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means for editing the contents of the second buffer memory corresponding to the new window according to the editing operation; and means for adding data to said operation history management table means representing the editing operation as the differential operation history of the new window.

20. A version management apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said replacing means comprises:

means for selecting one of the derived windows as a new basic window for a new major version; means for obtaining a sequence of parent windows of the new basic window using the identifiers of the parent windows in said operation history management table means; means for applying operations corresponding to the differential operation histories of the parent windows and the new basic window to a corresponding buffer memory corresponding to the basic window; and means for erasing the contents of said operation history management table means and the contents of said buffer memories corresponding to all of the derived windows.

21. A version management apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said replacing means comprises:

means for selecting one of the derived windows as a new basic window for a new major version; means for copying the contents of a corresponding buffer memory corresponding to the new basic window to the buffer memory corresponding to the basic window; and means for erasing the contents of said operation history management table means and the contents of said buffer memories corresponding to all of the derived windows.

22. A version management apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein said editing means comprises:

means for obtaining one of a differential operation history and a sequence of differential operation histories from a first window to a second window; means for applying operations corresponding to the one of the differential operation history and the differential operation histories to a corresponding buffer memory corresponding to a third window; and means for adding the one of the differential operation history and the differential operation histories to obtain the contents of said operation history management table means corresponding to the third window.

23. A version management apparatus as claimed in claim 15, further comprising:

a buffer memory for retaining the contents of one of the versions; and a current window memory for retaining an identifier of a corresponding window corresponding to the one of the windows to provide identification of a current window.

24. A version management apparatus as claimed in claim 23,

wherein the at least one minor version includes a plurality of minor versions corresponding to a plurality of derived windows, and wherein said version management apparatus further comprises:

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means for generating from a first window as the parent window a second window as one of the derived windows;

means for editing the contents of one of the minor versions in the second window; and

means for replacing the major version with the one of the minor versions as a new major version.

25. A version management apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein said generating means comprises:

means for opening the second window on said display screen as one of the derived windows; means for storing an identifier of the second window in said current window memory; means for storing an identifier of the first window in said operation history management table means; and means for redrawing the contents of said buffer memory corresponding to the first window in the second window.

26. A version management apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein said editing means comprises:

means for switching the current window to the second window corresponding to the one of the minor versions, by storing the identifier of the second window in said current window memory, and by modifying the contents of a corresponding buffer memory of the second window using said operation history management table means; means for editing the contents of said buffer memory according to the editing operation; and means for adding data representing the editing operation as the differential operation history of the one of the minor versions.

27. A version management apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein said replacing means comprises:

means for selecting a third window, as a new basic window for a new major version, from among the derived windows; means for switching the current window to the third window, by storing the identifier of the third window in said current window memory, and by modifying the contents of a corresponding buffer memory of the third window using said operation history management table means; means for obtaining a sequence of parent windows of the third window using the identifiers of the parent windows in said operation history management table means; and means for erasing the contents of said operation history management table means and the contents of said buffer memories corresponding to all of the derived windows.

28. A version management apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein said editing means comprises:

means for obtaining one of a differential operation history and a sequence of differential operation histories from the first window to the second window; means for applying operations corresponding to the one of the differential operation history and the differential operation histories obtained by said obtaining means to said buffer memories; and means for adding the one of the differential operation history and the differential operation histories to said operation history management table means corresponding to the editing displayed in the current window.