

Also, a surrogate machine connected to the server network could contain one or more daughter boards which each act as surrogate machines by controlling multiple hard drives during data-loading.

Several database models exist which utilize different approaches to the organization of data. While the preferred embodiment is implemented in a relational database model, alternatively, the object-oriented model, network model, or another model could be used to store and organize the data.

Additionally, a particular set of tables and data has been used for the organization of data in the relational database. However, data kept in one or more tables could be divided between other tables, used to populate new tables, or condensed into fewer tables or, a greater or lesser number of data attributes can be stored. Further, different primary and/or secondary keys could be used to access the table.

The determination of duplicate data is made by comparing the file size and result of an MD5 hash calculation. However, other more rudimentary methods of duplicate checking can be utilized. For instance, a check incorporating file name, size, and date/time stamp can be utilized.

What is claimed is:

1. A system of software downloading, comprising:
 - (a.) a computer network with a server containing software installation configurations;
 - (b.) first connections to connect an assembled computer containing a first hard drive to said network and said server;
 - (c.) second connections to connect a plurality of hard drives in a surrogate machine to said network and said server; and
 - (d.) a download process which can be executed on both said assembled computer and said plurality of hard drives which performs the actions of:
 - (i.) retrieving a respective install list from said server;
 - (ii.) partitioning ones of said first hard drive and said plurality of hard drives according to the respective partitioning information on said respective install list;
 - (iii.) retrieving software from said server according to said respective list; and
 - (iv.) installing said software onto respective ones of said first hard drive and said plurality of hard drives.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein said software is installed according to a required order.
3. The system of claim 1, further comprising a second server which maintains said install list.
4. The system of claim 1, further comprising a database which maintains said install list.
5. A system of software downloading, comprising:
 - (a.) a computer network with a server, said server containing software installation configurations;
 - (b.) a surrogate computer connected to the network and in communication with said server and containing a plurality of raw hard drives, wherein said plurality is greater than 1; and
 - (c.) a download process executing on said surrogate machine which performs the actions of:
 - (i.) retrieving an install list from said server;
 - (ii.) partitioning the hard drive of said surrogate machine according to the partitioning information on said install list;

- (iii.) retrieving software from said server according to said list; and
- (iv.) installing said software onto said plurality of hard drives in parallel.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein said software is installed according to a required order.

7. The system of claim 5, further comprising a second server which maintains said install list.

8. The system of claim 5, further comprising a database which maintains said install list.

9. The system of claim 5, further comprising an assembled computer connected to said network and a download process executing on said assembled computer.

10. A method for pre-installation of software, said method comprising the actions of:

- (a.) storing software to be pre-installed at computer manufacture on a server;
- (b.) creating a plurality of lists of partitioning information and software to be installed on particular respective hard drives;
- (c.) storing said plurality of lists on said server; and
- (d.) installing software from said server according to respective ones of said plurality of lists onto said respective hard drives;

wherein said installing step can selectively install said software as disk images or as files

wherein a plurality of said hard drives are contained in a surrogate machine and said software is installed onto said plurality of hard drives in parallel.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein ones of said hard drives are contained in assembled computers.

12. The method of claim 10, wherein said software is installed according to a required order.

13. The method of claim 10, wherein a second server maintains said install list.

14. The method of claim 10, wherein a database maintains said install list.

15. The method of claim 10, wherein said server and said respective hard drives are connected to a network and said software is installed over said network.

16. The method of claim 10, wherein said software can be simultaneously installed onto a plurality of assembled computers and surrogate machine raw hard drives.

17. A method for manufacturing computers with pre-installed software, said method comprising the actions of:

- (a.) storing software to be pre-installed at computer manufacture on a server;
- (b.) choosing hard drive partitioning and software to be pre-installed onto an assembled computer with a particular hardware configuration;
- (c.) enforcing partitioning and software choice rules to ensure hardware/software compatibility and proper configuration;
- (d.) creating and storing a list of said partitioning and software choices on said server; and
- (e.) referencing said list to install said stored software from said server according to said list onto a hard drive which will be part of said assembled computer.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein said hard drive is installed on a surrogate machine.

19. The method of claim 17, wherein said software is installed according to a required order.