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(12) **United States Patent**
Appelman

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(54) **USER DEFINABLE ON-LINE CO-USER LISTS**

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(*) Notice: This patent issued on a continued prosecution application filed under 37 CFR 1.53(d), and is subject to the twenty year patent term provisions of 35 U.S.C. 154(a)(2).

Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 1185 days.

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(22) Filed: **Feb. 24, 1997**

(51) **Int. Cl.**[7] **G06F 15/00**

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **345/733**; 345/853

(58) **Field of Search** 345/329, 330, 345/331, 332; 395/200.34, 200.35; 379/204, 201, 202, 913

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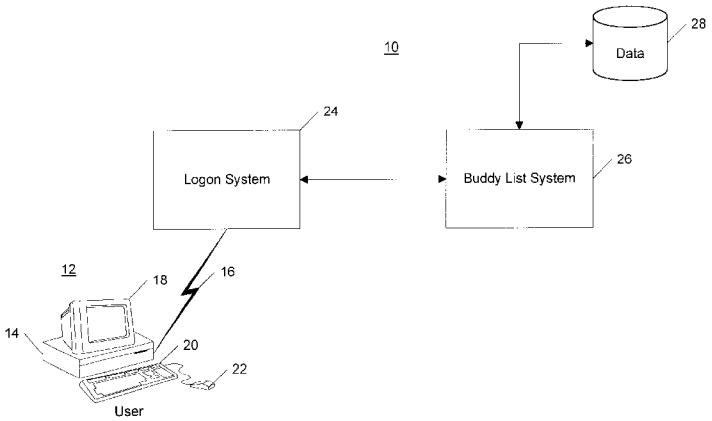
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A real time notification system that tracks, for each user, the logon status of selected co-users of an on-line or network system and displays that information in real time to the tracking user in a unique graphical interface. The invention provides user definable on-line co-user lists, or "buddy lists", that track specific co-users in real-time automatically. A user can create many separate buddy lists of co-users, either with intersecting or disjoint lists of users, and label these buddy lists according to the user's preference. The user can update a buddy list or create new buddy lists whenever necessary. When a user logs on to a system, the user's set of buddy lists is presented to the buddy list system. The buddy list system attempts to match co-users currently logged into the system with the entries on the user's buddy list. Any matches are displayed to the user. As co-users logon and logoff, a user's buddy list is updated to reflect these changes. An indication can also be added to show that a co-user just logged on or just left the system.

10 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



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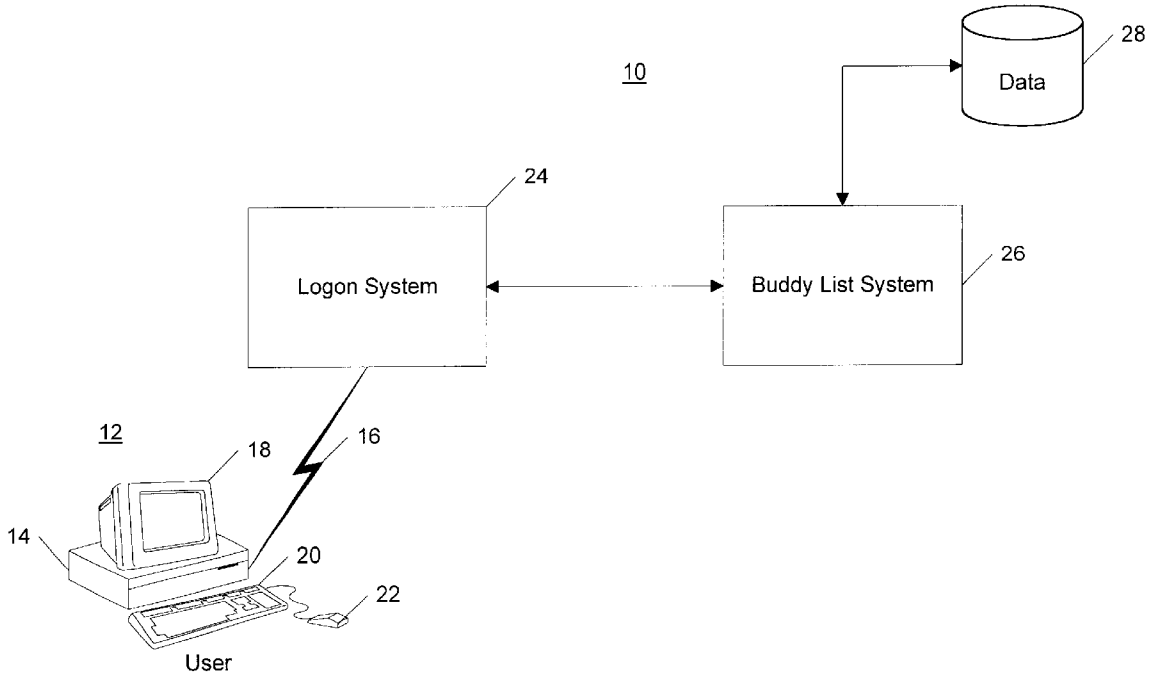

FIG. 1

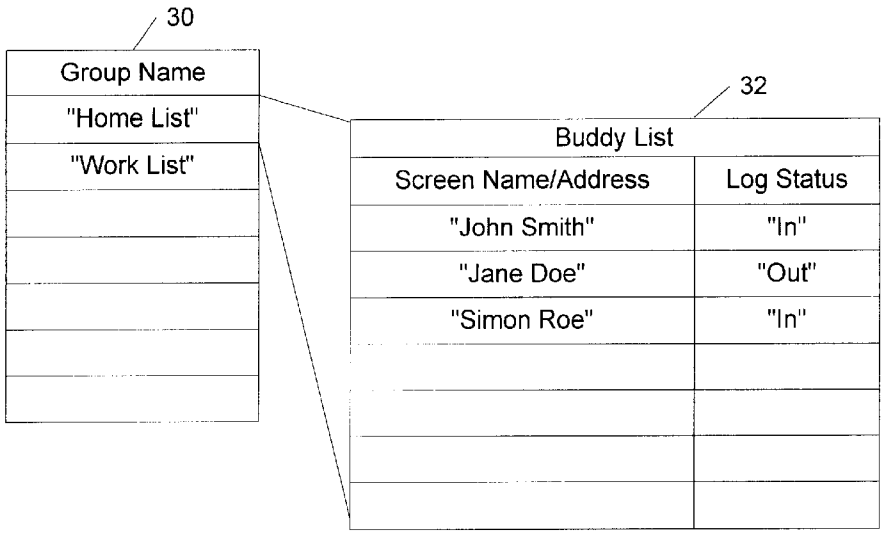

FIG. 2a

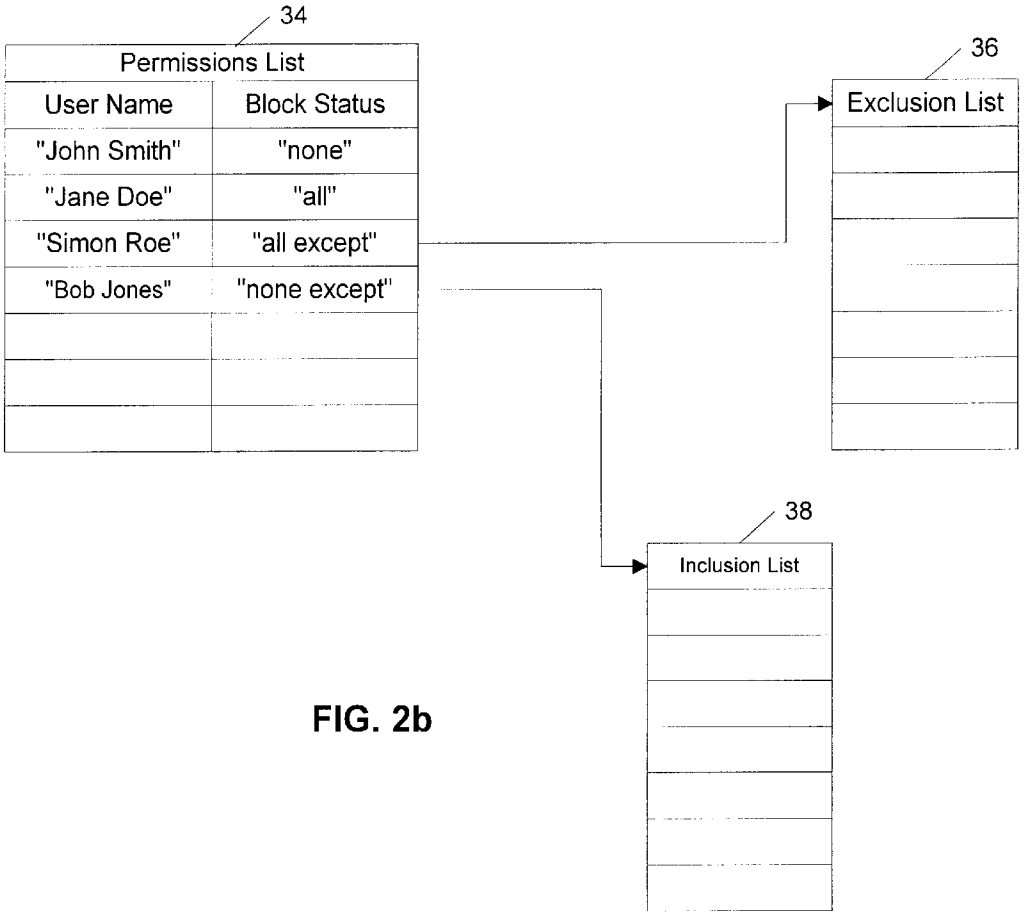

FIG. 2b

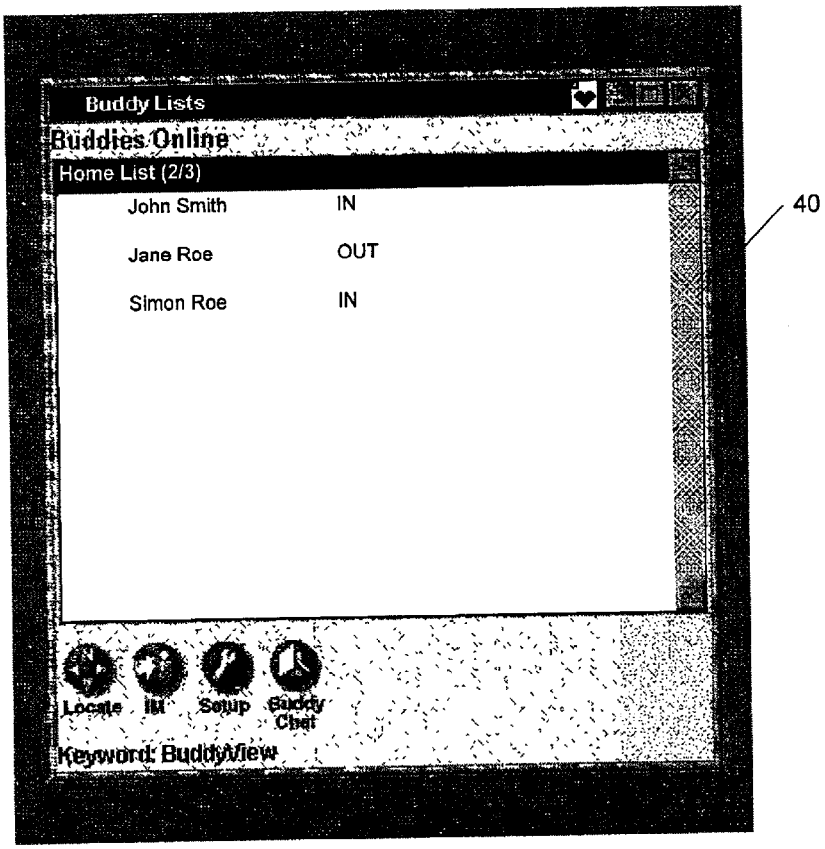

FIG. 3

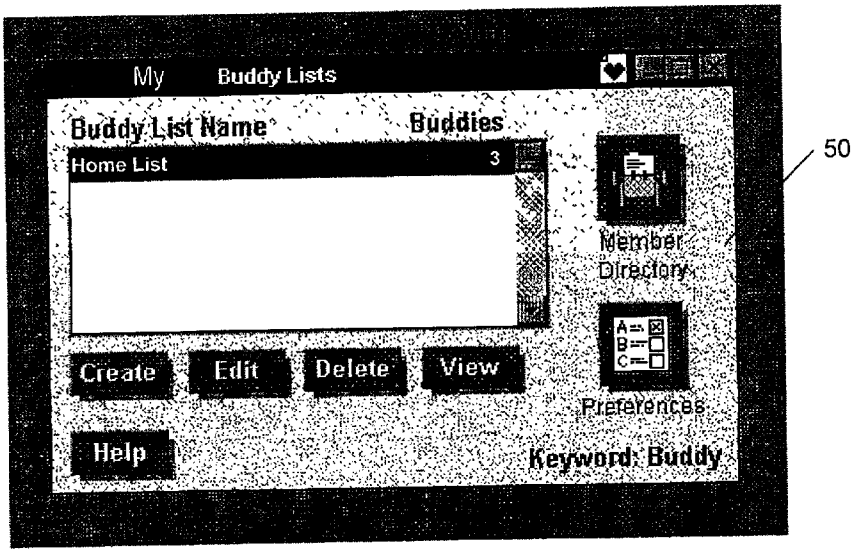

FIG. 4

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