



# United States Patent [19]

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Moody et al.

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[54] **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CONSOLIDATING EDITS MADE BY MULTIPLE EDITORS WORKING ON MULTIPLE DOCUMENT COPIES**

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### [57] ABSTRACT

[\*] Notice: This patent issued on a continued prosecution application filed under 37 CFR 1.53(d), and is subject to the twenty year patent term provisions of 35 U.S.C. 154(a)(2).

A document can be collaboratively edited by multiple editors by providing each editor with a separate copy of the document. Each editor then edits his own document copy using an editing application program, such as a word processor, to produce an edited copy. The edited copies are then retrieved and compared and a single marked-up document is created in which sections (for example, paragraphs) of the original document and corresponding sections of each of the edited documents (with changes from the original document indicated) are displayed in physically adjacent locations of the display screen. The displayed sections contain both edited and duplicated, unedited text. A set of "consolidation" tools are provided to quickly transfer edits between the physically adjacent areas of the screen and to make, or accept, edits made by any of the editors. A final document copy is made by eliminating the duplicate text in the sections. A unique, automated comparison routine may be used to compare the multiple edited document copies with the original document. The comparison routine can detect corresponding portions of the original and edited documents even if substantial edits have been made to the original document in the edited copies.

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[51] Int. Cl.<sup>6</sup> ..... **G06F 17/30**

[52] U.S. Cl. .... **707/511**

[58] Field of Search ..... 707/500, 511,  
707/530, 514, 515

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**24 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets**

