

be modified and varied over a tremendous range of applications, and accordingly the scope of patented subject matter is not limited by any of the specific exemplary teachings given.

Several database models exist which utilize different approaches to the organization of data. While the preferred embodiment is implemented in a relational database model, alternatively, the object-oriented model, network model, or another model could be used to store and organize the data.

Additionally, a particular set of tables and data has been used for the organization of data in the relational database. However, data kept in one or more tables could be divided between other tables, used to populate new tables, or condensed into fewer tables or, a greater or lesser number of data attributes can be stored.

Further, different primary and/or secondary keys could be used to access the table.

In the preferred embodiment, the rules database resides on a server with the PRISM database. However, the rules database could be stored on a server apart from the PRISM database.

For another example, in the preferred embodiment, the software component downloaded are chosen according to a rules database. However, other forms of decision making can be used. These may include neural networks and fuzzy logic.

In the preferred embodiment, distribution of database information takes place via LAN and WAN connections. However, the data could be distributed to local and remote facilities in many different ways such as over an intranet or the internet. Further, several different server/database configurations can be utilized. For example, a single server can maintain multiple isolated database structures and file sets.

In the preferred embodiment, the rules controlling software configurations are stored in a database, however, they could be stored in a flat file which configures an interpreting program, hard coded into a software application, or in some other form.

What is claimed is:

1. A process for manufacturing computer systems with pre-installed software, comprising the steps of repeatedly:

- (a.) selecting a hardware and software configuration;
- (b.) storing a list corresponding to said configuration;
- (c.) assembling hardware components according to said list;
- (d.) translating said list using an automatic inference procedure into a list of software components to be downloaded onto a computer system, wherein said automatic inference translating is performed according to a rules database separately stored from a software-loading-system; and
- (e.) downloading software components from the software-loading-system according to said software component list, to create a predetermined software configuration on an assembled computer system.

2. The process of claim 1, wherein said hardware configuration list is created by scanning hardware part numbers.

3. The process of claim 1, wherein said downloaded software components create a predetermined software configuration and also a self-test and software set-up environment on said system which is customized for the particular software configuration.

4. The process of claim 1, wherein tags are used by said inference procedure to associate said hardware and software selections with a set of rules.

5. The process of claim 1, wherein said software component list is dependent on said hardware configuration.

6. The process of claim 1, wherein said software component list is dependent on a language preference selection.

7. The process of claim 1, wherein said software component list is dependent on an operating system preference selection.

8. The process of claim 1, wherein said software component list includes diagnostic software.

9. The process of claim 1, wherein said software component list includes set-up routines which are dependent on said hardware and software configuration.

10. The process of claim 1, wherein said automatic procedure translates according to a set of rules stored in a database.

11. The process of claim 1, wherein said hardware configuration and said software component list are stored in a database.

12. The process of claim 1, wherein hardware and software configurations not provided by a manufacturer which are installed on said assembled computer system are stored in a database.

13. The process of claim 1, wherein said inference procedure translates said list by associating a language selection with software selections.

14. The process of claim 1, wherein said inference procedure translates said list by associating a hardware selection with software selections.

15. The process of claim 1, wherein said inference procedure translates said list by associating a software selection with software selections.

16. A process for manufacturing computer systems with pre-installed software, comprising the steps of repeatedly:

- (a.) selecting a hardware and software configuration;
- (b.) storing a list corresponding to said configuration;
- (c.) assembling hardware components according to said list;
- (d.) storing unique identification numbers for each hardware component;
- (e.) storing a unique identification number for the operating system, if selected;
- (f.) translating said list using an automatic inference procedure into a list of software components to be downloaded onto a computer system, wherein said automatic inference translating is accomplished according to a set of rules in a rules database stored separately from a software-downloading-system; and
- (g.) downloading software components from a software-loading-system according to said software component list, to create a predetermined software configuration on an assembled computer system.

17. The process of claim 16, wherein said hardware configuration list is created by scanning hardware part numbers.

18. The process of claim 16, wherein said downloaded software components create a predetermined software configuration and also a self-test and software set-up environment on said system which is customized for the particular software configuration.

19. The process of claim 16, wherein tags are used by said inference procedure to associate said hardware and software selections with a set of rules.

20. The process of claim 16, wherein said software component list is dependent on said hardware configuration.

21. The process of claim 16, wherein said software component list is dependent on a language preference selection.

22. The process of claim 16, wherein said software component list is dependent on an operating system preference selection.