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(54) **INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM**

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(*) Notice: This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

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Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 08/939,368, filed on Sep. 29, 1997, now Pat. No. 6,021,307, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 08/644,838, filed on May 10, 1996, now abandoned, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 08/279,424, filed on Jul. 25, 1994, now abandoned, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 08/255,649, filed on Jun. 8, 1994, now abandoned.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
H04H 1/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **725/66; 725/110**
(58) **Field of Classification Search** None
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An information distribution system encodes a first set of digital data on a plurality of portable read-only storage devices. Additional information is stored in a database that is accessible by using a bi-directional channel. The first set of digital data contains a plurality of special displayable terms, a first non-displayable symbol, a plurality of linkage references, and a second non-displayable symbol. A user can select at least one special displayable term. The linking reference associated with the selected special displayable term is sent to the database via the bi-directional channel. The database uses the linking reference to search for information, and returns the resulting information to the user.

