I. General Architecture

Referring to FIG. **1**, a side view of an exemplary embodiment of an electronic device **100** placed in a TABLET position is shown. Herein, the electronic device **100** comprises a display **110** placed in a first position and rotationally mounted on a body case **120** through a coupling member (not shown). Herein, the electronic device **100** operates as a tablet computer with the display **110** placed in a first (portrait) position.

More specifically, the display **110** contains a flat panel display **112** as well as all or part of the circuitry for generating a displayable image on the flat panel display **112**. Examples of a flat panel display **112** include, but are not limited or restricted to a liquid crystal display (LCD), a plasma display or the like.

In accordance with this embodiment, the body case **120** comprises a first body **130** and a second body **140** rotationally coupled together by a hinge **150**. The hinge **150** may be adapted as any type of friction hinge such as a brake hinge for example. This allows the second body **140** to be vertically rotated and maintained in any selected angle of rotation (α, where $0° \leqq \alpha \leqq 90°$). It is contemplated, however, that the hinge **150** need not include brake hinges when there is no need for maintaining the second body **140** at an angled orientation.

The first body **130** comprises a base **131** and one or more protrusions **132** extending from the base **131**. The base **131** is configured with a raised area **133** contoured to be complementary with a curvature of an edge **114** of the flat panel display **112**. Also, the top surface of the raised area **133** may be generally flush with a top surface **116** of the display **110**.

The base **131** is also adapted with a memory interface **134**. The memory interface **134** may be adapted as a bay or communication port to receive a portable memory device such as one or more of the following: a memory card (e.g., PCMCIA card), a digital versatile disc (DVD), a compact disc (CD), a digital tape, or a floppy disk.

The protrusions **132** extend under recessed portions **142** of the second body **140**. For instance, according to one embodiment of the invention, the protrusions **132** approximately extend up to a latitudinal center of the second body **140**.

A first grommet pair **160** is positioned on a bottom surface **135** of the base **131**. Moreover, a second grommet pair **162** is positioned on a bottom surface **136** of the protrusions **132**. These grommets **160** and **162** prevent sliding of the electronic device **100** when the electronic device **100** is used on a table or other flat surface.

The second body **140** may be rotated about an axis of rotation established by the hinge **150** after the display **110** has been appropriately rotated and translated as shown below. A pair of grommets **164** is positioned on a bottom surface **144** of the second body **140**. Optionally, a camera **170** may be rotationally coupled along an end **146** of the second body **140**. This rotational coupling may be accomplished by a friction hinge, which would maintain the camera **170** facing in a direction manually set by the user.

Referring now to FIG. **2**, an overhead view of the electronic device **100** is shown. Herein, the flat panel display **112** of the display **110** is mounted on the body case **120** in a stacked arrangement. The electronic device **100** operates as a portable tablet computer.

For this embodiment of the invention, the display **110** is configured in an oblong shape having a concave curvature at edge **114** and a convex curvature at edge **115**. In this position, the display **110** covers at least seventy percent of a footprint of the body case **120**, including a keyboard (not shown) integrated into the first body **130**, and perhaps a cursor control device **200**.

As shown in FIG. **2**, one or more hot keys **118** are integrated near an edge **115** of the display **110**. A "hot key" is a recessed area that, when activated, causes a task to be more quickly performed than by selecting entries from menus via the cursor control device **200**. These tasks can be specified and programmed at manufacture or can be programmed by the user. Examples of tasks controlled by the hot keys **118** include starting an application, establishing network connectivity, commencing a power-down procedure, or the like.

Referring to FIG. **3**, a perspective view of the bottom sides **135**, **136** and **144** of the electronic device **100** are shown. The first body **130** is configured with the protrusion **132** that are used to provide stability when the display **110** is rotated or translated as shown in FIG. **4**. The base **131** is sized to provide sufficient support for the display **110** when the electronic device **100** is placed in a SELF-SUPPORTING position. The grommet pairs **160** and **162** are positioned on opposite sides of the first body **130** and spaced appropriately to reduce skid during use.

Referring now to FIG. **4**, a perspective view of electronic device **100** placed in a SELF-SUPPORTING position is shown. Herein, the second body **140** is vertically rotated by an angle of rotation (α). Such rotation is performed after the display **110** has been horizontally rotated and translated toward the camera **170** and placed in a second position as described below in detail. Hence, the cursor control device **200** and the keyboard **210** are fully accessible by the user.

The second body **140** comprises the recessed portions **142**, which are sized to accommodate protrusions **132** of the first body **130**. As a result, the collective bottom surfaces of the bodies **130** and **140** are substantially planar when the electronic device **100** is placed in the TABLET position as shown in FIG. **1**.

Referring now to FIGS. **5**A–**5**B, exploded views of exemplary embodiments of a coupling member **300** are shown. Of course, the coupling member **300** may be produced in a variety of physical configurations other than those illustrated. Regardless of its configuration, the coupling member **300** is configured to enable the display **110** to be rotated and translated over the body case **120**.

For each of the embodiments illustrated in FIGS. **5**A–**5**B, the coupling member **300** comprises a shaft **310** interconnecting a fastening element **320** and a securing element **330**. Both the shaft **310** and elements **320** and **330** may be made of a rigid composition such as hardened plastic, metal, or the like. The shapes of the fastening and securing elements **320** and **330** are a design choice.

According to one embodiment of the invention, as shown in FIG. **5**A, the shaft **310** and securing element **330** are formed together as the same element. The shaft **310** comprises a first end **312** adapted for coupling to the fastening element **320**. For instance, the first end **312** may be sized and configured for insertion into a cavity **322** of the fastening element **320**, and thereafter, retained by the fastening element **320**.

As an example, the first end **312** may be a "snap-in" insert that is adapted to mate with a complementary female cavity **322** located on the fastening element **320**. Alternatively, as another example, the first end **312** may be coupled to the fastening element **320** by another conventional coupling technique such as threads, welding, gluing, or the like.

According to another embodiment of the invention, as shown in FIG. **5**B, the shaft **310** and fastening element **320**