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## PATENT APPLICATION FULL TEXT AND IMAGE DATABASE



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System and method for communicating sales messages

### Abstract

A system and method for delivering a sales presentation. The method includes providing a structure for the sales presentation. The method then generates a plurality of sales messages that are organized according to the structure. A performance is then generated for each of the sales messages. Each of the performances are then stored in signal bearing media. A plurality of company representatives are permitted to access the signal bearing media. At least one of the representatives then communicates the sales presentation to a prospect. The system comprises a display, a signal bearing media, an input device, and a central processing unit. The display is configured to display a plurality of performances. The signal bearing media is configured to store the performances. The input device is configured to permit a company representative to interact with the plurality of performances. The central processing unit is communication with the signal bearing media and is configured to permit the company representative to access the performances stored on the signal bearing media.

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***Claims***

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What is claimed is:

1. A method for delivering a sales presentation, comprising: providing a structure for said sales presentation; generating a plurality of sales messages that are organized according to said structure; generating a performance for each of said plurality of sales messages; storing each of said performances in a signal bearing media; permitting a plurality of company representatives to access said signal bearing media; and having at least one of said plurality of representatives communicate said sales presentation to a prospect.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein each of said plurality of sales messages are embodied in at least one message object.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein before generating said performance for each of said plurality of sales messages, the method further comprises generating at least one power position, said power position configured to communicate at least one sales message that is unique to a company.
4. The method of claim 3 wherein said power position is comprised of a plurality of message objects.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein said structure is explained to said plurality of company representatives having access to said signal bearing media.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein said performance includes an audio performance.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein said performance includes a comment.
8. The method of claim 1 wherein said performance includes an audio component and a video component.
9. The method of claim 1 wherein said structure includes providing an agenda.
10. The method of claim 1 wherein said structure includes providing a big picture.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein said structure includes providing a plurality of credentials.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein said structure includes providing a grabber.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein said structure includes providing a review of one or more sales messages that were previously presented.
14. The method of claim 1 wherein said structure includes providing a request for positive feedback from said







performed by a presenter such as an "all-star" sales person. The input device is configured to permit a company representative to interact with the plurality of performances. The central processing unit is communication with the signal bearing media and is configured to permit the company representative to access the performances stored on the signal bearing media.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] Embodiments for the following description are shown in the following drawings:

[0011] FIG. 1 is an illustrative general purpose computer.

[0012] FIG. 2 is an illustrative client-server system.

[0013] FIG. 3 is a flowchart of an illustrative method for communicating a sales presentation.

[0014] FIG. 4 is a diagram of an illustrative structure used to generate the sales presentation.

[0015] FIG. 5 is a simplified drawing showing the process of recording an "all-star" sales person's performance.

[0016] FIG. 6 is an illustrative interactive interface that is shown on a display.

[0017] FIG. 7 is a method for storing presentations and/or performances after the performance of the sales message has been generated.

[0018] FIG. 8 is an interactive method for storing presentations and/or performances in a searchable database.

[0019] FIG. 9 is a schematic with an organizational overview for delivering a sales presentation.

[0020] FIG. 10 is a screenshot showing an interactive interface that permits a user to view a plurality of message objects.

[0021] FIG. 11 is a screenshot showing an interactive interface for a prospect profile.

[0022] FIG. 12 is a screenshot showing an interactive interface in which the illustrative message object for the illustrative first power position is a competitive matrix.

[0023] FIG. 13 is a screenshot showing an interactive interface in which the illustrative message object for the illustrative first power position is a three-dimensional prop.

[0024] FIG. 14 is a screenshot showing an illustrative coach for the performance associated with the illustrative message object in FIG. 13.

[0025] FIG. 15 is a screenshot showing an interactive interface in which the illustrative message object is linked to a plurality of documents.

[0026] FIG. 16 is a screenshot showing an interactive interface in which a search can be performed for a particular message object.

## DESCRIPTION

[0027] In the following detailed description, reference is made to the accompanying drawings, which form a part of this application. The drawings show, by way of illustration, specific embodiments in which the invention may be practiced. It is to be understood that other embodiments may be utilized and structural changes may be made without departing from the scope of the appended claims.



is initiated at process block 102 in which a plurality of sales messages are generated. The sales messages are organized in a structured manner. The structure of the sales presentation may vary. An illustrative structure for generating a sales presentation is provided in FIG. 4. The illustrative structure for the sales presentation is described in further detail below. After the desired sales messages have been generated the method proceeds to process block 104.

[0034] At process block 104, an "all-star" sales person provides a performance for each sales message. The sales message is recorded using equipment intended to capture audio and video for each performance. By way of example and not of limitation, a video recorder is used to capture the audio and video for each performance. Typically, the "all-star" sales person is a successful sales person. Alternatively, the all-star sales person can be an individual that is charged with instructing company representatives.

[0035] Thus, the sales message that is communicated to company representatives is a sales message that is influenced by the most successful sales people. For purposes of this specification, a company representative includes company sales people, resellers, consultants and any other person authorized to represent the company delivering the sales presentation. For example, other company employees besides company sales people can also be company representatives.

[0036] Generally, each performance is complemented with comments about the sales message. A comment refers to the general use of words, phrases and sentences to highlight important aspects of each sales message. For purposes of this specification, the term "performance" generally includes comments that complement the performance. The method then proceeds to process block 108.

[0037] At process block 108, the performances for each sales message are stored in a signal bearing media. The type of signal bearing media depends on the particular application. By way of example and not of limitation, the performances may be stored on a CD or DVD. In another illustrative example, the performances may be stored on a server that can be accessed using the Internet, an intranet, or an extranet.

[0038] Generally, the sales messages are organized so that company representatives accessing the signal bearing media can easily find one or more particular performances, comments, and/or sales message. There are various searching methods that can be used to find a particular performance and/or sales message. One such searching method includes providing an interactive user interface that is organized using a combination of buttons and pull-down menus, or an interactive user interface that permits a user to perform word searches, or by using a combination of these searching methods.

[0039] Additionally, sales messages and their associated performances can be combined to generate presentations of various lengths. By way of example and not of limitation, two minute, seven minute and twenty minute presentations can be generated. These "canned" presentations can be used to provide a company representative with an illustrative example of how to provide an effective presentation to a prospect.

[0040] At process block 110, company representatives' are permitted to access the stored performances. As previously described, a company representative includes resellers and consultants. By way of example and of limitation consultants and resellers may have limited access to specific sales messages or performances. Limited access may be provided to preserve trade secrets and other sensitive intellectual properties.

[0041] An illustrative company representative accesses performances associated with one or more sales messages to prepare for meetings with one or more prospects. These performances can be viewed at the illustrative company representative's leisure. Depending on the type of access available to the company representative, the company representative can also provide feedback about the performances or the sales messages.

[0042] By way of example and not of limitation, one way of accessing the performances is to use the Internet's World Wide Web, or simply "Web". Utilizing browsers such as Internet Explorer or Netscape, the company representative can access the performances from any location having an Internet connection. Another method for

accessing the performances uses an intranet or an extranet. Yet a third method for accessing the performances is to use a CD or DVD.

[0043] The Internet is a networking infrastructure that connects millions of computers together and forms a network in which any computer can communicate with any other computer as long as they are both connected to the Internet. Information travels over the Internet using protocols such as TCP/IP for data transfer. An intranet provides similar services to the Internet, however the intranet network is not necessarily connected to the Internet. The intranet is generally used within a company for internal communications. An extranet is an extension of an intranet that uses the Internet. By way of example and not of limitation, an extranet permits suppliers and mobile employees to access the company's data and applications using the World Wide Web.

[0044] The method then proceeds to process 112 in which the company representative communicates one or more sales message to a prospect. The sales messages may be delivered as presentations of various lengths that can target the prospect's needs. For example, the sales messages may be combined into 2 minute, 7 minute and 20 minute presentations. Alternatively, the sales messages can be organized to address particular problems or needs that have been communicated by prospects in positions or industries. By applying knowledge gained from the sales message and the recorded performances, the company representative has an opportunity to communicate a clear sales message about the company to the prospect.

[0045] After communicating the sales message to the prospect, the method then proceeds to decision diamond 114 in which feedback is received. The feedback may be from the company representative or may be directly from a prospect. The feedback can be related to the sales message being communicated, the performance of the sales message, or the need for a new sales message. Each of these situations is described in further detail below. If there is no feedback to communicate, then the method is completed. However, if there is feedback then the feedback is analyzed as described in process block 116.

[0046] The feedback is analyzed to determine the type of feedback provided. Generally, there are three different types of feedback that can be provided. The first type of feedback is related to the performance of one or more sales message. The second type of feedback is related to the sales message. The third type of feedback is directed to the generation of a new sales message.

[0047] If the determination is made at decision diamond 118 that the feedback is related to one or more particular performances, the performance is modified at process block 119. The modified performance is stored in process block 108. The performance can be modified by adding comments, modifying comments, and/or modifying the performance presented by an illustrative all-star sales person. Typically, the modification of the performance is determined by evaluating feedback and determining that the feedback provides the appropriate basis to modify the performance.

[0048] If the determination is made at decision diamond 120 that the sales message is to be modified, then the sales message is modified at process block 121. The method then proceeds to process block 104 where the corresponding performance and comments are also changed to reflect the modification to the sales message.

[0049] At times there may changes that require generating new sales messages. For example, there may be a new competitor, or new products and/or services offered by a competitor that the company representative must be prepared to address. Additionally, the prospect may communicate the need for a particular product or service, and the current sales message may not address the prospect's needs. To effectively address this type of feedback, a new sales message may be needed. This need is determined in process block 122. The method would then proceed to process block 102 where the new sales message is generated which would directly address the challenge posed by the competitor and/or would address the prospect's needs.

[0050] Referring to FIG. 4 there is shown a diagram of an illustrative structure used to generate the sale presentation. The illustrative structure for the sales presentation is embodied in a "Message Map" that communicates a plurality of sales messages. Thus, the presentation communicates a plurality of sales messages using the illustrative structure that is described in further detail below.





[0065] Referring to FIG. 8 there is shown a method storing performances in a searchable database. The performances stored in the searchable database are received by an illustrative server as shown in process block 180. The performances are then organized to permit an illustrative sales person to find a particular performance, comment and/or sales message as shown in process block 182. There are various searching methods that can be used to find a particular performance and/or sales message. One such searching method includes providing an interactive user interface that is organized using a combination of buttons, and pull down menus, or an interactive user interface that permits a user to perform word searches, or by using a combination of these searching methods. These performances, comments and sales messages can then be directly stored in the searchable database 186.

[0066] In an alternative embodiment, the process of storing performances in a searchable database includes combining a plurality of performances into presentations as shown in process block 184. The presentations can also be stored in the searchable database 186.

[0067] By way of example and not of limitation, the searchable database 186 is an XML repository that supports the content. The content may include performances, presentations, comments or sales messages. The benefit of the XML repository is that it can be run independently without a server and can support search browsing, category browsing, and off-line computer usage without having to rely on the dependency of a server.

[0068] In process block 188, the searchable database 186 is then accessed by the illustrative sales person. The method then proceeds to process block 190 in which the illustrative sales person can then select the desired performance or presentation for a particular prospect.

[0069] Referring to FIG. 9 there is shown a schematic with an organizational overview for delivering the sales presentation. The schematic 200 shows a marketing block 202 that represents a marketing department. Generally, the marketing departments is charged with developing the materials and advertising to describe the company's products and/or services. The marketing department works in tandem with the sales department which is identified by block 204. The sales department is more focused on making a direct sales to one or more prospects.

[0070] Using the systems and methods described above, the sales department can effectively communicate a sales presentation to company representatives in the field. The sales messages are effective and consistent because the sales messages are generated in a centralized location. Thus, by using performances generated from an all-star sales person 204, the company representatives 206 and 208 can more effectively communicate with prospects and customers.

[0071] Referring to FIG. 10 there is shown an illustrative screenshot showing an interactive interface that permits a user to select one of a plurality of message objects. The performances are organized as a database of sales messages which is referred to as an "Ideabank". The Ideabank provides the company representation with a plurality of message objects that can be used for a particular presentation.

[0072] Referring to FIG. 11 there is shown an illustrative screenshot showing an interactive interface with a prospect profile. The prospect profile is a profile of the prospect that assists the company representative in structuring a targeted sales presentation. The profile describes the various pains associated with a particular within the prospect's organization.

[0073] Referring to FIG. 12 there is shown an illustrative screenshot in which the illustrative message object for the illustrative first power position is a competitive matrix. The message object is referred to as the competitive matrix. The competitive matrix is a sales message that supports the company solution. Additionally the competitive matrix shows that competitors do not meet the prospect's needs.

[0074] Referring to FIG. 13 there is shown an illustrative screenshot in which the illustrative message object for the illustrative first power position is a three-dimensional prop. The three-dimensional prop is used to provide a

physical metaphor that describes either the prospect's pain and/or a solution to the prospect's pain.

[0075] Referring to FIG. 14 there is shown an illustrative screenshot showing an illustrative coach, i.e. virtual agent, that describes the illustrative message object in FIG. 13. The coach describes the performance and the general conceptual framework for the particular message object. Thus, the company representative can more easily grasp the sales message and the structure within which to apply the particular sales message.

[0076] Referring to FIG. 15 there is shown an illustrative screenshot showing in which the illustrative message object is linked to a plurality of documents. By way of example, the plurality of documents may be located in a corporate intranet so that the documents can be quickly and easily revised.

[0077] Referring to FIG. 16 there is shown a screenshot in which a search can be performed for a particular message object. The search permits the company representative to readily access sales message or presentations. By way of example, the sales messages can be embodied in message objects and power positions.

[0078] Although the description about contains many limitations in the specification, these should not be construed as limiting the scope of the invention but as merely providing illustrations of some of the presently preferred embodiments of this invention. Thus, the scope of the invention should be determined by the appended claims and their legal equivalents rather than by the examples given.

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