

said corresponding master data file element to reflect changes made to said particular edited local data file element will generate a true conflict with a change made to said corresponding master data file element by a second user subsequent to said creating step;

means for updating said corresponding master data field element to reflect changes made to said particular edited local data file element when it is determined that said updating will not result in a true conflict; and

means for initiating a conflict mediation dialog when it is determined that said updating will result in a true conflict, wherein said corresponding master data field element is updated to reflect changes made to said particular edited local data file element if said conflict mediation is resolved in favor of said first user.

29. In a shared data environment in which copies of data files are distributed across a plurality of data sites, a system for resolving data conflicts comprising:

means for receiving a replicated data file at a data site, said replicated data file corresponding to a current data file existing on said data site;

means responsive to the occurrence of a potential conflict condition between said replicated data file and said current data file for resolving said potential conflict by creating a reconciled data file from said replicated data file and said current data file according to a predefined set of rules; and

means for replicating said reconciled data file across said plurality of data sites to replace said corresponding current data files.

30. The system of claim 29, further comprising:

means for indicating particular data files to which said method will be applied; and

means for disabling conflict handling routines external to said method upon receiving a replicated copy of said particular data files.

31. The system of claim 30, wherein data files are replicated via a messaging system and means for indicating comprises means for classifying said particular data files as a unique message class.

32. The system of claim 29, wherein said means for resolving further comprises:

means for identifying a particular conflict-type which is not to be resolved according to said predefined rules;

means for storing those portions of said replicated data file and said current data file which form a data conflict of said particular conflict-type in said reconciled data file as conflicting sub-elements;

means responsive to a user accessing said reconciled data file, for presenting said user with conflict resolving information related to said data conflict;

means for resolving said particular data conflict in response to user input.

33. In a shared data environment in which copies of data files are distributed across a plurality of data sites, each said

data file having a designated home site, a system for resolving data conflicts comprising:

means for receiving a replicated data file at a data site, said replicated data file corresponding to a current data file existing on said data site, said current data file and said replicated data file both having the same designated home site;

means responsive to the detection of a potential conflict between said replicated data file and said current data file for indicating said potential conflict condition to each of said data sites;

means for searching for an indicated potential conflict condition at the home site of said replicated and current data files;

means responsive to the detection of an indicated potential conflict condition for resolving said potential conflict by creating a reconciled data file from said replicated data file and said current data file according to a predefined set of rules; and

means for replicating said reconciled data file across said plurality of data sites to replace said corresponding current data files.

34. The system of claim 33, further comprising:

means responsive to the receipt of a potential conflict condition indication for designating said current data file as being in-conflict; and

means responsive to the replacement of said current data file with a reconciled data file for removing the in-conflict designation of said current data file.

35. The system of claim 34, further comprising means for providing read-only access to an in-conflict designated data file when said data file is accessed on a data site which is not the designated home site for said data file.

36. The system of claim 34, wherein said means for resolving is responsive to a user accessing an in-conflict data file on its designated home site.

37. The system of claim 33, wherein said means for resolving further comprises:

means for identifying a particular conflict-type which is not to be resolved according to said predefined rules;

means for storing those portions of said replicated data file and said current data file which form a data conflict of said particular conflict-type in said reconciled data file as conflicting sub-elements;

means responsive to a user accessing said reconciled data file for presenting said user with conflict resolving information related to said conflicting sub-elements;

means for receiving user input indicating which of said presented conflicting sub-elements should be preserved; and

means for resolving said particular data conflict in accordance with said user input.

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