



(12) **United States Patent**
Johnson et al.

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(54) **BUOY ICON NOTIFICATION OF OBJECT INTERFACE ACCESSIBILITY IN MULTITASKING COMPUTER ENVIRONMENT**

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(21) Appl. No.: **08/586,149**

(22) Filed: **Jan. 11, 1996**

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 08/179,479, filed on Jan. 10, 1994, now abandoned.

(51) **Int. Cl.⁷** **G06F 15/62**

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **345/772; 345/839; 345/771; 709/100**

(58) **Field of Search** **395/650, 800, 395/159; 364/521, 724, 721, 200**

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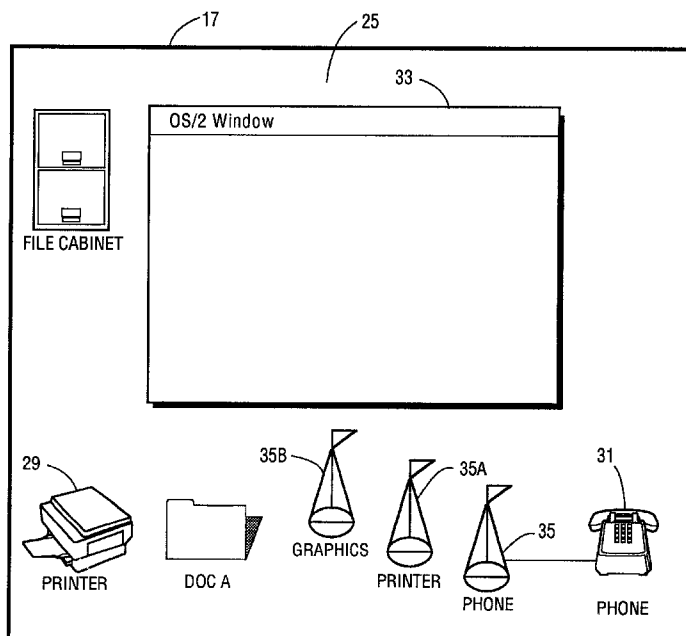
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Notification of an executing object becoming idle is provided in a multitasking environment. As the object executes, a user can interface with a second object. When the executing object becomes accessible, a buoy icon object is displayed on the computer screen. The buoy icon has the name of the accessible object as well as a pointer line extending from the buoy icon to the accessible object. The buoy icon provides notification that the accessible object execution is complete or is ready to receive a user input. The user can either remove the buoy icon from the screen or select the buoy icon object to focused the accessible object. The newly focused accessible object can then be used. The buoy icon notification can be enabled or disabled on an object-by-object basis.

25 Claims, 11 Drawing Sheets



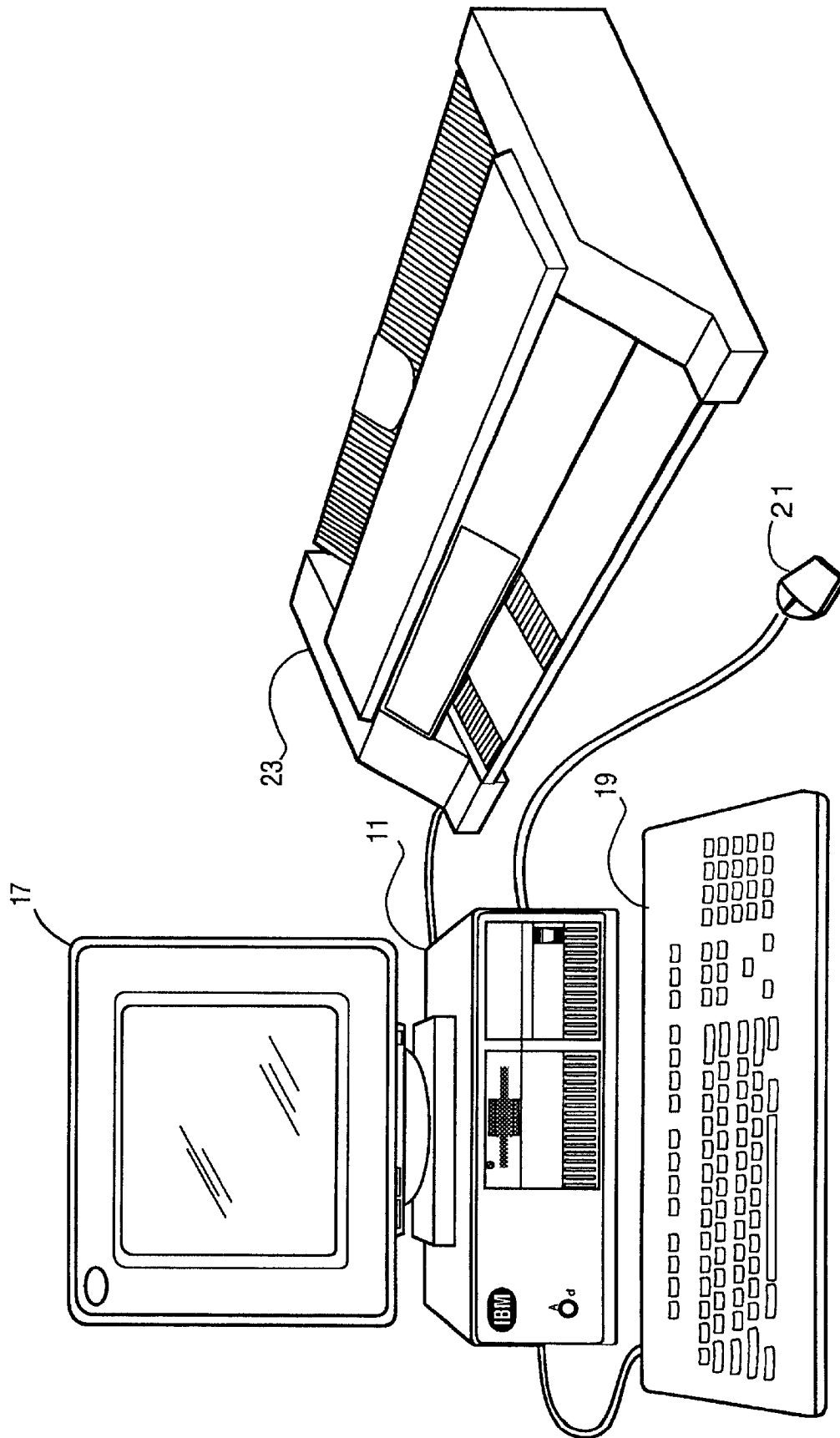


Fig. 1

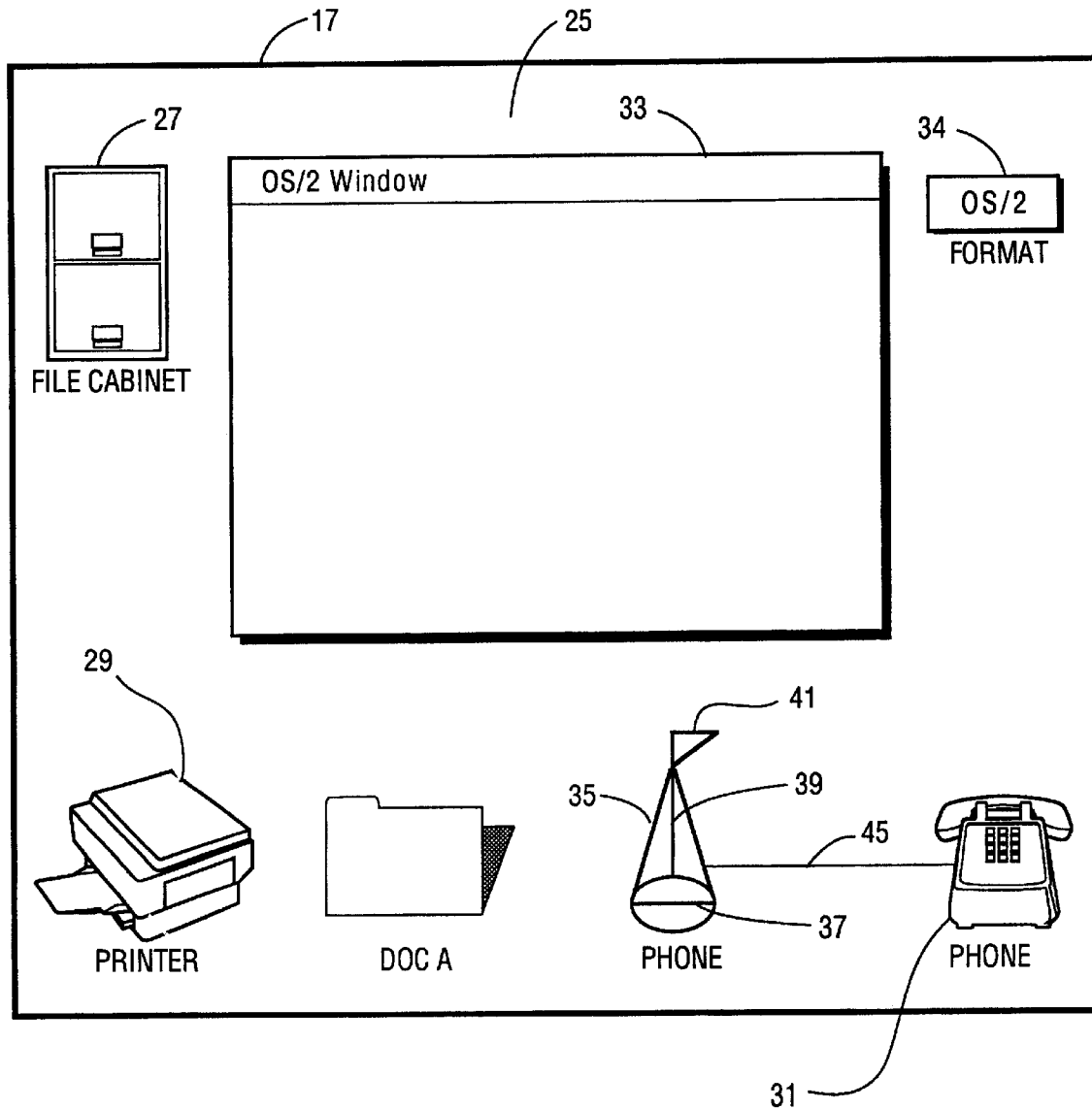


FIG 2

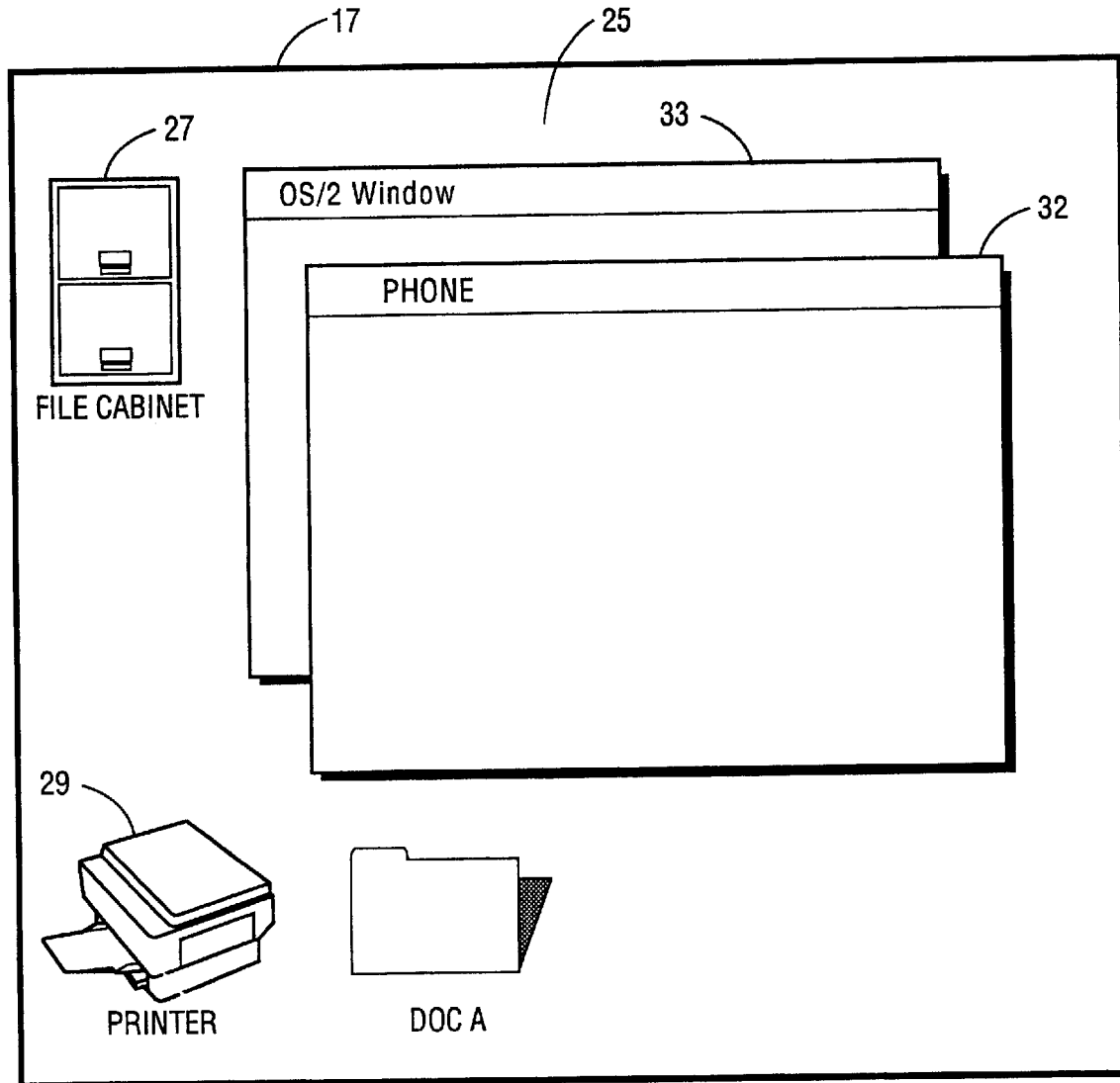


FIG. 3

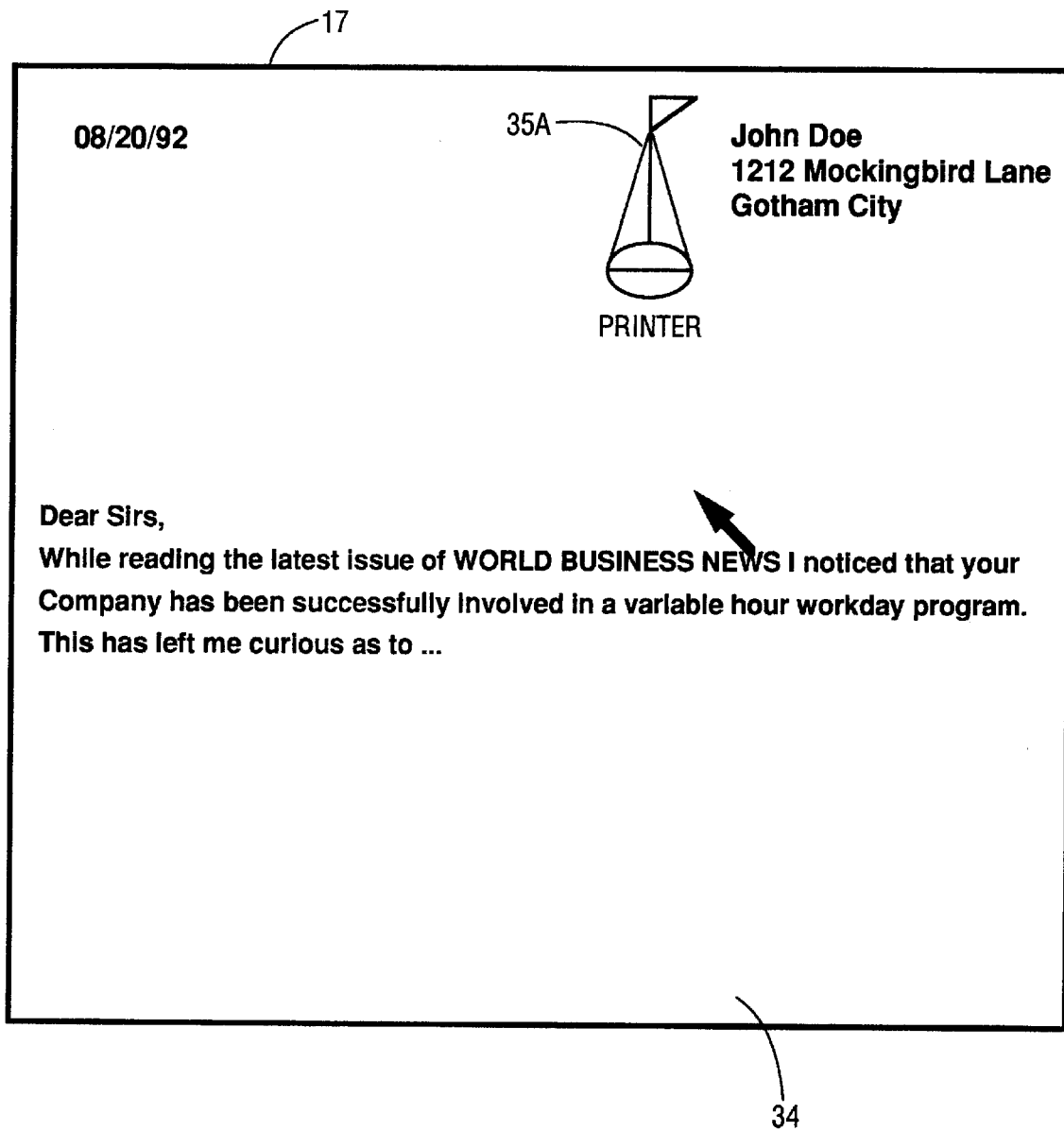


FIG. 4

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