



[54] COMPUTER APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING A COMMON USER INTERFACE FOR SOFTWARE APPLICATIONS ACCESSED VIA THE WORLD-WIDE WEB

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[57] ABSTRACT

The present invention provides the capability to easily access many different application programs over the WWW via a common user interface. By providing standard procedures, routines, tools, and software "hooks" for accessing software applications over the WWW, software developers can concentrate on the functionality of the application program and easily use HTML to provide a GUI interface for the application program. HTML is a well-known language which can be used by almost any computer system on the market today. In addition, since HTML is a fairly well controlled and standardized language, new software application features can be added as they are developed and supported by HTML. In addition, since HTML is a widely adopted, non-proprietary technology, the present invention can provide open access to a large market for even very small software developers. Further, the present invention also allows software developers to adopt a standard access protocol, which allows them to provide support for any computer system which is capable of utilizing a HTML cognizant browser. Finally, by providing easy-to-implement, standardized solutions to the issues of user interface, authentication/security, and web transaction support, the common user interface of the present invention overcomes the limitations existing in previous solutions.

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[22] Filed: Dec. 23, 1996

[51] Int. Cl. 6 ..... G06F 17/00; H04L 9/00

[52] U.S. Cl. .... 395/187.01; 395/186; 395/200.32; 395/200.59

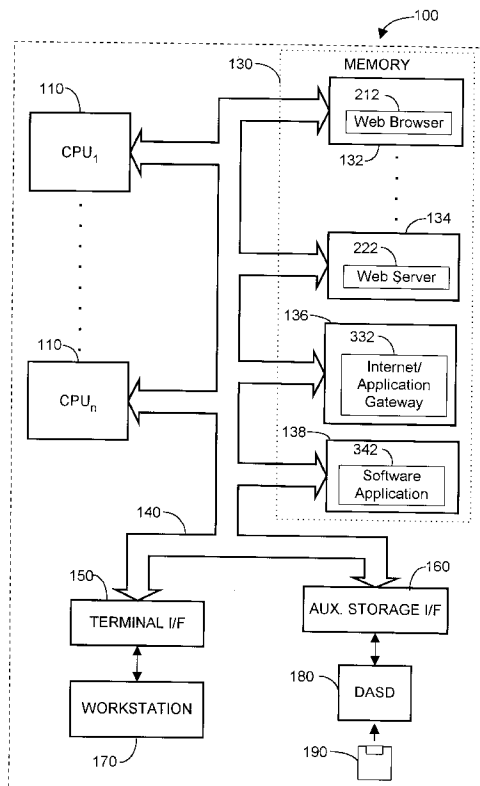
[58] Field of Search ..... 395/186, 187.01, 395/200.32, 200.59

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32 Claims, 22 Drawing Sheets



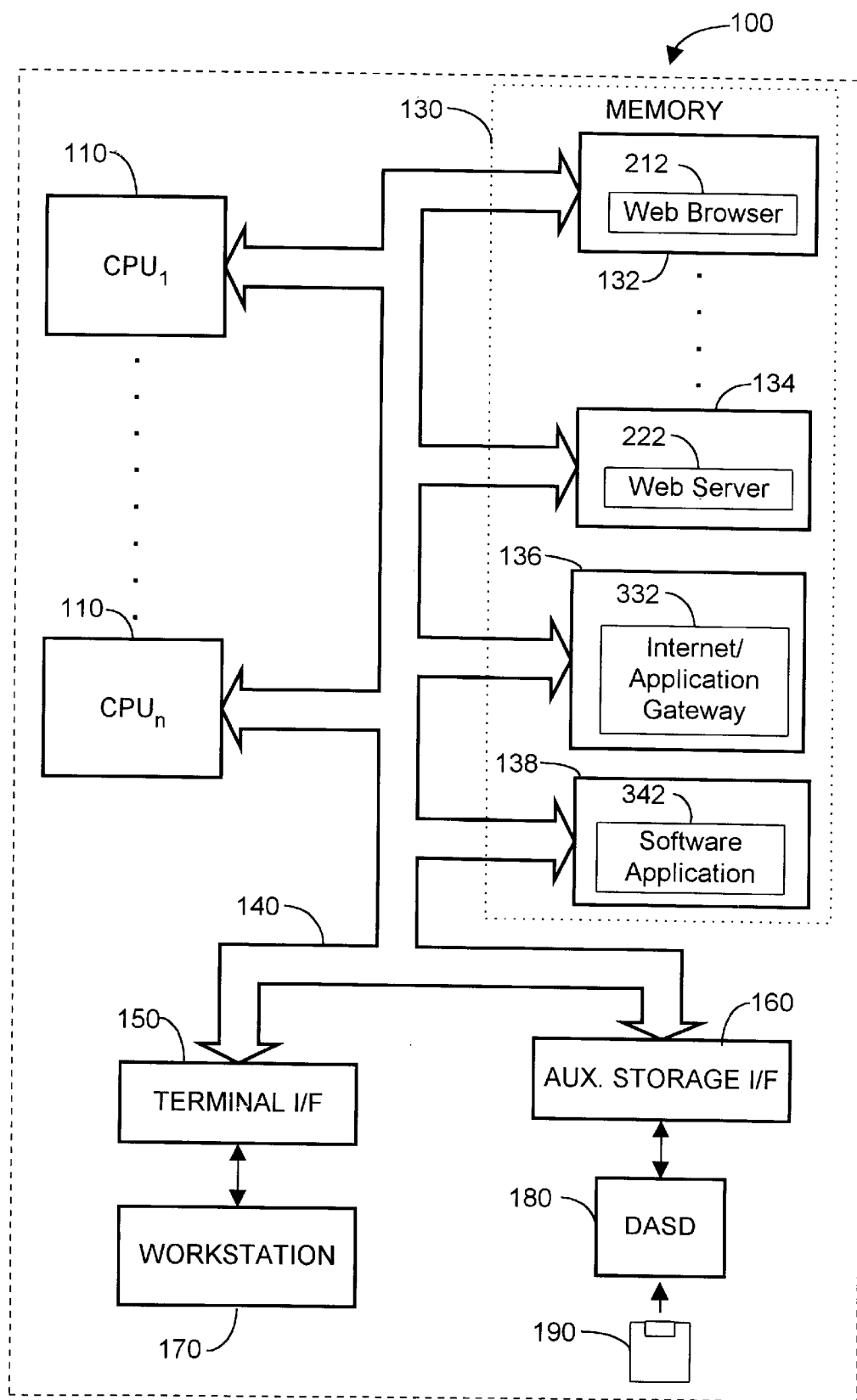


FIG. 1

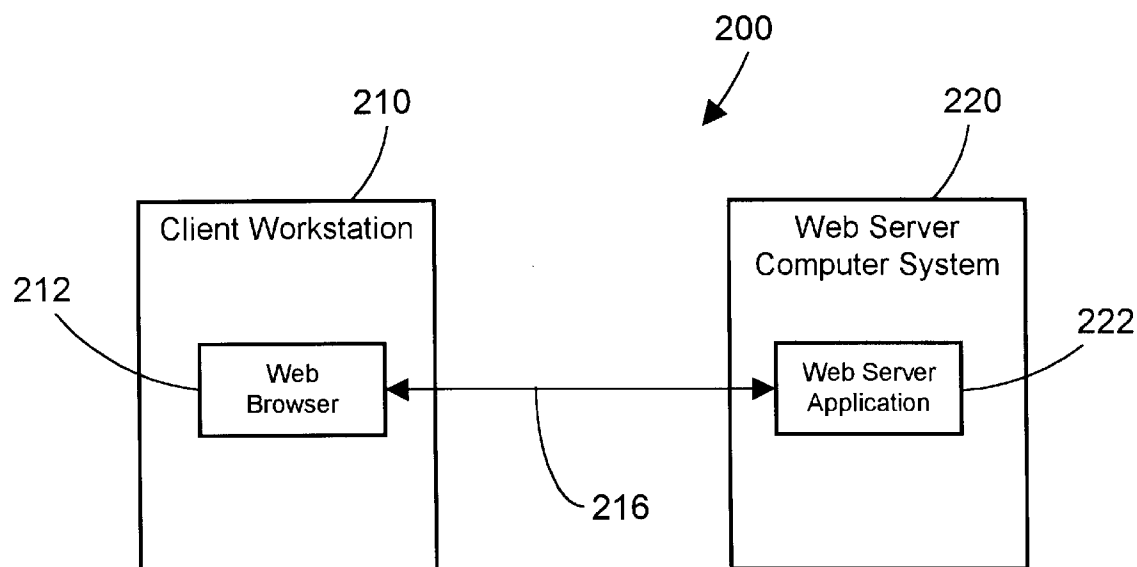


FIG. 2

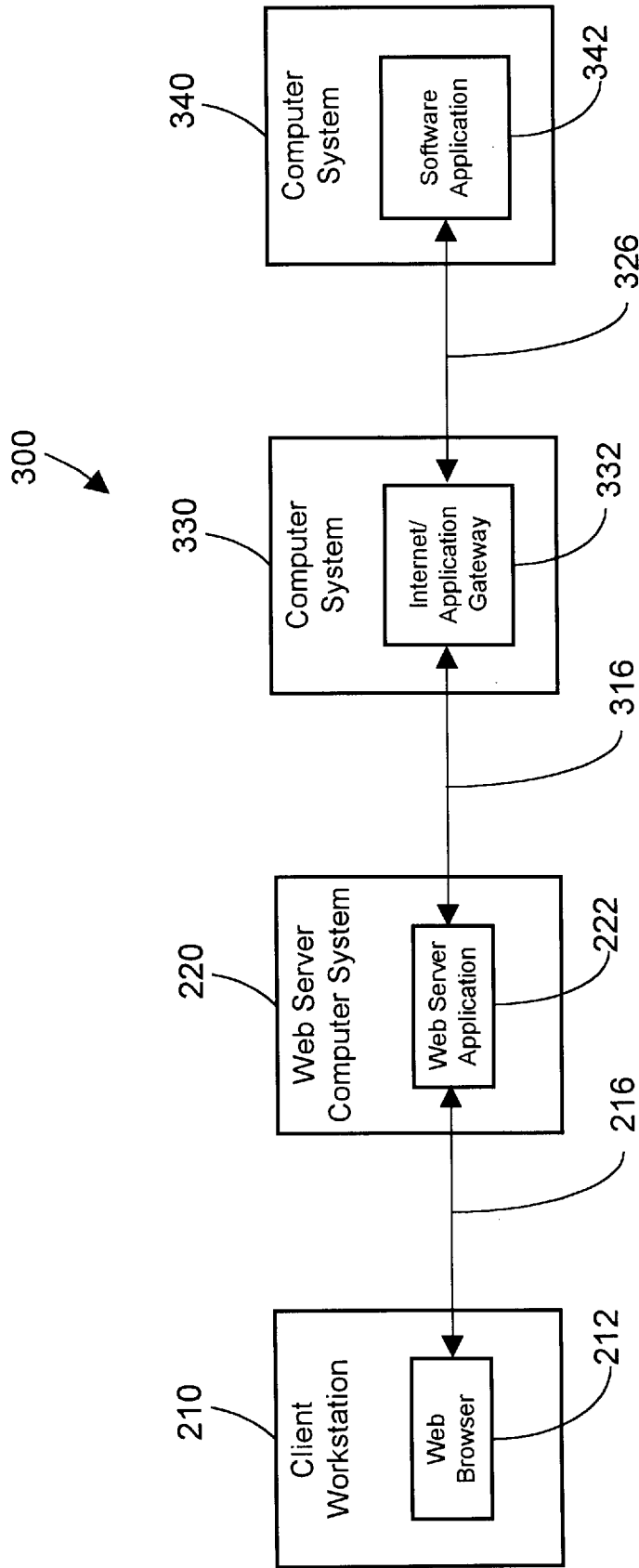


FIG. 3

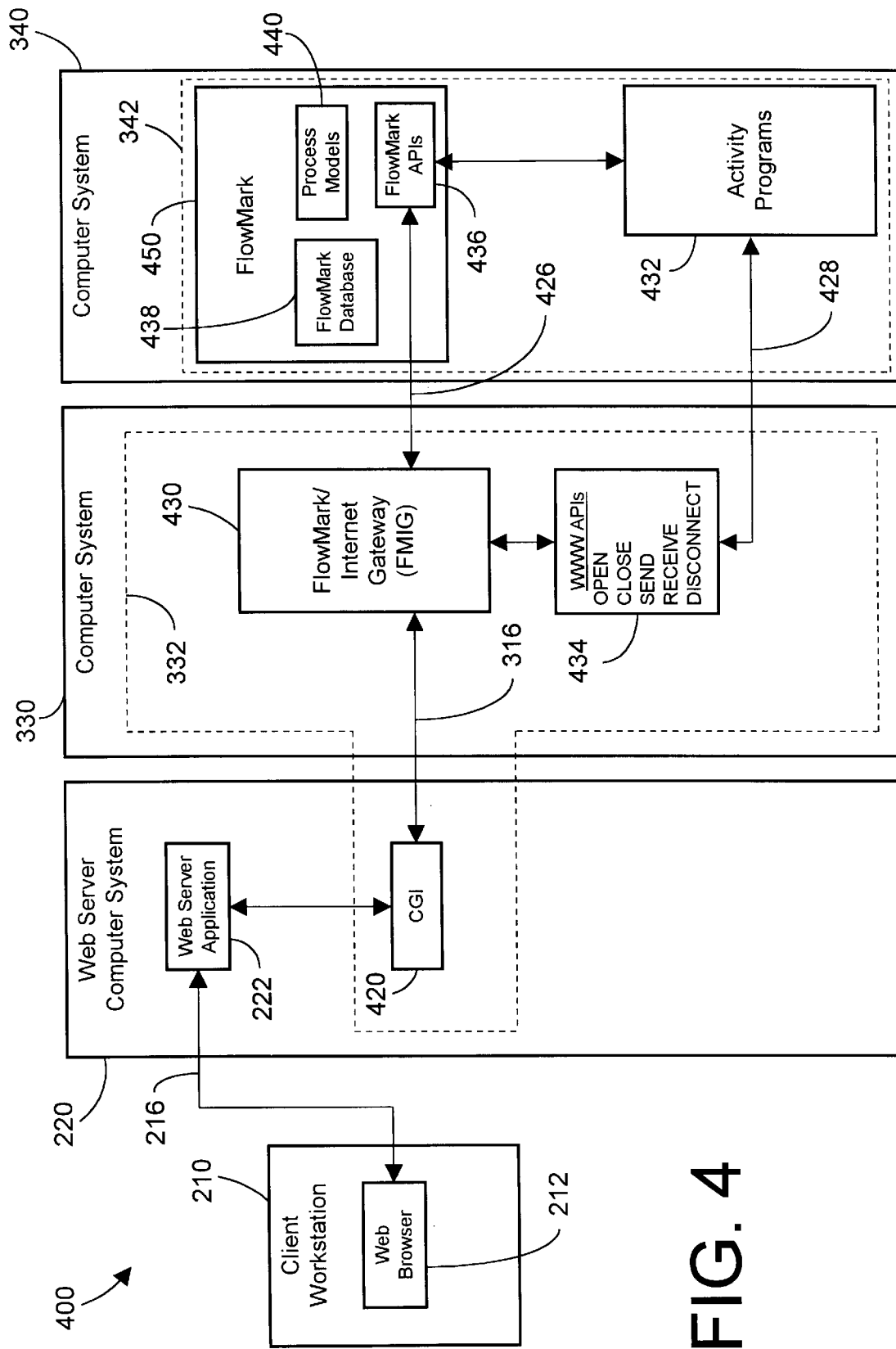


FIG. 4

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