NAME	RATE
xxCARD	0.42
△△AIR LINE	0.66
□□BOOK SHOP	1.00
⋮	⋮

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