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results from a defect in a digitizing means used to generate the digital image from an image of a document, wherein the digital image comprises a plurality of pixel locations with a pixel color value for each pixel location, the method comprising the steps of:

scanning multiple documents to form a plurality of digital images;

assigning each pixel location of each digital image of the plurality of digital images a pixel color value, wherein a pixel is characterized by a location and a color;

accumulating, for each pixel location in a region of interest, a count of documents in which said each pixel location contains a pixel of a common color value;

adding pixel locations which have a count higher than a threshold to the set of defect locations; and

supplying a digital image with questionable pixel values so marked.

9. The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of restoring pixel values to pixel locations in the set using an image continuation process.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

maintaining a list of tentative defect locations, wherein an entry in said list indicates a pixel color value and a count;

adding a pixel location to said list when said pixel color for said pixel location is a defect color;

incrementing said count for a defect location when said indicated pixel color and a pixel color for said defect location are the same color; and

indicating a tentative defect location as being a defect location when a count for said tentative defect location is incremented above a threshold value.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of decreasing said count when said indicated pixel color and a pixel color for said location are not the same color.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein said step of decreasing decreases said count to zero.

13. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of removing a tentative defect location from said list when said indicated pixel color and a pixel color for said defect location are not the same color.

14. The method of claim 10, wherein said list is limited to a fixed number of entries and a pixel location is only added to said list if an entry is available.

15. The method of claim 10, wherein a pixel location are only added to said list if said pixel location is within a cursor region.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein said cursor region is varied to cover different regions.

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17. The method of claim 1, wherein the document comprises text and graphics.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein the defect is caused by either a defect in the digitizing means or a defect in a platen interposed between the digitizing means and the document being scanned and digitized.

19. A method for automatically identifying a set of defect locations in a digital image where a defect location in the set results from a defect in a digitizing means used to generate the digital image from an image of a document, wherein the digital image comprises a plurality of pixel locations with a pixel color value for each pixel location, the method comprising the steps of:

scanning multiple documents to form a plurality of digital images;

assigning each pixel location of each digital image of the plurality of digital images a pixel color value, wherein a pixel is characterized by a location and a color;

accumulating, for each pixel location in a region of interest, a count of documents in which said each pixel location contains a pixel of a common color value wherein said step of accumulating uses stored image frames of varying order to hold results of said step and further comprises the steps of:

(a) decompressing at least one stored image frame; combining an image to be accumulated with said at least one stored image frame to form a first order stored image frame;

(b) recompressing said first order image frame; combining said first order stored image frame with other first order stored image frames to form a second order image frame;

(c) if necessary, repeating said step of combining to form higher order frames; and

(d) providing either a second order image frame or a higher order image frame as a defect list; and

adding pixel locations which have a count higher than a threshold to the set of defect locations.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein said steps of decompressing, combining and recompressing are done one scan line at a time.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein said steps of decompressing, combining and recompressing are done for both light and dark pixels.

22. The method of claim 21, where said step of combining is a voting combination for a less common pixel color and an "OR"ing combination for a more common pixel color.

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