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(12) **United States Patent Bogard**

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- (54) **INSTANT MESSAGING VIA TELEPHONE INTERFACES**
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- (73) **Assignee:** Tellme Networks, Inc., Mountain View, CA (US)
- (*) **Notice:** Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 213 days.

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- (21) **Appl. No.:** 09/691,606
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- (51) **Int. Cl.⁷** H04M 1/64
- (52) **U.S. Cl.** 379/88.17; 704/270.1; 709/206
- (58) **Field of Search** 379/88.13, 88.01, 379/88.04, 88.14, 88.16, 88.22, 67.1, 265.01; 704/270.1; 709/206

(57) **ABSTRACT**

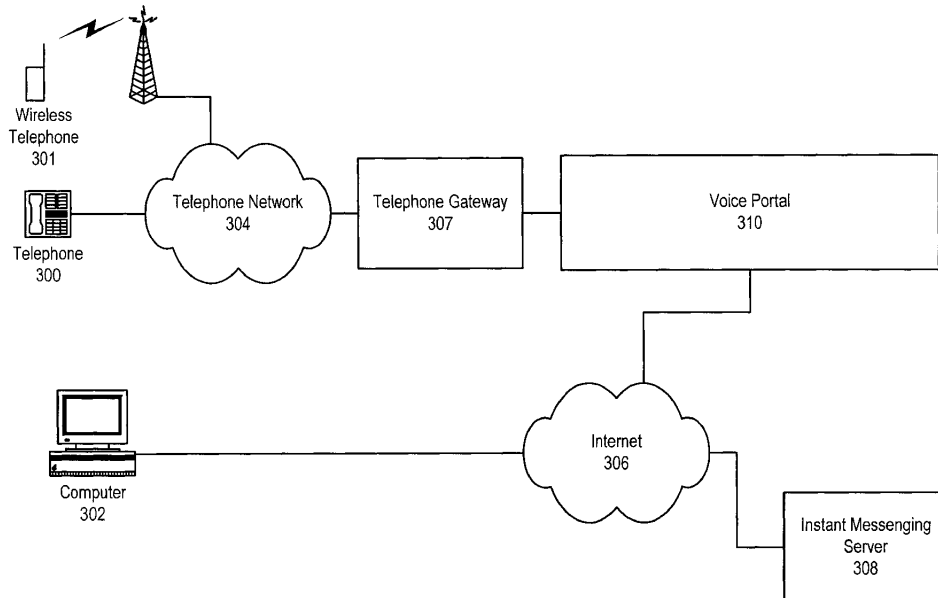
A method and apparatus for enabling users of a phone based speech activated system such as a voice portal to communicate with users of an Internet based instant messenger (IM) service is described. Phone based users are able to send and receive IMs. Incoming messages can cause an asynchronous notification in the user's current voice application and the user can (if they desire) switch contexts to hear the IM and respond. Sent messages may be expeditiously sent to users of the GUI as a hypertext link to a recorded audio. Other sending formats are also possible; similarly, buddy lists can be supported.

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7 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



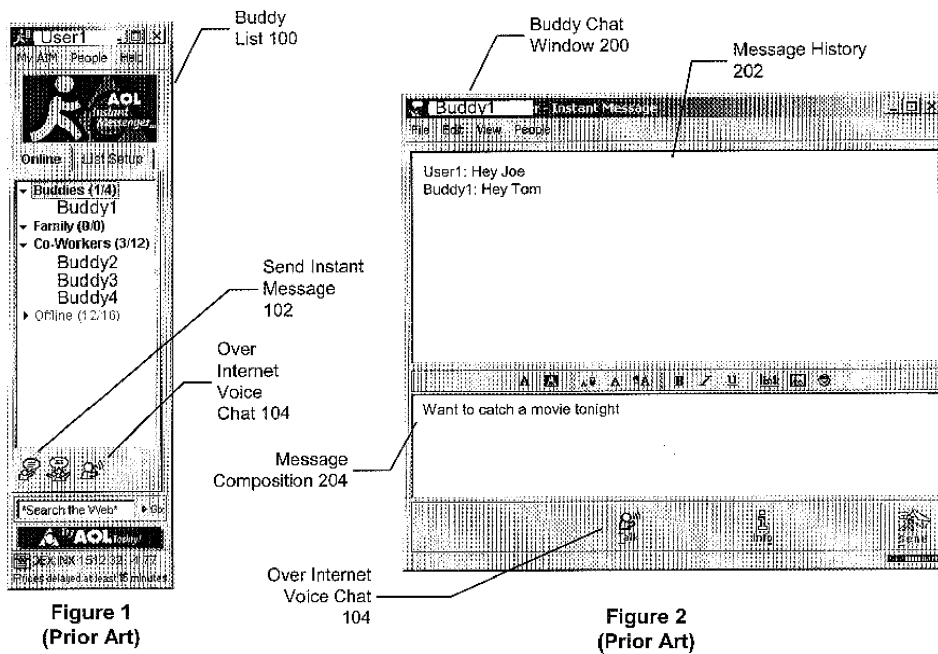
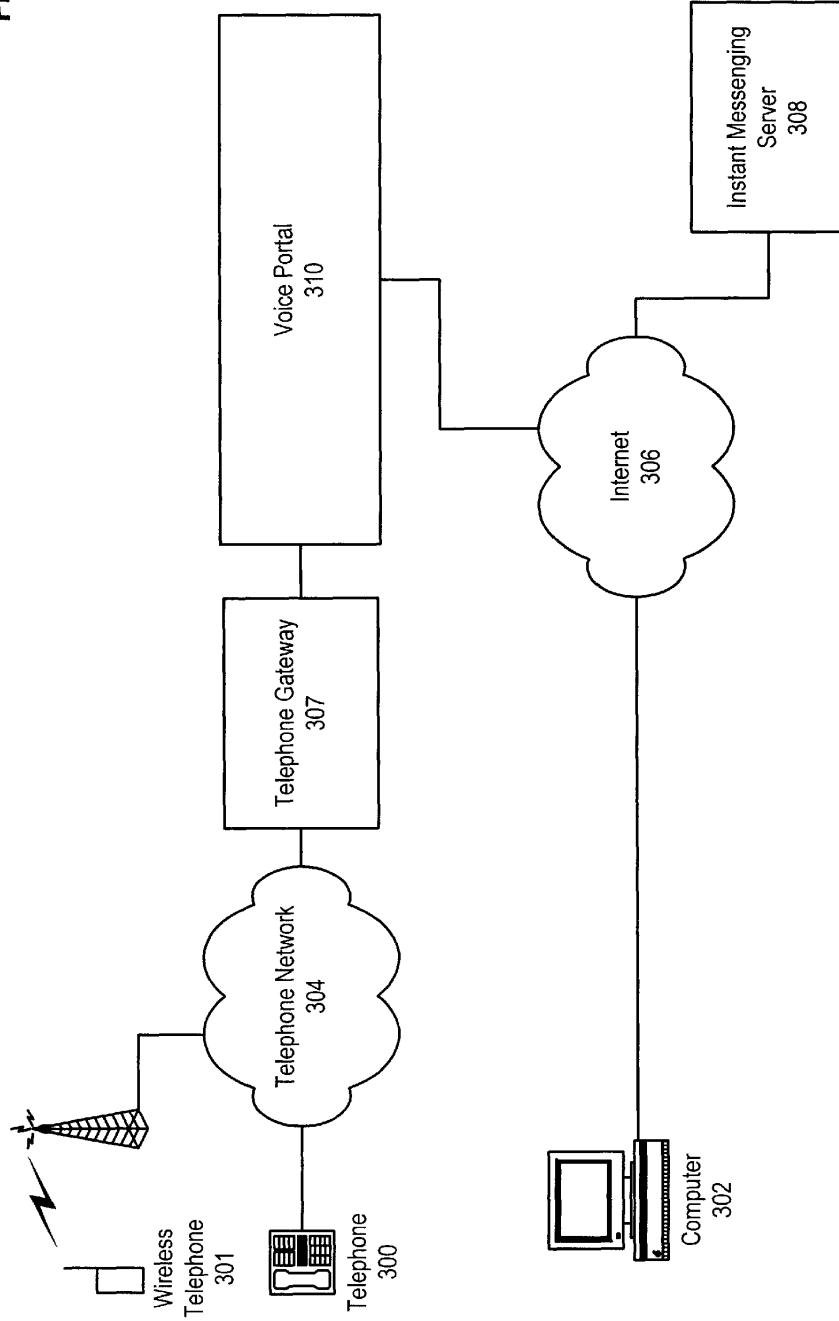


Figure 3



Initiate Messaging...

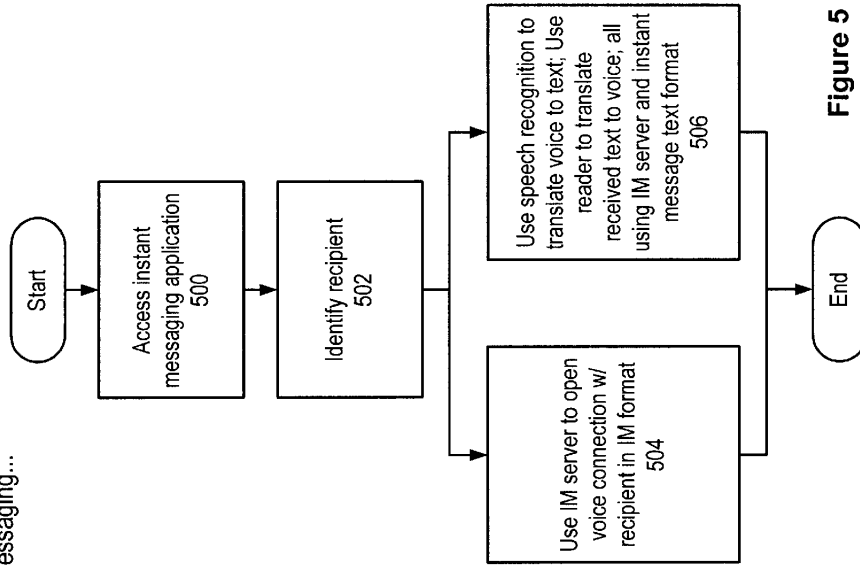


Figure 5

Is a user online?

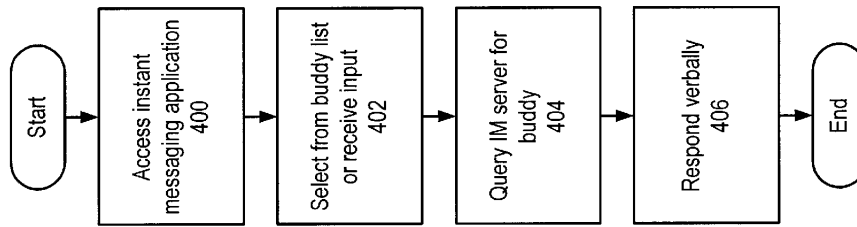


Figure 4

Retrieving Stored Messages...

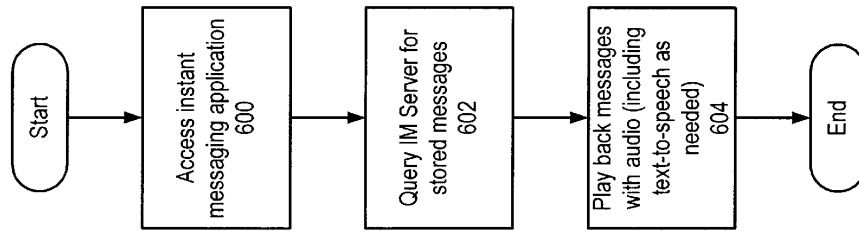


Figure 6

Query IM Server for Information, etc...

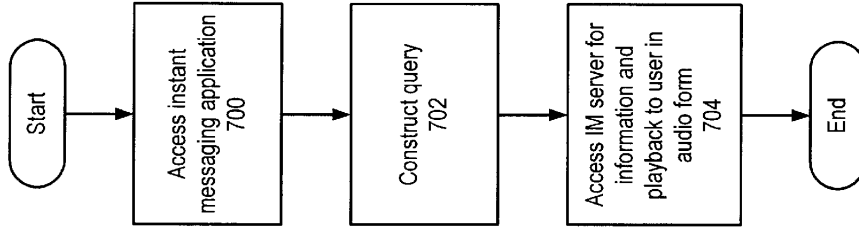


Figure 7

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