US 20050033615A1

(19) United States

(12) Patent Application Publication (10) Pub. No.: US 2005/0033615 A1

Nguyen et al. (43) Pub. Date: Feb. 10, 2005

(54) EVENT PLANNING SYSTEM

(76) Inventors: **Justin T. Nguyen**, Santa Clara, CA (US); **John Chang**, Cupertino, CA (US); **Joseph Chen**, Union City, CA (US); **Raymond Thackeray**, Fetcharn (GB); **Hoselito Stanovic**, San Jose, CA (US); **Bruce Leong**, Milpitas, CA (US); **Adam Goodrich**, Mosman NSW (AU)

Correspondence Address:
FENWICK & WEST LLP
SILICON VALLEY CENTER
801 CALIFORNIA STREET
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA 94041 (US)

(21) Appl. No.: 10/785,382

(22) Filed: Feb. 23, 2004

**Related U.S. Application Data**

(63) Continuation of application No. 09/597,969, filed on Jun. 20, 2000, now abandoned.

(60) Provisional application No. 60/140,525, filed on Jun. 22, 1999.

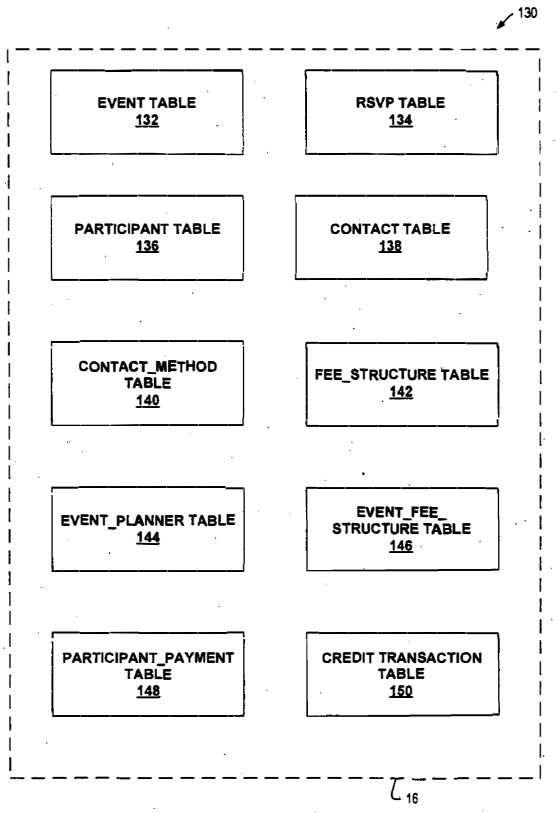
**Publication Classification**

(51) Int. Cl.[7] ..... G06F 17/60

(52) U.S. Cl. ..... 705/5; 705/9; 705/40; 705/17; 705/77; 705/53

(57) **ABSTRACT**

An event planning process is provided for execution by a server system in a computer network including a plurality of user terminals communicatively coupled with the server system via the network. The process includes the steps of: providing an event planning graphical user interface at a user terminal, the interface enabling a user to plan an event; receiving event information input by the user, the event information indicating a scheduled event, at least one invitee to be invited to the scheduled event, and information indicative of RSVP fees required to attend the scheduled event; providing an invitation to the invitee, the invitation indicating the scheduled event and the RSVP fees, and soliciting a response to the invitation, wherein an affirmative response to the invitation requires a payment as defined by the RSVP fees; receiving RSVP status information including payment information from the invitee; and verifying the payment information. The steps of providing an invitation to the invitee and receiving RSVP status information further include: generating an invitation Web page based on the event information, the invitation Web page being accessible via the network and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling the invitee to respond to the invitation; sending an invitation message to the invitee, the invitation message prompting the invitee to view the invitation Web page; and receiving input provided by the invitee via the invitation Web page, the input provided by the invitee indicating the RSVP status information.




Meta EX1006
Meta v. SitNet
IPR2026-00111

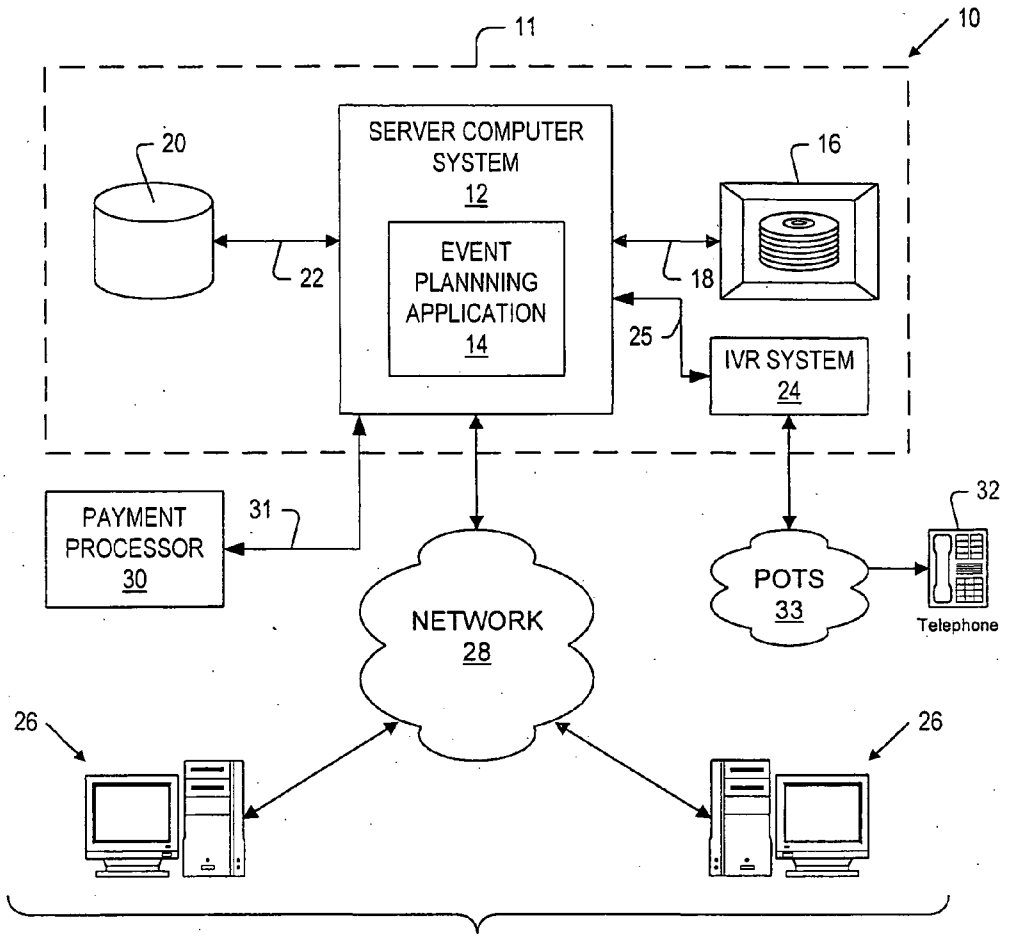

10
11
SERVER COMPUTER SYSTEM 12
EVENT PLANNNING APPLICATION 14
20
22
16
18
25
IVR SYSTEM 24
PAYMENT PROCESSOR 30
31
NETWORK 28
POTS 33
32
Telephone
26
26

FIG. 1A

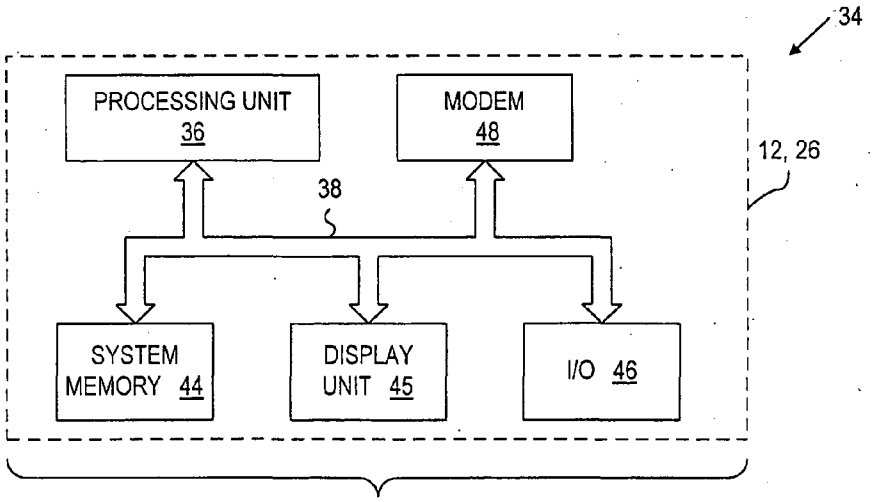

34
PROCESSING UNIT 36
MODEM 48
12, 26
38
SYSTEM MEMORY 44
DISPLAY UNIT 45
I/O 46

FIG. 1B

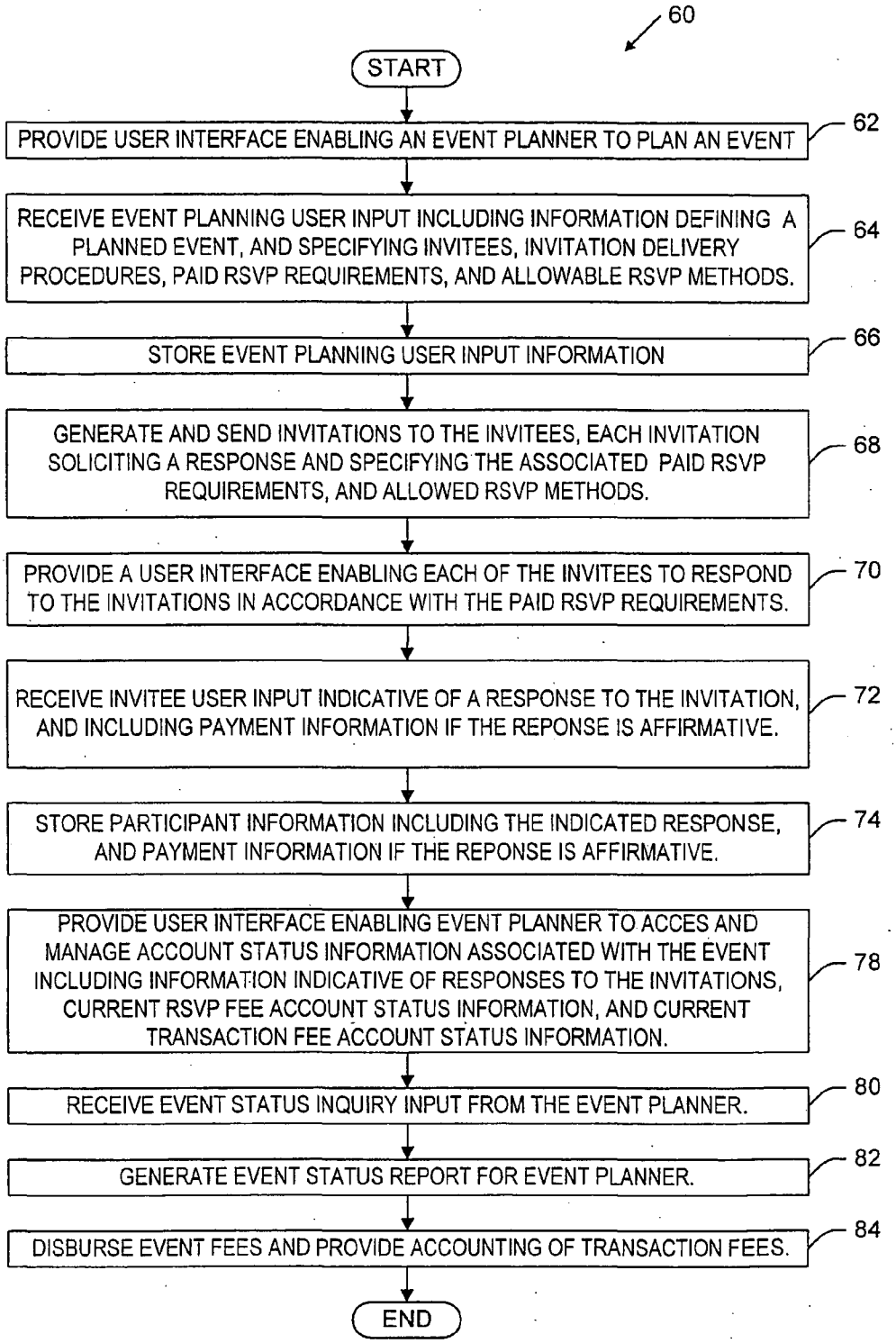

60
START
PROVIDE USER INTERFACE ENABLING AN EVENT PLANNER TO PLAN AN EVENT
62
RECEIVE EVENT PLANNING USER INPUT INCLUDING INFORMATION DEFINING A PLANNED EVENT, AND SPECIFYING INVITEES, INVITATION DELIVERY PROCEDURES, PAID RSVP REQUIREMENTS, AND ALLOWABLE RSVP METHODS.
64
STORE EVENT PLANNING USER INPUT INFORMATION
66
GENERATE AND SEND INVITATIONS TO THE INVITEES, EACH INVITATION SOLICITING A RESPONSE AND SPECIFYING THE ASSOCIATED PAID RSVP REQUIREMENTS, AND ALLOWED RSVP METHODS.
68
PROVIDE A USER INTERFACE ENABLING EACH OF THE INVITEES TO RESPOND TO THE INVITATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PAID RSVP REQUIREMENTS.
70
RECEIVE INVITEE USER INPUT INDICATIVE OF A RESPONSE TO THE INVITATION, AND INCLUDING PAYMENT INFORMATION IF THE REPONSE IS AFFIRMATIVE.
72
STORE PARTICIPANT INFORMATION INCLUDING THE INDICATED RESPONSE, AND PAYMENT INFORMATION IF THE REPONSE IS AFFIRMATIVE.
74
PROVIDE USER INTERFACE ENABLING EVENT PLANNER TO ACCES AND MANAGE ACCOUNT STATUS INFORMATION ASSOCIATED WITH THE EVENT INCLUDING INFORMATION INDICATIVE OF RESPONSES TO THE INVITATIONS, CURRENT RSVP FEE ACCOUNT STATUS INFORMATION, AND CURRENT TRANSACTION FEE ACCOUNT STATUS INFORMATION.
78
RECEIVE EVENT STATUS INQUIRY INPUT FROM THE EVENT PLANNER.
80
GENERATE EVENT STATUS REPORT FOR EVENT PLANNER.
82
DISBURSE EVENT FEES AND PROVIDE ACCOUNTING OF TRANSACTION FEES.
84
END

FIG. 1C

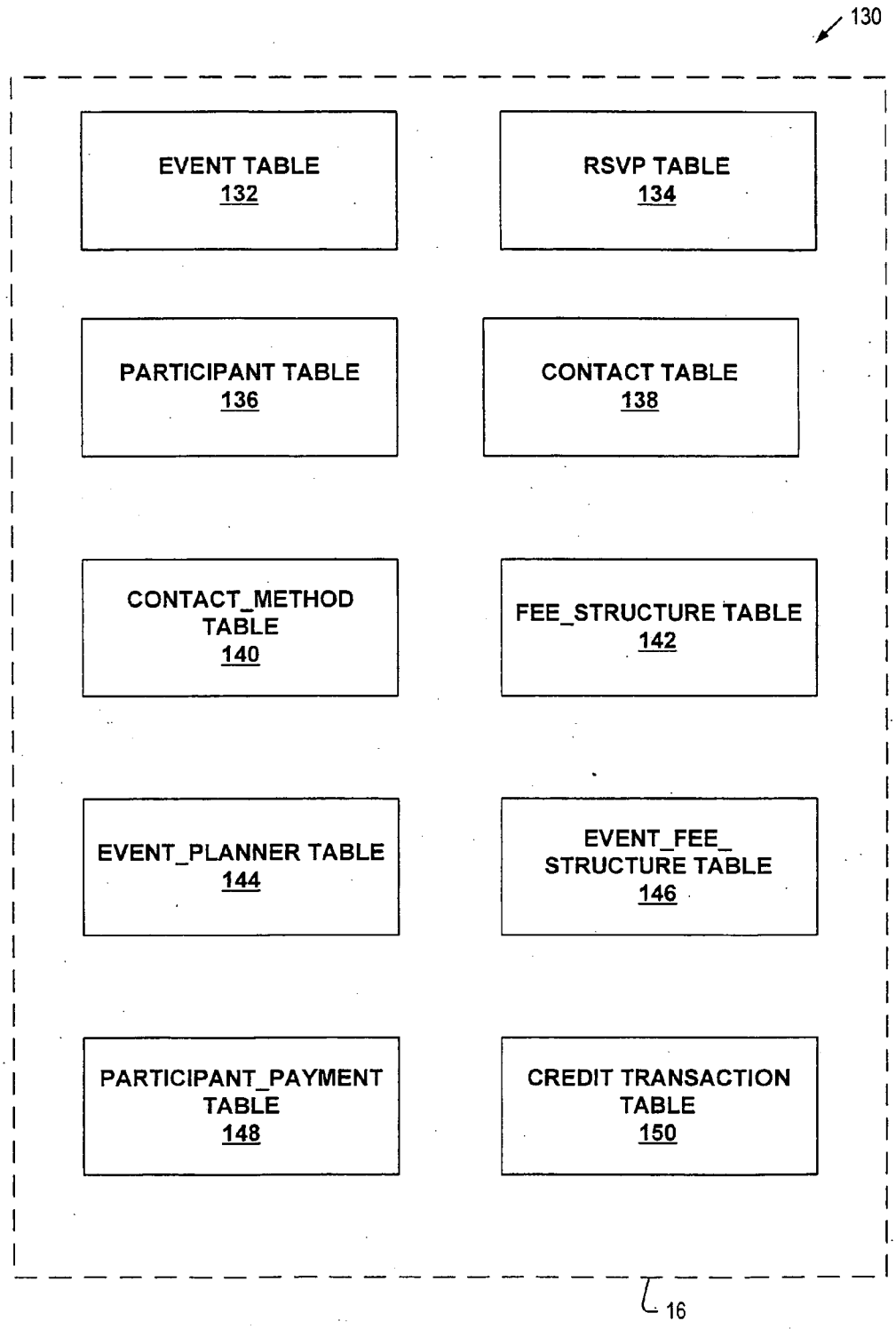

130
EVENT TABLE
132
RSVP TABLE
134
PARTICIPANT TABLE
136
CONTACT TABLE
138
CONTACT_METHOD TABLE
140
FEE_STRUCTURE TABLE
142
EVENT_PLANNER TABLE
144
EVENT_FEE_ STRUCTURE TABLE
146
PARTICIPANT_PAYMENT TABLE
148
CREDIT TRANSACTION TABLE
150
16

FIG. 2

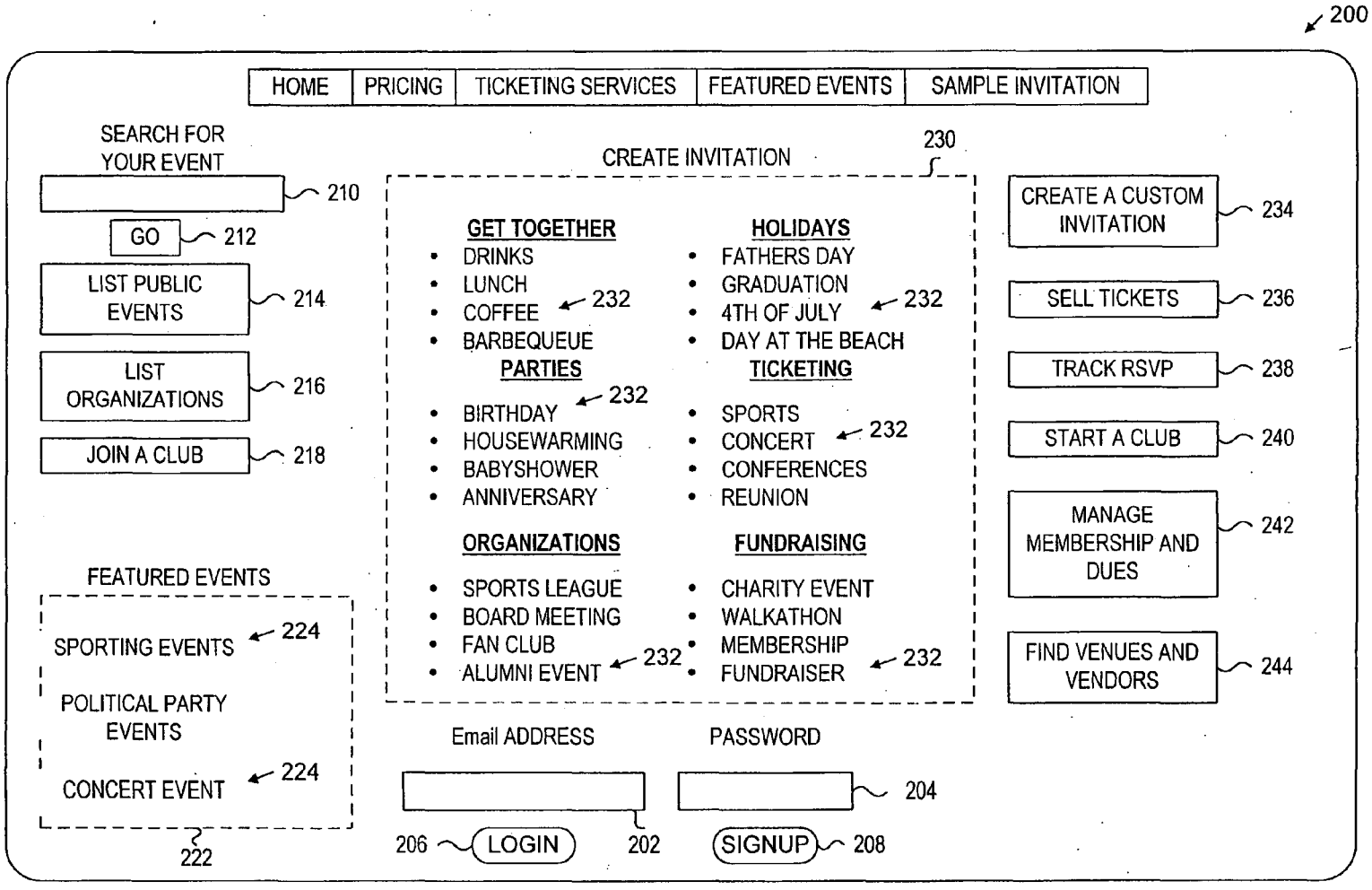

200
HOME
PRICING
TICKETING SERVICES
FEATURED EVENTS
SAMPLE INVITATION
SEARCH FOR YOUR EVENT
210
GO
212
LIST PUBLIC EVENTS
214
LIST ORGANIZATIONS
216
JOIN A CLUB
218
FEATURED EVENTS
SPORTING EVENTS
224
POLITICAL PARTY EVENTS
CONCERT EVENT
224
222
CREATE INVITATION
230
GET TOGETHER
DRINKS
LUNCH
COFFEE
232
BARBEQUEUE
HOLIDAYS
FATHERS DAY
GRADUATION
4TH OF JULY
232
DAY AT THE BEACH
PARTIES
232
BIRTHDAY
HOUSEWARMING
BABYSHOWER
ANNIVERSARY
TICKETING
SPORTS
CONCERT
232
CONFERENCES
REUNION
ORGANIZATIONS
SPORTS LEAGUE
BOARD MEETING
FAN CLUB
ALUMNI EVENT
232
FUNDRAISING
CHARITY EVENT
WALKATHON
MEMBERSHIP
FUNDRAISER
232
Email ADDRESS
PASSWORD
204
206
LOGIN
202
SIGNUP
208
CREATE A CUSTOM INVITATION
234
SELL TICKETS
236
TRACK RSVP
238
START A CLUB
240
MANAGE MEMBERSHIP AND DUES
242
FIND VENUES AND VENDORS
244

FIG. 3

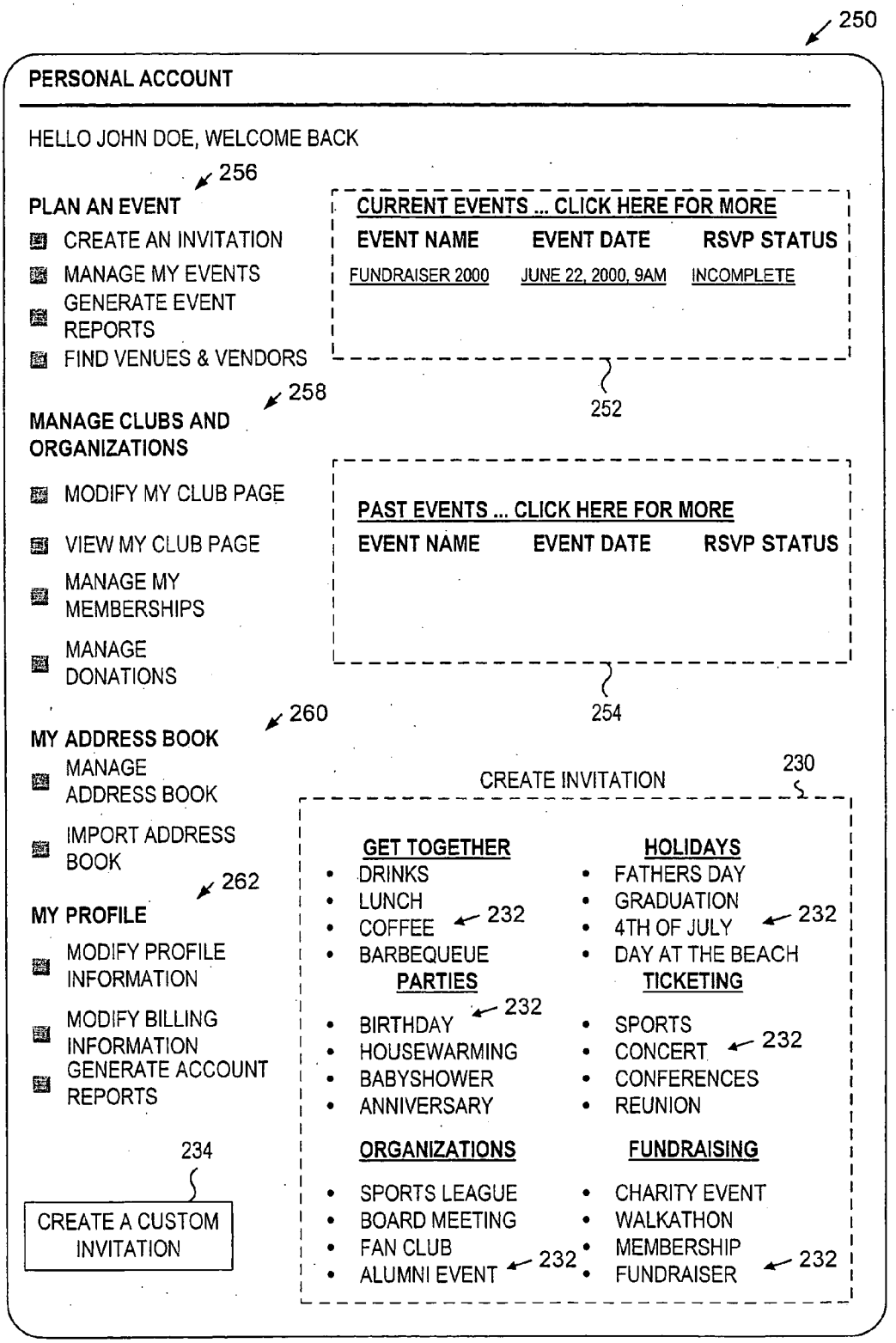

250
PERSONAL ACCOUNT
HELLO JOHN DOE, WELCOME BACK
256
PLAN AN EVENT
CREATE AN INVITATION
MANAGE MY EVENTS
GENERATE EVENT REPORTS
FIND VENUES & VENDORS
CURRENT EVENTS ... CLICK HERE FOR MORE
EVENT NAME
EVENT DATE
RSVP STATUS
FUNDRAISER 2000
JUNE 22, 2000, 9AM
INCOMPLETE
252
258
MANAGE CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS
MODIFY MY CLUB PAGE
VIEW MY CLUB PAGE
MANAGE MY MEMBERSHIPS
MANAGE DONATIONS
PAST EVENTS ... CLICK HERE FOR MORE
EVENT NAME
EVENT DATE
RSVP STATUS
254
260
MY ADDRESS BOOK
MANAGE ADDRESS BOOK
IMPORT ADDRESS BOOK
CREATE INVITATION
230
262
MY PROFILE
MODIFY PROFILE INFORMATION
MODIFY BILLING INFORMATION
GENERATE ACCOUNT REPORTS
GET TOGETHER
DRINKS
LUNCH
COFFEE
BARBEQUEUE
232
HOLIDAYS
FATHERS DAY
GRADUATION
4TH OF JULY
DAY AT THE BEACH
232
PARTIES
BIRTHDAY
HOUSEWARMING
BABYSHOWER
ANNIVERSARY
232
TICKETING
SPORTS
CONCERT
CONFERENCES
REUNION
232
234
CREATE A CUSTOM INVITATION
ORGANIZATIONS
SPORTS LEAGUE
BOARD MEETING
FAN CLUB
ALUMNI EVENT
232
FUNDRAISING
CHARITY EVENT
WALKATHON
MEMBERSHIP
FUNDRAISER
232

FIG. 4

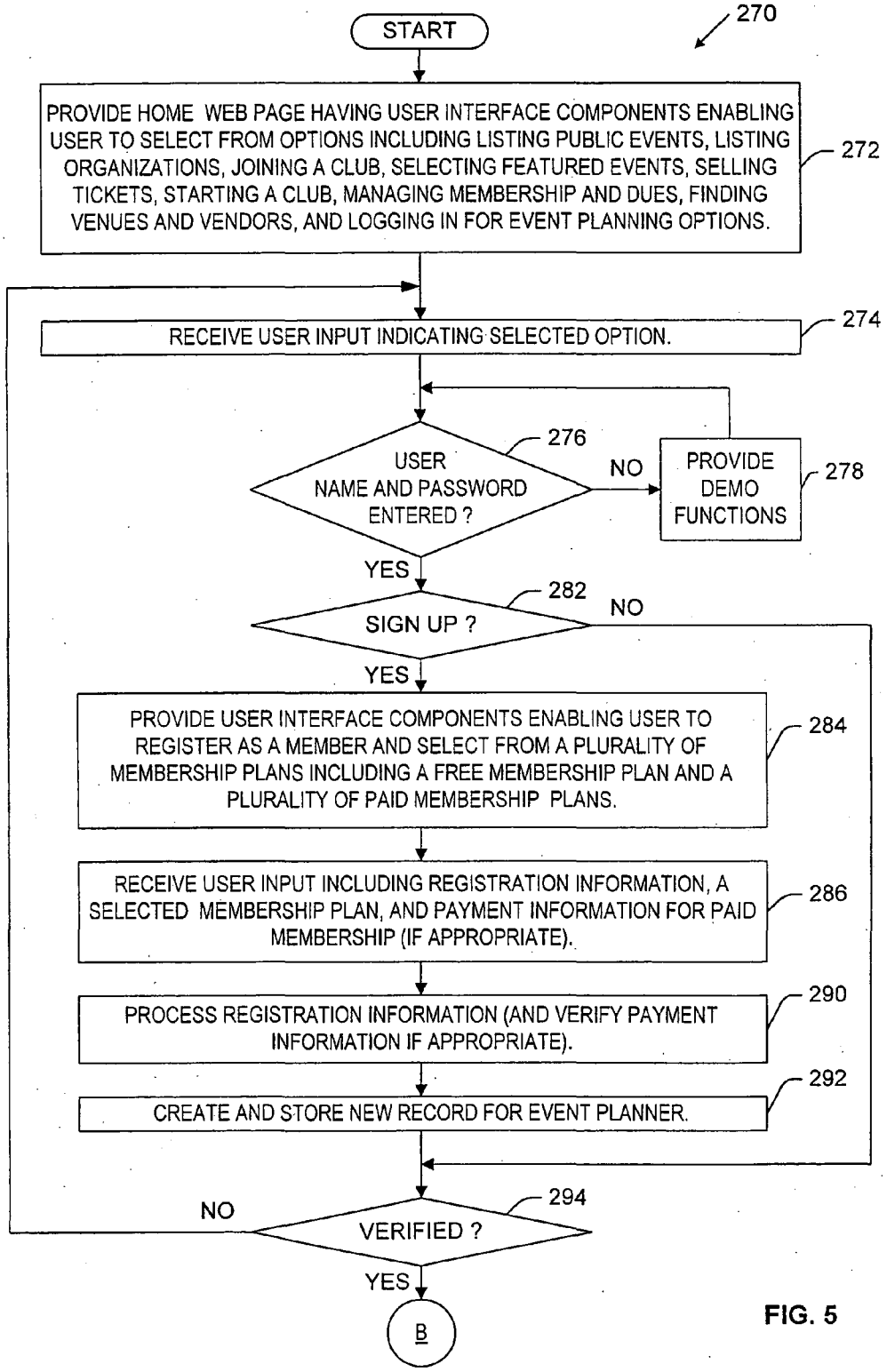

270
START
PROVIDE HOME WEB PAGE HAVING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO SELECT FROM OPTIONS INCLUDING LISTING PUBLIC EVENTS, LISTING ORGANIZATIONS, JOINING A CLUB, SELECTING FEATURED EVENTS, SELLING TICKETS, STARTING A CLUB, MANAGING MEMBERSHIP AND DUES, FINDING VENUES AND VENDORS, AND LOGGING IN FOR EVENT PLANNING OPTIONS.
272
RECEIVE USER INPUT INDICATING SELECTED OPTION.
274
USER NAME AND PASSWORD ENTERED ?
276
NO
PROVIDE DEMO FUNCTIONS
278
YES
SIGN UP ?
282
NO
YES
PROVIDE USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO REGISTER AS A MEMBER AND SELECT FROM A PLURALITY OF MEMBERSHIP PLANS INCLUDING A FREE MEMBERSHIP PLAN AND A PLURALITY OF PAID MEMBERSHIP PLANS.
284
RECEIVE USER INPUT INCLUDING REGISTRATION INFORMATION, A SELECTED MEMBERSHIP PLAN, AND PAYMENT INFORMATION FOR PAID MEMBERSHIP (IF APPROPRIATE).
286
PROCESS REGISTRATION INFORMATION (AND VERIFY PAYMENT INFORMATION IF APPROPRIATE).
290
CREATE AND STORE NEW RECORD FOR EVENT PLANNER.
292
NO
VERIFIED ?
294
YES
B

FIG. 5

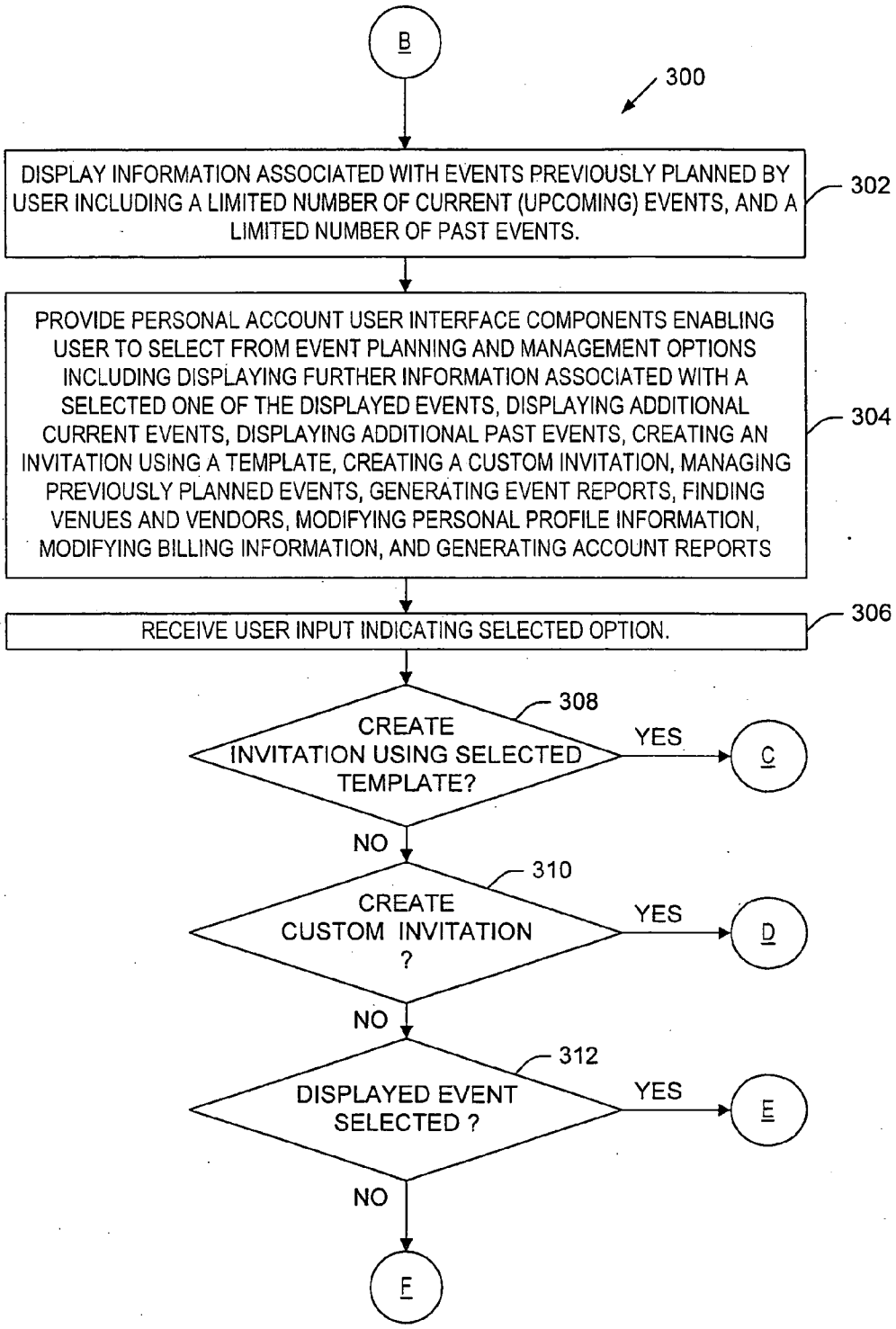

B
300
DISPLAY INFORMATION ASSOCIATED WITH EVENTS PREVIOUSLY PLANNED BY USER INCLUDING A LIMITED NUMBER OF CURRENT (UPCOMING) EVENTS, AND A LIMITED NUMBER OF PAST EVENTS.
302
PROVIDE PERSONAL ACCOUNT USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO SELECT FROM EVENT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OPTIONS INCLUDING DISPLAYING FURTHER INFORMATION ASSOCIATED WITH A SELECTED ONE OF THE DISPLAYED EVENTS, DISPLAYING ADDITIONAL CURRENT EVENTS, DISPLAYING ADDITIONAL PAST EVENTS, CREATING AN INVITATION USING A TEMPLATE, CREATING A CUSTOM INVITATION, MANAGING PREVIOUSLY PLANNED EVENTS, GENERATING EVENT REPORTS, FINDING VENUES AND VENDORS, MODIFYING PERSONAL PROFILE INFORMATION, MODIFYING BILLING INFORMATION, AND GENERATING ACCOUNT REPORTS
304
RECEIVE USER INPUT INDICATING SELECTED OPTION.
306
CREATE INVITATION USING SELECTED TEMPLATE?
308
YES
C
NO
CREATE CUSTOM INVITATION ?
310
YES
D
NO
DISPLAYED EVENT SELECTED ?
312
YES
E
NO
F

FIG. 6

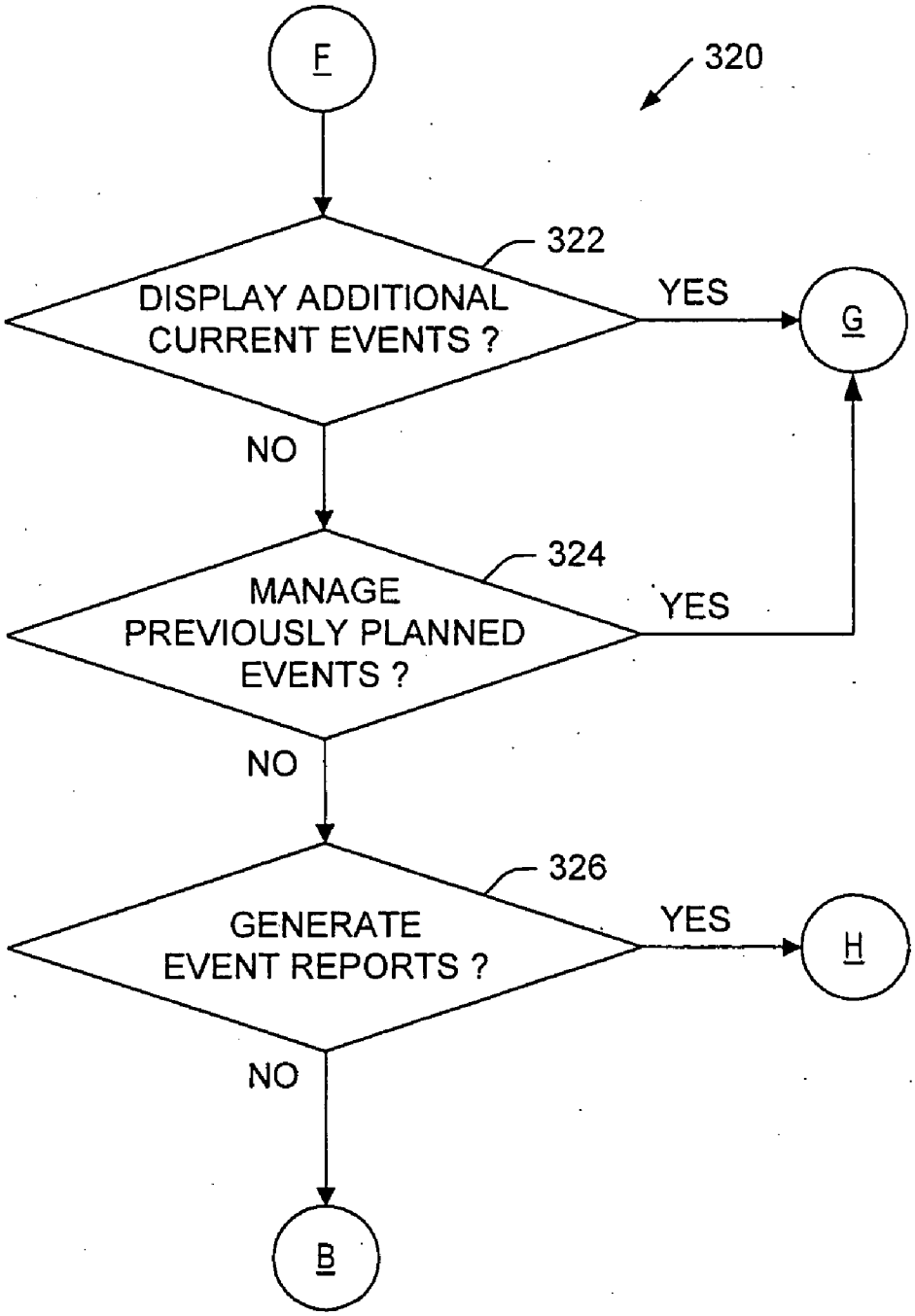

F
320
322
DISPLAY ADDITIONAL CURRENT EVENTS ?
YES
G
NO
324
MANAGE PREVIOUSLY PLANNED EVENTS ?
YES
NO
326
GENERATE EVENT REPORTS ?
YES
H
NO
B

FIG. 7

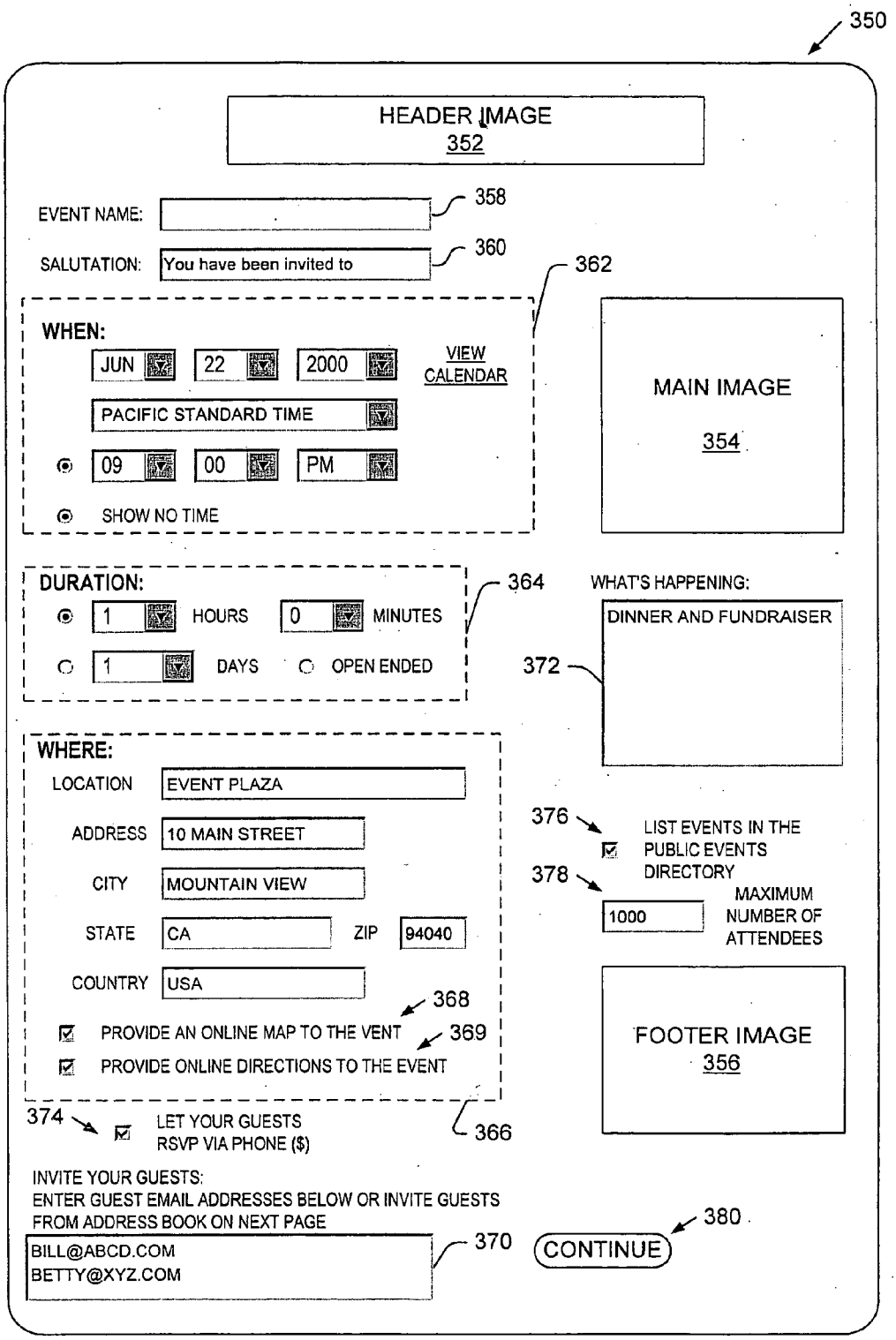

350
HEADER IMAGE
352
EVENT NAME:
358
SALUTATION:
You have been invited to
360
362
WHEN:
JUN
22
2000
VIEW CALENDAR
PACIFIC STANDARD TIME
09
00
PM
SHOW NO TIME
MAIN IMAGE
354
DURATION:
364
1
HOURS
0
MINUTES
1
DAYS
OPEN ENDED
WHAT'S HAPPENING:
DINNER AND FUNDRAISER
372
WHERE:
LOCATION
EVENT PLAZA
ADDRESS
10 MAIN STREET
CITY
MOUNTAIN VIEW
STATE
CA
ZIP
94040
COUNTRY
USA
376
LIST EVENTS IN THE PUBLIC EVENTS DIRECTORY
378
1000
MAXIMUM NUMBER OF ATTENDEES
368
PROVIDE AN ONLINE MAP TO THE VENT
369
PROVIDE ONLINE DIRECTIONS TO THE EVENT
FOOTER IMAGE
356
374
LET YOUR GUESTS RSVP VIA PHONE ($)
366
INVITE YOUR GUESTS:
ENTER GUEST EMAIL ADDRESSES BELOW OR INVITE GUESTS FROM ADDRESS BOOK ON NEXT PAGE
BILL@ABCD.COM
BETTY@XYZ.COM
370
380
CONTINUE

FIG. 8

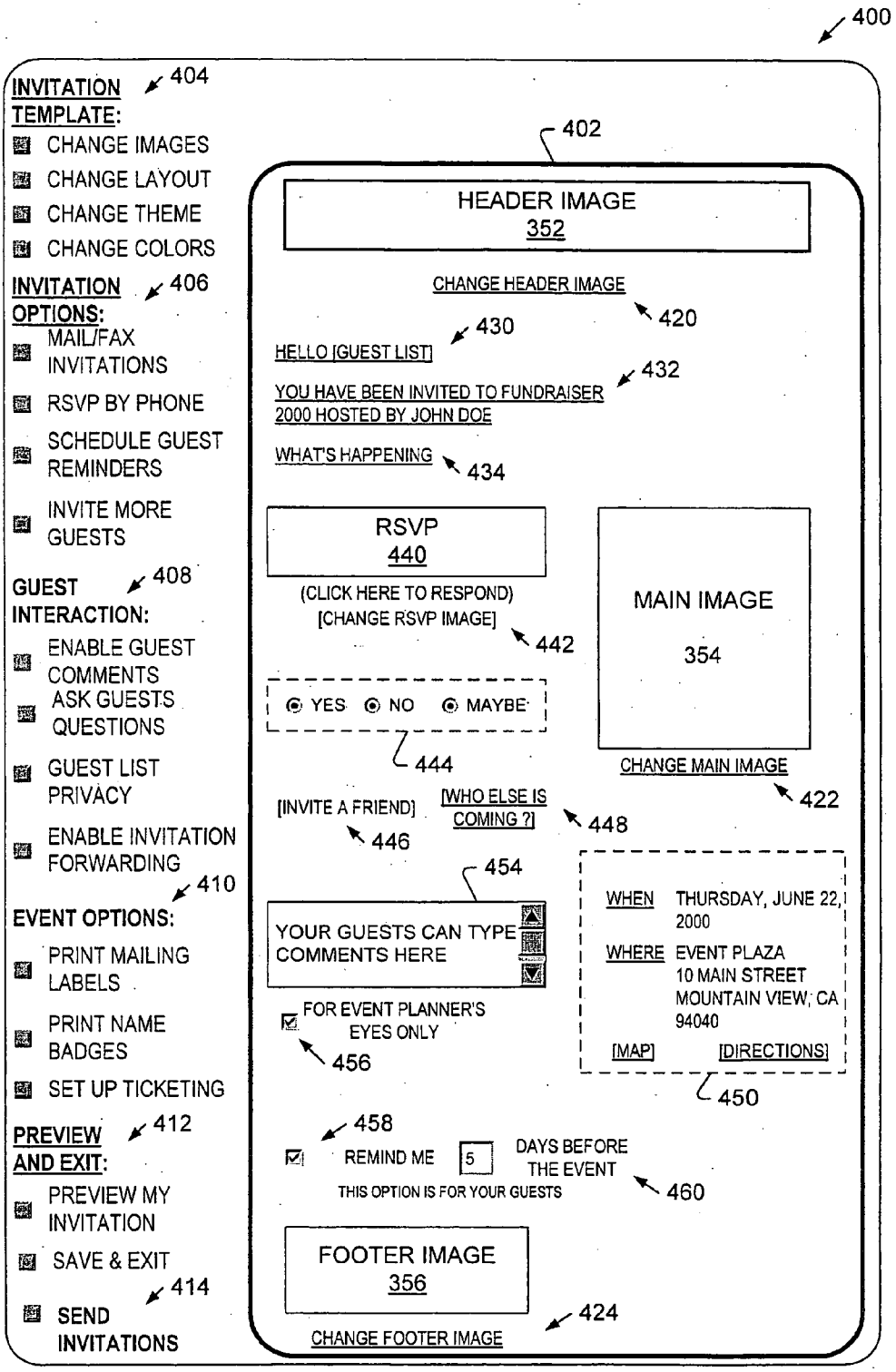

400
INVITATION TEMPLATE:
404
CHANGE IMAGES
CHANGE LAYOUT
CHANGE THEME
CHANGE COLORS
INVITATION OPTIONS:
406
MAIL/FAX INVITATIONS
RSVP BY PHONE
SCHEDULE GUEST REMINDERS
INVITE MORE GUESTS
GUEST INTERACTION:
408
ENABLE GUEST COMMENTS
ASK GUESTS QUESTIONS
GUEST LIST PRIVACY
ENABLE INVITATION FORWARDING
EVENT OPTIONS:
410
PRINT MAILING LABELS
PRINT NAME BADGES
SET UP TICKETING
PREVIEW AND EXIT:
412
PREVIEW MY INVITATION
SAVE & EXIT
414
SEND INVITATIONS
402
HEADER IMAGE
352
CHANGE HEADER IMAGE
420
430
HELLO [GUEST LIST]
432
YOU HAVE BEEN INVITED TO FUNDRAISER 2000 HOSTED BY JOHN DOE
WHAT'S HAPPENING
434
RSVP
440
(CLICK HERE TO RESPOND)
[CHANGE RSVP IMAGE]
442
YES NO MAYBE
444
MAIN IMAGE
354
CHANGE MAIN IMAGE
422
[INVITE A FRIEND]
446
[WHO ELSE IS COMING ?]
448
454
YOUR GUESTS CAN TYPE COMMENTS HERE
FOR EVENT PLANNER'S EYES ONLY
456
WHEN THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2000
WHERE EVENT PLAZA 10 MAIN STREET MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA 94040
[MAP] [DIRECTIONS]
450
458
REMIND ME 5 DAYS BEFORE THE EVENT
THIS OPTION IS FOR YOUR GUESTS
460
FOOTER IMAGE
356
CHANGE FOOTER IMAGE
424

FIG. 9

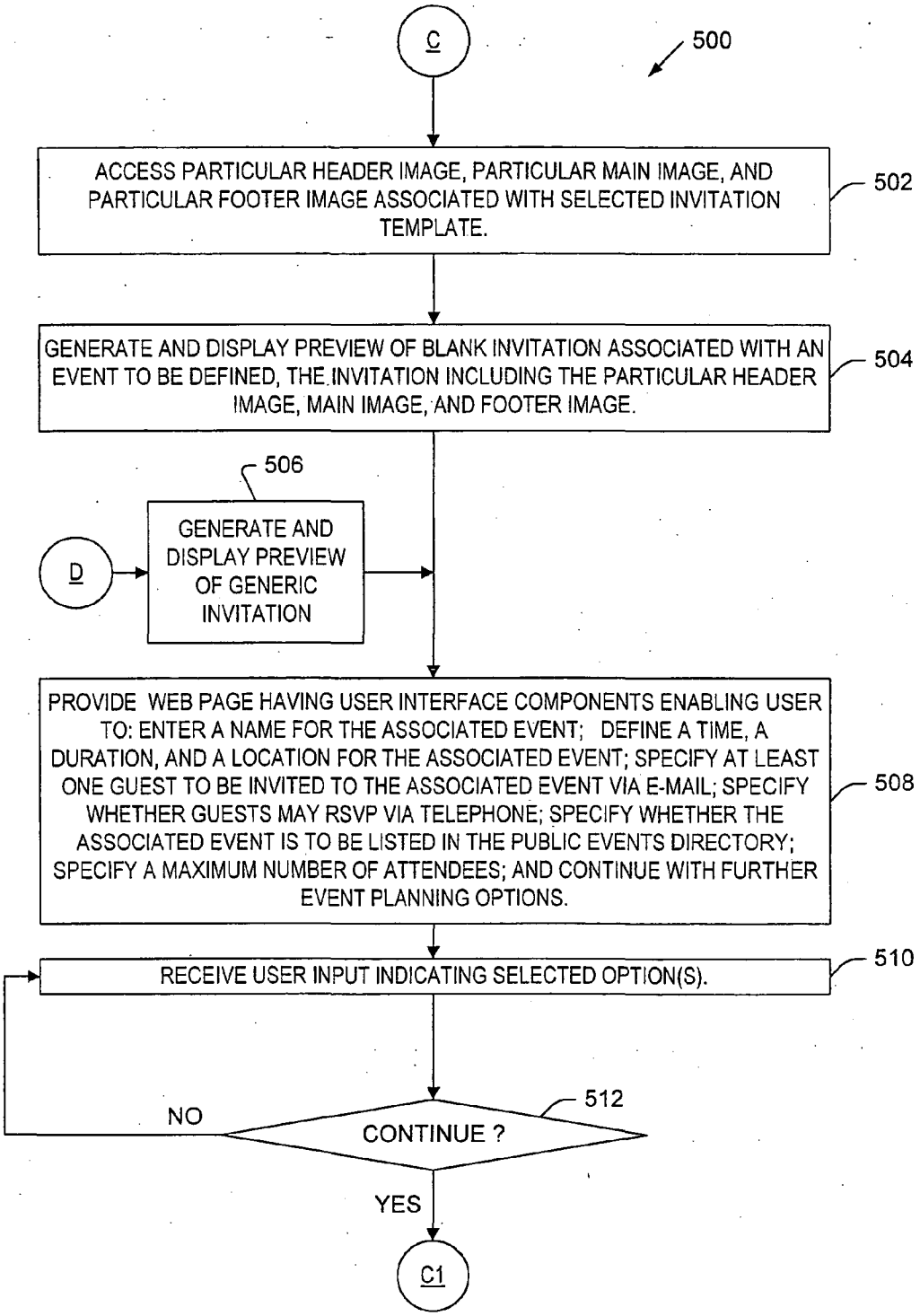

C
500
ACCESS PARTICULAR HEADER IMAGE, PARTICULAR MAIN IMAGE, AND PARTICULAR FOOTER IMAGE ASSOCIATED WITH SELECTED INVITATION TEMPLATE.
502
GENERATE AND DISPLAY PREVIEW OF BLANK INVITATION ASSOCIATED WITH AN EVENT TO BE DEFINED, THE INVITATION INCLUDING THE PARTICULAR HEADER IMAGE, MAIN IMAGE, AND FOOTER IMAGE.
504
506
D
GENERATE AND DISPLAY PREVIEW OF GENERIC INVITATION
PROVIDE WEB PAGE HAVING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO: ENTER A NAME FOR THE ASSOCIATED EVENT; DEFINE A TIME, A DURATION, AND A LOCATION FOR THE ASSOCIATED EVENT; SPECIFY AT LEAST ONE GUEST TO BE INVITED TO THE ASSOCIATED EVENT VIA E-MAIL; SPECIFY WHETHER GUESTS MAY RSVP VIA TELEPHONE; SPECIFY WHETHER THE ASSOCIATED EVENT IS TO BE LISTED IN THE PUBLIC EVENTS DIRECTORY; SPECIFY A MAXIMUM NUMBER OF ATTENDEES; AND CONTINUE WITH FURTHER EVENT PLANNING OPTIONS.
508
RECEIVE USER INPUT INDICATING SELECTED OPTION(S).
510
512
NO
CONTINUE ?
YES
C1

FIG. 10

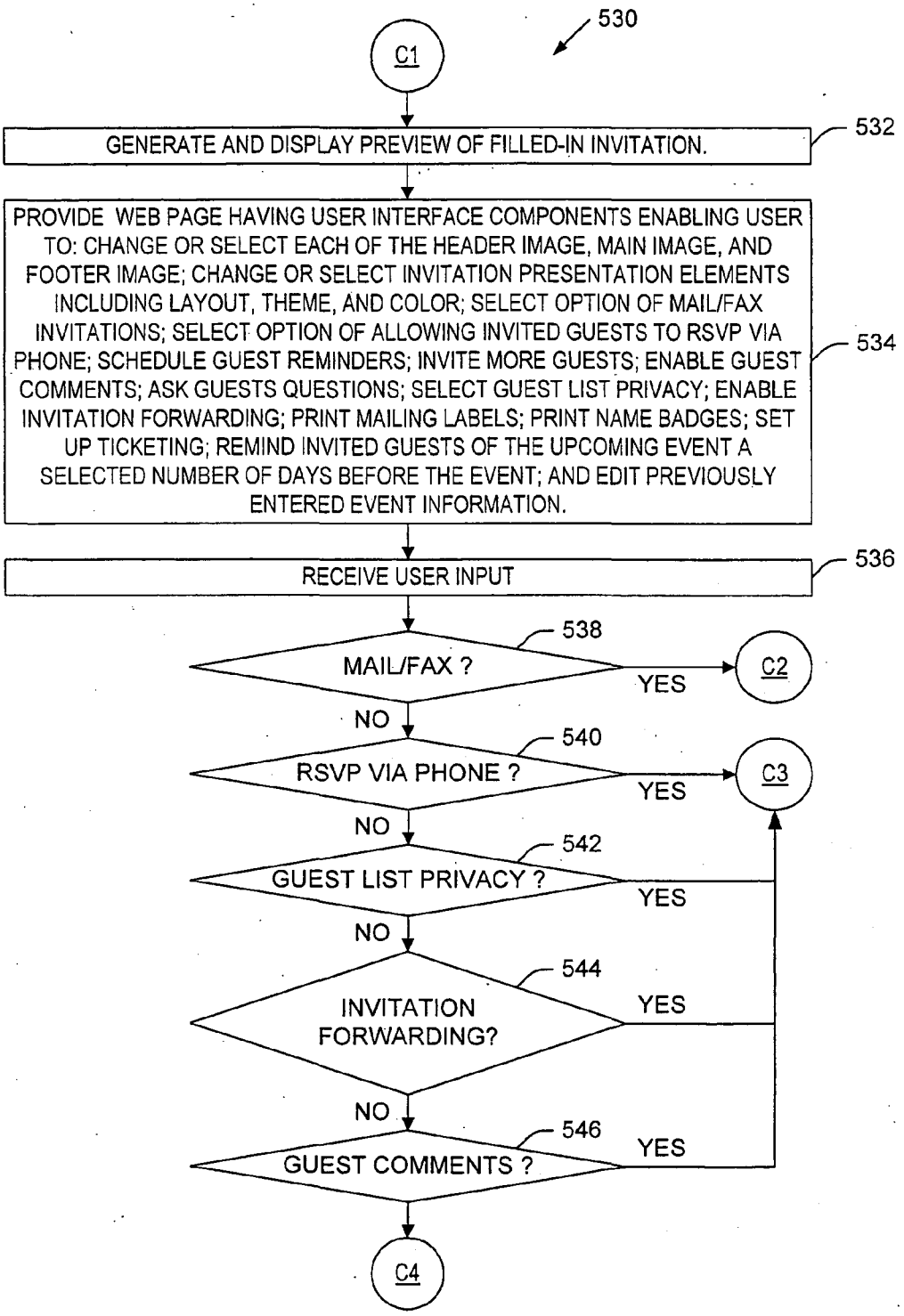

530
C1
GENERATE AND DISPLAY PREVIEW OF FILLED-IN INVITATION.
532
PROVIDE WEB PAGE HAVING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO: CHANGE OR SELECT EACH OF THE HEADER IMAGE, MAIN IMAGE, AND FOOTER IMAGE; CHANGE OR SELECT INVITATION PRESENTATION ELEMENTS INCLUDING LAYOUT, THEME, AND COLOR; SELECT OPTION OF MAIL/FAX INVITATIONS; SELECT OPTION OF ALLOWING INVITED GUESTS TO RSVP VIA PHONE; SCHEDULE GUEST REMINDERS; INVITE MORE GUESTS; ENABLE GUEST COMMENTS; ASK GUESTS QUESTIONS; SELECT GUEST LIST PRIVACY; ENABLE INVITATION FORWARDING; PRINT MAILING LABELS; PRINT NAME BADGES; SET UP TICKETING; REMIND INVITED GUESTS OF THE UPCOMING EVENT A SELECTED NUMBER OF DAYS BEFORE THE EVENT; AND EDIT PREVIOUSLY ENTERED EVENT INFORMATION.
534
RECEIVE USER INPUT
536
538
MAIL/FAX ?
YES
C2
NO
540
RSVP VIA PHONE ?
YES
C3
NO
542
GUEST LIST PRIVACY ?
YES
NO
544
INVITATION FORWARDING?
YES
NO
546
GUEST COMMENTS ?
YES
C4

FIG. 11

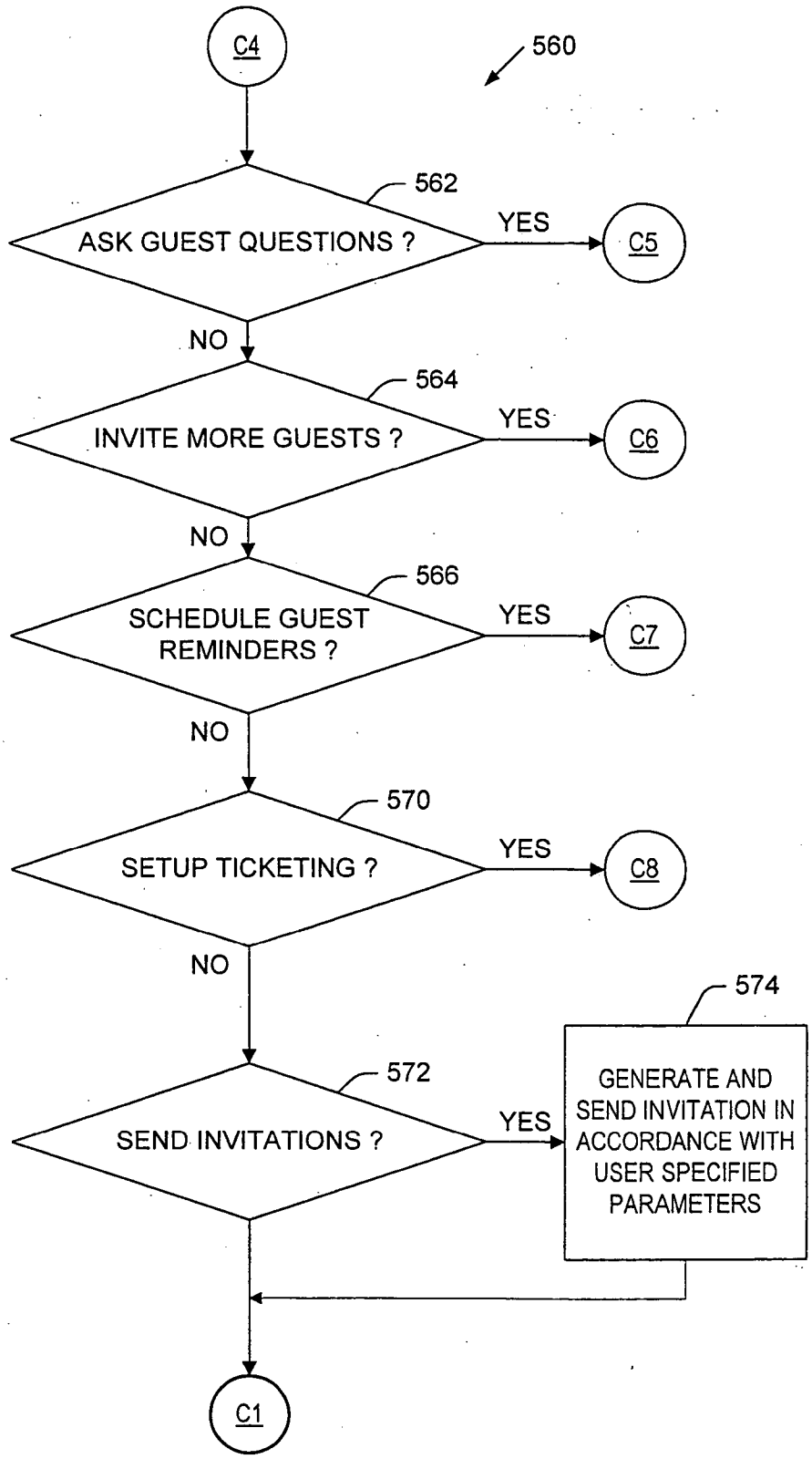

C4
560
562
ASK GUEST QUESTIONS ?
YES
C5
NO
564
INVITE MORE GUESTS ?
YES
C6
NO
566
SCHEDULE GUEST REMINDERS ?
YES
C7
NO
570
SETUP TICKETING ?
YES
C8
NO
574
572
SEND INVITATIONS ?
YES
GENERATE AND SEND INVITATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH USER SPECIFIED PARAMETERS
C1

FIG. 12

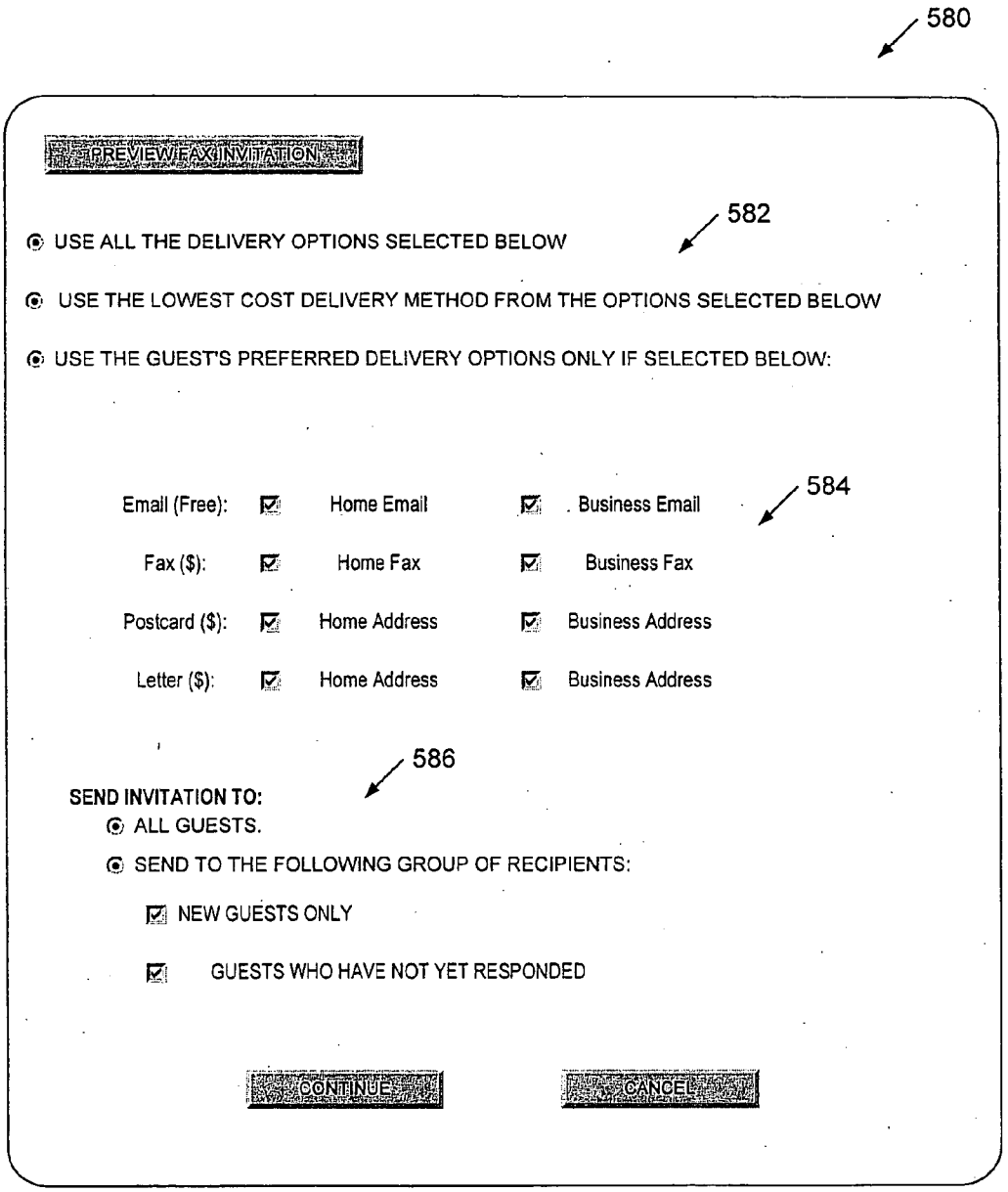

580
PREVIEW FAX INVITATION
582
USE ALL THE DELIVERY OPTIONS SELECTED BELOW
USE THE LOWEST COST DELIVERY METHOD FROM THE OPTIONS SELECTED BELOW
USE THE GUEST'S PREFERRED DELIVERY OPTIONS ONLY IF SELECTED BELOW:
584
Email (Free): Home Email Business Email
Fax ($): Home Fax Business Fax
Postcard ($): Home Address Business Address
Letter ($): Home Address Business Address
586
SEND INVITATION TO:
ALL GUESTS.
SEND TO THE FOLLOWING GROUP OF RECIPIENTS:
NEW GUESTS ONLY
GUESTS WHO HAVE NOT YET RESPONDED
CONTINUE
CANCEL

FIG. 13

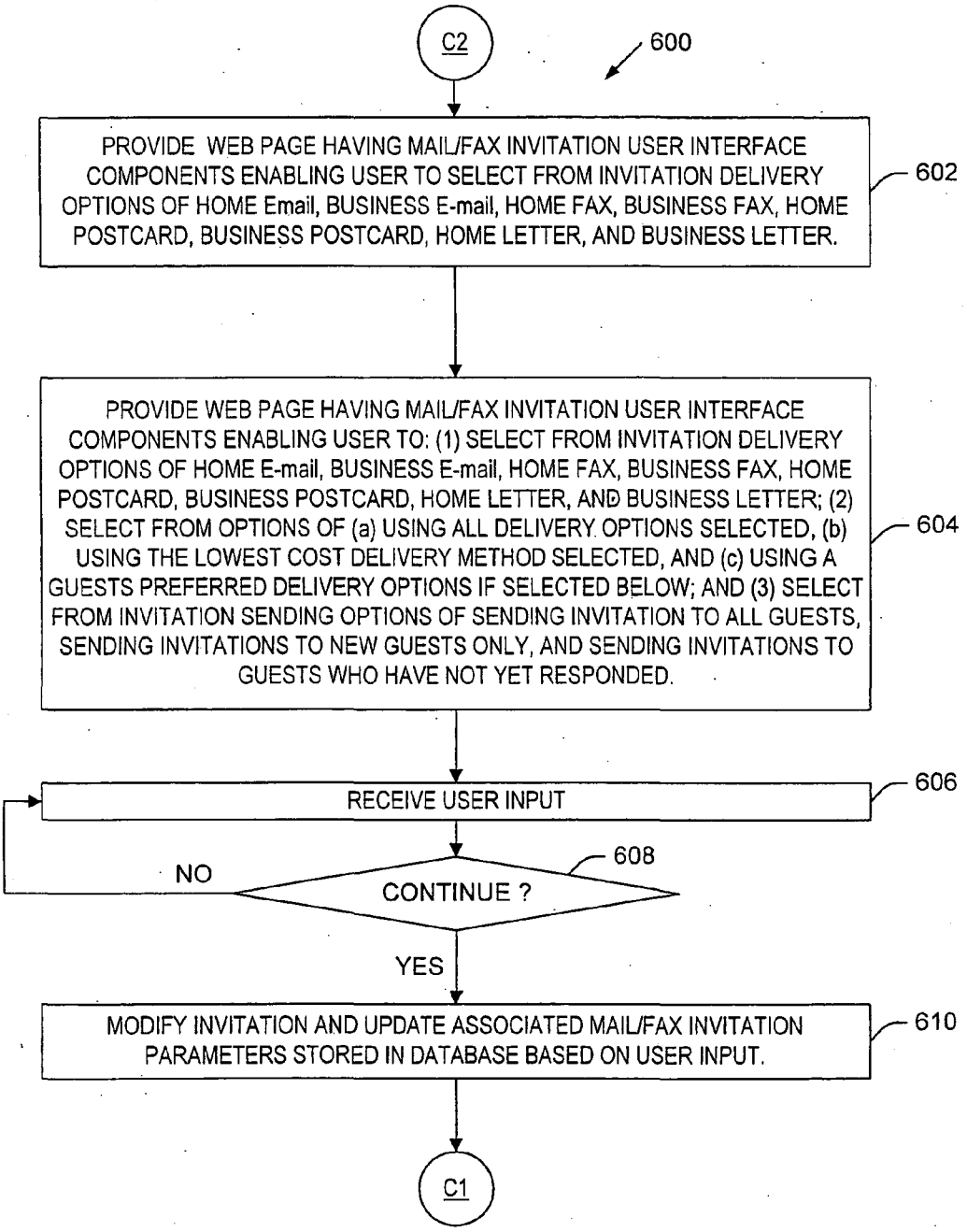

C2
600
PROVIDE WEB PAGE HAVING MAIL/FAX INVITATION USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO SELECT FROM INVITATION DELIVERY OPTIONS OF HOME Email, BUSINESS E-mail, HOME FAX, BUSINESS FAX, HOME POSTCARD, BUSINESS POSTCARD, HOME LETTER, AND BUSINESS LETTER.
602
PROVIDE WEB PAGE HAVING MAIL/FAX INVITATION USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO: (1) SELECT FROM INVITATION DELIVERY OPTIONS OF HOME E-mail, BUSINESS E-mail, HOME FAX, BUSINESS FAX, HOME POSTCARD, BUSINESS POSTCARD, HOME LETTER, AND BUSINESS LETTER; (2) SELECT FROM OPTIONS OF (a) USING ALL DELIVERY OPTIONS SELECTED, (b) USING THE LOWEST COST DELIVERY METHOD SELECTED, AND (c) USING A GUESTS PREFERRED DELIVERY OPTIONS IF SELECTED BELOW; AND (3) SELECT FROM INVITATION SENDING OPTIONS OF SENDING INVITATION TO ALL GUESTS, SENDING INVITATIONS TO NEW GUESTS ONLY, AND SENDING INVITATIONS TO GUESTS WHO HAVE NOT YET RESPONDED.
604
RECEIVE USER INPUT
606
608
NO
CONTINUE ?
YES
MODIFY INVITATION AND UPDATE ASSOCIATED MAIL/FAX INVITATION PARAMETERS STORED IN DATABASE BASED ON USER INPUT.
610
C1

FIG. 14

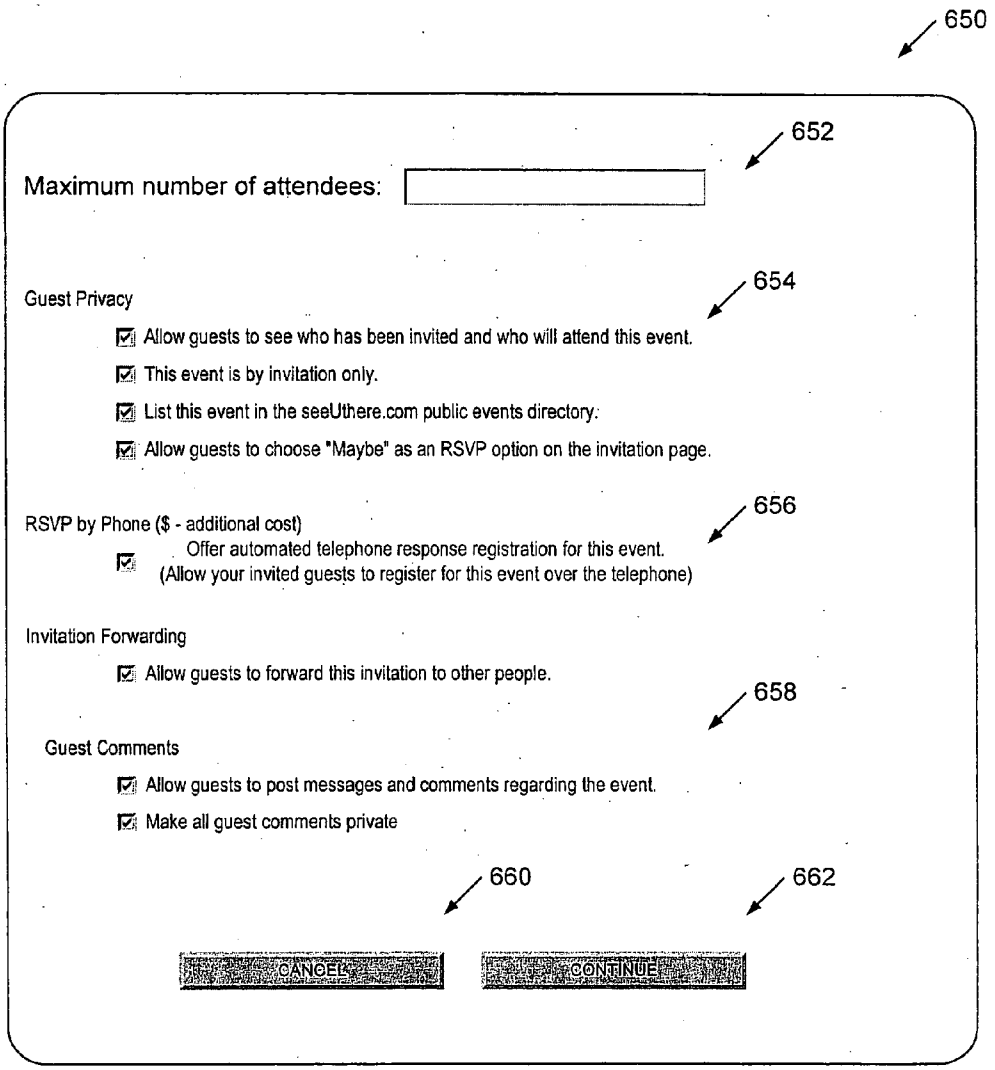

650
652
Maximum number of attendees:
654
Guest Privacy
Allow guests to see who has been invited and who will attend this event.
This event is by invitation only.
List this event in the seeUthere.com public events directory.
Allow guests to choose "Maybe" as an RSVP option on the invitation page.
656
RSVP by Phone ($ - additional cost)
Offer automated telephone response registration for this event.
(Allow your invited guests to register for this event over the telephone)
Invitation Forwarding
Allow guests to forward this invitation to other people.
658
Guest Comments
Allow guests to post messages and comments regarding the event.
Make all guest comments private
660
662
CANCEL
CONTINUE

FIG. 15

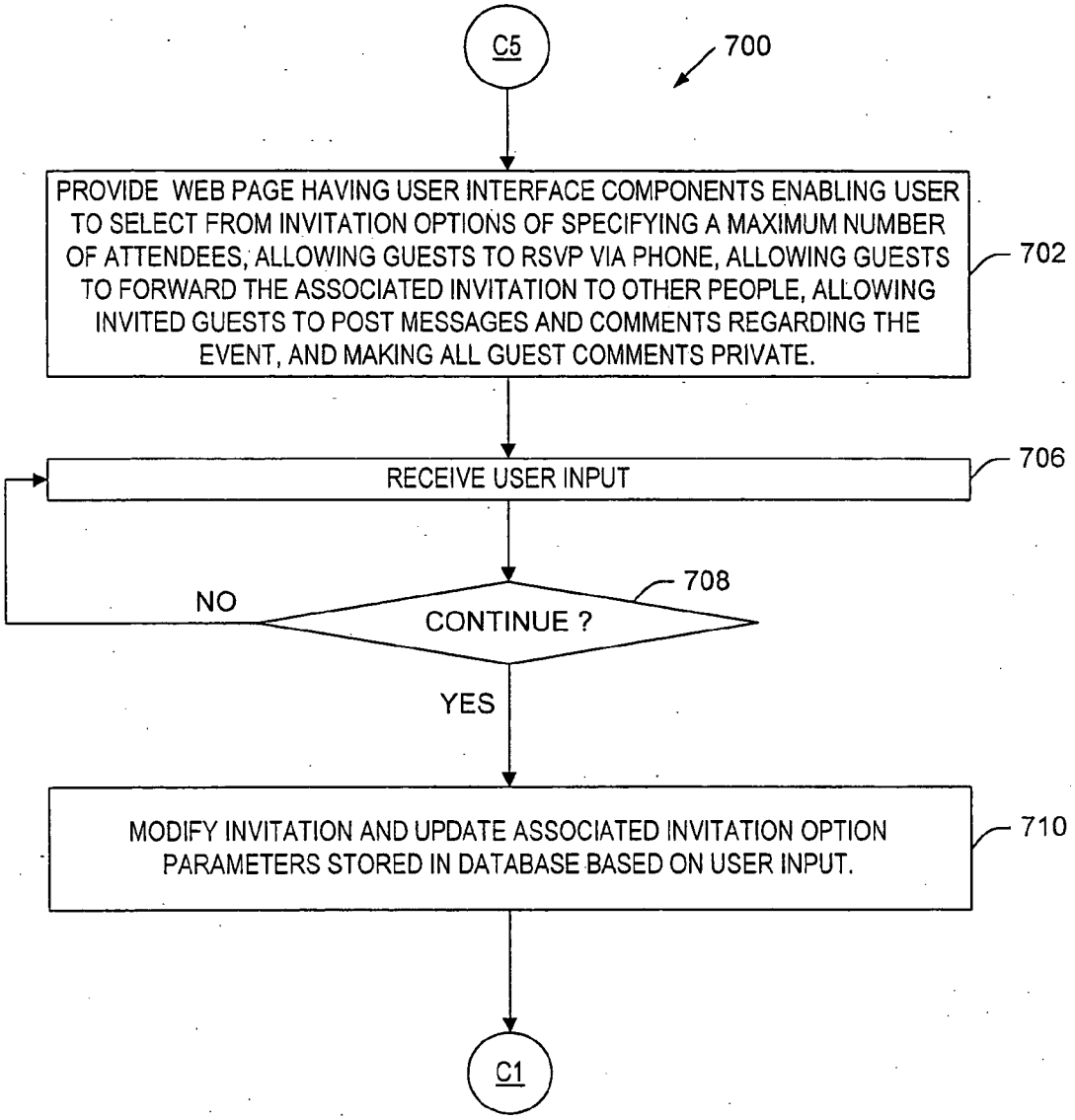

C5
700
PROVIDE WEB PAGE HAVING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO SELECT FROM INVITATION OPTIONS OF SPECIFYING A MAXIMUM NUMBER OF ATTENDEES, ALLOWING GUESTS TO RSVP VIA PHONE, ALLOWING GUESTS TO FORWARD THE ASSOCIATED INVITATION TO OTHER PEOPLE, ALLOWING INVITED GUESTS TO POST MESSAGES AND COMMENTS REGARDING THE EVENT, AND MAKING ALL GUEST COMMENTS PRIVATE.
702
RECEIVE USER INPUT
706
708
NO
CONTINUE ?
YES
MODIFY INVITATION AND UPDATE ASSOCIATED INVITATION OPTION PARAMETERS STORED IN DATABASE BASED ON USER INPUT.
710
C1

FIG. 16

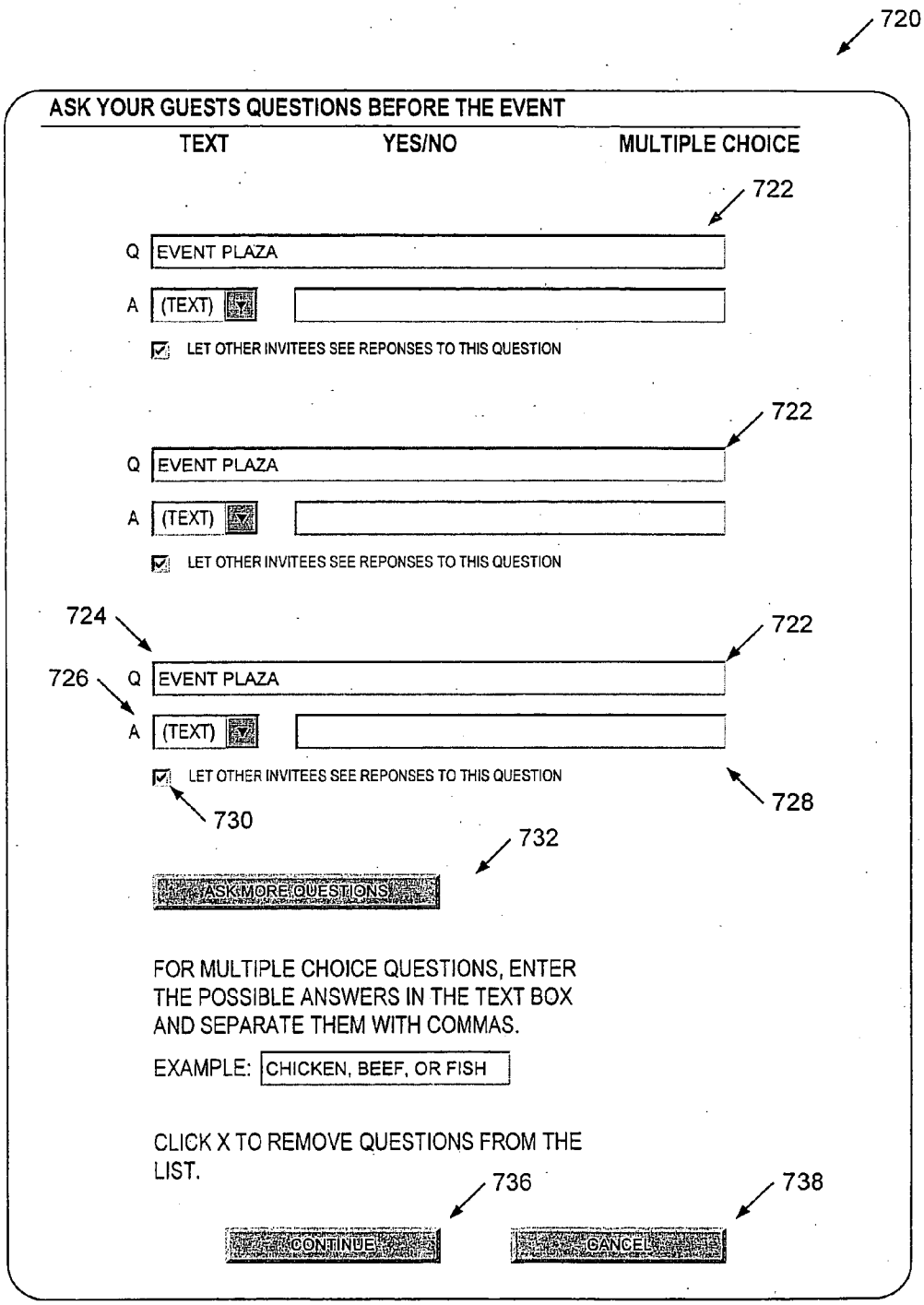

720
ASK YOUR GUESTS QUESTIONS BEFORE THE EVENT
TEXT
YES/NO
MULTIPLE CHOICE
722
Q EVENT PLAZA
A (TEXT)
LET OTHER INVITEES SEE REPONSES TO THIS QUESTION
722
Q EVENT PLAZA
A (TEXT)
LET OTHER INVITEES SEE REPONSES TO THIS QUESTION
724
722
726
Q EVENT PLAZA
A (TEXT)
LET OTHER INVITEES SEE REPONSES TO THIS QUESTION
728
730
732
ASK MORE QUESTIONS
FOR MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS, ENTER THE POSSIBLE ANSWERS IN THE TEXT BOX AND SEPARATE THEM WITH COMMAS.
EXAMPLE: CHICKEN, BEEF, OR FISH
CLICK X TO REMOVE QUESTIONS FROM THE LIST.
736
738
CONTINUE
CANCEL

FIG. 17

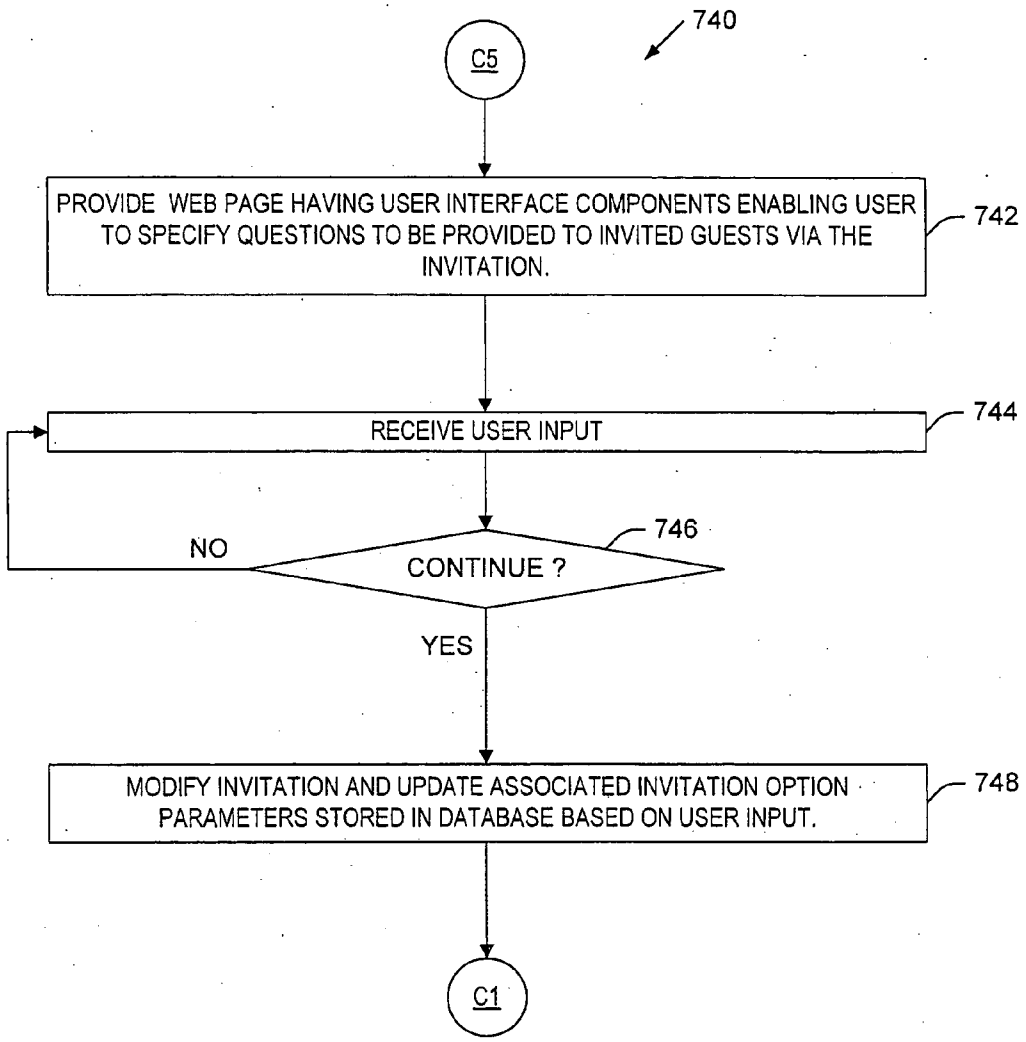

740
C5
PROVIDE WEB PAGE HAVING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO SPECIFY QUESTIONS TO BE PROVIDED TO INVITED GUESTS VIA THE INVITATION.
742
RECEIVE USER INPUT
744
746
NO
CONTINUE ?
YES
MODIFY INVITATION AND UPDATE ASSOCIATED INVITATION OPTION PARAMETERS STORED IN DATABASE BASED ON USER INPUT.
748
C1

FIG. 18

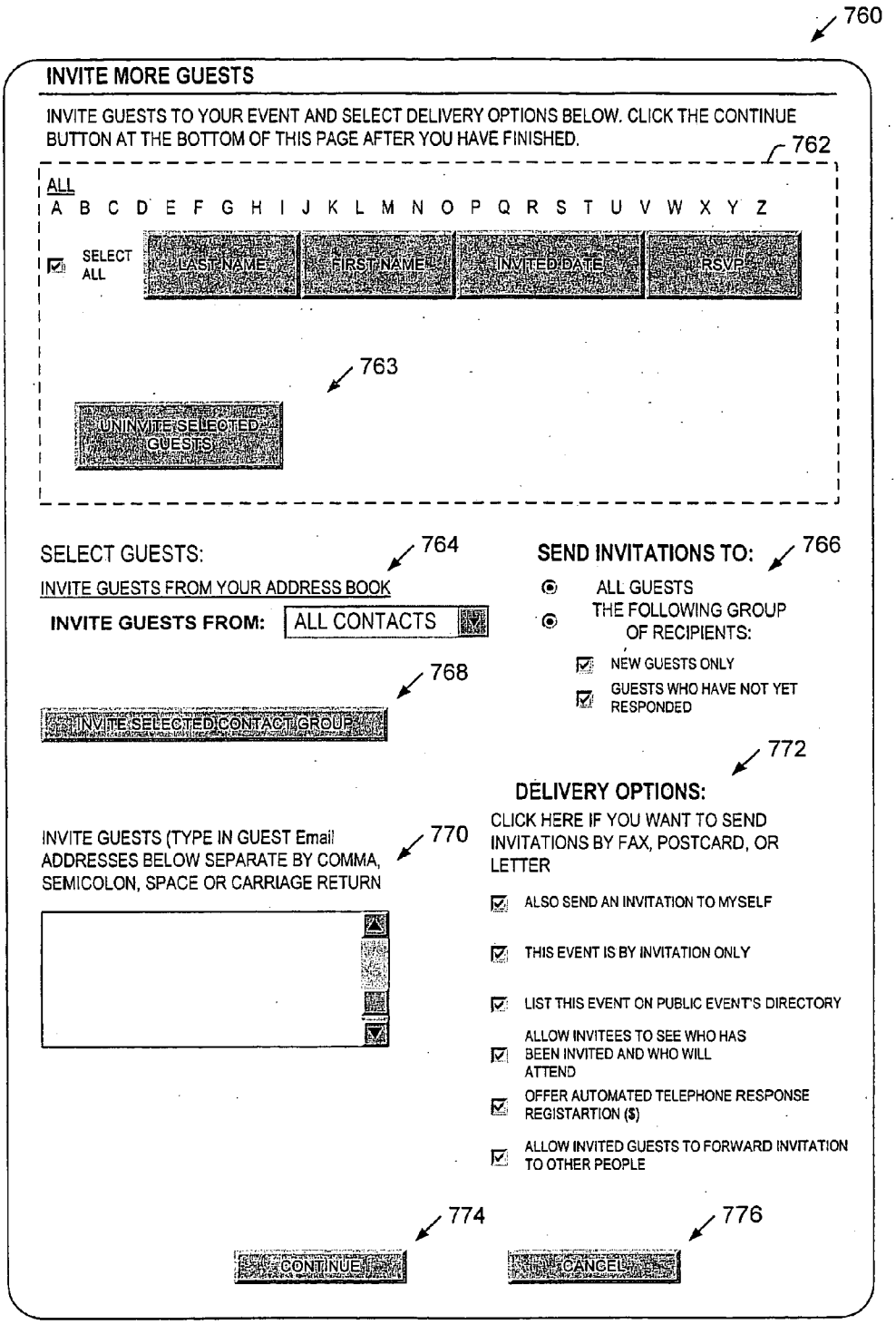

760
INVITE MORE GUESTS
INVITE GUESTS TO YOUR EVENT AND SELECT DELIVERY OPTIONS BELOW. CLICK THE CONTINUE BUTTON AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS PAGE AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED.
762
ALL
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
SELECT ALL
LAST NAME
FIRST NAME
INVITED DATE
RSVP
763
UNINVITE SELECTED GUESTS
SELECT GUESTS:
764
INVITE GUESTS FROM YOUR ADDRESS BOOK
INVITE GUESTS FROM:
ALL CONTACTS
768
INVITE SELECTED CONTACT GROUP
SEND INVITATIONS TO:
766
ALL GUESTS
THE FOLLOWING GROUP OF RECIPIENTS:
NEW GUESTS ONLY
GUESTS WHO HAVE NOT YET RESPONDED
772
DELIVERY OPTIONS:
CLICK HERE IF YOU WANT TO SEND INVITATIONS BY FAX, POSTCARD, OR LETTER
INVITE GUESTS (TYPE IN GUEST Email ADDRESSES BELOW SEPARATE BY COMMA, SEMICOLON, SPACE OR CARRIAGE RETURN
770
ALSO SEND AN INVITATION TO MYSELF
THIS EVENT IS BY INVITATION ONLY
LIST THIS EVENT ON PUBLIC EVENT'S DIRECTORY
ALLOW INVITEES TO SEE WHO HAS BEEN INVITED AND WHO WILL ATTEND
OFFER AUTOMATED TELEPHONE RESPONSE REGISTARTION ($)
ALLOW INVITED GUESTS TO FORWARD INVITATION TO OTHER PEOPLE
774
CONTINUE
776
CANCEL

FIG. 19

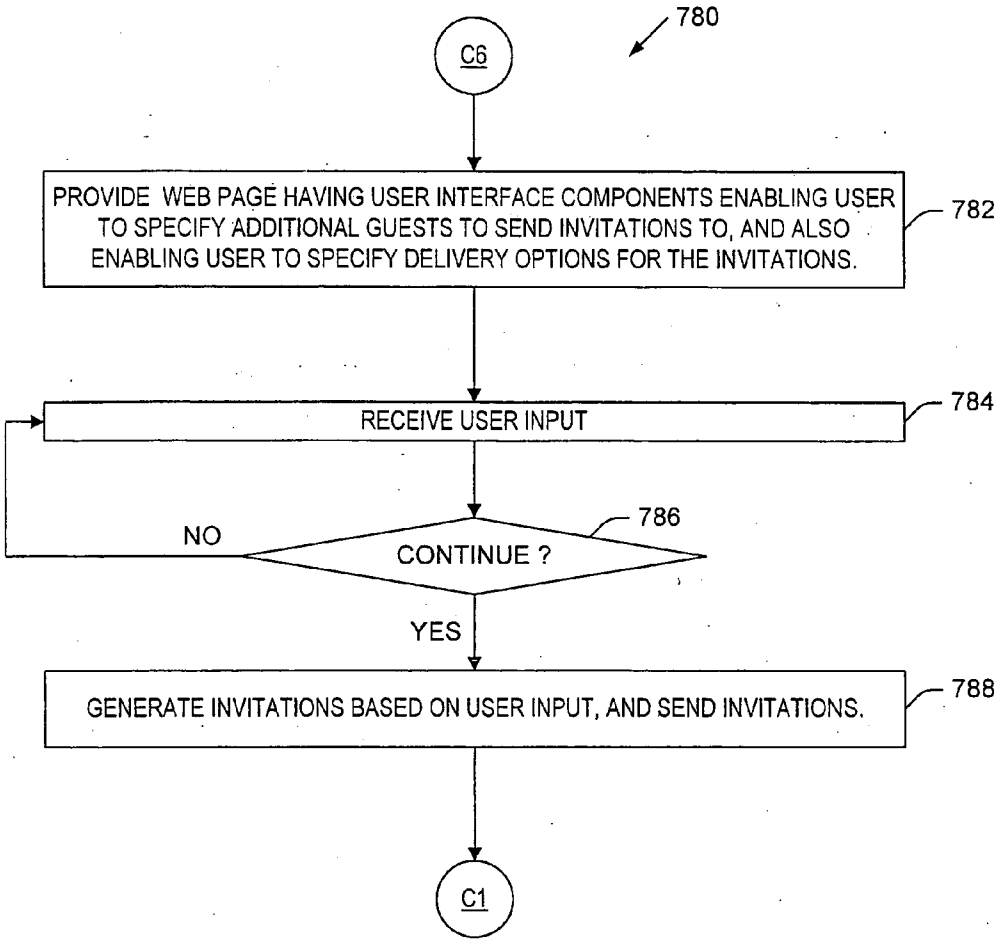

780
C6
PROVIDE WEB PAGE HAVING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO SPECIFY ADDITIONAL GUESTS TO SEND INVITATIONS TO, AND ALSO ENABLING USER TO SPECIFY DELIVERY OPTIONS FOR THE INVITATIONS.
782
RECEIVE USER INPUT
784
786
NO
CONTINUE ?
YES
GENERATE INVITATIONS BASED ON USER INPUT, AND SEND INVITATIONS.
788
C1

FIG. 20

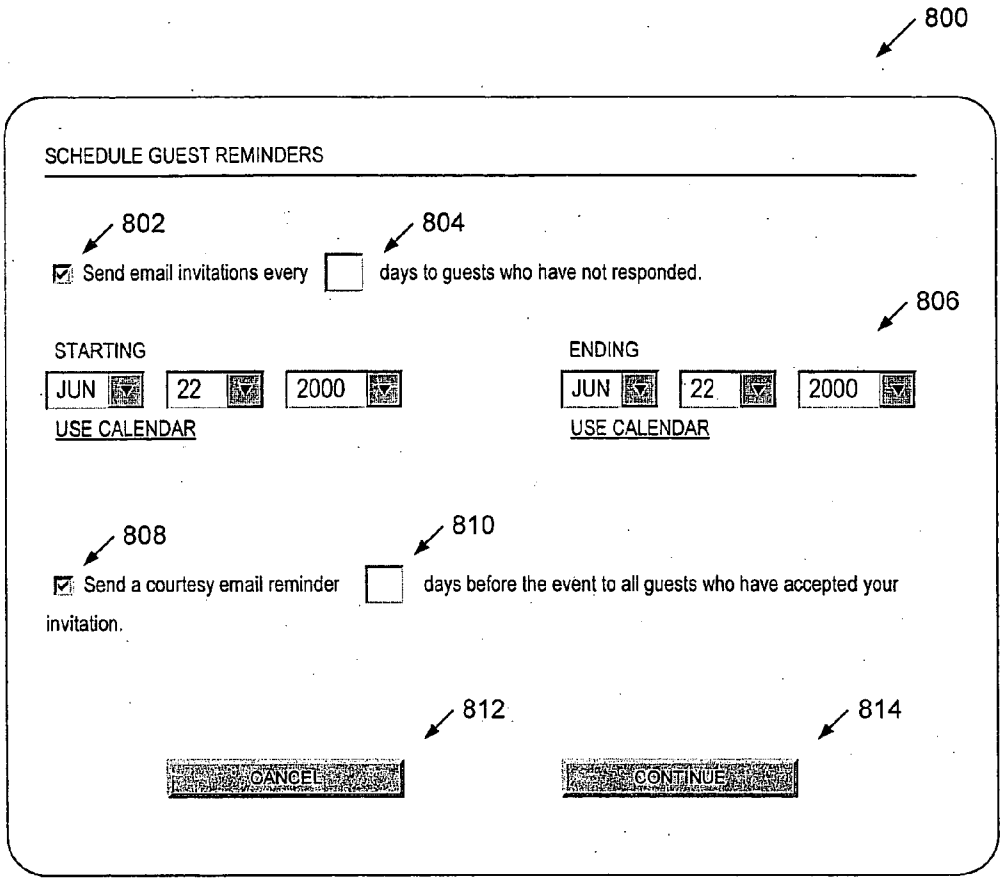

800
SCHEDULE GUEST REMINDERS
802
804
Send email invitations every
days to guests who have not responded.
806
STARTING
ENDING
JUN
22
2000
JUN
22
2000
USE CALENDAR
USE CALENDAR
808
810
Send a courtesy email reminder
days before the event to all guests who have accepted your invitation.
812
814
CANCEL
CONTINUE

FIG. 21

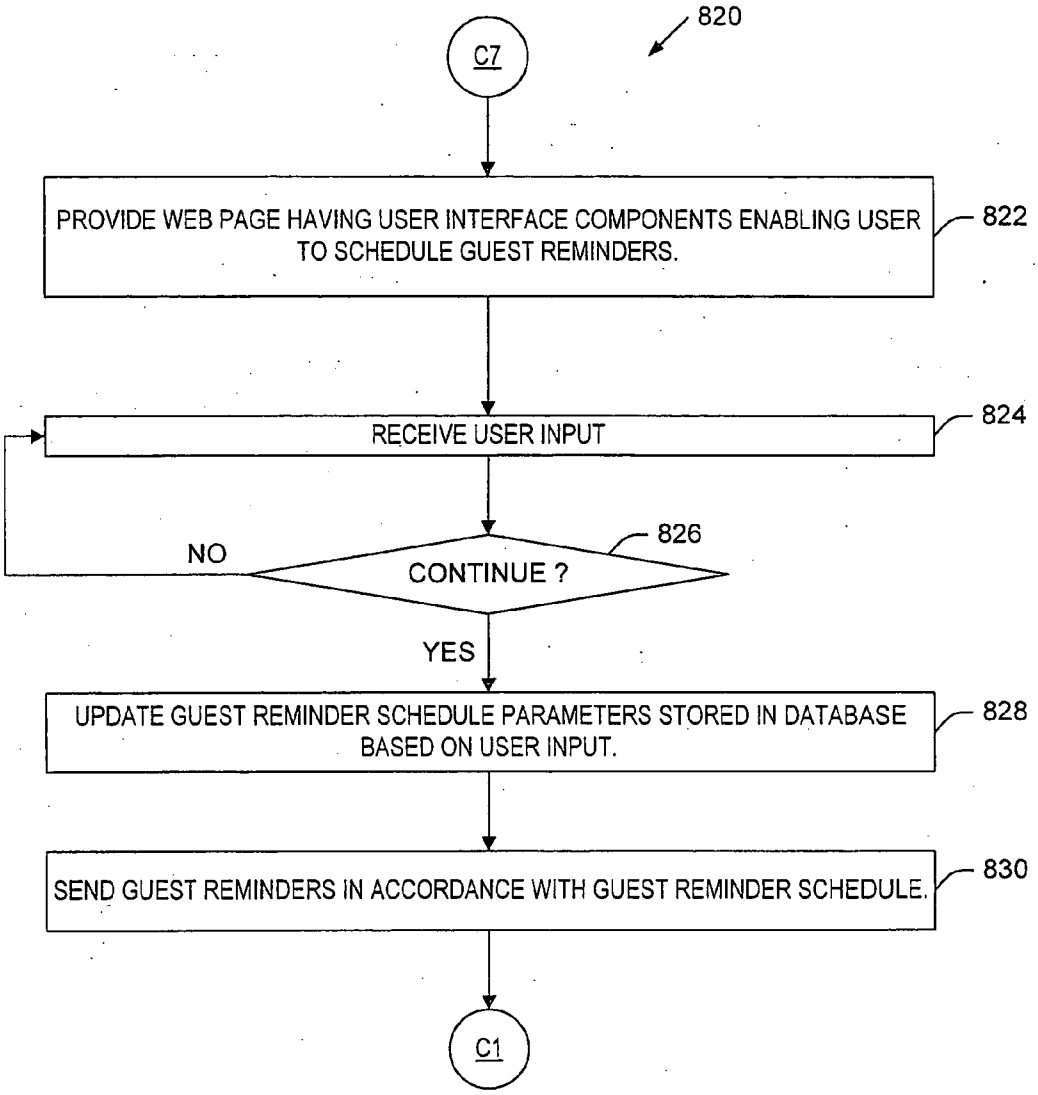

820
C7
PROVIDE WEB PAGE HAVING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO SCHEDULE GUEST REMINDERS.
822
RECEIVE USER INPUT
824
826
NO
CONTINUE ?
YES
UPDATE GUEST REMINDER SCHEDULE PARAMETERS STORED IN DATABASE BASED ON USER INPUT.
828
SEND GUEST REMINDERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH GUEST REMINDER SCHEDULE.
830
C1

FIG. 22

850

SET UP TICKETING

SET UP TICKETING OPTIONS FOR YOUR EVENT BELOW. CLICK THE CONTINUE BUTTON AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED.

854

CONTINUE

852

SELL TICKETS TO YOUR EVENT:

- THIS IS A FREE EVENT
- I WISH TO CHARGE FOR THIS EVENT (FILL OUT THE REST OF THE FORM BELOW)

856

☑ INDICATE THIS TICKET IS "FREE" ON THE INVITATION

CONVENIENCE FEE: A CONVENIENCE FEE WILL BE CHARGED FOR EACH TICKET PROCESSED

858

- PAY THIS CONVENIENCE FEE FROM YOUR PROCEEDS OF TICKET SALES

890

- PASS THIS CONVENIENCE FEE TO YOUR CUSTOMERS

**PURCHASE DEADLINE:** SET DEADLINE FOR DISCOUNTED EARLY TICKET PURCHASES:

ALL TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED BY:

VIEW CALENDAR

892

JUN 22 2000

**TICKETS:** ASSIGN TICKET NAMES, PRICES AND DESCRIPTIONS. CLICK THE CALCULATE BUTTON BELOW TO CREATE THE TICKET

896

894

TICKET NAME: TICKET DESCRIPTION:

898

| | LAST DAY TO BUY | TICKET PRICE | CONVENIENCE FEE | TOTAL CUSTOMER COST | ORDER PROCESSING FEE | YOUR REVENUE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| STD. PRICE | JUN 22, 2000 | 0 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

900 902

SET EARLY PRICING CALCULATE

STATUS [NEW]

910 912

CONTINUE CANCEL

FIG. 23

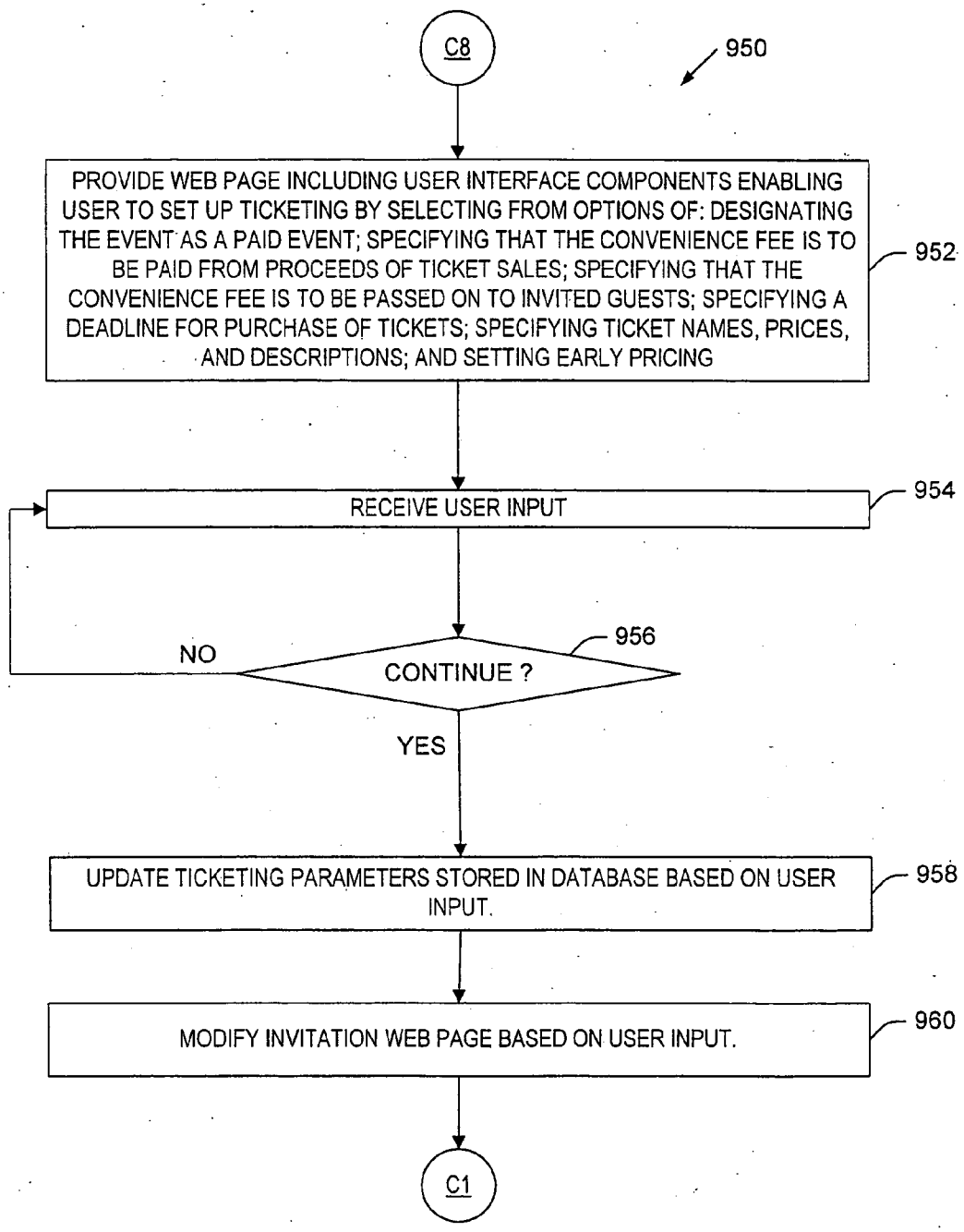

C8
950
PROVIDE WEB PAGE INCLUDING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING USER TO SET UP TICKETING BY SELECTING FROM OPTIONS OF: DESIGNATING THE EVENT AS A PAID EVENT; SPECIFYING THAT THE CONVENIENCE FEE IS TO BE PAID FROM PROCEEDS OF TICKET SALES; SPECIFYING THAT THE CONVENIENCE FEE IS TO BE PASSED ON TO INVITED GUESTS; SPECIFYING A DEADLINE FOR PURCHASE OF TICKETS; SPECIFYING TICKET NAMES, PRICES, AND DESCRIPTIONS; AND SETTING EARLY PRICING
952
RECEIVE USER INPUT
954
NO
CONTINUE ?
956
YES
UPDATE TICKETING PARAMETERS STORED IN DATABASE BASED ON USER INPUT.
958
MODIFY INVITATION WEB PAGE BASED ON USER INPUT.
960
C1

FIG. 24

1000

**EVENT SUMMMARY**

EVENT NAME LUNCH

EVENT URL (SIGN UP FOR THE EVENT HERE): http://www.seeuthere.com/events/id=28972

WHEN: WEDNESDAY, Jun 7, 2000 9:00 AM

WHERE: EVENT PLAZA
10 Main Street
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA 94040

WHAT'S HAPPENING: FUN

EVENT STATUS: COMPLETE

1002

[MODIFY EVENT PAGE]

1004

[SEND INVITATIONS TO GUESTS]

1006

[INVITE MORE GUESTS]

1008

**RSVP STATUS**

| | |
|---|---|
| MAXIMUM ATTENDEES | 1000 |
| TOTAL INVITED | 7 |
| **TOTAL REGISTRANTS** | 0 |
| REGISTERED | 2 |
| MAYBE | 2 |
| DECLINED | 2 |
| NO RESPONSE | 1 |

1010

1012

[SEND REMINDERS] (to all invited guests who have not responded yet)

1014

DONE

FIG. 25

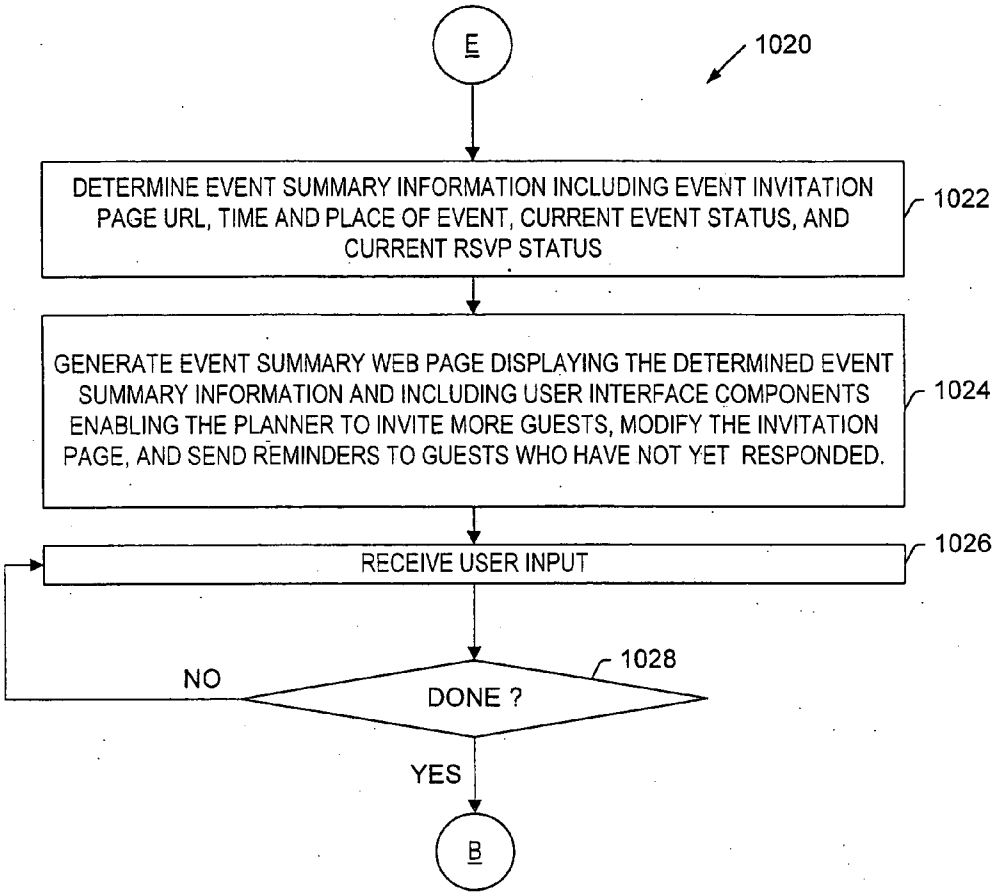

E
1020
DETERMINE EVENT SUMMARY INFORMATION INCLUDING EVENT INVITATION PAGE URL, TIME AND PLACE OF EVENT, CURRENT EVENT STATUS, AND CURRENT RSVP STATUS
1022
GENERATE EVENT SUMMARY WEB PAGE DISPLAYING THE DETERMINED EVENT SUMMARY INFORMATION AND INCLUDING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING THE PLANNER TO INVITE MORE GUESTS, MODIFY THE INVITATION PAGE, AND SEND REMINDERS TO GUESTS WHO HAVE NOT YET RESPONDED.
1024
RECEIVE USER INPUT
1026
1028
NO
DONE ?
YES
B

FIG. 26

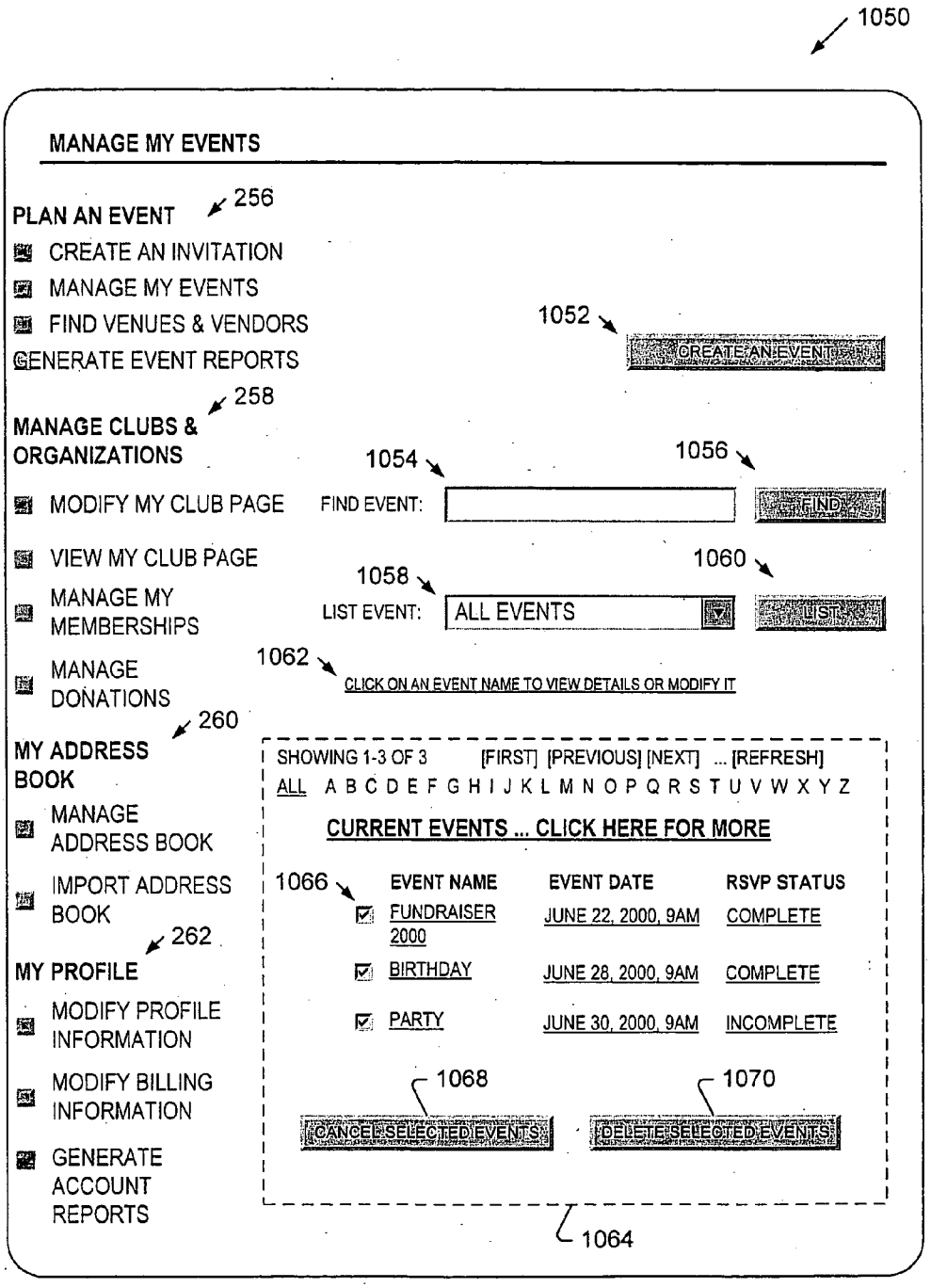

1050
MANAGE MY EVENTS
PLAN AN EVENT
256
CREATE AN INVITATION
MANAGE MY EVENTS
FIND VENUES & VENDORS
GENERATE EVENT REPORTS
1052
CREATE AN EVENT
258
MANAGE CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS
1054
1056
MODIFY MY CLUB PAGE
FIND EVENT:
FIND
VIEW MY CLUB PAGE
1058
1060
MANAGE MY MEMBERSHIPS
LIST EVENT:
ALL EVENTS
LIST
MANAGE DONATIONS
1062
CLICK ON AN EVENT NAME TO VIEW DETAILS OR MODIFY IT
260
MY ADDRESS BOOK
SHOWING 1-3 OF 3 [FIRST] [PREVIOUS] [NEXT] ... [REFRESH]
ALL A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
MANAGE ADDRESS BOOK
CURRENT EVENTS ... CLICK HERE FOR MORE
IMPORT ADDRESS BOOK
1066
EVENT NAME
EVENT DATE
RSVP STATUS
262
MY PROFILE
FUNDRAISER 2000
JUNE 22, 2000, 9AM
COMPLETE
BIRTHDAY
JUNE 28, 2000, 9AM
COMPLETE
MODIFY PROFILE INFORMATION
PARTY
JUNE 30, 2000, 9AM
INCOMPLETE
1068
1070
MODIFY BILLING INFORMATION
CANCEL SELECTED EVENTS
DELETE SELECTED EVENTS
GENERATE ACCOUNT REPORTS
1064

FIG. 27

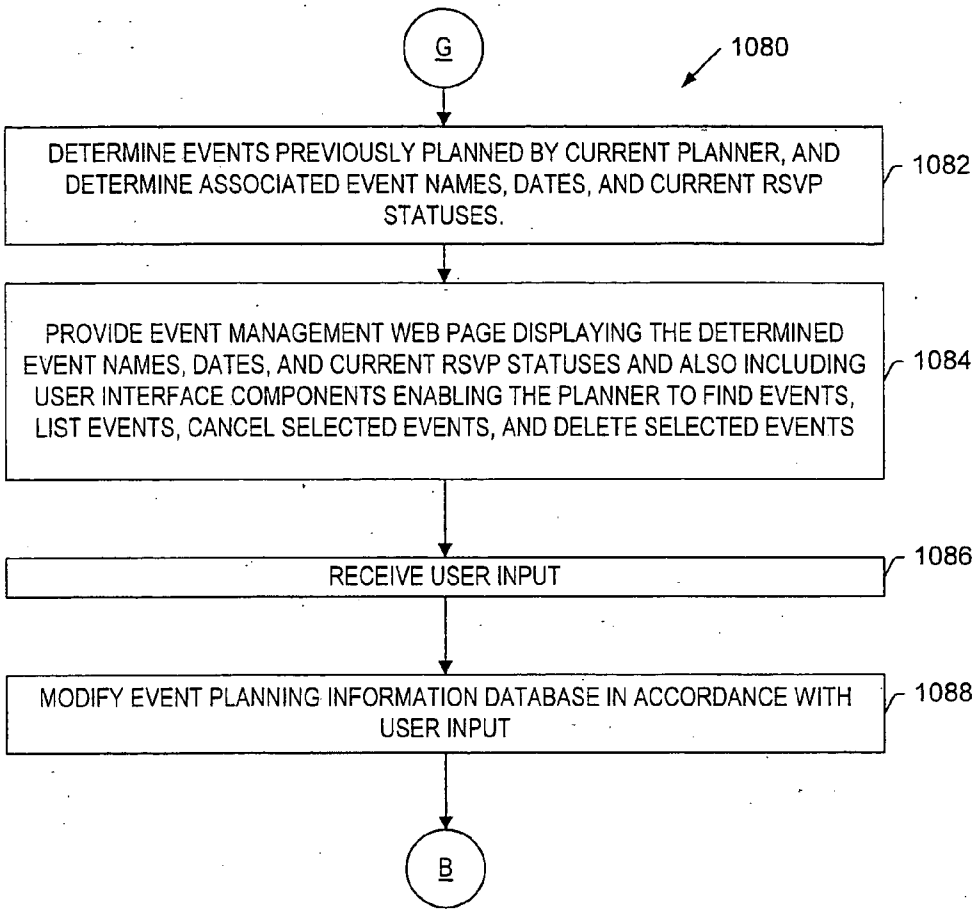

G
1080
DETERMINE EVENTS PREVIOUSLY PLANNED BY CURRENT PLANNER, AND DETERMINE ASSOCIATED EVENT NAMES, DATES, AND CURRENT RSVP STATUSES.
1082
PROVIDE EVENT MANAGEMENT WEB PAGE DISPLAYING THE DETERMINED EVENT NAMES, DATES, AND CURRENT RSVP STATUSES AND ALSO INCLUDING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING THE PLANNER TO FIND EVENTS, LIST EVENTS, CANCEL SELECTED EVENTS, AND DELETE SELECTED EVENTS
1084
RECEIVE USER INPUT
1086
MODIFY EVENT PLANNING INFORMATION DATABASE IN ACCORDANCE WITH USER INPUT
1088
B

FIG. 28

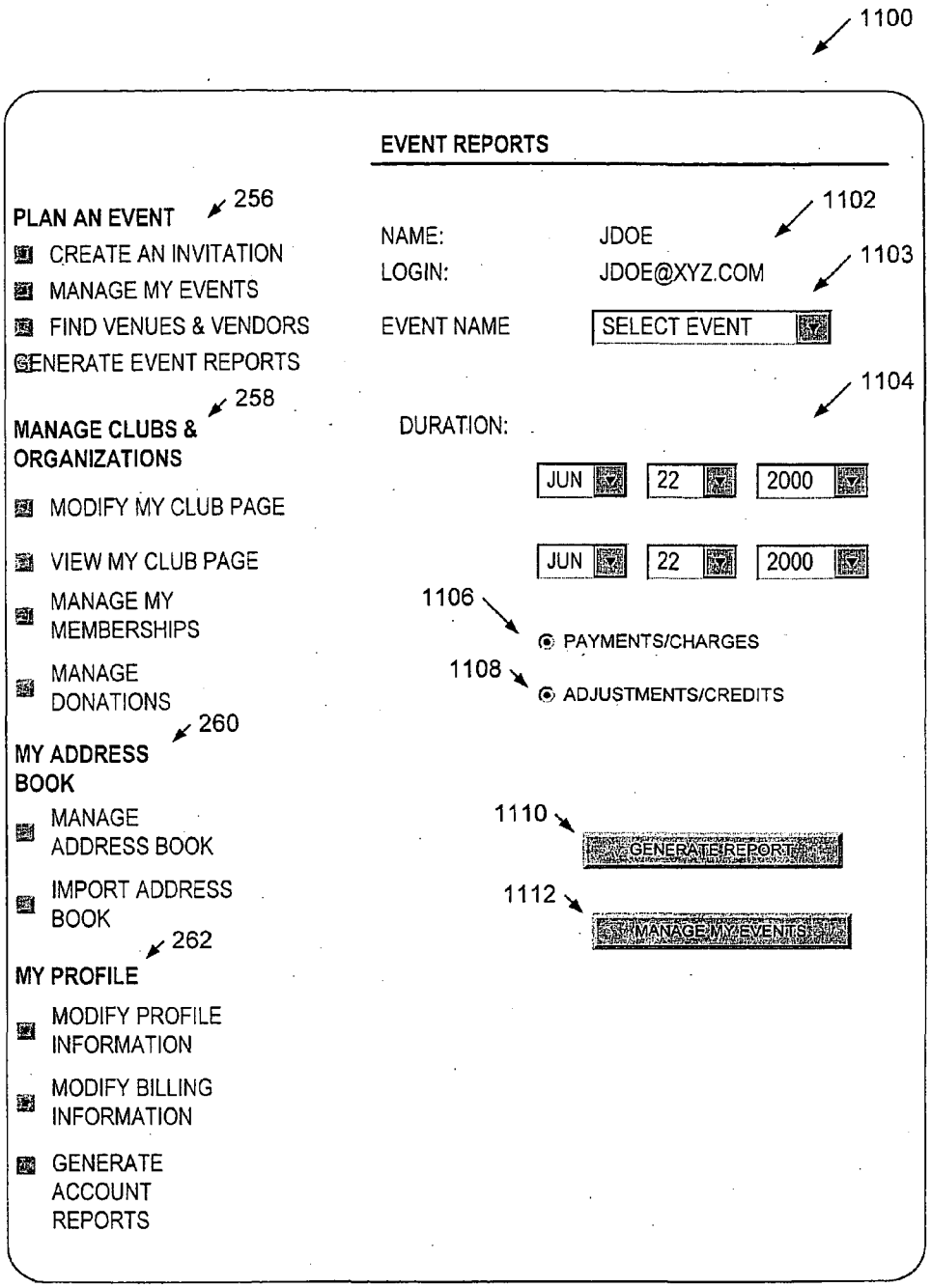

1100
EVENT REPORTS
256
PLAN AN EVENT
CREATE AN INVITATION
MANAGE MY EVENTS
FIND VENUES & VENDORS
GENERATE EVENT REPORTS
258
MANAGE CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS
MODIFY MY CLUB PAGE
VIEW MY CLUB PAGE
MANAGE MY MEMBERSHIPS
MANAGE DONATIONS
260
MY ADDRESS BOOK
MANAGE ADDRESS BOOK
IMPORT ADDRESS BOOK
262
MY PROFILE
MODIFY PROFILE INFORMATION
MODIFY BILLING INFORMATION
GENERATE ACCOUNT REPORTS
1102
NAME:
JDOE
1103
LOGIN:
JDOE@XYZ.COM
EVENT NAME
SELECT EVENT
1104
DURATION:
JUN
22
2000
JUN
22
2000
1106
PAYMENTS/CHARGES
1108
ADJUSTMENTS/CREDITS
1110
GENERATE REPORT
1112
MANAGE MY EVENTS

FIG. 29

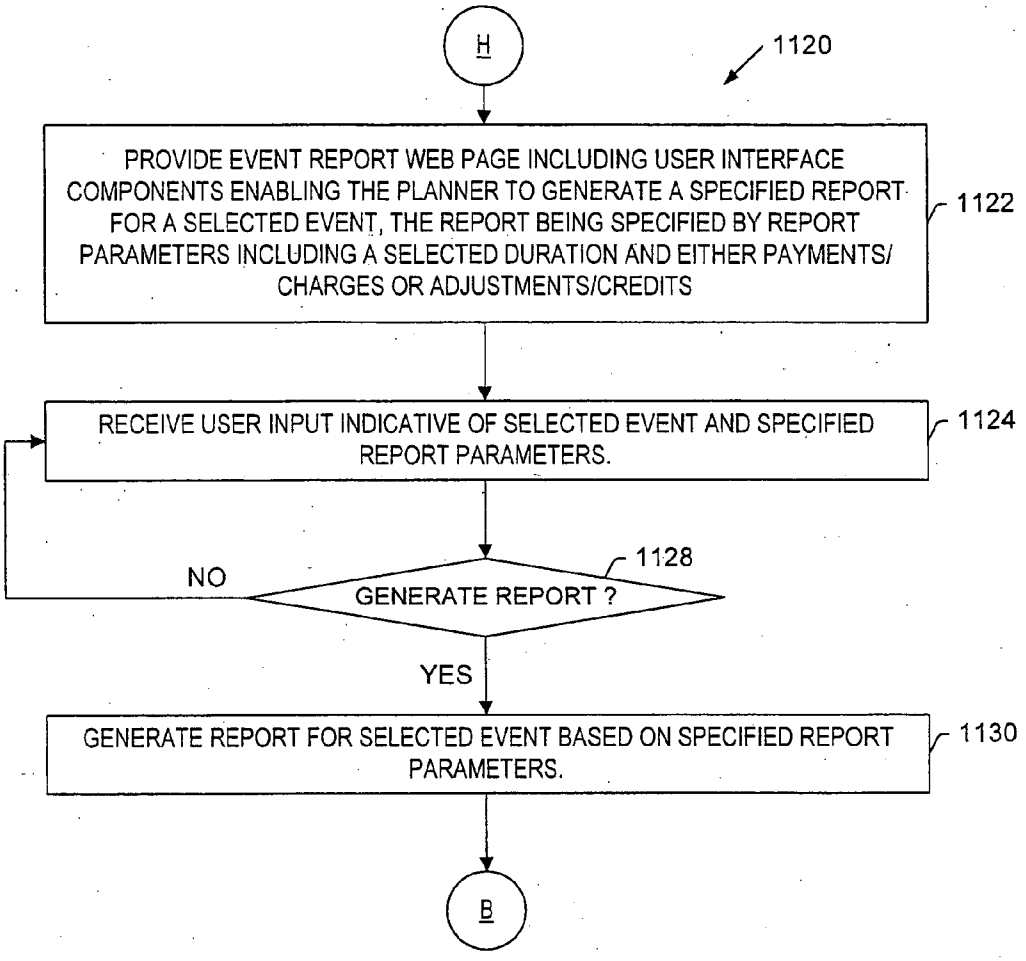

H
1120
PROVIDE EVENT REPORT WEB PAGE INCLUDING USER INTERFACE COMPONENTS ENABLING THE PLANNER TO GENERATE A SPECIFIED REPORT FOR A SELECTED EVENT, THE REPORT BEING SPECIFIED BY REPORT PARAMETERS INCLUDING A SELECTED DURATION AND EITHER PAYMENTS/ CHARGES OR ADJUSTMENTS/CREDITS
1122
RECEIVE USER INPUT INDICATIVE OF SELECTED EVENT AND SPECIFIED REPORT PARAMETERS.
1124
1128
NO
GENERATE REPORT ?
YES
GENERATE REPORT FOR SELECTED EVENT BASED ON SPECIFIED REPORT PARAMETERS.
1130
B

FIG. 30

# EVENT PLANNING SYSTEM

## CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] Reference is made to and priority claimed from U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/140,525, filed Jun. 22, 1999, entitled "TRANSCOMPUTING ARCHITECTURE"

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention:

[0003] The present invention relates generally to computer systems and methods for planning and organizing events, and more specifically to an event planning system providing an interface allowing a user, that is an event planner, to organize events and manage information associated with the events.

[0004] 2. Description of the Prior Art:

[0005] With the advent of computer networking, many different types of scheduling applications have been developed to allow network users and managers to share information indicative of scheduled events and associated time information. Such applications have been primarily developed for use by groups of users (e.g., employees of a corporation) sharing a local area network wherein all of the users communicate with each other using identical, or substantially similar, application programs running on substantially similar computer platforms. As an example Novell, Inc. developed a scheduling application called GROUPWISE. However such systems require execution of custom software on each computer, specialized hardware, and often operate within limited proscribed network environments. As another example, Microsoft Outlook provides for Email communications wherein a first user running Outlook can send an invitation to a second user running Outlook, the invitation requesting that the second user respond to the invitation. Outlook and GROUPWISE provide many useful functions for facilitating the scheduling of planned events. However, such systems fall far short of fulfilling a need in the art for technology that coordinates myriad schedules, and facilitates event planning with people in disparate locations, time zones, and computing environments.

[0006] Another problem associated with conventional event planning systems is that no functions are provided for assisting an event planner in financing the planned event. In many cases, event planners are not able to finance an event (i.e., paying fees for the venue, goods, and services associated with the planned event) without soliciting and receiving RSVP fees from invited guests before the event takes place. Particularly in the case of large and costly events, the tasks associated with planning an event can be very difficult and very time consuming. Such event planning tasks include planning the event, identifying and contracting with venue providers and vendors for the event, inviting guests, soliciting RSVP fees from invitees who respond affirmatively, receiving the RSVP fees, tracking RSVP status of each invited guest, tracking and managing RSVP accounts generated by the RSVP fees, and sending guest reminders. None of the prior art scheduling systems referred to above provide any functions for these event planning tasks.

[0007] What is needed is an event planning system that obviates the need for special software programs to be purchased by end users, and which allows end users to read invitations in any computing environment.

[0008] What is also needed is an event planning system providing an interface allowing an event planner to organize events and manage information associated with the events wherein the event planner and at least some of the invitees communicate via disparate data hosts running on disparate computer platforms.

[0009] What is further needed is an event planning system that facilitates event planning tasks including planning an event, identifying and contracting with venue providers and vendors for the event, inviting guests, soliciting RSVP fees from invitees who respond affirmatively, receiving the RSVP fees, tracking RSVP status of each invited guest, tracking and managing RSVP accounts generated by the RSVP fees, and sending guest reminders.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0010] It is an object of the present invention to provide an event planning system that allows for sending invitations which may be viewed by participating end users in a standard Web Browser in order to obviate the need for special software programs to be purchased by end users, and to allow end users of any CPU type to read their invitations.

[0011] It is also an object of the present invention to provide an event planning system that facilitates event planning tasks including planning an event, identifying and contracting with venue providers and vendors for the event, inviting guests, soliciting RSVP fees from invitees who respond affirmatively, receiving the RSVP fees, tracking RSVP status of each invited guest, tracking and managing RSVP accounts generated by the RSVP fees, and sending guest reminders.

[0012] Briefly, a presently preferred embodiment of the present invention provides an event planning process executed by a server system in a computer network including a plurality of user terminals communicatively coupled with the server system via the network. The process includes the steps of: providing an event planning graphical user interface at a user terminal, the interface enabling a user to plan an event; receiving event information input by the user, the event information indicating a scheduled event, at least one invitee to be invited to the scheduled event, and information indicative of RSVP fees required to attend the scheduled event; providing an invitation to the invitee, the invitation indicating the scheduled event and the RSVP fees, and soliciting a response to the invitation, wherein an affirmative response to the invitation requires a payment as defined by the RSVP fees; receiving RSVP status information including payment information from the invitee; and verifying the payment information.

[0013] The of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal preferably includes generating at least one event planning Web page that is accessible at the user terminal via the network, the event planning Web page including embedded code for providing the event planning graphical user interface.

[0014] The steps of providing an invitation to the invitee and receiving RSVP status information further include: generating an invitation Web page based on the event information, the invitation Web page being accessible via

the network and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling the invitee to respond to the invitation; sending an invitation message to the invitee, the invitation message prompting the invitee to view the invitation Web page; and receiving input provided by the invitee via the invitation Web page, the input provided by the invitee indicating the RSVP status information. In accordance with several aspects of the present invention, the step of sending an invitation message to the invitee may include: sending an Email message via the network to the invitee at a second user terminal, the Email invitation including a link to the invitation Web page; sending a fax invitation message to the invitee via the telephone system, the fax invitation including a universal resource locator for accessing the invitation Web page via the network; and/or sending a post card to the invitee, the post card providing a universal resource locator for accessing the invitation Web page via the network.

[0015] In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, the server system is communicatively coupled with an interactive voice response system that is connected to a plain old telephone system, the interactive voice response system being configured to enable the invitee to provide the RSVP status information in response to the invitation. If selected, the RSVP status information may be received at the server system via the interactive voice response system.

[0016] In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, a plurality of invitation templates are provided, each template being associated with a different type of event and having at least one associated graphical image. Information indicative of a selected one of the templates is received, and an invitation Web page is generated based on the selected template, the invitation Web page displaying the associated graphical image.

[0017] The user may specify that the scheduled event is to be listed in a public events directory. If so, a link to the invitation Web page is provided from a home page Web page that is accessible via the network, the invitation Web page allowing anyone who accesses the invitation Web page to RSVP for the scheduled event.

[0018] The event planning graphical user interface allows the user to indicate a schedule for sending reminders to invited guests, and reminder messages are then to the invitees in accordance with the schedule. The event planning graphical user interface also allows the user to specify a question for the invitee in which case the invitation Web page provides interface components enabling the invitee to provide a response to the question. If allowed by the user, the invitation Web page may be configured to enable other invitees to view the response. If allowed by the user, the invitation Web page may also be configured to enable the invitee to view information indicating other invitees associated with the planned event, and RSVP status information associated with each of the other invitees.

[0019] In accordance with yet another aspect of the present invention, invitees may post messages and comments regarding the event on the invitation Web page, and the user may specify that all of the posted messages and comments may be viewed by all other invitees, or only by the user.

[0020] The event planning graphical user interface also enables the user to specify ticket pricing information indicating a price of at least one type of ticket being offered for admission to the scheduled event. Convenience fees to be paid to administrators of the server system are determined based on sales of the tickets to the invitees. The user may specify whether the convenience fees are to be paid from proceeds of ticket sales, or whether the convenience fees are to be passed on to invitees.

[0021] The user may select an option of viewing event summary information associated with a selected event, the event summary information including RSVP status information associated with each of the invitees for the selected event. The user may also select an option of viewing event report information associated with the selected event, the event report information including RSVP fee status information and convenience fee information associated with each of the invitees for the selected event.

[0022] An important advantage of the event planning system of the present invention is that it allows for sending invitations which may be viewed by participating end users in a standard Web Browser in order to obviate the need for special software programs to be purchased by end users, and to allow end users of any CPU type to read their invitations.

[0023] Another important advantage of the event planning system of the present invention is that it facilitates event planning tasks including identifying and contracting with venue providers and vendors for the event, inviting guests, soliciting RSVP fees from invitees who respond affirmatively, receiving the RSVP fees, tracking RSVP status of each invited guest, tracking and managing RSVP accounts generated by the RSVP fees, and sending guest reminders.

[0024] The foregoing and other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will be apparent from the following detailed description of the preferred embodiment which makes reference to the several figures of the drawing.

## IN THE DRAWING

[0025] **FIG. 1A** is a schematic block diagram illustrating an event planning network system in accordance with the present invention, the system including a server system, and a plurality of user terminals communicatively coupled with the server system via a network;

[0026] **FIG. 1B** is a schematic block diagram illustrating an exemplary general purpose computer system which may be used to implement the server system and each of the user terminals of **FIG. 1A**;

[0027] **FIG. 1C** is a flow diagram generally illustrating an overview of an event planning process executed using the event planning system of **FIG. 1A** in accordance with the present invention;

[0028] **FIG. 2** is a block diagram generally illustrating exemplary tables of information stored in an event planning information database of the server system of **FIG. 1A**;

[0029] **FIG. 3** is a generalized block diagram illustrating a main event planning Web page for providing a graphical user interface (GUI) enabling a user to plan events in accordance with the present invention;

[0030] **FIG. 4** is a generalized block diagram illustrating a personal event planning account Web page in accordance with the present invention;

[0031] **FIG. 5** is a flow diagram illustrating a process of providing a user interface via the main event planning Web page of **FIG. 3**;

[0032] **FIGS. 6 and 7** are flow diagrams illustrating a process of providing a user interface via the personal event planning account Web page of **FIG. 4**;

[0033] **FIG. 8** is a block diagram illustrating a Web page enabling a user to create invitations;

[0034] **FIG. 9** is a block diagram generally illustrating a Web page providing a preview of an invitation, and enabling the user to edit the invitation;

[0035] **FIG. 10** is a flow diagram generally illustrating an invitation creation process in accordance with the present invention;

[0036] **FIGS. 11 and 12** are flow diagrams generally illustrating an invitation previewing and editing process in accordance with the present invention;

[0037] **FIG. 13** is a block diagram generally illustrating an invitation delivery option Web page enabling the user to specify a method of delivering an invitation message to an associated invitee;

[0038] **FIG. 14** is a flow diagram generally illustrating a delivery specification process;

[0039] **FIG. 15** is a generalized block diagram generally illustrating a Web page enabling the user to select options of enabling RSVP by phone, enabling guests to post comments, enabling guest list privacy, and enabling invitation forwarding;

[0040] **FIG. 16** is a flow diagram generally illustrating a process of providing a user interface via the Web page of **FIG. 15**;

[0041] **FIG. 17** is a block diagram generally illustrating a Web page enabling the user to specify questions to be asked of invited guests;

[0042] **FIG. 18** is a flow diagram generally illustrating a process of providing a user interface via the Web page of **FIG. 17**;

[0043] **FIG. 19** is a block diagram generally illustrating a Web page enabling the user to invite more guests to the planned event;

[0044] **FIG. 20** is a flow diagram illustrating a process of providing a user interface via the Web page of **FIG. 19** enabling the user to invite more guests to the planned event;

[0045] **FIG. 21** is a block diagram generally illustrating a Web page enabling the user to schedule the sending of reminders to invited guests;

[0046] **FIG. 22** is a flow diagram generally illustrating a process for enabling an event planner to schedule guest reminders;

[0047] **FIG. 23** is a block diagram generally illustrating a ticket setup Web page generated by the event planning system;

[0048] **FIG. 24** is a flow diagram illustrating a process of generating the ticket set up Web page;

[0049] **FIG. 25** is a block diagram generally illustrating an event summary Web page provided by the event planning system;

[0050] **FIG. 26** is a flow diagram generally illustrating an event summary generating process;

[0051] **FIG. 27** is a block diagram generally illustrating an event management Web page for displaying a list of events previously planned by the user and enabling the user to manage information associated with selected events;

[0052] **FIG. 28** is a flow diagram illustrating an event management process in accordance with the present invention;

[0053] **FIG. 29** is a block diagram generally illustrating an event reporting Web page enabling the user to select from a list of events previously planned by the user, and to generate an event report associated with a selected event; and

[0054] **FIG. 30** is a flow diagram generally illustrating an event management process in accordance with the present invention.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0055] **FIG. 1A** shows a schematic block diagram illustrating an event planning network system at **10** in accordance with the present invention. The system **10** includes an event planning server system **11** having: a server computer system **12** for executing an event planning application **14** that is operative to enable a user to plan an event, generate and send invitations, track RSVP status, and manage RSVP fee account information as further explained below; an event planning information database **16** communicatively coupled with the server computer system **12** as shown by a line **18** for storing event planning information; a memory unit **20** communicatively coupled with the server computer system **12** as shown by a line **22**, and providing for storage of a directory of graphical indicia including image data associated with each of a plurality of images in accordance with the present invention, the images to be selected by users for creating invitation Web pages as further explained below; and an interactive voice response system (IVR system) **24** communicatively coupled with the computer system **12** as shown by a line **25**, the IVR system enabling an invited guest to RSVP, for a planned event using a telephone as further explained below. The system **10** further includes: at least one user terminal **26** communicatively coupled with the server system **11** via a computer network **28**; a payment processor system **30** communicatively coupled with the server system **11** via a communication link **31**; and at least one telephone **32** communicatively coupled with the IVR system **24** of the event planning server system via a plain old telephone system (POTS) **33**. In one embodiment, the network **28** is an internet protocol (IP) network. In an alternative embodiment of the present invention, the network **28** is a local are network (LAN). Also in an embodiment, the communication link **31** is a T1 line. In an alternative embodiment, the payment processor system **30** is communicatively coupled with the event planning server system **11** via the network **28**.

[0056] **FIG. 1B** shows a schematic block diagram illustrating an exemplary general purpose computer system at **34** which may be used to implement the event planning server system **11** and each of the user terminals **26** (**FIG. 1A**). The

computer system **34** includes: a processing unit **36** communicatively coupled to a bus **38**; a system memory unit **44**, such as a hard disk or other memory storage device, communicatively coupled to the processing unit via the bus; a display unit **45**, such as a cathode ray tube or a flat panel display, communicatively coupled to the bus for displaying graphical calendar information as further explained below; an input/output unit (I/O unit) **46**, such as a keyboard or mouse, coupled with the processing unit via the bus, and providing an interface for the user to provide input; and a modem **48** coupled with the bus, and providing communication with remote devices via the network **28 (FIG. 1A)**.

[**0057**] As further explained below, the information stored in the database **16 (FIG. 1A)** includes event planning information associated with each of a plurality of events. The event planning information generally includes: event information indicative of a name, time, date, and location for a planned event; invitee information including information indicative of addresses of the invited guests (e.g., home and business Email addresses, home and business postal addresses, home and business FAX numbers, and a preferred method of sending invitations); invitation format information; and paid RSVP requirements indicative of RSVP fees required to be paid by each invited guest in order to respond affirmatively to the invitation. The event planning information stored in the database **16** is further explained below.

[**0058**] In one embodiment of the present invention, the system memory unit **44** of the user terminal **26 (FIG. 1A)** stores computer readable instructions for implementing a viewing application such as a Web browser (e.g., Netscape Navigator, Microsoft Explorer, or any other Web browser application) for viewing Web pages such as Web pages that are accessible via the network. Also in the described embodiment, the event planning application **14 (FIG. 1A)** is operative to provide an event planning graphical user interface (GUI) on the display unit **45** by packaging predetermined Web pages having user interface components encoded therein for transmission to the user terminal **26** via the network **28 (FIG. 1A)** and for display on the display unit **45** or one of the user terminals **26 (FIG. 1B)**.

[**0059**] The user of the user terminal **26 (FIG. 1A)** may interface using GUI components provided on the event planning Web pages via the I/O unit **46 (FIG. 1B)**, such as a keyboard and mouse, to provide user input by activating various buttons and checkboxes, and by entering and editing text as required and prompted by the interface components as further explained below. In the below-described embodiment of the present invention, each of a plurality of interface functions provided by each of the event planning Web pages is implemented using a corresponding interface component selected from a variety of components including radio buttons, checkboxes, drop-down lists, spin buttons, editable text boxes, non-editable text boxes, etc. However, as is well understood by one of ordinary skill in the art, each of the interface components of each of the event planning Web pages described below may alternatively be implemented using other types of interface components. An event planning process of the present invention is generally described below with reference to flow diagrams while a preferred embodiment of the present invention is depicted by block diagrams illustrating Web pages for displaying event planning interfaces, event invitations, and event information status reports in accordance with the present invention.

[**0060**] **FIG. 1C** shows a flow diagram generally illustrating an event planning process at **60** executed using the event planning system **10 (FIG. 1A)** in accordance with the present invention. The process **60** begins with step **62** in which the event planning server system **11 (FIG. 1A)** provides an event planning graphical user interface (GUI) enabling the user to plan an event. In the preferred embodiment, the event planning GUI is provided by generating a series of Web pages which are accessed by users of the terminals **26 (FIG. 1A)** and displayed via Web browser type applications as explained above. The event planning GUI prompts the user to specify: event information including information indicative of a name, time, date, and location for a planned event; invited guest information including information indicative of addresses of the invited guests (e.g., home and business Email addresses, home and business postal addresses, home and business FAX numbers, and a preferred method of sending invitations); invitation format information specifying graphical images and text to be displayed on invitations; paid RSVP requirements indicative of RSVP fees required to be paid by each invited guest in order to respond affirmatively to the invitation; invitation delivery mode information specifying preferred delivery methods such as delivery via an Email message having a link to an invitation or event Web page (e.g., a Web page), a FAX invitation, or a post card invitation; and allowable RSVP methods indicating procedures by which an invitee may RSVP for the planned event such as via interaction with the invitation Web page, or IVR registration using the IVR system **24 (FIG. 1A)**.

[**0061**] From step **62**, the process proceeds to step **64** in which the event planning server system **11 (FIG. 1A)** receives event planning user input defining the planned event, and specifying information associated with the event including a list of invitees, invitations procedures associated with each of the invitees, paid RSVP requirements, and allowable RSVP methods. As further explained below, the paid RSVP requirements generally define ticket sales offering for attending the event. The user may offer several different categories or tickets for the vent, each ticket costing a different amount.

[**0062**] In step **66**, the server computer system executing the event planning application **14 (FIG. 1A)** creates records associated with portions of the event planning information (including the planned event, the associated list of invitees, specified invitations, procedures for sending the invitations, paid RSVP requirements, and allowable RSVP methods), and stores the records in the event planning information database **16** as further explained below. From step **66**, the event planning process **60** proceeds to step **68** in which the server computer system generates and sends the specified invitations to the specified invitees in accordance with the associated invitation procedures, each invitation soliciting a response and specifying the paid RSVP requirements, and allowable RSVP methods. In one embodiment of the present invention, the event planning server system **11 (FIG. 1A)** generates an invitation Web page based on the event planning user input received in step **62** as explained above, and sends Email message invitations to associated invitees. The Email message invitations include links to the associated invitation Web page with which the invitees may interact to RSVP for the event. In accordance with further aspects of the present invention, the user may enable an invitee to forward the invitation to additional invitees who may also

RSVP for the event by linking to the invitation Web page. Also, the user may select an option of posting the invitation Web page in a list of public events at the event planning server system **11 (FIG. 1A)** thereby enabling any user to access the invitation Web page and RSVP for the event. In accordance with another aspect of the present invention, the user may simply donate an amount to an organization without actually requesting to attend the event.

[**0063**] In step **70**, the event planning server system provides user interface components enabling invitees to respond to the invitations in accordance with the specified paid RSVP requirements. In one embodiment, the invitation Web page provides a GUI via embedded HTML commands enabling an invited guest to RSVP for the vent by paying for a selected ticket in accordance with the RSVP requirements specified by the user. The invitation Web page includes user interface components enabling the invitee to select from responses including yes, no, and maybe. If the selected response is "yes", then the invitee will be required to pay to RSVP for the event by online credit card payment processing or any other online payment processing method. Also, if IVR response is enabled by the user, then the IVR system **24 (FIG. 1A)** provides an alternative user interface enabling invitees to respond to the invitations in accordance with the paid RSVP requirements.

[**0064**] In step **72**, the event planning server system **11 (FIG. 1A)** receives invitee user input indicative of a response to the invitation, and including payment information if the response is affirmative. An invitee may interface with the user interface components provided by the invitation Web page to select from responses including yes, no, and maybe. If the selected response is "yes", then the invitee will be required to pay to RSVP for the event by paying for selected ticket(s) via online credit card payment processing or any other online payment processing method. In one embodiment, the server computer system **11 (FIG. 1A)** links to the payment processor system **30 (FIG. 1A)** to process and Verify a credit card transaction in accordance with well known methods. Note that if IVR RSVP response is enabled, the invitee may also RSVP via the IVR system **24 (FIG. 1A)** using a telephone hand set by following IVR response instructions in accordance with well known methods. In step **74**, the event planning server system **11 (FIG. 1A)** creates records in the database to store the response information, and RSVP fee information associated with the particular invitee. The event planning server system creates and stores event status information including RSVP status information and RSVP fee account status information for all invited guests associated with each planned event. As further explained below, transaction fees are exacted by the event planning system in accordance with convenience fee options released by the user. Therefore, the event planning server system tracks and stores transaction fee account status information as well as RSVP fee account status information.

[**0065**] From step **74**, the process proceeds to step **78** to provide user interface components enabling the user to access and manage RSVP status information associated with the event, the account status information including RSVP status information indicative of responses to the invitations, current RSVP fee account status information, and current transaction fee account status information. In the preferred embodiment, the event planning server system **11 (FIG. 1A)** provides event summary Web pages providing a graphical user interface via embedded HTML commands and enabling the user to access and manage the RSVP status information. In step **80**, the event planning server system **11** receives event status inquiry input from the user in response to the event summary Web pages displayed to the user at the user terminal via a Web browser application. In step **82**, the server system generates an event status report for the user, the event status report indicating RSVP status, RSVP fee account status information, and transaction fee account status information for the selected planned event. Further aspects of this step are described in detail below.

[**0066**] **FIG. 2** shows a block diagram generally illustrating exemplary tables of information of the event planning database **16 (FIG. 1A)** in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. The below described tables provide an overview of one approach to implementing a database for managing event planning information in accordance with the event planning process described herein. It will be apparent to one skilled in the art that a database for managing the event planning information may be implemented using a wide variety of different table structures. In one embodiment, the database **130** generally includes: an event table **132** including a plurality of event records each being associated with an event planned by an associated user, each event record including information associated with the planned event as further explained below; an RSVP table **134** including a plurality of RSVP records each being associated with one of the guests invited to an associated event; a participant table **136** including a plurality of participant records each being associated with one of the guests invited to an associated event, each participant record including RSVP status information indicating whether an invitation has been sent to the invitee and whether the invitee has accepted or declined the invitation; a contact table **138** including a plurality of contact records each being associated with a particular contact, or potential invitee, known to an associated user, the contact records being used for a variety of functions including providing an address book for the user; a contact method table **140** including a plurality of contact method records each being associated with a particular portion of contact information of the contact table **138** and indicating a preferred method of delivering invitations to the associated contact; a fee structure table **142** including a plurality of fee structure records each being associated with a particular ticket category for an associated event; an event fee structure table **142** including a plurality of event fee structure records each being associated with a particular ticket being offered for an associated event; a user table **144** including a plurality of user records each being associated with a planner of an associated event; a fee structure table **146** including a plurality of fee structure records each being associated with a particular ticket category (e.g., member ticket, non-member ticket, gold member ticket) for an associated event; a participant payment table **134** including a plurality of participant payment records each being associated with a particular invited guest who has elected to RSVP for the associated event by paying the required fee for a particular ticket; and a credit transaction table **150** including a plurality of credit transaction records each being associated with a particular credit transaction for an buying a particular ticket for associated event.

[**0067**] Each record of the event table **132** generally includes: information indicative of a name, time, date, and location for a planned event; invitation format information

specifying graphical images and text to be displayed on invitations for the event; paid RSVP requirements indicative of RSVP fees required to be paid by each invited guest for specified ticket(s) in order to respond affirmatively to the invitation; and invitation delivery mode information specifying preferred delivery methods such as delivery via an Email message having a link to an invitation Web page, a FAX invitation, or a post card invitation. Each record of the participant table **136** generally includes: information indicative of whether an invitation has been sent to the associated invitee; and information indicative of how the associated invitee has responded to the invitation (e.g., accept, decline, maybe, etc.).

[**0068**] Each event fee structure record of the table **146** may include information indicative of an "early ticket price", a regular ticket price, and a last day for purchase of the associated ticket at the early ticket price.

[**0069**] **FIG. 3** shows a generalized block diagram illustrating a main Web page at **200** for providing a main event planning graphical user interface Web page at a user terminal. The Web page **200** provides a plurality of log-in graphical user interface (GUI) components **201** at the user terminal enabling the user, or event planner, to log-in to the event planning Web site. The log-in components include: an Email address text box **202** enabling the user to enter a log-in name which, in one embodiment of the present invention, is the user's Email address; a password text box **204** enabling the user to enter or define a password; a log-in button **206** enabling the user to log-in after entering his or her Email address and password; and a sign-up button **208** enabling the user to register with the event planning system after having entered an Email address and password as described above. In one embodiment, the Web page **200** is implemented as a hypertext document. The Web page **200** is transmitted from the server system **11 (FIG. 1A)** to one of the user terminals for display by a Web browser application at the user terminal. The main event planning Web page **200** further includes: a text box **210** enabling a pre-registered user to enter a publicly listed event to be searched for, and a "go" button **212** enabling the user to query the server to determine information associated with the event entered in the text box **210**; a list public events button **214** which, when activated, enables a function for displaying a list of public events which any user may attend as further explained below; a "list organizations" button **216** enabling the user to activate a function for displaying a list of organizations which the user may join; a button **218** enabling the user to activate a function for joining a club as further explained below; a featured events, display area **222** for displaying an anchor (active text) **224** which, when activated by the user, displays information associated with specific featured public events, that the user may attend; an invitation template display area **230** for displaying a plurality of different types of invitation templates which the user may use to design an invitation in the course of planning an event as further explained below; a custom invitation button **234** enabling the user to activate a function for creating a custom invitation in the course of planning an event; a "sell tickets" button **236** enabling the user to activate a function for defining ticket sales offerings for a planned event as further explained below; a "track RSVP" button **238** enabling the user to activate a function for displaying RSVP status information associated with events previously planned by the user; a "start a club" button **240** enabling the user to activate functions for creating a club which other users may join by paying dues or fees (if any) as defined by the club organizer; a button **242** enabling the user to activate functions for managing membership and dues associated with members of a previously established club which other users have joined; and a button **244** for finding venues and vendors which the user may enlist to supply or provide a venue, goods, or services for an event in the course of planning an event. In one embodiment of the present invention, a user logging on to the event planning Web site who is not yet registered may select from the GUI components **210** through **244** without signing up for the services of the event planning system. In this embodiment, the user may activate the components **210** through **244**, and the system displays graphical indicia associated with demonstration functions corresponding with the activated buttons so that the user may get an idea of the type of functions and services offered by the event planning system without actually signing up. Further in this embodiment, the user will be provided with another opportunity to sign up for the services of the event planning system after sampling the types of services offered.

[**0070**] **FIG. 4** shows a generalized block diagram illustrating a personal event planning account Web page at **250** in accordance with the present invention. In one embodiment, the personal event planning Web page **250** provides a plurality of GUI components enabling the user to plan and manage information associated with that event, manage clubs and organizations, manage a personal address book, and manage profile information associated with the user. The event planning Web page **250** includes: a plurality of event planning buttons **256** which may be implemented as an anchor for initializing a process of creating an invitation in the course of planning an event, a button for initializing a process of managing information associated with previously planned events, a button for generating event reports associated with previously planned events, and a button for initializing a process of displaying and choosing from venues and vendors in the course of planning an event; a plurality of buttons **258** for managing clubs and organizations including modifying a club page, viewing a club page, managing memberships, and managing donations; a plurality of buttons **260** for initializing functions for managing an address book including a list of contacts known to the user; a plurality of buttons **262** for initializing functions for managing a user's profile including buttons for initializing processes of modifying profile information, modifying billing information and generating account reports as further explained below. The personal event planning account Web page **250** further includes: a display area **252** for displaying information associated with a limited number of current or upcoming events previously planned by the user; a past events display area **254** for displaying information associated with each of a limited number of past events that were previously planned by the user and are now past; the invitation templates display area **230** as explained above; and the "custom invitation" button **234** as explained above. Further aspects of the GUI components and associated functions are further explained below.

[**0071**] **FIG. 5** shows a flow diagram illustrating a process at **270** for generating and displaying the main event planning Web page **200 (FIG. 3)**. The process **270** begins with step **272** in which the event planning server system **11 (FIG. 1A)** provides user interface components enabling the user to select from options including listing public events, listing

organizations, joining a club, selecting featured events, selling tickets, starting a club, managing membership and dues for previously defined clubs, finding venues and vendors, and logging in for event planning options. The process **270** is initiated in response to the user linking to and generating the Web page **200 (FIG. 3)**. In step **274**, the event planning system receives user input indicating a selected one of the options provided by the Web page **200 (FIG. 3)**. It is then determined at **276** whether the user has entered a user name and password at **202** and **204 (FIG. 3)**.

[**0072**] If the user selects any of the GUI components **210-244** of the Web page **200 (FIG. 3)** without logging in, the process proceeds to step **278** to provide demonstration functions for demonstrating the services of the event planning system, after which the user may log in as determined at **276**. If it is determined at **276** that the user has entered a user name and password, the process proceeds to step **282** to determine whether the user has activated the sign-up button **208 (FIG. 3)** or the login button **206 (FIG. 3)**. If the user has activated the sign-up button, the process proceeds to step **284** in which the server system provides GUI components enabling the user to request as a member, and allowing the user to select from a plurality of membership plans including a free plan, and several different paid membership plans. In one embodiment, the prices of the paid membership plans vary based on an anticipated number of people who will attend planned events, and also based on whether the user wishes to send fax and post card invitations as further explained below, and whether the user wishes to enable invitees to RSVP via the IVR system **24 (FIG. 1A)**. In step **286**, the server system receives user input including user registration information (e.g. name, billing, address, Email address, credit card information, etc.), information indicating a selected membership plan, and payment information (e.g. credit card information) if the selected membership plan is a paid plan. In step **290**, the server system processes the registration information and verifies the payment information, if appropriate. In step **292**, the server system creates new records for the new user and stores the records in the data base **16 (FIG. 1A)** after which the system verifies the user name and password at **294** and then proceeds to "B" **(FIG. 6)** to display the personal event planning Web page **250 (FIG. 4)**.

[**0073**] **FIG. 6** shows a flow diagram illustrating a process at **300** for providing the personal event planning account Web page **250 (FIG. 4)**. The process **300** begins with a step **302** in which the event planning system displays information associated with events previously planned by the user including a limited number of current (upcoming) events, and a limited number of past events. In step **304**, the event planning system provides interface components enabling the user to select from event planning and management options including displaying further information associated with a selected one of the displayed events, displaying additional current events, displaying additional past events, creating an invitation using a template, creating a custom invitation, managing previously planned events, generating event reports, finding venues and vendors, modifying personal profile information, modifying billing information and generating account reports. In step **306**, the event planning system receives user input indicating a selected one of the options provided in steps **302** and **304**. From step **306**, the process proceeds to **308** at which it is determined whether the option for creating an invitation using a selected one of the templates **232 (FIG. 4)** has been selected, and if so, the process proceeds to "C" (to **FIG. 10**). It is then determined at **310** whether the user has selected the option of creating a custom invitation by activating the button **234 (FIG. 4)** of the personal event planning account Web page, and if so, the process proceeds to "D" (to **FIG. 10**). It is determined at **312** whether the user has selected one of the displayed events current or past events displayed in areas **252** and **254** of **FIG. 4** previously planned by the user and displayed on the personal event planning account Web page **250 (FIG. 4)**. If it is determined at **312** that the user has selected one of the displayed events, the process proceeds to "E" (to **FIG. 26**). Otherwise, the process proceeds to "F" (to **FIG. 7**).

[**0074**] **FIG. 7** shows a flow diagram generally illustrating further steps at **320** of the process **300 (FIG. 6)**. The steps at **320** proceed from "F" (from **FIG. 6**) to **322** at which the event planning system determines whether the user has selected the option of displaying additional current events, and if so, the process proceeds to "G" (to **FIG. 28**). It is determined at **324** whether the user has selected the option of managing previously planned events, and if so, the process proceeds to "G". It is then determined at **326** whether the user has selected the option of generating event reports, and if so, the process proceeds to "H" (to **FIG. 30**). If the user has not selected any of the above options, the process proceeds back to "B" (to **FIG. 6**).

[**0075**] **FIG. 8** shows a block diagram illustrating an invitation creation Web page **350** that is generated by the event planning server system **11 (FIG. 1A)** in response to the user activating either one of the invitation template buttons **232 (FIG. 3)** or the custom invitation button **234 (FIG. 3)** of the main event planning Web page. The Web page **350** includes: a plurality of invitation image display areas including a header image display area **352**, a main image display area **354**, and a footer image display area **356** each for displaying an associated graphical image selected by the user for the associated invitation. If the invitation creation Web page **350** is generated in response to the user selecting one of the invitation templates **232 (FIG. 3)**, then each of the image display areas **352**, **354** and **356** will have an associated template graphical image displayed therein. The invitation creation Web page **350** further includes: an event name text box **358** enabling the user to enter a name for the planned event; a salutation text box **360** that defaults to text stating "You have been invited to . . .", and enabling the user to enter any salutation for inviting guests to the event; interface components **362** enabling the user to define a date and time for the planned event; duration interface components **364** enabling the user to specify a duration in minutes, days or open-ended for the planned event; location interface component **366** enabling the user to define a location for the planned event; and check boxes **368** which, when activated, provide the capability of providing an online map to the invited guest for the event; a check box **369** which, when activated, enables a capability of providing online directions to the invited guests for the event; a text box **370** enabling the user to enter Email addresses for invited guests who are to receive invitations via Email; a text box **372** enabling the user to enter text indicative of the nature of the event, such as "dinner and fund raiser"; a check box **374** which, when activated by the user, allows for invited guests to RSVP via telephone as further explained below; a check box **376** which, when activated, provides for the planned event to be listed in the public events directory

which is accessible to all users via the main event planning Web page **200 (FIG. 3)** by activating the list public events button **214 (FIG. 3)**; a text box **378** enabling the user to enter a maximum number of attendees who may attend the planned event; and a continue button **380** which provides for the invitation creation Web page **350** to be sent from the user terminal **26 (FIG. 1A)** to the event planning server system via the network.

[**0076**] **FIG. 9** shows a block diagram generally illustrating an invitation preview Web page **400** generated by the event planning system in response to receiving event planning information provided via the Web page **350 (FIG. 8)**. The invitation preview Web page **400** includes: an invitation preview display area **402** for displaying a preview of an invitation that is filled in with information provided by the user via the invitation creation Web page **350 (FIG. 8)**; invitation template format modification buttons **404** for enabling the user to change format parameters associated with the invitation such as images (displayed in the display areas **352**, **354**, and **356**), layout, theme and colors; a plurality of invitation options buttons **406** including a button enabling the user to specify whether some invitations are to be sent via mail or fax as further explained below, a button enabling the user to specify that guests may RSVP via telephone as further explained below, a button enabling the user to schedule delivery of guest reminders as further explained below, and a button enabling the user to invite more guests; a guest interaction button display area **408** for displaying a plurality of buttons which may be activated by the user to specify guest interaction options such as enabling guests comments, asking guests' questions, specifying guest list privacy, and enabling invitation forwarding; an event options button area **410** for displaying a plurality of buttons which may be activated by the user for the purpose of initiating functions for options such as printing mailing labels, printing name badges, and setting up ticketing as further explained below; preview and exit buttons **412**; and a send invitations button **414** for initiating the process of sending invitations to specified guests for the planned event as further explained below.

[**0077**] The invitation display area **402** provides a preview of an invitation as thus far designed by the user, as well as GUI components enabling the user to modify the invitation. The invitation preview display area **402** includes: the image display areas **352**, **354** and **356** having graphical images associated with a selected invitation template displayed therein (or being blank if the invitation is a custom invitation); a change header image active area **420** for enabling the user to select a function for changing the header image **352**; an active area **422** enabling the user to change the main image **354**; an active area **424** enabling the user to change the footer image; a guest list active area **430** enabling the user to initiate a function for displaying a guest list as thus far specified; a display area **432** for displaying information including the salutation, event name and host of the planned event; an active area **434** for enabling the user to preview information indicative of what is happening at the planned event; an RSVP image display area **440** for displaying user selected graphical image indicia for RSVP text; an active area **442** enabling the user to initiate a function for changing the RSVP image **440**; a guest response user interface area **444** for enabling invited guests to select from invitation response radio buttons for indicating yes, no, and maybe with regard to whether the user will attend the event; an active area **446** allowing the user to enable invited guests to forward the invitation to a friend; an active area **448** enabling the user to initiate a function for defining parameters associated with invitation options for who else is coming; a display area **450** for displaying the event time and location, map, and directions; a text box **454** enabling invited guests to type comments which may be later viewed by the user as further explained below; a check box **456** which, when activated, indicates that comments provided by a guest in the text box **454** are for the user's eyes only as opposed to being accessible by other invitees which is the default option); a check box **458** enabling invited guests to initiate a function for being reminded of the upcoming event a selected number of days before the event; a text box **460** enabling an invited guest to specify the number of days which the invited guest wishes to be reminded of the upcoming event before the upcoming event.

[**0078**] **FIG. 10** shows a flow diagram generally illustrating an invitation creation process at **500** in accordance with the present invention. The process **500** proceeds from "C" (from **FIG. 6**), and is initiated in response to the user selecting one of the invitation templates **232 (FIGS. 3 and 4)**. In step **502**, the event planning system accesses a particular one of the header images, a particular one of the main images, and a particular one of the footer images associated with the selected invitation template from the image directory **20 (FIG. 1A)** of the event planning server system. From step **502**, the process proceeds to step **504** in which the event planning system generates and displays a preview of a blank invitation associated with an event to be defined, the invitation including a particular header image, main image and footer image. From step **504**, the process proceeds to step **508** in which the event planning system provides user interface components enabling the user to define parameters associated with the invitation and the event to be planned as further explained below.

[**0079**] The invitation creation process **500** may also be initiated in response to the user selecting the custom invitation button **234 (FIG. 4)** for creating a custom invitation as displayed on the main event planning Web page **200 (FIG. 3)**. In accordance with this function, the process **500** proceeds from "D" (from **FIG. 6**) to step **506** in which the event planning system generates and displays a preview of a generic invitation in the form of the invitation creation Web page **350 (FIG. 8)** wherein the header image **352**, main image display area **354**, and footer display image **356** are each displayed without any particular images displayed therein.

[**0080**] Regardless of whether the invitation creation Web page was generated in response to selecting an invitation template or selecting a custom invitation, the invitation creation process **500** proceeds to step **508** to provide user interface components enabling the user to perform invitation editing functions including: entering a name for the associated event such as in the event name text box **358 (FIG. 8)**; defining a time for the planned event such as by using the time interface components **362 (FIG. 8)** of the invitation creation Web page; defining a duration such as by using the duration interface components **364 (FIG. 8)**; defining a location for the associated event such as by using the location interface component **366 (FIG. 8)**; specifying at least one guest to be invited to the associated event via Email such as by using the text box **370 (FIG. 8)**; specifying

whether guests may RSVP via telephone such as by the check box **374** (**FIG. 8**); specifying whether the associated event is to be listed in the public events directory such as by the check box **376** (**FIG. 8**); specifying a maximum number of attendees such as by the text box **378** (**FIG. 8**); and continuing with further event planning options such as by activating the associated continue button.

[**0081**] From step **508**, the process proceeds to step **510** in which the event planning system receives user input associated with selected ones of the options provided in step **508** above. From step **510**, the process proceeds to **512** in which it is determined whether the user has activated the continue button **380** (**FIG. 8**), and if so, the process proceeds to "C**1**" (to **FIG. 11**). Alternatively, the process repeats step **510** allowing the user to fill in the information requested in the invitation creation Web page **350** (**FIG. 8**) until the user activates the continue button.

[**0082**] **FIG. 11** shows a flow diagram generally illustrating an invitation preview generating process at **530** in accordance with the present invention. The process **530** is initiated in response to the user activating the continue button **380** (**FIG. 8**) of the invitation creation Web page **350** (**FIG. 8**). The process **530** proceeds from "C**1**" (from **FIG. 10**) to step **532** in which the event planning system generates and displays a preview of a filled in invitation. In the preferred embodiment, step **532** is implemented to generate the invitation preview Web page **400** (**FIG. 9**) which includes the invitation preview display area **402** for displaying a preview of an invitation as specified by information provided by the user in the invitation creation Web page **350** (**FIG. 8**). From step **532**, the process proceeds to step **534** in which the event planning system provides user interface components enabling the user to, change or select each of the header image, main image, and footer image such as by activating one of the active areas **420**, **422** and **424** (**FIG. 9**) of the invitation preview Web page; changing or selecting invitation presentation elements (including layout, theme and color), mailing or faxing invitations to, allowing invited guests to RSVP via telephone, scheduling guest reminders, inviting of more guests, enabling guests' comments, asking guests questions, selecting guest list privacy options, enabling invitation forwarding, printing mailing labels, printing name badges for the planned event, setting up ticketing options associated with a planned event, reminding invited guests of the upcoming event a selected number of days before the event, and editing previously entered event information.

[**0083**] From step **534**, the process proceeds to step **536** in which the event planning system receives user input such as via the invitation preview Web page **400** (**FIG. 9**). From step **536**, the process proceeds to **538** at which the event planning system determines whether the user has selected the option of mailing or faxing invitations to guests and if so, the process proceeds to "C**2**" (to **FIG. 14**). It is determined at **540** whether the user has selected the option of allowing invited guests to RSVP via telephone, and if so, the process proceeds to "C**3**" (to **FIG. 16**). It is determined at **542** whether the user has selected the option of guest list privacy, and if so, the process proceeds to "C**3**" (to **FIG. 16**). It is also determined at **544** and **546** whether the user has selected the options of invitation forwarding and guest comments respectively, and if so, the process proceeds to "C**3**" (to **FIG. 16**). If none of the options tested for at **538** to **546** has been selected, the process proceeds to "C**4**" (to **FIG. 12**).

[**0084**] **FIG. 12** shows a flow diagram generally illustrating further steps of the invitation preview generating process **530** (**FIG. 11**). The process **560** proceeds from "C**4**" (from **FIG. 11**) to **562** at which the event planning system determines whether the user has selected the option of asking guests questions, and if so, the process proceeds to "C**5**" (to **FIG. 18**). At **564**, it is determined whether the user has selected the option of inviting more guests, and if so, the process proceeds to "**6**" (to **FIG. 20**).

[**0085**] It is determined at **566** whether the user has selected the option of scheduling guest reminders, and if so, the process proceeds to "C**7**" (to **FIG. 22**). It is determined at **570** whether the user has selected the option of setting up ticketing, and if so, the process proceeds to "C**8**" (to **FIG. 24**). It is determined at **572** whether the user has selected the option of sending the invitation as defined, and if so, the process proceeds to step **574** in which the event planning system generates and sends invitations in accordance with the user specified parameters. Otherwise, the process proceeds back to "C**1**" (to **FIG. 11**).

[**0086**] **FIG. 13** shows a block diagram generally illustrating a mail/fax invitation option Web page at **580** in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. The event planning server system **11** (**FIG. 1A**) generates the Web page **580** in response to the user activating the mail/fax invitation option button at **406** (**FIG. 9**) of the invitation preview Web page. The Web page **580** includes a plurality of radio buttons **582** including: a first radio button for selecting all of a plurality of delivery options selected as further explained below; a second radio button for using a lowest cost delivery method of the selected options; and a third radio button allowing the user to select the option of using a guests' preferred delivery option, only if selected below. The Web page **580** further includes a plurality of check boxes **584** each being associated with a delivery option. The delivery option check boxes **584** include check boxes allowing the user to select delivery options for home E-mail, business E-mail, home fax, business fax, home address, business address for postcard, home address for letter, and home address for business.

[**0087**] The Web page **580** further includes a plurality of interface components allowing the user to specify sending the invitation to all guests, or to a selected group of recipients. The user may specify sending invitations to new guests only, or guests who have not yet responded by selecting an appropriate check box. Information answered via the Web page **580** is provided to the event planning server system by the user activating a continue button.

[**0088**] **FIG. 14** shows a flow diagram generally illustrating a mail/fax invitation delivery specification process at **600** in accordance with the present invention. The process **600** is initiated in response to the user activating the mail/fax invitation option button at **406** (**FIG. 9**) of the invitation preview Web page. The process **600** begins with a step **602** in which the event planning system provides mail/fax invitation user interface components enabling the user to select from invitation delivery options of home E-mail/business E-mail, home fax, business fax, home postcard, business postcard, home letter, and business letter. In the preferred embodiment, the process **600** is implemented by generating

the Web page **580** (**FIG. 13**). From step **602**, the process proceeds to step **604** in which the event planning system provides mail/fax invitation user interface components enabling the user to: (1) select from invitation delivery options of home E-mail, business E-mail, home fax, business fax, home postcard, business postcard, home letter, and business letter; (2) select from options of (a) using all delivery options selected, (b) using the lowest cost delivery method selected, and (c) using a guests' preferred delivery option; and (3) select from invitation sending options of sending invitations to all guests, sending invitations to new guests only, and sending invitations to guests who have not yet responded. In step **606**, the event planning system receives user input via the Web page **580** (**FIG. 13**). It is then determined at **608** whether the user has activated the continue button of the mail/fax invitation delivery option Web page **580**, and if so, the process proceeds to step **610** in which the event planning system modifies invitation and update information associated with mail/fax invitation parameters stored in the database **16** (**FIG. 1A**).

[**0089**] **FIG. 15** shows a generalized block diagram generally illustrating a Web page at **650** that is initiated or provided by the event planning server system in response to the user activating either the RSVP by phone enabling invitation option **406** (**FIG. 9**), the enable guest comments guest interaction button, the guest list privacy interaction button, or the invitation forwarding enable button **408** (**FIG. 9**). The Web page **650** includes: a text box at **652** enabling the user to specify a maximum number of attendees for the event; a plurality of guest privacy option check boxes at **654** including a first check box for enabling guests to see who has been invited and who will attend the associated event, a second check box enabling the user to specify that the event is by invitation only, a third check box enabling the user to specify that the event should be listed in the public events directory, and a fourth check box allowing the user to specify or enable guests to choose "maybe" as an RSVP option on the invitation page; a RSVP by phone check box at **656** enabling the user to select the option of enabling invitees to RSVP by phone using the IVR system **24** (**FIG. 1A**) as explained above; an invitation forwarding check box **658** enabling the user to allow invited guests to forward the invitation to other people; a plurality of guest comments check boxes at **658** including a first check box enabling the user to allow guests to post messages and comments regarding the event, and a second check box enabling the user to make all of the guests' comments private (as opposed to allowing other invited guests to view the guest comments); a cancel button **660** for canceling the entry of information entered via the Web page **650**; and a continue button **662** for providing the information entered via the Web page **650** to the event planning server system.

[**0090**] **FIG. 16** shows a flow diagram generally illustrating a process at **700** for providing the Web page **650** (**FIG. 15**). The process **700** proceeds from "C**3**" (from **FIG. 11**). The process **700** begins with the process **702** in which the event planning system provides user interface components enabling the user to select from invitation options of specifying a maximum number of attendees, allowing guests to RSVP via phone, allowing guests to forward the associated invitation to other people, allowing guests to post messages and comments regarding the event, and making all guests comments private as described above with reference to the Web page **650** (**FIG. 15**). In step **706**, the event planning system receives user input, and if it is determined at **708** that the user has activated the continue button **662** (**FIG. 15**), the event planning system receives the user input and proceeds to execute step **710** in which the system modifies the invitation and updates associated invitation option parameters stored in the database (**FIG. 1A**) based on the user input. From step **710**, the process proceeds back to "C**1**" (to **FIG. 11**).

[**0091**] **FIG. 17** shows a block diagram generally illustrating a Web page at **720** enabling the user to specify questions to be asked of invited guests via the invitation. The Web page **720** is provided by the event planning system in response to the user activating the guest interaction button for asking questions at **408** (**FIG. 9**). The Web page **720** includes a plurality of sets of GUI components **722** enabling the planner to create a question to be asked of an invited guest. Each set of question GUI components **722** includes: a question text box **724** enabling the planner to type a question to be asked; an answer type dropdown list **726** enabling the planner to select from a plurality of answer types including (text), (choice), (number), and (yes/no); a text box **728** enabling the planner to enter possible answers for (choice), type questions and answers; and a check box **730** enabling the planner to select the option of letting other invitees see the responses to the associated question. The Web page **720** further includes a button **732** enabling the planner to create more questions and answer choices, a button **736** enabling the planner to continue and enter the information provided via the Web page **720** to the event planning system, and a cancel button **738** enabling the planner to cancel the entry of information provided via the Web page.

[**0092**] **FIG. 18** shows a flow diagram generally illustrating a process at **740** for providing the Web page **720** (**FIG. 17**). The process **740** proceeds from "C**5**" (from **FIG. 12**) to step **742** in which the event planning system provides the user interface components shown in the Web page **720** (**FIG. 17**) enabling the user to specify questions to be provided to invited guests via the invitation. In step **744**, the event planning system receives user input via the Web page **720** (**FIG. 17**), and if the continue button **736** (**FIG. 17**) is activated, the process proceeds to step **748** in which the event planning system modifies the invitation to include the questions provided the Web page, and updates the associated invitation option parameters stored in the database **16** (**FIG. 1A**). From step **748**, the process proceeds back to "C**1**" (back to **FIG. 12**).

[**0093**] **FIG. 19** shows a block diagram generally illustrating a Web page for inviting more guests at **760**. The Web page **760** is generated by the event planning system and provided to the user in response to the user activating the invitation option for inviting more guests at **406** (**FIG. 9**). The Web page **760** enables the user to invite additional guests to a planned event, and to specify delivery options for delivering the invitation. The Web page **760** includes: a plurality of interface components at **762** enabling the user to uninvited selected guests that have been previously invited; an anchor area **764** enabling the user to invite guests from the planner's address book; a button **768** enabling the planner to invite guests in the selected contact group; a set of interface components at **766** enabling the planner to send invitations to all guests, or to a specified group of recipients such as new guests only or guests who have not yet

responded; a scroll down text box **770** enabling the planner to type in guests' E-mail addresses associated with invited guests; a plurality of delivery option check boxes at **772** enabling the planner to specify sending an invitation to the planner, specifying that the event is by invitation only, specifying that the event is to be listed in the public events directory, allowing invitees to see who has been invited and who will attend, offering automated telephone response registration via the IVR system **24 (FIG. 1A)**, and allowing invited guests to forward invitations to other people; a continue button **774**; and a cancel button **776**.

[**0094**] **FIG. 20** shows a flow diagram illustrating a process at **780** executed by the event planning system for providing the Web page **760 (FIG. 19)** enabling the user to invite more guests to the planned event. The process **780** proceeds from "C6" (from **FIG. 12**) to step **782** in which the event planning system provides user interface components enabling the user to specify additional guests to send invitations to, and also enabling the planner to specify delivery options for the invitations as described above with reference to the Web page **760 (FIG. 19)** for inviting additional guests. In step **784**, the event planning system receives user input provided via the Web page **760 (FIG. 19)**, and if it is determined that the planner has activated the continue button **774 (FIG. 19)**, the process proceeds to step **788** in which the event planning system generates the invitations based on the user input received in step **784** above. From step **788**, the process proceeds to "C1" (back to **FIG. 12**).

[**0095**] **FIG. 21** shows a block diagram generally illustrating a Web page at **800** enabling a user to specify a schedule for sending reminders to invited guests. The Web page **800** is generated by the event planning system in response to the user activating the invitation option for scheduling guest reminders at **406 (FIG. 9)**.

[**0096**] **FIG. 22** shows a flow diagram generally illustrating a process at **820** for enabling an event planner to schedule guest reminders. The process **820** proceeds from "C7" (from **FIG. 12**) to step **822** in which the event planning system provides user interface components enabling the user to schedule guest reminders. In the preferred embodiment, the process **820** is executed by generating the Web page **800 (FIG. 21)**. In step **824**, the event planning system receives user input via the Web page **800 (FIG. 21)**, and if it is determined at **826** that the planner has activated the continue button **814 (FIG. 21)**, then the process proceeds to step **828** in which the event planning system updates guest reminders schedule parameters stored in the database **16 (FIG. 1A)**. In step **830**, the event planning system sends guest reminders in accordance with the guest reminder schedule as defined via the guest reminder Web page **800 (FIG. 21)**.

[**0097**] **FIG. 23** shows a block diagram generally illustrating a ticket setup Web page at **850** that is provided by the event planning system in response to the event planner activating the event option for setting up ticketing at **410 (FIG. 9)**. The ticket setup Web page **850** includes: a set of radio buttons at **852** enabling the planner to specify that the event is a free event, or that the event planner wishes to charge for this event; a continue button **854**; a check box **856** enabling the event planner to indicate that the ticket is "free" on the invitation; a check box **858** enabling the event planner to specify that a convenience fee will be charged for each ticket processed from proceeds of ticket sales; a radio button **890** enabling the event planner to specify that the convenience fee will be charged for each ticket processed by passing the convenience fee to the customers; a set of GUI components **892** enabling the event planner to specify a purchase deadline for purchasing discounted early tickets at a discounted price; a text box at **894** enabling the event planner to specify a name for the associated ticket; a text box at **896** enabling the event planner to enter a text description of the associated ticket; a set of GUI components **898** enabling the event planner to specify a ticket prices for the associated ticket and displaying the last day to buy, convenience fee, total customer cost, order processing fee, and event planners' revenue, and also including a button **900** enabling the event planner to set early pricing for the associated ticket; a continue button **910**; and a cancel button **912**.

[**0098**] **FIG. 24** shows a flow diagram illustrating a ticket setting process at **950**. The process **950** proceeds from "C8" (from **FIG. 12**) to step **952** in which the event planning system provides user interface components enabling the user to set up a ticket by selecting from options of: designated the event as a paid event; specifying that the convenience fee is to be paid from proceeds of ticket sales; specifying that the convenience fee is to be passed on to invited guests; specifying a deadline for purchase of early discounted tickets; specifying ticket names, prices and descriptions; and setting early pricing parameters. In step **954**, the event planning system receives user input via the ticket setup Web page **850 (FIG. 23)**, and if it is determined at **956** that the event planner has activated the continue button **910 (FIG. 23)**, then the process proceeds to step **958** in which the event planning system updates ticketing parameters stored in the database **16 (FIG. 1A)** based on the user input received in step **954**. In step **960**, the event planning system modifies the invitation Web page based on the user input to provide information regarding ticketing for invited guests, after which the process proceeds back to "C1" (back to **FIG. 11**).

[**0099**] **FIG. 25** shows a block diagram generally illustrating an event summary Web page at **1000** that is provided by the event planning system in response to an event planner activating one of the active areas associated with either a current event or a past event previously planned by the user as shown at **252** and **254 (FIG. 4)** of the personal account Web page **250 (FIG. 4)**. The event summary Web page **1000** provides a summary of information associated with a planned event. The event summary Web page **1000** includes information indicative of a URL for linking to the associated invitation Web page, information indicative of the time and place of the event, what is happening at the event, and the event status which indicates whether the event is complete, incomplete, cancelled, or deleted.

[**0100**] The event summary Web page **1000** further includes: an anchor area at **1002** enabling the planner to modify the invitation event page; an anchor area **1004** enabling the planner to send invitations to guests; an RSVP status information display area **1008** for displaying a maximum number of attendees specified for the event, and the total number of persons invited to the event; a total registrant information display area **1010** for displaying the total number of invited guests who have thus far registered, the total number of invited guests who have indicated that they will "maybe" attend the planned event, the total number of invited guests who have declined to attend the planned

event, and the total number of invited guests who have thus far not responded to the associated invitation. The event summary Web page **1000** further includes a plurality of interface components enabling the user to initiate functions including modifying the invitation page by activating text displayed at **1002**, sending invitations to guests by activating the text at **1004**, inviting more guests by activating the text at **1006**, sending reminders to all invited guests who have not yet responded by activating text at **1012**, and indicating that the user is done with the event summary Web page by activating a done button **1014**.

[0101] **FIG. 26** shows a flow diagram generally illustrating an event summary generating process at **1020**. The depicted process proceeds from "E" (from **FIG. 6**) to step **1022** in which the event planning system determines event summary information for a selected event, the event summary information including an invitation page uniform resource locator (URL), a time and place for the selected event, the current event status, and the current RSVP status of guests invited to the selected event. In step **1024**, the event planning process generates the event summary Web page **1000** (**FIG. 25**) displaying the determined event summary information and including user interface components enabling the planner to invite more guests, modify the invitation page, and send reminders to guests who have not yet responded. In step **1026**, the event planning system receives user input via the Web page **1000** (**FIG. 25**) and if it is determined at **1028** that the user has activated the done button **1014**, the process proceeds back to "B" (back to **FIG. 6**).

[0102] **FIG. 27** shows a block diagram generally illustrating an event management Web page **1050** for displaying a list of events previously planned by the user and enabling the user to manage information associated with particular events. The event management Web page **1050** is generated by the event planning system in response to the user activating the event management anchor at **256** (**FIG. 4**) of the personal event planning account Web page **250** (**FIG. 4**). The event management Web page **1050** includes: a button at **1052** enabling the user to initiate a process for creating a new event; a text box at **1054** enabling the user to enter text indicative of a previously planned event; a find button **1056** which when activated causes the event planning system to search for an event as specified by text entered in the box **1054**; an event drop down list **1058** enabling the user to select from a plurality of events previously planned by the user; and a list button at **1060** which when activated causes the event planning system to provide a list of additional events previously planned by the user. The event management Web page further includes a event display area **1064** including: a plurality of check boxes at **1066** each being associated with a previously planned event wherein each of the displayed events has an event name, and event date, and an RSVP status information displayed therewith. The display area **1064** further includes a button **1068** enabling the user to cancel events selected using the check boxes **1066**, and a button **1070** enabling the user to delete events selected using the check boxes **1066**.

[0103] **FIG. 28** shows an event management process at **1080** in accordance with the present invention. The process **1080** proceeds form "G" (from **FIG. 7**) to step **1082** in which the event planning system determines all events previously planned by the current user, and determines associated event names, dates, and current RSVP statuses for each of the listed events. In step **1084**, the event planning system generates the event management Web page **1050** (**FIG. 27**) for displaying the determined event names, dates and current RSVP status of each of the listed events, and also including user interface components enabling the planner to find events, list events, cancel selected events, and delete selected events. In step **1086**, the event planning system receives user input. In step **1088**, the event planning system modifies information in the database **16** (**FIG. 1A**) in accordance with the input received in step **1086**. From **1088**, the process proceeds to "B" (back to **FIG. 5**).

[0104] **FIG. 29** shows a block diagram generally illustrating an event reporting Web page **1100** for displaying a list of events previously planned by the user, and enabling the user to generate event reports associated with a selected event. The event management Web page **1100** is generated by the event planning system in response to the user activating the event report anchor at **256** (**FIG. 4**) of the personal event planning account Web page **250** (**FIG. 4**). The event report Web page **100** includes: name and login information displayed at **1102**; an event name drop down list **1103** enabling the user to select from a plurality of events previously planned by the user; a set of duration interface components **1104** enabling the user to specify a period for which event information is to be generated in the event report; a first radio button **1106** enabling the user to specify that the event report is to include information indicative of payments and charges for the selected event during the specified period; and a second radio button **1108** enabling the user to specify that the event report is to include information indicative of adjustments and credits for the selected event during the specified period. The event report Web page **100** also includes a button **1110** for generating the specified report, and a button **1112** for linking to the event management Web page **1050** (**FIG. 27**).

[0105] **FIG. 30** shows an event report generating process at **1120** in accordance with the present invention. The process **1120** proceeds form "H" (from **FIG. 7**) to step **1122** in which the event planning system generates the event reporting Web page **1100** (**FIG. 29**) as described above. In step **1124**, the event planning system receives user input. In step **1130**, the event planning system generates an event report for the selected event, the report including either payment/charge information of adjustment/credit information associated with the specified period. From step **1130**, the process proceeds to "B" (back to **FIG. 5**).

[0106] Although the present invention has been particularly shown and described above with reference to a specific embodiment, it is anticipated that alterations and modifications thereof will no doubt become apparent to those skilled in the art. It is therefore intended that the following claims be interpreted as covering all such alterations and modifications as fall within the true spirit and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

**1**. An event planning process executed by a server system in a computer network including a plurality of user terminals communicatively coupled with the server system via the network, the process comprising the steps of:

providing an event planning graphical user interface at a user terminal, the interface enabling a user to plan an event;

receiving event information input by the user said event information indicating a scheduled event, at least one invitee to be invited to said scheduled event, and information indicative of RSVP fees required to attend said scheduled event;

providing an invitation to said invitee, said invitation indicating said scheduled event and said RSVP fees, and soliciting a response to said invitation, wherein an affirmative response to said invitation requires a payment as defined by said RSVP fees;

receiving RSVP status information including payment information from said invitee; and

verifying said payment information.

**2**. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal includes generating at least one event planning Web page that is accessible at the user terminal via the network, said event planning Web page including embedded code for providing said event planning graphical user interface.

**3**. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein said steps of providing an invitation to said invitee and receiving RSVP status information further comprise:

generating an invitation Web page based on said event information, said invitation Web page being accessible via the network and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling said invitee to respond to said invitation;

sending an invitation message to said invitee, said invitation message prompting said invitee to view said invitation Web page; and

receiving input provided by said invitee via said invitation Web page, said input provided by said invitee indicating said RSVP status information.

**4**. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said step of sending an invitation message to said invitee comprises sending an Email message via the network to said invitee at a second user terminal, said Email invitation including a link to said invitation Web page.

**5**. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein the server system is communicatively coupled with a plain old telephone system, and wherein said step of sending an invitation message to said invitee comprises sending a fax invitation message to said invitee via said telephone system, said fax invitation including a universal resource locator for accessing said invitation Web page via the network.

**6**. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said step of sending an invitation message to said invitee comprises sending a post card to said invitee, said post card providing a universal resource locator for accessing said invitation Web page via the network.

**7**. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein the server system is communicatively coupled with an interactive voice response system that is connected to a plain old telephone system, said interactive voice response system being configured to enable said invitee to provide said RSVP status information in response to said invitation, and wherein said RSVP status information is received at the server system via said interactive voice response system.

**8**. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein:

said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal includes a step of providing a plurality of invitation templates each being associated with a different type of event and having at least one associated graphical image;

said step of receiving event information includes receiving information indicative of a selected one of said templates; and

said step of generating an invitation Web page includes generating an invitation Web page based on said selected template, said invitation Web page displaying said associated graphical image.

**9**. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein:

said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal includes providing access to an address book associated with the user, said address book including a list of contacts and associated contract addresses;

said step of receiving event information includes receiving information indicative of selected ones of said contacts; and

said step of providing an invitation includes providing invitations to said selected contacts.

**10**. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to indicate whether said scheduled event is to be listed in a public events directory, and wherein said event information indicates whether said scheduled event is to be listed in the public events directory, and further comprising the step of:

if said event information indicates that said scheduled event is to be listed in the public events directory, providing a link to said invitation Web page from a home page Web page that is accessible via the network, said invitation Web page allowing anyone who accesses said invitation Web page to RSVP for said scheduled event.

**11**. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to indicate a schedule for sending reminders to invited guests, and further comprising the step of sending reminder messages to said invitees in accordance with said schedule.

**12**. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein:

said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to specify a question for said invitee;

said event information specifies said question;

said invitation Web page is further operative to provide invitation response graphical user interface components enabling said invitee to provide a response to said question; and

said step of receiving invitee user input via said invitation Web page includes receiving information indicative of said response.

**13**. An event planning process as recited in claim 12 wherein said invitation Web page is further operative to enable other invitees to view said response if the user has selected an option of enabling said other invitees to view said response.

**14**. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said invitation Web page is further operative to enable said invitee to view information indicating other invitees associated with the planned event, and RSVP status information associated with each of said other invitees.

**15**. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein invitees may post messages and comments regarding the event on said invitation Web page.

**16**. An event planning process as recited in claim 15 wherein said user may specify that all of said posted messages and comments may be viewed only by said user.

**17**. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to indicate whether said invitee may forward said invitation to other people.

**18**. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to indicate ticket pricing information indicating a price of at least one type of ticket being offered for admission to said scheduled event, and further comprising a step of determining convenience fees to be paid to administrators of the server system based on sales of said tickets to said invitees.

**19**. An event planning process as recited in claim 18 wherein said event information provided by said user indicates whether said convenience fees are to be paid from proceeds of ticket sales, or whether said convenience fees are to be passed on to said invitees.

**20**. An event planning process as recited in claim 2 further comprising the steps of:

providing an event summary Web page to the user terminal, the event summary Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event;

receiving user input from said user via said event summary Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events;

generating event summary information associated with the selected event, said event summary information including RSVP status information associated with each of the invitees for selected event; and

transmitting said event summary information to said user terminal.

**21**. An event planning process as recited in claim 3 wherein said invitation Web page provides an invitation response graphical user interface enabling said invitee to select "maybe" as an said RSVP status response.

**22**. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to specify a maximum number of invitees.

**23**. An event planning process as recited in claim 2 further comprising the steps of:

providing an event report Web page to the user terminal, the event report Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event;

receiving user input from said user via said event report Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events;

generating event report information associated with the selected event, said event report information including RSVP fee status information associated with each of the invitees for selected event; and

transmitting said event report information to said user terminal.

**24**. An event planning process as recited in claim 18 further comprising the steps of:

providing an event report Web page to the user terminal, the event report Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event;

receiving user input from said user via said event report Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events;

generating event report information associated with the selected event, said event report information including RSVP fee status information and convenience fee information associated with said selected event; and

transmitting said event report information to said user terminal.

**25**. An event planning process as recited in claim 1 wherein each of said invitees is a member of an organization.

**26**. A server system operative to execute an event planning process in a computer network including a plurality of user terminals communicatively coupled with the server system via the network, the process comprising the steps of:

providing an event planning graphical user interface at a user terminal, the interface enabling a user to plan an event;

receiving event information input by the user, said event information indicating a scheduled event, at least one invitee to be invited to said scheduled event, and information indicative of RSVP fees required to attend said scheduled event;

providing an invitation to said invitee, said invitation indicating said scheduled event and said RSVP fees, and soliciting a response to said invitation, wherein an affirmative response to said invitation requires a payment as defined by said RSVP fees;

receiving RSVP status information including payment information from said invitee; and

verifying said payment information.

**27**. A server system as recited in claim 26 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal includes generating at least one event planning Web page that is accessible at the user terminal via the network, said event planning Web page including embedded code for providing said event planning graphical user interface.

**28**. An event planning process as recited in claim 26 wherein said steps of providing an invitation to said invitee and receiving RSVP status information further comprise:

generating an invitation Web page based on said event information, said invitation Web page being accessible via the network and being operative to provide an invitation response graphical user interface for enabling said invitee to respond to said invitation;

sending an invitation message to said invitee, said invitation message prompting said invitee to view said invitation Web page; and

receiving input provided by said invitee via said invitation Web page, said input provided by said invitee indicating said RSVP status information.

**29**. An event planning process as recited in claim 28 wherein said step of sending an invitation message to said invitee comprises sending an Email message via the network to said invitee at a second user terminal, said Email invitation including a link to said invitation Web page.

**30**. An event planning process as recited in claim 28 wherein the server system is communicatively coupled with a plain old telephone system, and wherein said step of sending an invitation message to said invitee comprises sending a fax invitation message to said invitee via said telephone system, said fax invitation including a universal resource locator for accessing said invitation Web page via the network.

**31**. An event planning process as recited in claim 28 wherein said step of sending an invitation message to said invitee comprises sending a post card to said invitee, said post card providing a universal resource locator for accessing said invitation Web page via the network.

**32**. An event planning process as recited in claim 26 wherein the server system is communicatively coupled with an interactive voice response system that is connected to a plain old telephone system, said interactive voice response system being configured to enable said invitee to provide said RSVP status information in response to said invitation, and wherein said RSVP status information is received at the server system via said interactive voice response system.

**33**. An event planning process as recited in claim 26 wherein:

said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal includes a step of providing a plurality of invitation templates each being associated with a different type of event and having at least one associated graphical image;

said step of receiving event information includes receiving information indicative of a selected one of said templates; and

said step of generating an invitation Web page includes generating an invitation Web page based on said selected template, said invitation Web page displaying said associated graphical image.

**34**. An event planning process as recited in claim 26 wherein:

said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface at the user terminal includes providing access to an address book associated with the user, said address book including a list of contacts and associated contract addresses;

said step of receiving event information includes receiving information indicative of selected ones of said contacts; and

said step of providing an invitation includes providing invitations to said selected contacts.

**35**. An event planning process as recited in claim 28 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to indicate whether said scheduled event is to be listed in a public events directory, and wherein said event information indicates whether said scheduled event is to be listed in the public events directory, and further comprising the step of:

if said event information indicates that said scheduled event is to be listed in the public events directory, providing a link to said invitation Web page from a home page Web page that is accessible via the network, said invitation Web page allowing anyone who accesses said invitation Web page to RSVP for said scheduled event.

**36**. An event planning process as recited in claim 26 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to indicate a schedule for sending reminders to invited guests, and further comprising the step of sending reminder messages to said invitees in accordance with said schedule.

**37**. An event planning process as recited in claim 28 wherein:

said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to specify a question for said invitee;

said event information specifies said question;

said invitation Web page is further operative to provide invitation response graphical user interface components enabling said invitee to provide a response to said question; and

said step of receiving invitee user input via said invitation Web page includes receiving information indicative of said response.

**38**. An event planning process as recited in claim 37 wherein said invitation Web page is further operative to enable other invitees to view said response if the user has selected an option of enabling said other invitees to view said response.

**39**. An event planning process as recited in claim 28 wherein said invitation Web page is further operative to enable said invitee to view information indicating other invitees associated with the planned event, and RSVP status information associated with each of said other invitees.

**40**. An event planning process as recited in claim 28 wherein invitees may post messages and comments regarding the event on said invitation Web page.

**41**. An event planning process as recited in claim 40 wherein said user may specify that all of said posted messages and comments may be viewed only by said user.

**42**. An event planning process as recited in claim 28 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to indicate whether said invitee may forward said invitation to other people.

**43**. An event planning process as recited in claim 26 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to indicate ticket pricing information indicating a price of at least one type of ticket being offered for admission to said scheduled event, and further comprising a step of determining convenience

fees to be paid to administrators of the server system based on sales of said tickets to said invitees.

**44**. An event planning process as recited in claim 43 wherein said event information provided by said user indicates whether said convenience fees are to be paid from proceeds of ticket sales, or whether said convenience fees are to be passed on to said invitees.

**45**. An event planning process as recited in claim 27 further comprising the steps of:

providing an event summary Web page to the user terminal, the event summary Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event;

receiving user input from said user via said event summary Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events;

generating event summary information associated with the selected event, said event summary information including RSVP status information associated with each of the invitees for selected event; and

transmitting said event summary information to said user terminal.

**46**. An event planning process as recited in claim 28 wherein said invitation Web page provides an invitation response graphical user interface enabling said invitee to select "maybe" as an said RSVP status response.

**47**. An event planning process as recited in claim 26 wherein said step of providing an event planning graphical user interface includes prompting the user to specify a maximum number of invitees.

**48**. An event planning process as recited in claim 27 further comprising the steps of:

providing an event report Web page to the user terminal, the event report Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event;

receiving user input from said user via said event report Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events;

generating event report information associated with the selected event, said event report information including RSVP fee status information associated with each of the invitees for selected event; and

transmitting said event report information to said user terminal.

**49**. An event planning process as recited in claim 43 further comprising the steps of:

providing an event report Web page to the user terminal, the event report Web page enabling the user to select from at least one previously planned event;

receiving user input from said user via said event report Web page, said user input indicating a selected one of the previously planned events;

generating event report information associated with the selected event, said event report information including RSVP fee status information and convenience fee information associated with said selected event; and

transmitting said event report information to said user terminal.

**50**. An event planning process as recited in claim 26 wherein each of said invitees is a member of an organization.

**51**. An event planning process executed by a server system in a computer network including a plurality of user terminals communicatively coupled with the server system via the network, the process comprising the steps of:

generating at least one event planning Web page that is accessible at the user terminal via the network, said event planning Web page including embedded code for providing an event planning graphical user interface;

receiving event information input by the user, said event information indicating a scheduled event, at least one invitee to be invited to said scheduled event, and information indicative of RSVP fees required to attend said scheduled event;

providing an invitation to said invitee, said invitation indicating said scheduled event and said RSVP fees, and soliciting a response to said invitation, wherein an affirmative response to said invitation requires a payment as defined by said RSVP fees;

receiving RSVP status information including payment information from said invitee; and

verifying said payment information.

* * * * *