tion with the user if the credit card information is not valid.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the displaying step is followed by the steps of calculating the charges incurred by the user during the searching session, and printing a credit card bill for submission to the user.

8. A system for retrieving information from a plurality of databases, the databases having at least two different languages, and for supplying said information to a user, comprising:

(a) means for receiving a specification of a subject in which the user is interested,

(b) means for automatically selecting one of said databases in response to said specification by the user,

(c) means for accepting a search request from the user, the search request comprising at least one word which is to be searched in the selected database,

(d) means for translating the user's search request into the language of the selected database,

(e) means for gaining access to the selected database, and

(f) means for downloading, into the system, the information obtained from the selected database.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the receiving means comprises a programmed digital computer, the computer comprising means for presenting the user with a series of choices of subjects and for receiving responses from the user, to the choices presented.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein the selecting means comprises a programmed digital computer, the computer being programmed to select at least one database for every possible choice of subject made by the user.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein the computer is further programmed to select alternative databases for searching.

12. A system for retrieving information from a plurality of remote databases, and for supplying said information to a user, the databases having at least two different languages, comprising,

(a) a programmed digital computer,

(b) a modem, connected between the computer and an outgoing telecommunications line, wherein the modem comprises means for establishing communication between the computer and any of said plurality of remote databases,

(c) the computer comprising means for automatically selecting one of said databases in response to a specification of a subject of interest by the user, and for receiving a search request from the user, the computer also comprising means for tanslating the search request received from the user into the language of the database selected by the computer, the computer also comprising means for transmitting the translated search request to the selected database and for downloading the information obtained from the database, into the memory of the computer, after the search is completed.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein the computer is programmed to select at least one database to be searched regardless of what area is specified by the user.

14. A method of supplying information to a remote user from any of a plurality of commercial databases, the databases having at least two different languages, comprising the steps of:

(a) requesting, from the user, a specification of one of a plurality of choices of subjects of interest, in which subject the user desires to search, said plurality of choices being programmed to represent a comprehensive list of subjects,

(b) accepting said specification from the user,

(c) automatically selecting one of said plurality of databases, the selection step being made by a programmed digital computer, the computer being programmed to select that database which most closely matches the specification of the user, of the databases which are available,

(d) accepting a search request from the user, the search request comprising at least one word for which the user desires to search in the selected database,

(e) translating the search request into the language of the selected database,

(f) gaining access to the selected database and searching the database according to the translated search request,

(g) downloading the information received from the database, into the memory of the computer,

(h) terminating the connection with the selected database, and

(i) interactively displaying the information received from the search to the user, whereby the displaying step is performed while the user is off-line with respect to the database.

15. The method of claim 14, further comprising the step of automatically suggesting, to the user, at least one additional database for searching.

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