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(54) **UNIVERSAL INTERFACE FOR RETRIEVAL OF INFORMATION IN A COMPUTER SYSTEM**

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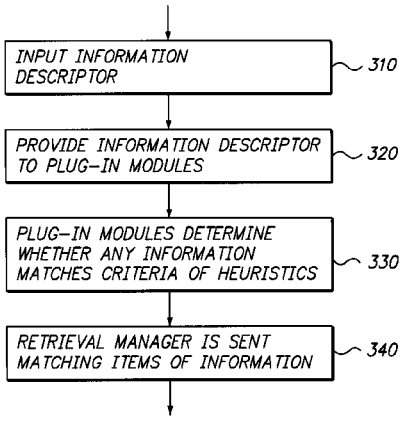
(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention provides convenient access to items of information that are related to various descriptors input by a user, by means of a unitary interface which is capable of accessing information in a variety of locations, through a number of different techniques. Using a plurality of heuristic algorithms to operate upon information descriptors input by the user, the present invention locates and displays candidate items of information for selection and/or retrieval. Thus, the advantages of a search engine can be exploited, while listing only relevant object candidate items of information.

49 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets