

(12) **United States Patent**
Hamlin et al.

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(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR
 AUTOMATING THE CONDUCT OF
 SURVEYS OVER A NETWORK SYSTEM**

WO WO96/08779 3/1996
 WO WO99/07144 2/1999

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(73) Assignee: **IX, Inc.**, Greenwich, CT (US)

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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(22) Filed: **Mar. 2, 1998**

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(51) **Int. Cl.**⁷ **G06F 17/60**

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **705/10; 705/1; 705/7; 348/1; 348/2; 455/2; 709/217; 707/104; 707/506; 707/507**

(58) **Field of Search** 705/1, 10, 7; 345/333, 345/524; 364/710.07, 468.16, 468.15; 710/10, 102, 506, 507; 707/506, 104, 507; 348/1, 2; 455/2; 709/217

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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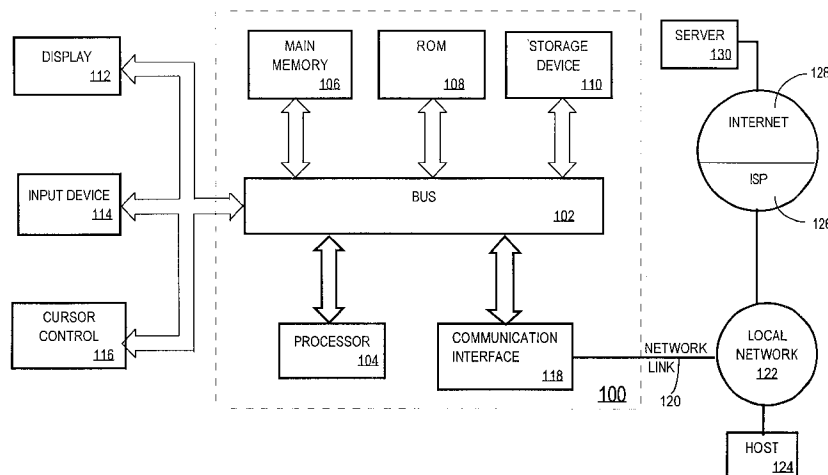
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A method and apparatus for automating surveys over a network system causes an interface to be displayed to a particular client of the network system. This interface can be used by the particular client to define a survey. In response to the client interacting with the interface, a sequence of steps is automatically performed. The sequence of steps includes generating a survey based on information received over the network system from the particular client interacting with the interface; fielding the survey to a group of target users on the network system; gathering results of from network users participating in the survey; and providing the particular client, over said network system, with data that reflects the results of the survey.

90 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



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FIG. 1

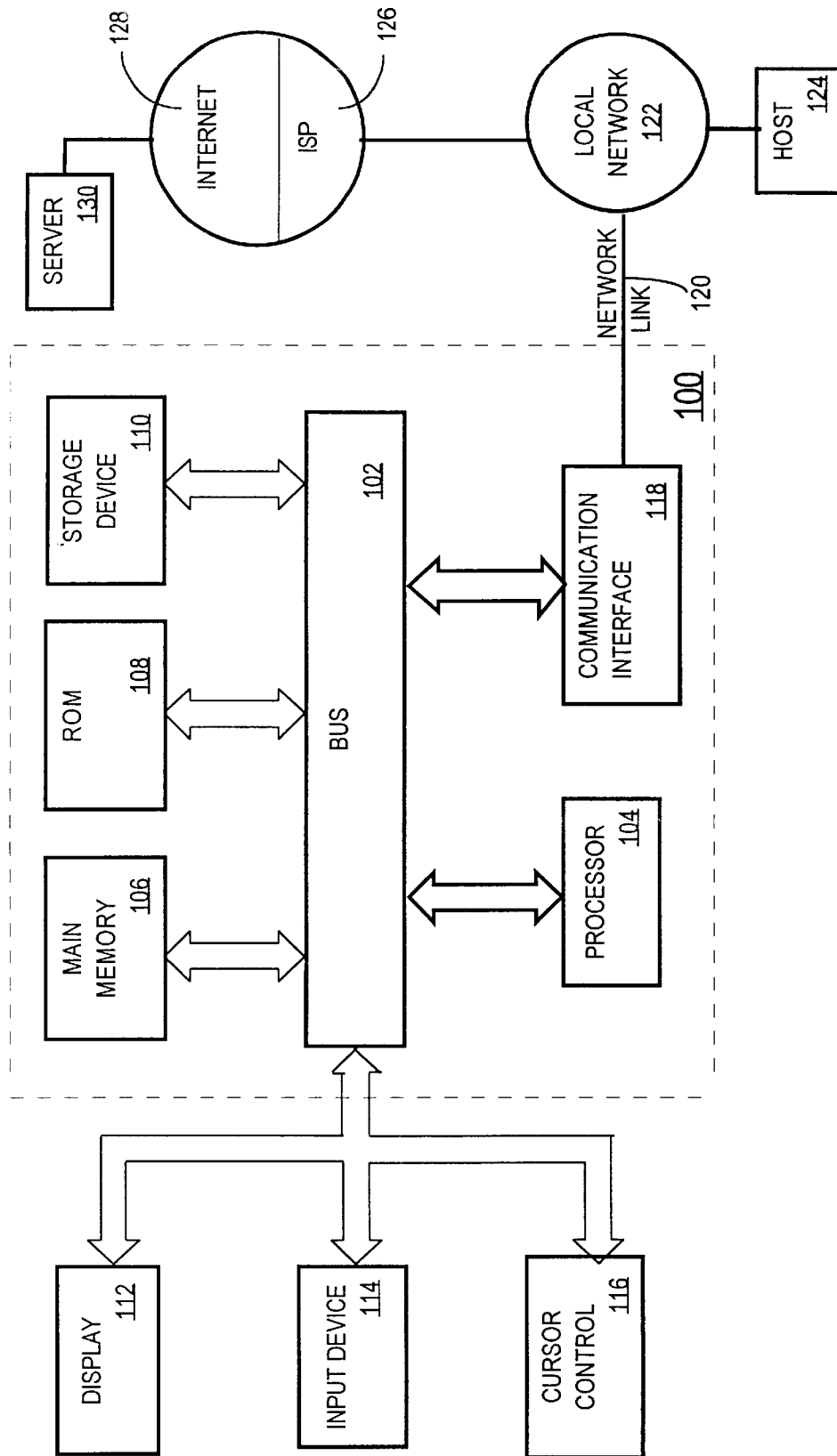


FIG. 2A

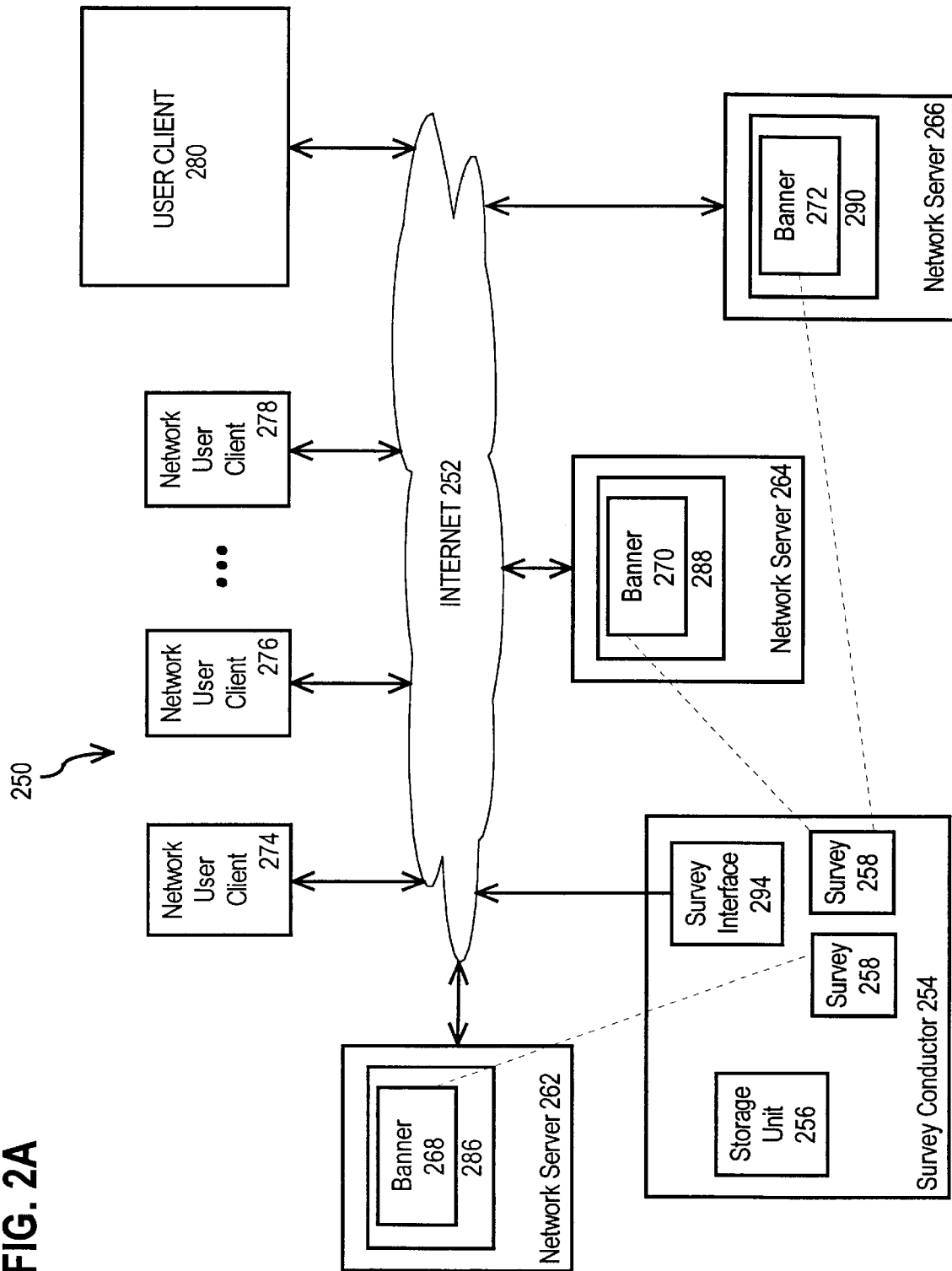
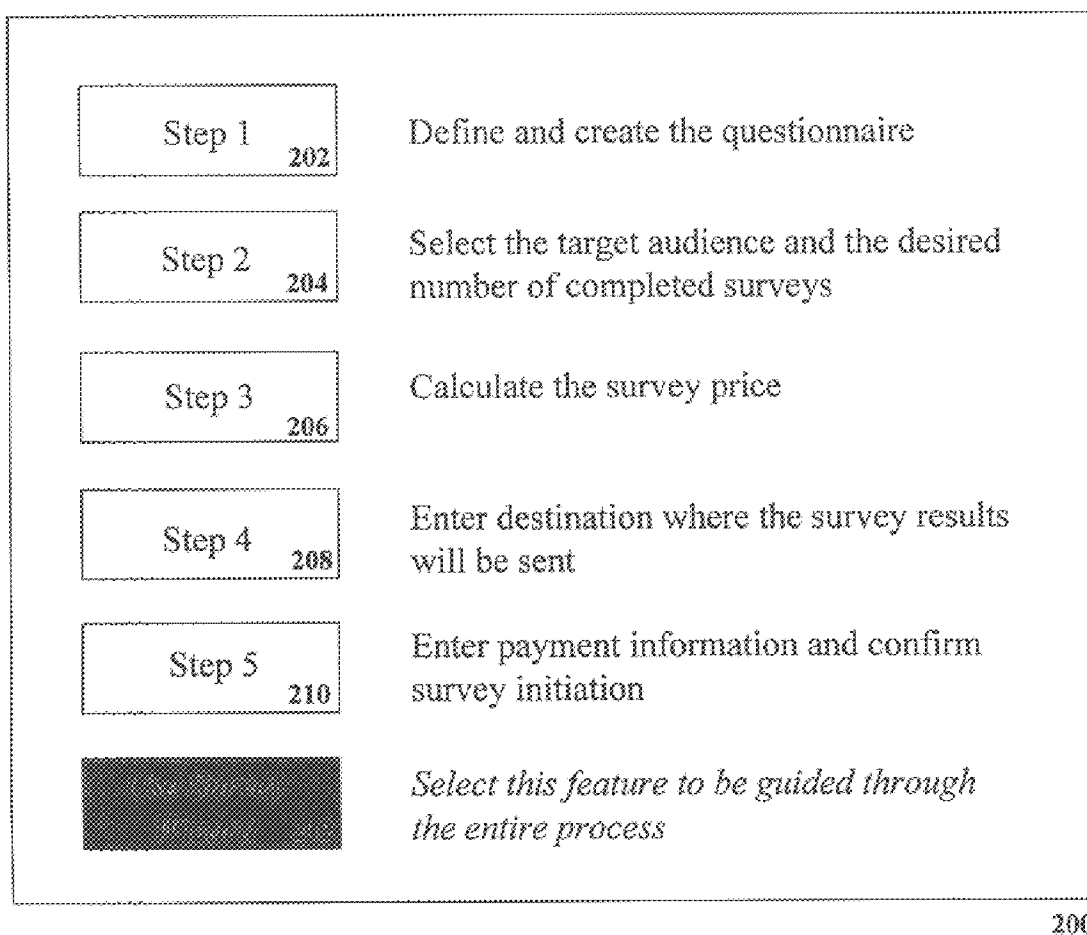


Figure 2B: Example Top-Level Interface Page

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