

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

BEFORE THE PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD

SLACK TECHNOLOGIES, LLC. and SALESFORCE, INC.,
Petitioner,

v.

WRINKL, INC.,
Patent Owner.

IPR2024-01489
Patent 11,973,731 B2

Before NEIL T. POWELL, BARBARA A. PARVIS, and
NABEEL U. KHAN, *Administrative Patent Judges*.

PARVIS, *Administrative Patent Judge*.

DECISION
Granting Institution of *Inter Partes* Review
35 U.S.C. § 314

Slack Technologies, LLC and Salesforce, Inc. (“Petitioner”) filed a Petition (Paper 1, “Pet.”) requesting an *inter partes* review of claims 1–30 of U.S. Patent No. 11,973,731 B2 (Ex. 1001, “the ’731 patent”). Wrinkl, Inc. (“Patent Owner”) did not file a Preliminary Response.

We have authority to determine whether to institute an *inter partes* review. *See* 35 U.S.C. § 314 (2018); 37 C.F.R. § 42.4(a) (2023). We may not authorize an *inter partes* review unless the information presented in the petition and any preliminary response “shows that there is a reasonable likelihood that the petitioner would prevail with respect to at least 1 of the claims challenged in the petition.” 35 U.S.C. § 314(a). For the reasons that follow, we institute an *inter partes* review as to claims 1–30 of the ’731 patent on all grounds of unpatentability presented.

I. BACKGROUND

A. Real Parties in Interest

Petitioner identifies Slack Technologies, LLC and Salesforce, Inc. as the real parties in interest. Pet. 1. Patent Owner identifies Wrinkl, Inc. as the real party in interest. Paper 4, 1.

B. Related Matters

Both parties identify, as a matter currently involving the ’731 patent, *Wrinkl, Inc. v. Slack Technologies, LLC*, No. 1:24-cv-00620 (D. Del. May 23, 2024). Pet. 1; Paper 4, 1. Patent Owner also states that a “second IPR was filed against the same patent in proceeding IPR2024-01490.” Paper 4, 1. Patent Owner does not argue that we should exercise discretion under 35 U.S.C. § 314(a) because Petitioner uses more than one petition to challenge the ’731 patent.

Petitioner ranks the instant petition first and argues “[t]he first petition challenges the alleged priority date of the ’731 patent (IPR2024-01489) (‘First Petition’) and the second petition assumes that the Patent Owner’s claimed priority date is valid, and addresses prior art references predating that priority date (IPR2024-01490) (‘Second Petition’).” Ex. 1019, 1. In accordance with the Consolidated Trial Practice Guide¹ (“CTPG”), issued in November 2019, “there may be circumstances in which more than one petition may be necessary” including “when there is a dispute about priority date requiring arguments under multiple prior art references.” CTPG 59. Such is the case here. Patent Owner does not file any Preliminary Response or other paper disputing Petitioner’s use of two petitions to challenge the claims of the ’731 patent. Based on the record before us, we consider the merits of both petitions because Petitioner’s stated reasons for filing two petitions are consistent with the CTPG. *See generally* Ex. 1019 (citing CTPG, 59 (“the Board recognizes that there may be circumstances in which more than one petition may be necessary, including, for example, . . . when there is a dispute about priority date requiring arguments under multiple prior art references))).

C. The ’731 Patent

The ’731 patent is titled “System and Methods for Subsidiary Channel-Based Thread Communications.” Ex. 1001, code (54). The ’731 patent relates to “real-time electronic communications, and more specifically, to creating and displaying subsidiary channel-based thread communications in a group-based messaging system.” *Id.* at 2:40–43.

¹ Available at <https://www.uspto.gov/TrialPracticeGuideConsolidated>.

Operation of the channel-based thread communications is described with respect to system 100 shown in Figure 1 below. *Id.* at 5:13–14.

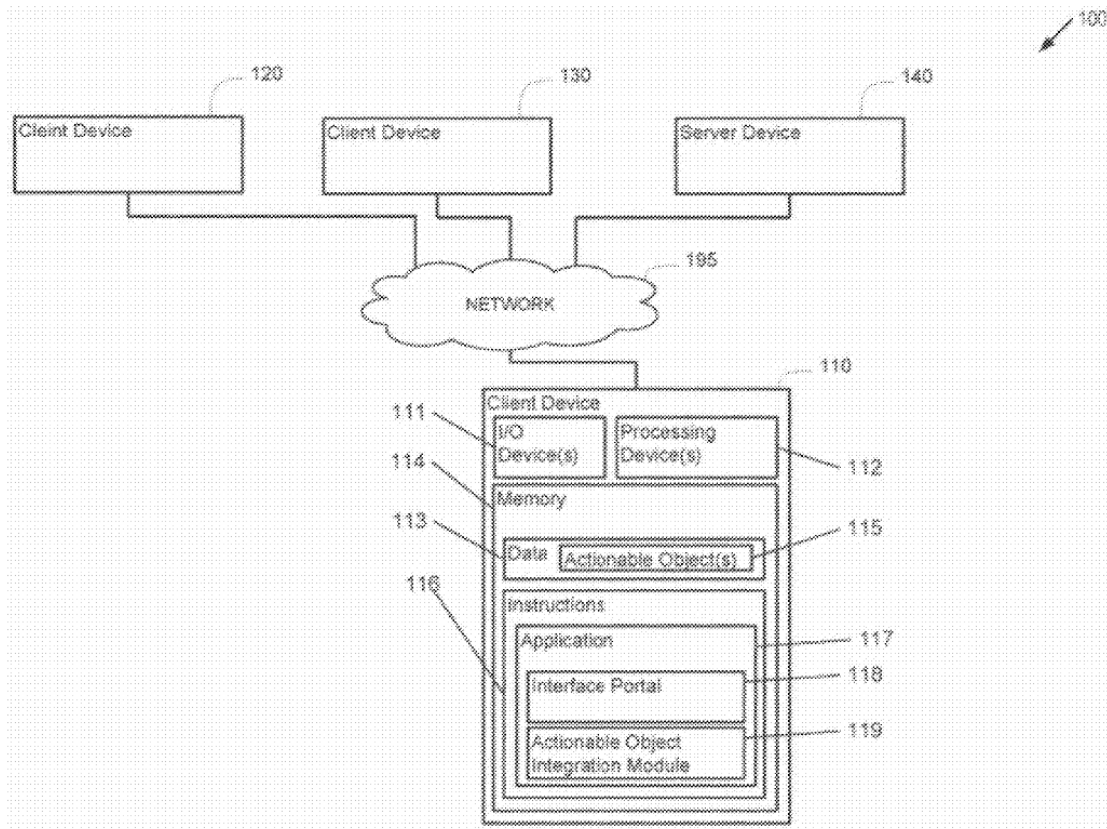


FIG. 1

Figure 1 illustrates a block diagram of system 100 having server device 140 that is coupled to client devices 110, 120, and 130 via network 195. *Id.* at 3:5–6, 5:19–29. Server device 140 communicates with client computing devices 110, 120, and 130 to facilitate communications between two or more client devices. *Id.* at 5:19–23.

As shown in Figure 1, each computing device, such as client device 110, includes one or more input/output (I/O) devices 111, processors 112, memory 114, and other components typically present in a general-purpose computer. *Id.* at 5:46–50. Instructions 116 of client device 110 are executed by processor 112. *Id.* at 6:9–11. Instructions 116 include application 117 that

provides interactive interface portal 118 for facilitating channel-based thread communications. *Id.* at 6:46–51, Fig. 1. Interface portal 118 displays network content, such as chat messages of a chat session, and allows a participant to interactively navigate over the display of data. *Id.* at 7:5–11. Data 118 is retrieved, stored, and modified by processor 112 in accordance with instructions 116. *Id.* at 6:18–19. Data 118 includes actionable objects 115 that identify user perceivable action that is included in a chat session. *Id.* at 6:31–33.

Operation of the channel-based thread communications is shown in a screenshot, reproduced below, in Figure 10F. *Id.* at 24:16–18.

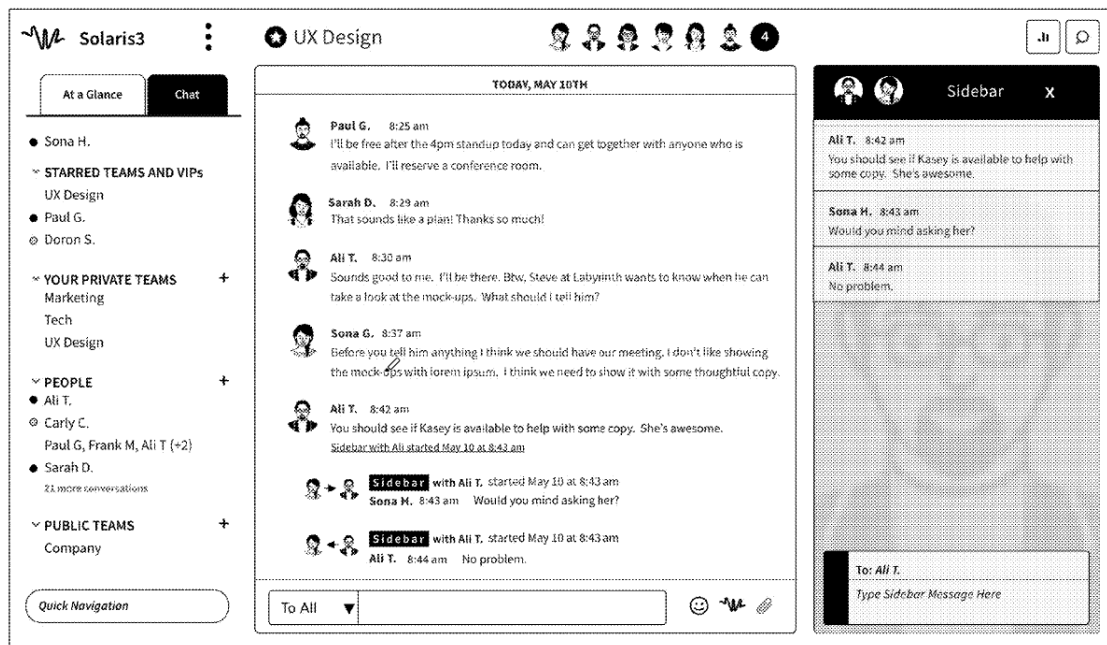


FIG. 10F

Figure 10F illustrates a screenshot showing a plurality of messages exchanged between participants. *Id.* at 24:19–20.

As shown in Figure 10F, the messages exchanged between participants are displayed in a portion of the screen that is referred to as “the

main conversation pane.” *Id.* at 24:19–22. Figure 10F also illustrates an exemplary “private 1:1 conversation” between two participants “Sona and Ali” that excludes at least one person who is participating in the messaging that is displayed on the main conversation pane. *Id.* at 24:29–34. Ali’s message is designated as an “anchor message” and is displayed in a separate pane referred to as a “sidebar.” *Id.* at 24:35–42. As shown in Figure 10F, a responsive message sent by Sona and a response to that message sent by Ali appear in the sidebar. *Id.* at 24:42–52, Fig. 10F.

D. Illustrative Claim

Petitioner challenges claims 1–30 of the ’731 patent. Pet. 1. Of the challenged claims, claims 1, 15, 25, and 30 are independent. Claims 2–14 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1; claims 16–24 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 15; and claims 26–29 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 25. Claim 1 is illustrative of the challenged claims and recites:

1. [1[pre]] An apparatus for use with a group-based communication system to facilitate messaging communication over a network between users of said system, comprising:

[1[a]] a processor, and a memory associated with said processor having computer coded instructions therein, with said computer coded instructions configured to, when executed by said processor, cause the apparatus to:

[1[b]] generate a group-based communication interface on a display screen of a user client device, the group-based communication interface defining:

[1[c]] a first pane configured to display a plurality of channel identifiers, each of said plurality of channel identifiers corresponding to a respective one of a plurality of group-based communication channels, each of such channels having an associated group of members who are users of said system, and

[1[d]] a second pane configured to display messaging communications associated with a selected one of said

plurality of group-based communication channels corresponding to one of said plurality of channel identifiers,

[1[e]] wherein, associated with said second pane, is a channel text entry field that is user operable to generate communication in said selected one of said plurality of group-based communication channels, and a title field displaying information identifying said selected one of said plurality of group-based communication channels,

[1[f]] receive a first messaging communication associated with the selected one of the plurality of group-based communication channels, the selected one of the plurality of group-based communication channels comprising messaging communications, including said first messaging communication, between members of the group associated with said selected one of the plurality of group-based communication channels;

[1[g]] display said first messaging communication with said second pane;

[1[h]] display a first user-selectable control associated with said first messaging communication;

[1[i]] in response to a user selection of said first user-selectable control, display a third pane, said third pane displaying said first messaging communication and having an associated sidebar text-entry field that is different from said channel text-entry field and operable to receive user input of an additional messaging communication;

[1[j]] wherein said third pane and said sidebar text-entry field are displayed simultaneously with said first pane, said second pane and said channel text-entry field;

and [1[k]] wherein said first messaging communication is displayed within said third pane and said second pane simultaneously;

[1[l]] receive user input of an additional messaging communication in said sidebar text-entry field;

[1[m]] after receipt of said user input:

transmit said additional messaging communication, via a network, to at least one member of the group associated with said selected group-based communication channel and

- [1[n]] display, in said third pane, a first subsidiary communication thread having an anchor message, said thread comprising said first messaging communication together with said additional messaging communication, wherein said first messaging communication is the anchor message of said first subsidiary communication thread;
- [1[o]] display a second user-selectable control associated with said first messaging communication in said second pane, said second user-selectable control being associated with an indication that said first messaging communication is an anchor message of a subsidiary communication thread, and being configured to:
- [1[p]] in response to a user selection of said second user-selectable control, cause at least a portion of said first subsidiary communication thread containing said first messaging communication to be displayed in said third pane.

Ex. 1001, 27:24–28:32.²

E. Priority Date of the Challenged Claims

A claim in a patent application is entitled to the benefit of the filing date of an earlier filed, related application if it meets the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 120; *Hollmer v. Harari*, 681 F.3d 1351, 1355 (Fed. Cir. 2012); 35 U.S.C. § 120. Such requirements include, *inter alia*, that: (1) the written description of the earlier filed application provides support for the claim as of its earlier filing date, as required under 35 U.S.C. § 112; and (2) the later application “contains or is amended to contain a specific reference to the earlier filed application.” 35 U.S.C. § 120; *In re NTP, Inc.*, 654 F.3d 1268, 1277 (Fed. Cir. 2011); *PowerOasis, Inc. v. T-Mobile USA, Inc.*, 522 F.3d 1299, 1306 (Fed. Cir. 2008). “[I]f any application in the priority chain fails to make the requisite disclosure of subject matter [under § 112], the

² Throughout our Decision we use Petitioner’s designations for the elements of the challenged claims. *See, e.g.*, Pet. 20–50 (designations for claim 1).

later-filed application is not entitled to the benefit of the filing date of applications preceding the break in the priority chain.” *Hollmer*, 681 F.3d at 1355.

According to Petitioner, the priority date of the challenged claims is no earlier than June 21, 2018. Pet. 5–6. Petitioner, more specifically, argues that applications in the priority chain do not disclose “a third pane with a sidebar text entry field and a subsidiary communication thread, nor do they disclose a third pane that is simultaneously displayed/viewable with the first and second pane, as required in independent Claims 1, 15, 25, or 30.” *Id.* at 10 (citing Ex. 1003 ¶¶ 45–47).

As background, the application that led to the ’731 patent was filed on December 11, 2023, and claims priority via a series of continuation and continuation-in-part applications to an application filed October 14, 2016. *Id.* at code (63); *see also* Pet. 5–7 (including a priority chain timeline showing a priority claim to U.S. Application No. 15/293,620 filed October 14, 2016 (“the ’620 Application,” which was published as U.S. Publication No. 2017/0134316 A1 and is the asserted prior art in this proceeding (also referred to herein as “Cohen”)). The ’731 patent also claims priority to seven provisional applications, the earliest of which was filed on November 10, 2015. Ex. 1001, code (60); *see also* Pet. 5–7 (including seven provisional applications in the priority chain timeline). The priority chain of the series of applications leading to the ’731 patent includes U.S. Application No. 16/014,578 (“the ’578 Application”) filed on June 21, 2018, as a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application No. 15/858,696 (“the ’696 Application”) that was filed December 29, 2017. Ex. 1001, code (63); *see also* Pet. 5–7. The priority chain also includes Provisional Application

No. 62,666,137 (“the ’137 Provisional”) that was filed May 3, 2018.
Ex. 1001, code (60); Pet. 5–7.

Relying on the testimony of Dr. Cockburn, Petitioner argues that the ’696 Application and the ’137 Provisional lack disclosure of simultaneous displaying of three panes, with the third pane being a subsidiary communication thread and, therefore, the ’696 Application and the ’137 Provisional lack written description support for all independent claims of the ’731 patent. *Id.* at 9–10 (citing Ex. 1003 ¶¶ 45–47). Petitioner argues that, as a result, “none of the claims of the ’731 patent [is] entitled to claim priority to the filing dates of any applications prior to” the filing date of the ’578 Application, which is June 21, 2018. *Id.* at 5–6.

Dr. Cockburn testifies that “[t]he ’696 Application and ’137 Provisional do not disclose a third pane with a sidebar text entry field and a subsidiary communication thread, nor does it disclose a third pane that is simultaneously displayed/viewable with the first and second pane.” Ex. 1003 ¶ 47. Dr. Cockburn testifies that the ’696 Application “teaches referencing objects and drafting direct replies to specific messages, all within a single message stream” and the ’137 Provisional teaches “cross-channel communication bundling, and tag functionality,” but neither “teaches a third pane viewed simultaneously, including both a sidebar text-entry field and a subsidiary communication thread.” *Id.* (citing Exs. 1013; 1015). Dr. Cockburn testifies that the ’731 patent “details a process” in which “a subsidiary thread communication is displayed in a separate pane, allowing the list pane, messaging pane, and thread communication pane to be simultaneously visible within a defined display window.” *Id.* ¶ 33 (citing Ex. 1001, code (57), 2:37–62, Fig. 10F.); *see also* Pet. 3 (arguing that “[t]he ’731 Patent recites a system that allows for the creation and display of a

subsidiary thread of communications in a separate pane, allowing a list pane, messaging pane, and thread communication pane to be simultaneously visible within a defined display window” and reproducing Figure 10F of the ’731 patent).

In this *inter partes* review, the burden is on Petitioner to show a reasonable likelihood that it would prevail on a ground of unpatentability. 35 U.S.C. § 314(a); *Harmonic Inc. v. Avid Tech., Inc.*, 815 F.3d 1356, 1363 (Fed. Cir. 2016) (citing 35 U.S.C. § 312(a)(3)) (“In an [*inter partes* review], the petitioner has the burden from the onset to show with particularity why the patent it challenges is unpatentable.”). Petitioner first must raise the issue of entitlement to a claimed priority date by “identifying, specifically, the features, claims, and ancestral application or applications allegedly lacking § 112 support for the claims based on the identified features.” *Focal Therapeutics, Inc. v. Senorx, Inc.*, IPR2014-00116, Paper 8 at 9–10 (PTAB Apr. 22, 2014); *Mission Integrated Techs., LLC v. Joshua Clemente*, IPR2023-01285, Paper 16 at 18 (PTAB Feb. 23, 2024). Then, Patent Owner must make a sufficient showing of entitlement to earlier filing date(s), in a manner that is commensurate in scope with the specific points and contentions raised by the petitioner. *See id.*

The challenged patent in this proceeding claims priority to the ’620 Application, which was published as Cohen, which is the asserted prior art in this proceeding. Ex. 1001, code (63); Ex. 1005, code (21). The ’696 Application is in the priority chain and is a continuation-in-part of U.S. Application No. 15,609,663, which is a continuation of the ’620 Application. Ex. 1001, code (63). Petitioner argues the ’731 patent is not entitled to priority to the ’620 Application because of a break in the priority chain because the ’696 Application and the ’137 Provisional lack written

description support. Pet. 4–7 (illustrating a graphic showing that the ’620 Application was filed before the ’696 Application and the ’137 Provisional).

“[I]f any application in the priority chain fails to make the requisite disclosure of subject matter [under § 112], the later-filed application is not entitled to the benefit of the filing date of applications preceding the break in the priority chain.” *Hollmer*, 681 F.3d at 1355. We find that Petitioner has raised sufficiently the issue of whether Patent Owner is entitled to claim priority to the ’696 Application or ’137 Provisional by arguing that the feature of simultaneous displaying of three panes, with the third pane being a subsidiary communication thread recited in each of the independent claims, is not disclosed in the ’696 Application or the ’137 Provisional. At this early juncture in the proceeding, Patent Owner has not filed a Preliminary Response and has not argued the independent claims of the ’731 patent are entitled to a filing date before June 21, 2018.

For the reasons given, we find that the preliminary record before us at this early juncture supports sufficiently that we should apply the filing date of the ’578 Application, which is June 21, 2018 (“effective filing date”), for determining whether the asserted reference qualifies as prior art.

F. Evidence

Petitioner relies on the following patent evidence.

Name	Patent Document	Exhibit
Cohen	U.S. Published Application No. 2017/0134316	1005

Petitioner also relies on the testimony of Dr. Andrew Cockburn.
Ex. 1003.

G. Asserted Grounds

Petitioner asserts that the challenged claims would have been unpatentable on the following ground:

Claim(s) Challenged	35 U.S.C. § ³	Reference(s)/Basis
1–30	102	Cohen

II. ANALYSIS

A. Legal Standards

To show anticipation under 35 U.S.C. § 102, each and every claim element, arranged as in the claim, must be found in a single prior art reference. *Net MoneyIN, Inc. v. VeriSign, Inc.*, 545 F.3d 1359 (Fed. Cir. 2008); *Verdegaal Bros., Inc. v. Union Oil Co. of Cal.*, 814 F.2d 628, 631 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Identity of terminology is not required for a claim element to be met directly by the prior art. *In re Gleave*, 560 F.3d 1331, 1334 (Fed. Cir. 2009); *In re Bond*, 910 F.2d 831, 832 (Fed. Cir. 1990) (citations omitted) (“[T]his is not an ‘ipsissimis verbis’ test.”). For anticipation, we take into account not only the specific teachings of the reference, but also the inferences which one skilled in the art would reasonably be expected to draw therefrom. *In re Preda*, 401 F.2d 825, 826 (CCPA 1968).

B. Level of Ordinary Skill in the Art

Petitioner asserts that a person of ordinary skill in the art would have had “at least a bachelor’s degree in computer science or a related degree, and

³ The Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (“AIA”), Pub. L. No. 112-29, 125 Stat. 284 (2011), amended 35 U.S.C. § 102, effective March 16, 2013. Because the challenged claims of the ’731 patent have an apparent effective filing date after March 16, 2013, the AIA version of § 102 applies. Our determinations and findings herein would not change if the pre-AIA provisions applied.

at least four years of experience with graphical user interfaces, and at least two years of experience in the graphical user interface field” or, alternatively “a master’s degree in computer science (or similar discipline) and at least two years of similar experience.” Pet. 16 (citing Ex. 1003 ¶ 40). We find that “at least” in Petitioner’s formulation of the level of skill in the art is vague and open-ended. Otherwise, we preliminarily adopt Petitioner’s formulation of the level of skill in the art, which appears consistent with the specification and prior art presented.

C. Claim Construction

We interpret the challenged claims

using the same claim construction standard that would be used to construe the claim in a civil action under 35 U.S.C. 282(b), including construing the claim in accordance with the ordinary and customary meaning of such claim as understood by one of ordinary skill in the art and the prosecution history pertaining to the patent.

37 C.F.R. § 42.100(b). Under that standard, we generally give claim terms their ordinary and customary meaning, as would be understood by a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, in light of the language of the claims, the specification, and the prosecution history.

Phillips v. AWH Corp., 415 F.3d 1303, 1312–14 (Fed. Cir. 2005) (en banc).

Petitioner states that it gives the claim terms “their plain and ordinary meaning that they would have to a person having ordinary skill in the art [(‘PHOSITA’)].” Pet. 15. At this early stage, neither party provides an express construction for any claim term. “The Board is required to construe ‘only those terms . . . that are in controversy, and only to the extent necessary to resolve the controversy.’” *Realtime Data, LLC v. Iancu*, 912 F.3d 1368, 1375 (Fed. Cir. 2019) (quoting *Vivid Techs., Inc. v. Am. Sci. &*

Eng'g, Inc., 200 F.3d 795, 803 (Fed. Cir. 1999)). We, therefore, use the ordinary and customary meaning and do not provide an express construction for any term at this preliminary stage in the proceeding.

D. Anticipation of Claims 1–30 by Cohen

1. Overview of Cohen

Cohen is titled “Integrating Actionable Objects into an On-line Chat Communications Platform.” Ex. 1005, code (54). Cohen relates to “real-time electronic communications, and more specifically, for integrating actionable objects into an on-line chat communications platform.” *Id.* ¶ 2.

Electronic communications are transferred in system 100, shown in Figure 1 below. *Id.* ¶ 22.

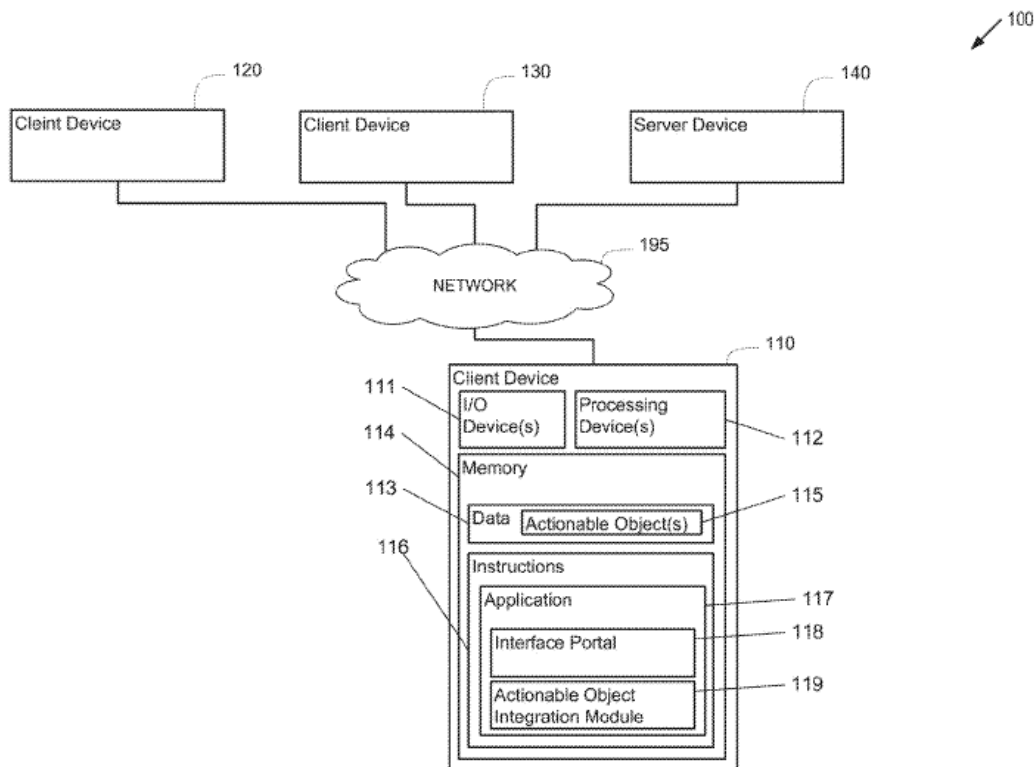


FIG. 1

Figure 1 illustrates a block diagram of system 100 having server device 140 that is coupled to client devices 110, 120, and 130 via network 195. *Id.* ¶¶ 5, 22.

As shown in Figure 1, each of computing devices, such as client device 110, includes one or more input/output (I/O) devices 111, processors 112, memory 114, and other components typically present in a general-purpose computer. *Id.* ¶ 25. Instructions 116 of client device 110 are executed by processor 112. *Id.* ¶ 26. Instructions 116 include application 117 that provides interactive interface portal 118 for facilitating electronic communications. *Id.* ¶ 29, Fig. 1. Interface portal 118 displays network content, such as chat messages of a chat session and allows a participant to interactively navigate over the display of data. *Id.* ¶ 31. Data 118 is retrieved, stored, and modified by processor 112 in accordance with instructions 116. *Id.* ¶ 27. Data 118 includes actionable objects 115 that identify user perceivable action that is included in a chat session. *Id.*

Landing interface portal 300 is illustrated in Figure 3, below. *Id.* ¶ 38.

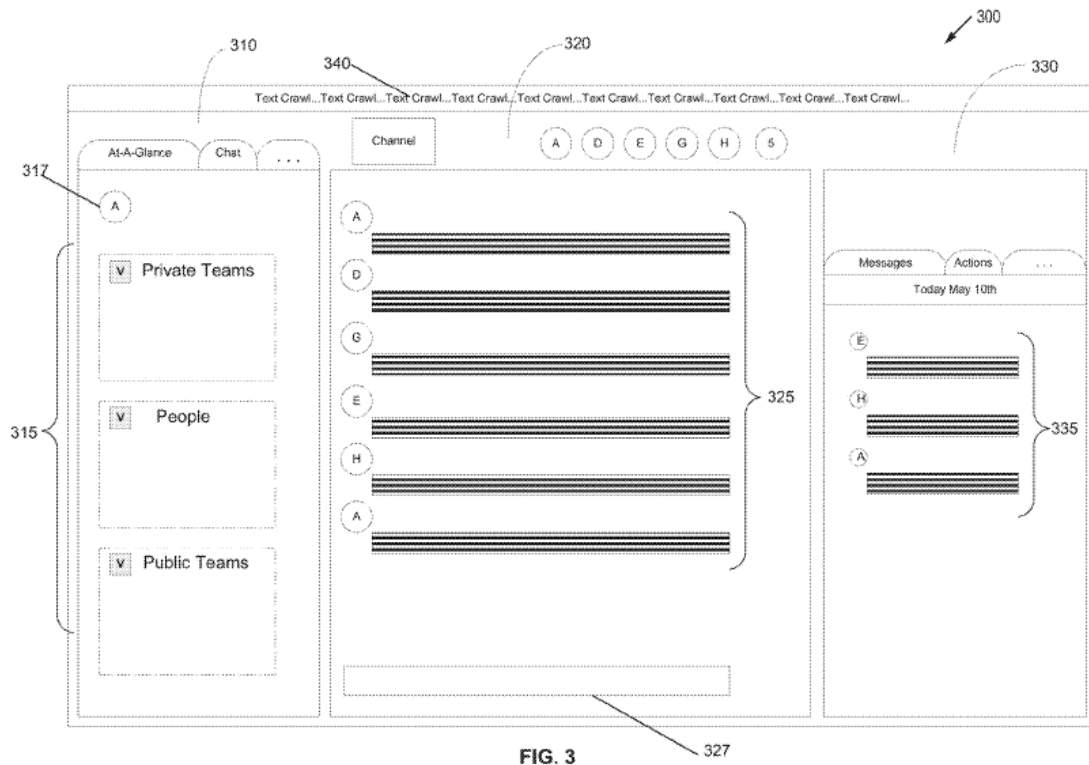


FIG. 3

Figure 3 illustrates landing interface portal 300 having channel/dialog panel 310, message window panel 320, and side panel 330. *Id.*

Channel/dialog panel 310 displays different chat session groups 315 that participant 317 has joined. *Id.* Message window panel 320 displays chat messages 325 exchanged by participants and includes text entry region 327 that allows participants to insert and reformat text. *Id.* Side panel 330 dynamically displays elements regarding messages or groups of messages 335. *Id.*

Interactive interface portal 500 is illustrated in Figure 5A, below.

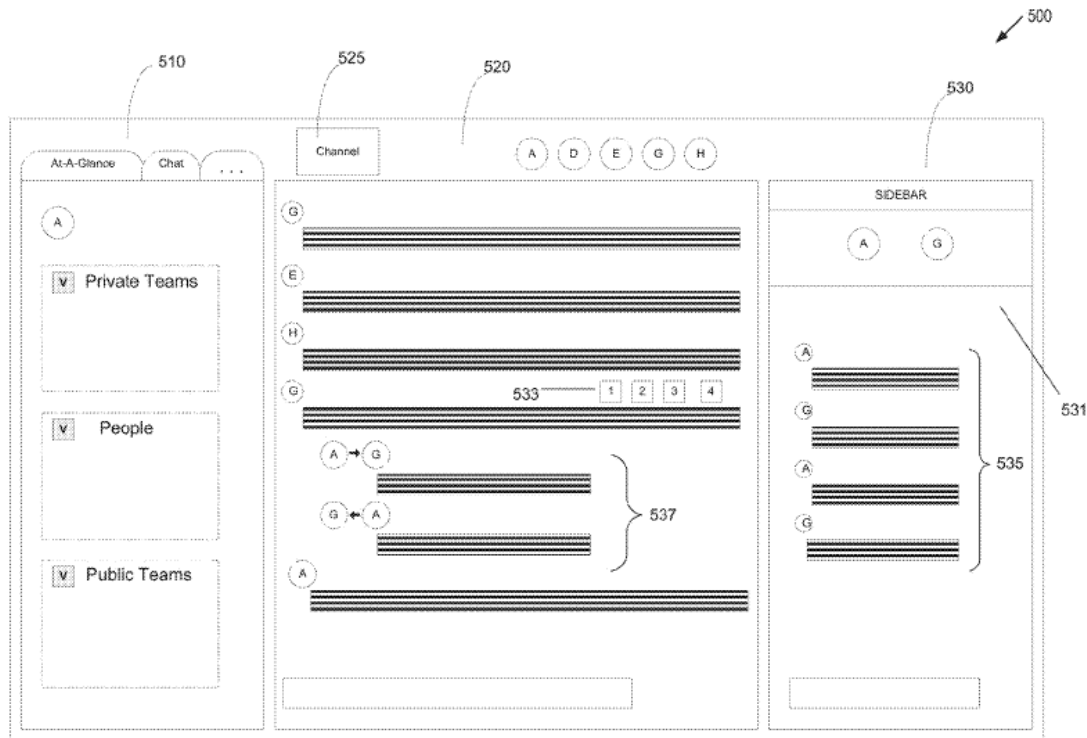


FIG. 5A

Figure 5A illustrates interactive interface portal 500 having channel/dialog panel 510, message window panel 520, side panel 530. *Id.* ¶ 71.

Chat messaging session is engaged by participants represented by participant icons A–H on interactive interface portal 500. *Id.* Interactive interface portal 500 allows participants to integrate user perceivable actionable objects in chat session channel 525. *Id.* Interactive interface portal 500 includes the capability to open sidebar selection 531, which allows two or more of members of larger group session channel 525 to communicate privately in private chat session 535. *Id.* ¶ 73.

2. Analysis of Claim 1

Petitioner argues that “Cohen has virtually the same disclosure as the ’731 Patent.” Pet. 18. Petitioner, more specifically, argues that system 100 illustrated in Figure 1, landing interface portal 300 illustrated in Figure 3, and interactive interface portal 500, illustrated in Figure 5A disclose the

elements recited in claim 1. Pet. 22–51 (citing, e.g., Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 14, 22, 27, 30, 37–40, 51, 71–75, Figs. 3, 5A, 5D; Ex. 1003 ¶¶ 51–86). Regarding Petitioner’s reliance on three different figures, Cohen describes that “landing interface portal 300 may correspond to the interface portal 118 in system 100 of FIG. 1.” Ex. 1005 ¶ 38. Cohen also describes that interactive interface portal 500 “may correspond to interface portal 118 in system 100 of FIG. 1” and “may be compared to interface portal 300 of FIG. 3.” *Id.* ¶ 71. We, therefore, find Petitioner’s reliance on three different figures for anticipation of claim 1 to be supported by Cohen’s disclosure.

At this preliminary stage, Patent Owner has not filed a Preliminary Response. Based on the preliminary record before us, we find that Petitioner’s element-by-element analysis for claim 1 is sufficient for purposes of institution. We summarize certain of Petitioner’s persuasive arguments and evidence below.

a. The Preamble and Element 1[a]

The preamble and element 1[a] are reproduced below.

[1[pre]] An apparatus for use with a group-based communication system to facilitate messaging communication over a network between users of said system, comprising:
[1[a]] a processor, and a memory associated with said processor having computer coded instructions therein, with said computer coded instructions configured to, when executed by said processor, cause the apparatus to.

Ex. 1001, 27:24–30.

Petitioner argues that system 100 illustrated in Figure 1 of Cohen discloses the preamble and element 1[a]. Pet. 20–21 (citing Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 25, 37, 106–107, Figs. 1, 9; Ex. 1003 ¶¶ 49–50). As shown in Figure 1 of Cohen, system 100 has server device 140 that is coupled to client devices 110, 120, and 130 via network 195. *Id.* ¶ 22. As further shown in Figure 1,

each of computing devices, such as client device 110, includes one or more input/output (I/O) devices 111, processors 112, memory 114, and other components typically present in a general-purpose computer. *Id.* ¶ 25.⁴

We find that Petitioner's arguments and evidence for the preamble and claim element 1[a] are sufficient for purposes of institution.

b. Elements 1[b]–1[d]

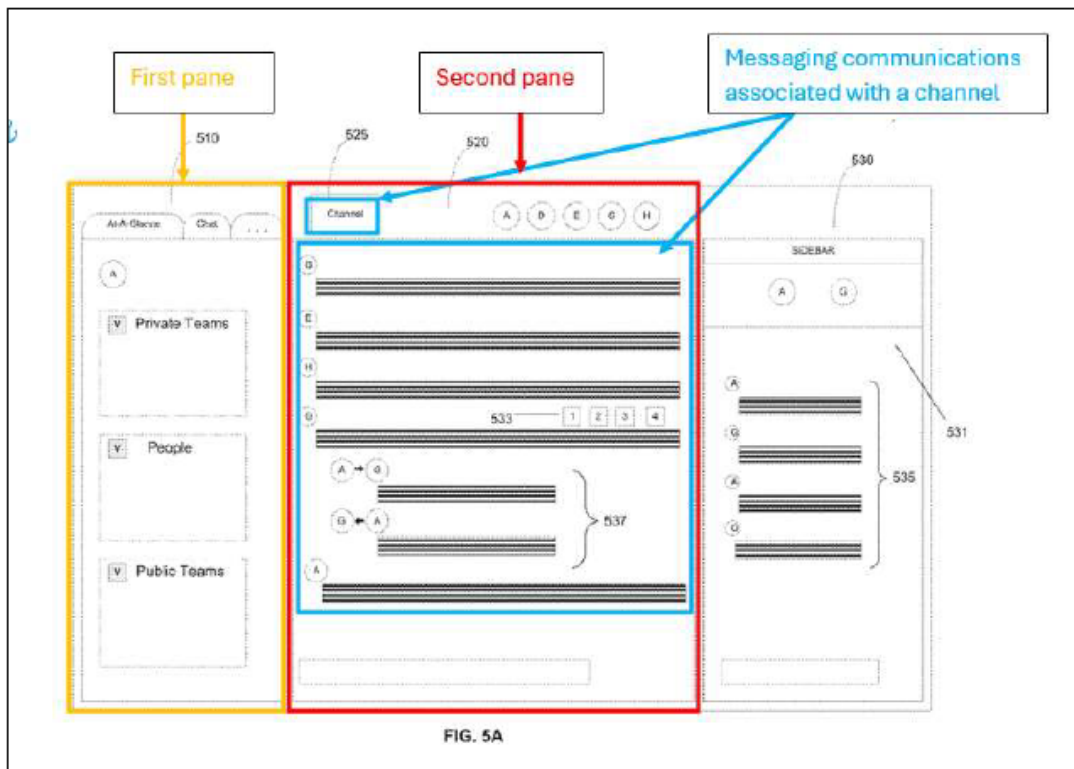
Elements 1[b]–1[d] are reproduced below.

- [1[b]] generate a group-based communication interface on a display screen of a user client device, the group-based communication interface defining:
- [1[c]] a first pane configured to display a plurality of channel identifiers, each of said plurality of channel identifiers corresponding to a respective one of a plurality of group-based communication channels, each of such channels having an associated group of members who are users of said system, and
- [1[d]] a second pane configured to display messaging communications associated with a selected one of said plurality of group-based communication channels corresponding to one of said plurality of channel identifiers.

Ex. 1001, 27:31–43.

Petitioner provides an annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen, showing Petitioner's mapping of elements 1[b]–1[d] to interactive interface portal 500. Pet. 26.

⁴ We need not resolve whether the preamble is limiting at this stage because Petitioner shows sufficiently for purposes of institution that the prior art satisfies the recitation in the preamble.



Petitioner's annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen, above, includes (1) Petitioner's yellow textual annotation of "First pane" and yellow outlining of a box depicting channel/dialog panel 510; (2) Petitioner's red textual annotation of "Second pane" and red outlining of a box depicting message window panel 520; and (3) Petitioner's blue textual annotation of "Messaging communications associated with a channel," blue outlining of box 525 with the label "Channel;" and blue drawing of a box around groups of serrated lines depicting chat messages exchanged by participants. *Id.*; Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 38, 71, Fig. 5A.

Petitioner argues that each of channel/dialog panels 310 and 510 disclose the "first pane" recited in element 1[c]. Pet. 23–24 (citing, e.g., Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 38, 71, Fig. 5A). Petitioner argues that each of message window panel 320 and 520 disclose the "second pane" recited in element 1[d]. Pet. 24–26 (citing, e.g., Ex. 1005, ¶¶ 38, 71, Figs 3, 5A). Petitioner argues

that chat messages exchanged by participants shown as groups of serrated lines within message window panel 320 and 520 discloses “messaging communications associated with a selected one of said plurality of group-based communication channels” recited in element 1[d]. *Id.*

We find that Petitioner’s arguments and evidence for elements 1[b]–1[d] are sufficient for purposes of institution.

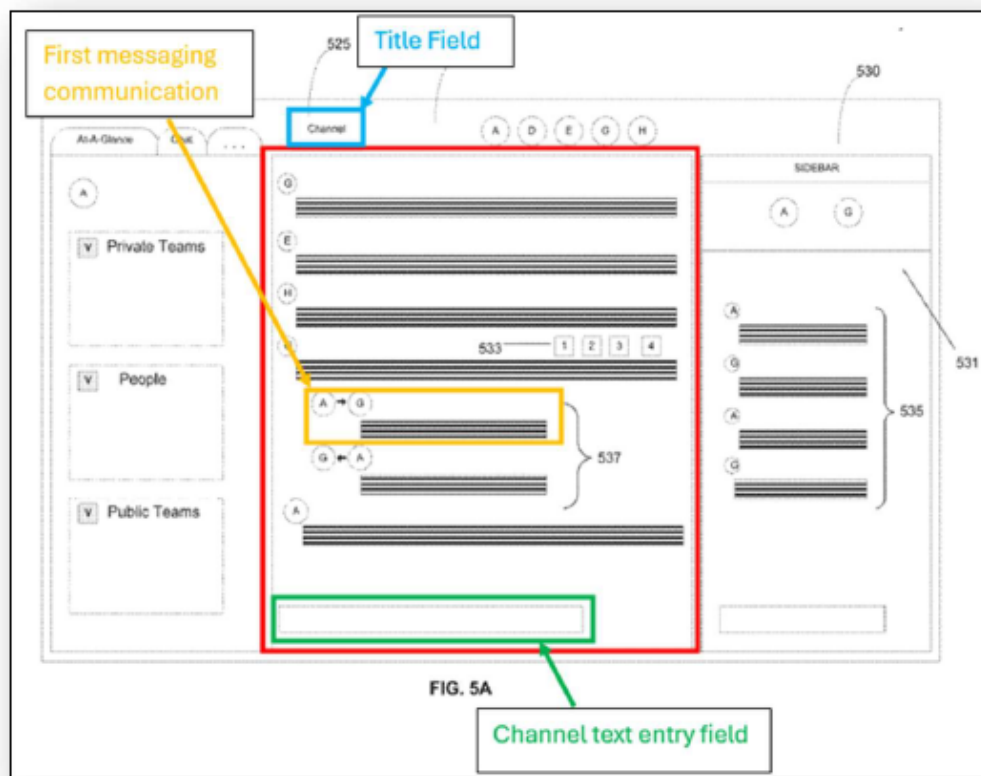
c. Elements 1[e]–1[g]

Elements 1[e]–1[g] are reproduced below.

[1[e]] wherein, associated with said second pane, is a channel text entry field that is user operable to generate communication in said selected one of said plurality of group-based communication channels, and a title field displaying information identifying said selected one of said plurality of group-based communication channels, [1[f]] receive a first messaging communication associated with the selected one of the plurality of group-based communication channels, the selected one of the plurality of group-based communication channels comprising messaging communications, including said first messaging communication, between members of the group associated with said selected one of the plurality of group-based communication channels; [1[g]] display said first messaging communication with said second pane.

Ex. 1001, 27:44–59.

Petitioner provides an annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen, showing Petitioner’s mapping of elements 1[e]–1[g] to interactive interface portal 500. Pet. 31.



Petitioner’s annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen, above, includes (1) Petitioner’s red outlining of a box depicting message window panel 520; (2) Petitioner’s blue textual annotation of “Title Field” and blue outlining of box 525 with the label “Channel;” (3) Petitioner’s yellow textual annotation of “First messaging communication” and yellow drawing of a box around the first group of serrated lines identified as private chat session 537; and (4) Petitioner’s green textual annotation “Channel text entry field” and green outlining of an empty box below the groups of serrated lines within message window panel 320 and 520. *Id.*; Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 38, 71, Fig. 5A.

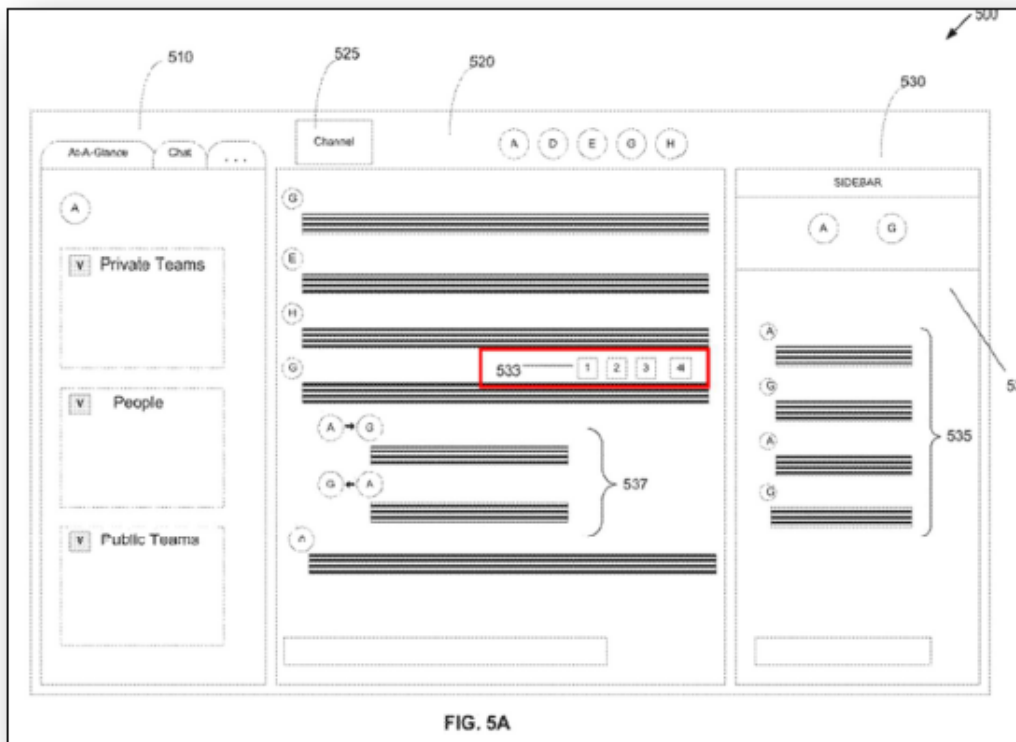
As set forth above, Petitioner again relies on each of message window panel 320 and 520 for disclosing the “second pane” recited in element 1[e], which derives antecedent basis from element 1[d]. Pet. 26–28 (citing, e.g., Ex. 1005, ¶¶ 38, 39, Fig 5A). Petitioner argues that each of a box

labeled 327 and referred to as “text entry region 327” and a corresponding unnumbered box shown in Figure 5A discloses “a channel text entry field that is user operable to generate communication in selected one of said group-based communication channels” recited in element 1[e]. *Id.* at 26–28 (citing, e.g., Ex. 1005, ¶¶ 38, 39, Fig 5A). Petitioner argues that each of box 525 with the label “Channel” and a similar unnumbered box with the same label in Figure 3 discloses “a title field” recited in element 1[e]. *Id.* at 27–28 (citing Ex. 1005, Fig. 5A). Petitioner argues each of the first group of serrated lines identified as private chat session 537 and the fourth in a group of serrated lines identified as chat messages 325 discloses “a first messaging communication associated with the selected one of the plurality of group-based communication channels” recited in elements 1[f] and 1[g]. *Id.* at 29–31 (citing Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 38, 51, 71, Figs. 3, 5A).

We find that Petitioner’s arguments and evidence for claim elements 1[e]–1[g] are sufficient for purposes of institution.

d. Element 1[h]

Element 1[h] recites “display a first user-selectable control associated with said first messaging communication.” Ex. 1001, 27:60–61. For “a first user-selectable control,” Petitioner identifies “a control” in message window 320 and controls 533 in interface 500 as shown in annotated Figure 5A reproduced below. Pet. 35 (citing, e.g., Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 14, 27, 30, 40, 75, Figs. 5A, 5D).



Petitioner's annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen includes Petitioner's red outlining annotation of a box depicting controls 533 in message window panel 520. *Id.*

We find that Petitioner's arguments and evidence for claim element 1[h] is sufficient for purposes of institution.

e. Elements 1[i] and 1[j]

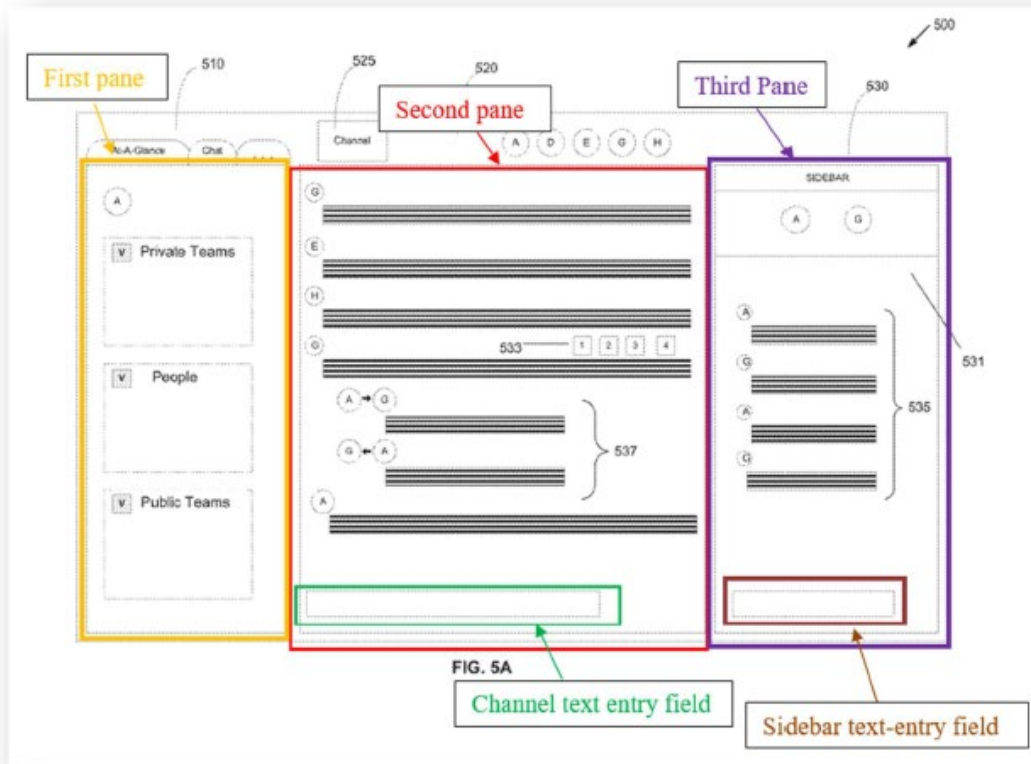
Elements 1[i] and 1[j] are reproduced below.

[1[i]] in response to a user selection of said first user-selectable control, display a third pane, said third pane displaying said first messaging communication and having an associated sidebar text-entry field that is different from said channel text-entry field and operable to receive user input of an additional messaging communication;

[1[j]] wherein said third pane and said sidebar text-entry field are displayed simultaneously with said first pane, said second pane and said channel text-entry field;

Ex. 1001, 27:62–28:3

Petitioner provides annotations to Figure 5A showing Petitioner’s mapping of elements 1[i] and 1[j] to interactive interface portal 500. Pet. 36–39 (citing, e.g., Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 38, 73–75, Figs. 3, 5A).



Petitioner’s annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen, above, includes (1) Petitioner’s yellow textual annotation of “First pane” and yellow outlining of channel/dialog panel 510; (2) Petitioner’s textual annotation of “Second pane” and red outlining of message window panel 520; (3) Petitioner’s purple textual annotation of “Third Pane” and purple outlining of side panel 530; (4) Petitioner’s green textual annotation “Channel text entry field” and green outlining of an empty box below the groups of serrated lines within message window panel 520; and

(5) Petitioner’s brown textual annotation of “Sidebar text-entry field” and brown outlining of a box at the bottom of side panel 530. *Id.* at 39.

Petitioner argues that a box at the bottom of side panel 530 displays “a distinct side-bar text entry field operable to receive user input of an additional messaging communication” recited in element 1[i]. Pet. 36–39 (citing, e.g., Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 38, 75, Figs. 3, 5A). Element 1[i] recites that this “sidebar text-entry field . . . is different from said channel text-entry field.” The recitation of “said channel text-entry field” derives antecedent basis from element 1[e]. Petitioner again relies on “text entry region 327” and a corresponding unnumbered box shown in Figure 5A for disclosing “said channel text-entry field” recited in elements 1[e] and 1[i]. *Id.* at 26–28, 36–38 (citing, e.g., Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 38, 39, 73, 75, Figs. 3, 5A). Thus, Petitioner relies on different text-entry fields for the “channel” and “side bar” text-entry fields. *See, e.g., id.* at 39.

Element 1[j] recites “wherein said third pane and said sidebar text-entry field are displayed simultaneously with said first pane, said second pane and said channel text-entry field.” For element 1[j], Petitioner relies on (1) the simultaneous display of channel/dialog panel 310, message window panel 320, and side panel 330 (shown in Figure 3 of Cohen); and alternatively, (2) the simultaneous display of channel/dialog panel 510, message window panel 520, and side panel 530 (shown in Figure 5A of Cohen). *Id.* at 23–39.

We find that Petitioner’s arguments and evidence for claim elements 1[i] and 1[j] are sufficient for purposes of institution.

f. Elements 1[k]–1[n]

Elements 1[k]–1[n] are reproduced below.

- [1[k]] wherein said first messaging communication is displayed within said third pane and said second pane simultaneously;
- [1[l]] receive user input of an additional messaging communication in said sidebar text-entry field;
- [1[m]] after receipt of said user input:
 - transmit said additional messaging communication, via a network, to at least one member of the group associated with said selected group-based communication channel and
- [1[n]] display, in said third pane, a first subsidiary communication thread having an anchor message, said thread comprising said first messaging communication together with said additional messaging communication, wherein said first messaging communication is the anchor message of said first subsidiary communication thread.

Ex. 1001, 28:4–28:21.

Petitioner provides an annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen, showing Petitioner's mapping of elements 1[k] and 1[n] to interactive interface portal 500. Pet. 47.



Petitioner's annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen, above, includes (1) Petitioner's red textual annotation of "Second pane" and red outlining of message window panel 520; and (2) Petitioner's purple textual annotation of "Third Pane" and purple outlining of side panel 530. *Id.* Petitioner's annotated version of Figure 5A also includes (1) Petitioner's first green textual annotation "First messaging," first green box around the first of groups of serrated lines identified as private chat session 537 in message window panel 520, second green box around the first of groups of serrated lines identified as private chat session 535 within side panel 530, two green unidirectional arrows from the green textual annotation of "First messaging" to each of the first and second green boxes, and a green bidirectional arrow between the two green boxes; and (2) Petitioner's second green textual

annotation of “Anchor Message” and a third green unidirectional arrow from the green textual annotation of “Anchor Message” to the second green box around the first of groups of serrated lines identified as private chat session 535 within side panel 530. *Id.* Petitioner’s annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen, above, further includes Petitioner’s blue textual annotation of “Additional messaging,” a first blue box around the second of the groups of serrated lines identified as private chat session 537 in message window panel 520, a second blue box around the second of the groups of serrated lines identified as private chat session 535 within side panel 530, two blue unidirectional arrows from the blue textual annotation of “Additional messaging” to each of the blue boxes, and a blue bidirectional arrow between the two blue boxes. *Id.*

For “wherein said first messaging communication is displayed within said third pane and second pane simultaneously” recited in element 1[k], Petitioner argues that the first of the groups of serrated lines identified as private chat session 537 (within the first green box) in message window panel 520 and the first of the groups of serrated lines identified as private chat session 535 (within the second green box) in side panel 530 are simultaneously displayed in message window panel 520 and side panel 530. *Id.* at 40, 47. Cohen describes that private chat session 535 in side panel 530 and private chat session 537 in message window panel 520 are between participants “A” and “G.” Ex. 1005 ¶ 73, Fig. 5A.

For “receive user input of an additional messaging communication in said sidebar text-entry field” recited in element 1[l] and “after receipt of said user input: transmit said additional messaging communication, via a network, to at least one member of the group associated with said selected group-based communication channel” recited in element 1[m], Petitioner

argues that Cohen describes that a participant uses sidebar session 531 to reply directly to someone in a group chat and the reply is “communicated via a ‘communication network.’” Pet. 41–45 (citing, e.g., Ex. 1005 ¶¶ 22, 72, 75, 77, Fig. 5A). Cohen describes that “users can reply 1 to 1 to someone in a group chat rather than the typical limited and distracting Reply-To-All messaging technology.” Ex. 1005 ¶ 72. Cohen also describes that server device 140 provides access to client devices 110, 120, and 130 via network 195 in system 100. Ex. 1005 ¶ 22, Fig. 1; *see also id.* ¶ 23 (describing that client devices 110, 120, and 130 are coupled to network 195 and server device 140 and that in “some implementations network 195 may be a private network (e.g., a local area network (LAN), Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, Radio Frequency[], a wide area network (WAN), intranet, etc.), or a public network (e.g., the Internet”).

For “display, in said third pane, a first subsidiary communication thread having an anchor message, said thread comprising said first messaging communication together with said additional messaging communication” recited in element 1[n], as can be seen from Petitioner’s annotated version of Figure 5A in Cohen above, Petitioner relies on two groups of serrated lines identified within private chat session 535 in side panel 530. *See, e.g.*, Pet. 47. Petitioner identifies the first group using a green textual annotation of “Anchor Message” and a green box around the first group of serrated lines. *Id.* Petitioner identifies the second group using the blue textual annotation of “Additional messaging” and a blue box around the second group of serrated lines. *Id.* For “wherein said first messaging communication is the anchor message of said first subsidiary communication thread” recited in element 1[n], Petitioner annotates Figure 5A of Cohen with a blue box around the second of the groups of serrated lines identified

as private chat session 537 in message window panel 520 and a blue box around the second of the groups of serrated lines identified as private chat session 535 within side panel 530. *Id.* at 46–48. Petitioner also uses a textual annotation to indicate that these blue boxes disclose “Additional messaging” recited in element 1[n]. *Id.*

We find that Petitioner’s arguments and evidence for claim elements 1[k]–1[n] are sufficient for purposes of institution.

g. Elements 1[o] and 1[p]

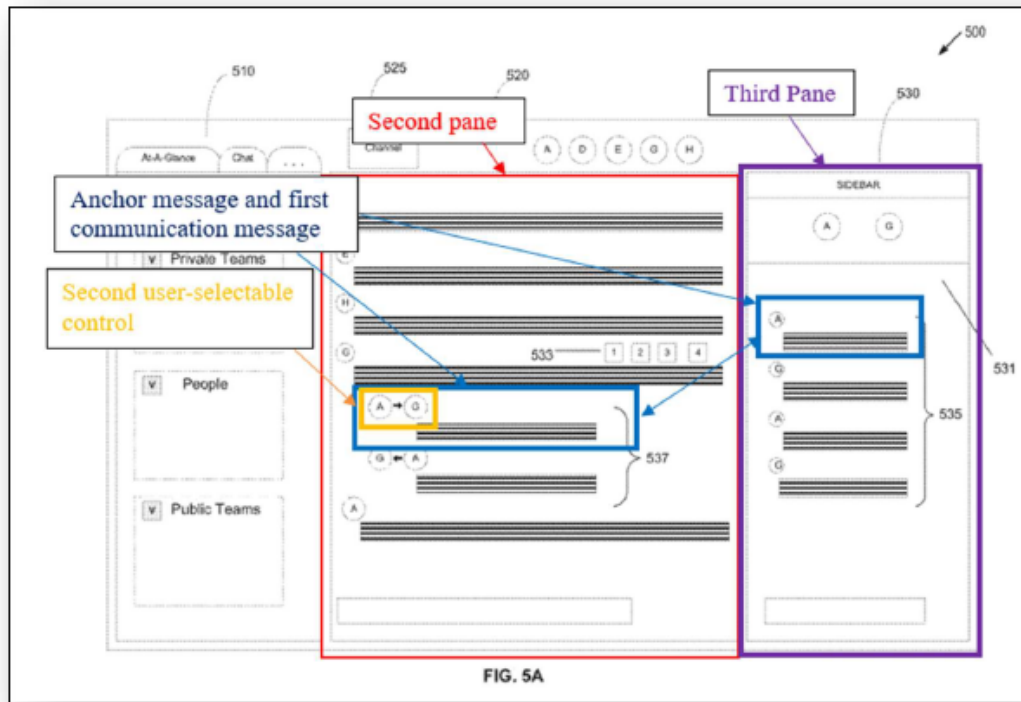
Elements 1[o] and 1[p] are reproduced below.

[1[o]] display a second user-selectable control associated with said first messaging communication in said second pane, said second user-selectable control being associated with an indication that said first messaging communication is an anchor message of a subsidiary communication thread, and being configured to:

[1[p]] in response to a user selection of said second user-selectable control, cause at least a portion of said first subsidiary communication thread containing said first messaging communication to be displayed in said third pane.

Ex. 1001, 28:22–28:32

Petitioner provides an annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen, showing Petitioner’s mapping of elements 1[o] and 1[p] to interactive interface portal 500. Pet. 51.



Petitioner's annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen, above, includes (1) Petitioner's red textual annotation of "Second pane" and red outlining of message window panel 520; and (2) Petitioner's purple textual annotation of "Third Pane" and purple outlining of side panel 530. *Id.* Petitioner's annotated version of Figure 5A also includes (1) Petitioner's first blue textual annotation "Anchor message and first communication message," first blue box around the first of groups of serrated lines identified as private chat session 537 in message window panel 520, second blue box around the first of groups of serrated lines identified as private chat session 535 within side panel 530, two blue unidirectional arrows from the blue textual annotation of "Anchor message and first communication message" to each of the first and second blue boxes, and a blue bidirectional arrow between the two blue boxes. *Id.* Petitioner's annotated version of Figure 5A of Cohen further includes Petitioner's yellow textual annotation of "Second user-selectable

control,” a yellow box around the two circles denoted as “A” and “G,” a yellow unidirectional arrow from the yellow textual annotation of “Second user-selectable control” to the yellow box. *Id.*

For the “second user-selectable control” recited in element 1[o], Petitioner relies on Cohen’s illustration of two circles denoted as “A” and “G” in message window panel 520. Pet. 48–51. The two circles are connected by a black unidirectional arrow from “A” to “G” and are immediately above the first group of serrated lines in the depiction of private chat session 537. Ex. 1005, Fig. 5A. Petitioner argues element 1[o] is met because the two circles are “displayed in proximity to the top-most message, the first messaging communication within the private session 537.” Pet. 49. Regarding element 1[p], Petitioner argues that Cohen discloses “an actionable object where a first chat participant may click on and/or hover over the display name for a second chat participant in the main window 520 to open a sidebar session 531.” *Id.* at 50–51 (citing Ex. 1005 ¶ 75; Ex. 1003 ¶ 84).

We find that Petitioner’s arguments and evidence for claim elements 1[o] and 1[p] are sufficient for purposes of institution.

3. Analysis of Claims 2–30

Petitioner provides analysis for independent claims 15, 25, and 30. Pet. 84–88, 92–97, 99–105. Independent claims 15 and 25 are the same as independent claim 1, except claim 15 is directed to a method and claim 25 is directed to computer-readable media. The features recited in independent claim 30 are similar to features recited in independent claim 1.

Claims 2–14 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 1; claims 16–24 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 15; and claims 26–29 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 25. Petitioner provides a detailed

element-by-element analysis for claims 2–14, 16–24, and 26–29. Pet. 52–84, 89–92, 97–99.

We have reviewed Petitioner’s assertions and the evidence in support thereof for claims 2–30. Based on the record at this preliminary stage, we conclude that Petitioner has demonstrated a reasonable likelihood that it would prevail in showing that claims 2–30 are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by Cohen.

III. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, we determine that Petitioner has demonstrated that there is a reasonable likelihood that it would prevail in providing the unpatentability of at least one of the challenged claims of the ’731 patent. We, thus, institute an *inter partes* review of all challenged claims of the ’731 patent on all grounds asserted in the Petition. *See* 37 C.F.R. § 42.108(a).

Any findings or conclusions in this Decision are made only for the purposes of institution and are not dispositive of any issue. We have not made a final determination with respect to the patentability of any challenged claim. Our final determination will be based on the record as fully developed during trial, including any evidence or argument timely presented by the parties under our Rules.

IV. ORDER

In consideration of the foregoing, it is hereby:

ORDERED that pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 314, *inter partes* review of claims 1–30 of U.S. Patent No. 11,973,731 B2 is *instituted* with respect to all grounds of unpatentability set forth in the Petition; and

FURTHER ORDERED that *inter partes* review is commenced on the entry date of this Order, and pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 314(c) and 37 C.F.R. § 42.4, notice is given of the institution of a trial.

IPR2024-01489
Patent 11,973,731 B2

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