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(54) **DYNAMIC POPULARITY-BASED
ADVERTISEMENT SELECTION FOR VIDEO
ON DEMAND**

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See application file for complete search history.

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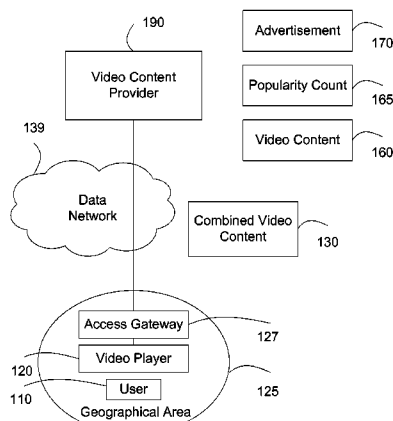
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Michele Liu Baillie

(57) **ABSTRACT**

In a method and system for selecting an advertisement for
video on demand, a video player is connected to a video
content provider over a network via an access gateway. The
video content provider receives a request for a video content
from the video player, determines a popularity count for the
video content and a geographical area for the video player,
selects the advertisement based on the popularity count and
the geographical area, and sends the video content combined
with the advertisement to the video player. In one embod-
iment, the advertisement has a corresponding advertisement
rule with an advertising condition which specifies a required
popularity count and geographical area. If the advertisement
condition is satisfied, then the advertisement is selected. In
this manner, an advertisement for video on demand is selected
based upon both demographics information and location of
the video player increasing the effectiveness of the advertise-
ment.

20 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets



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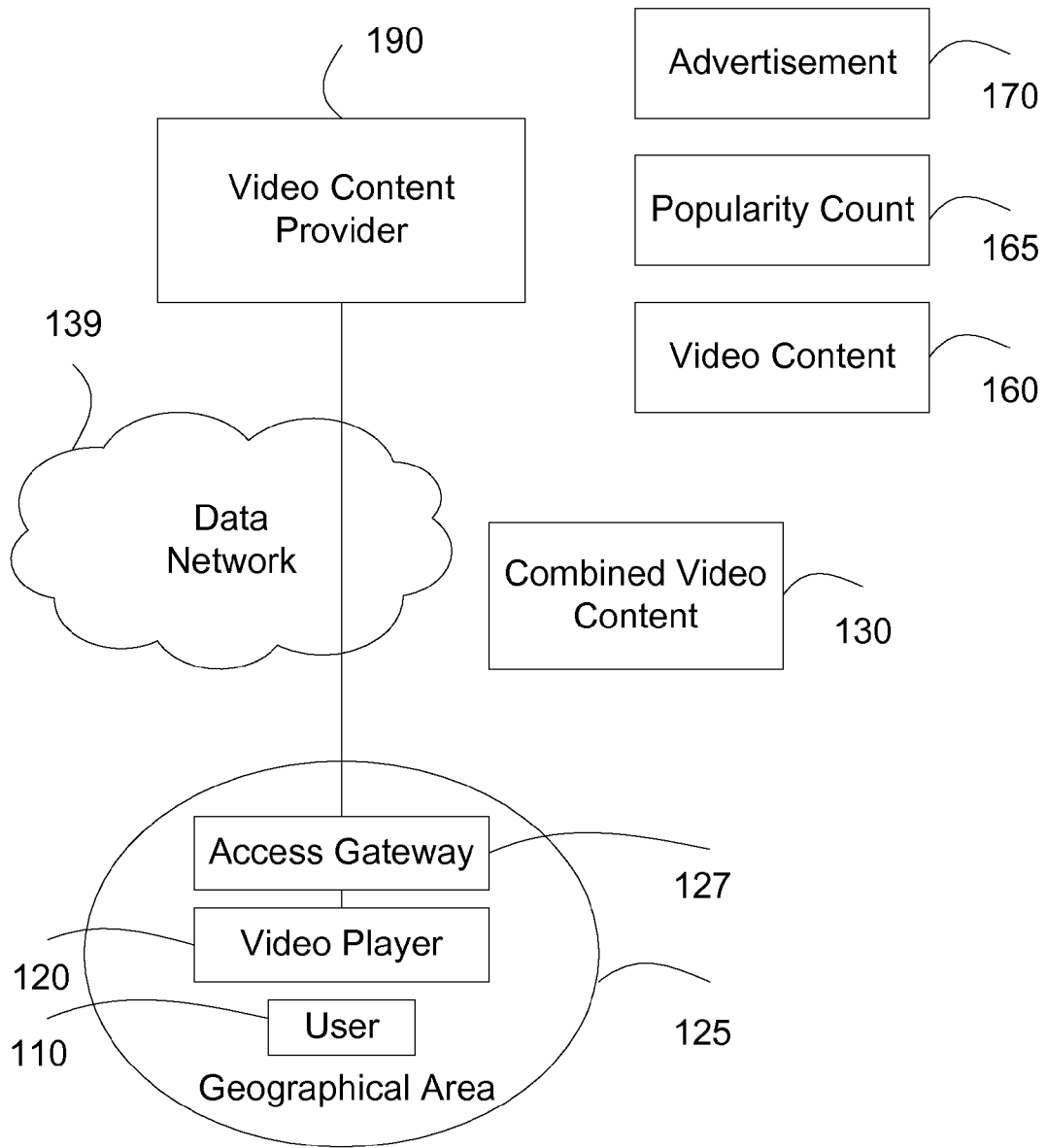


Figure 1

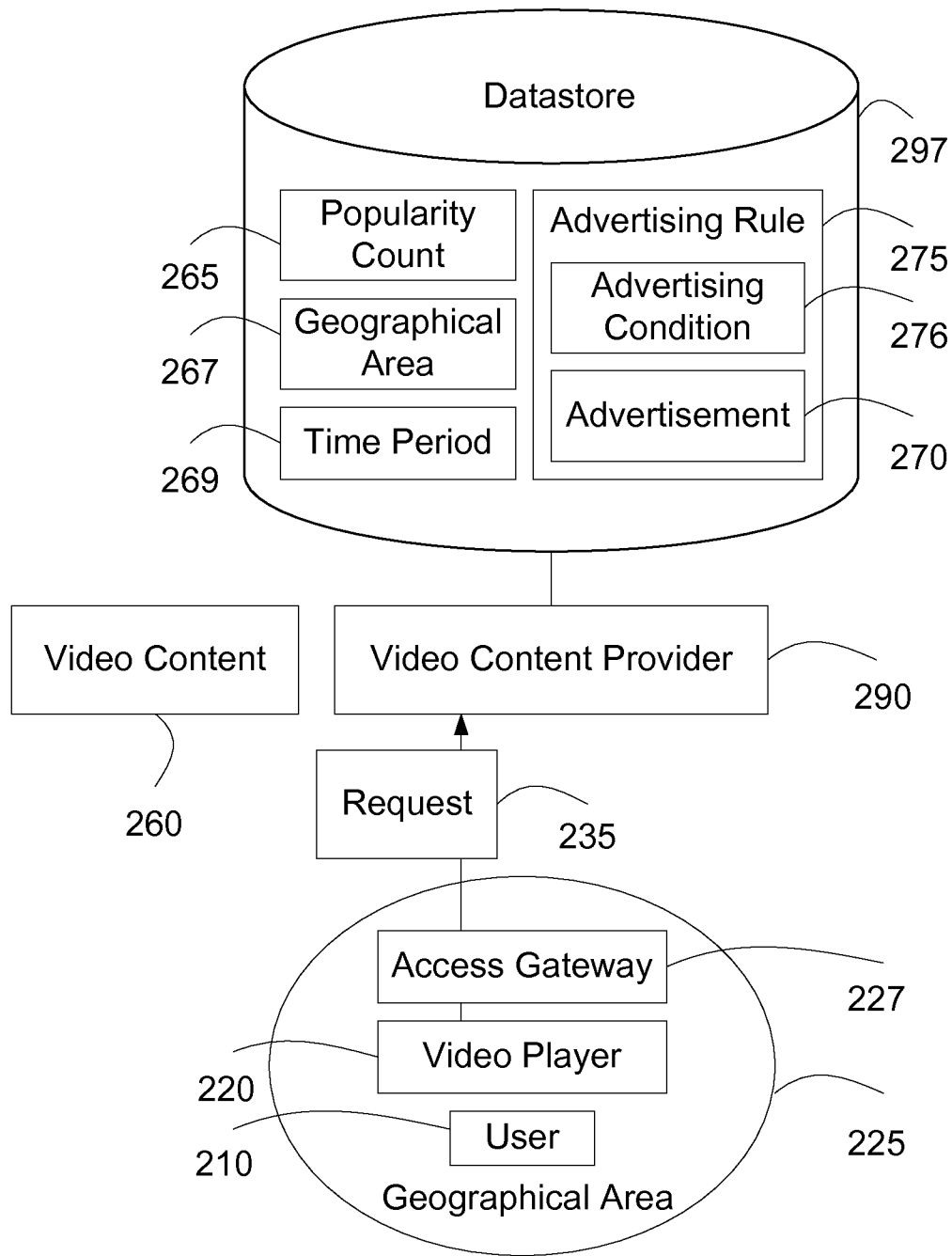


Figure 2a

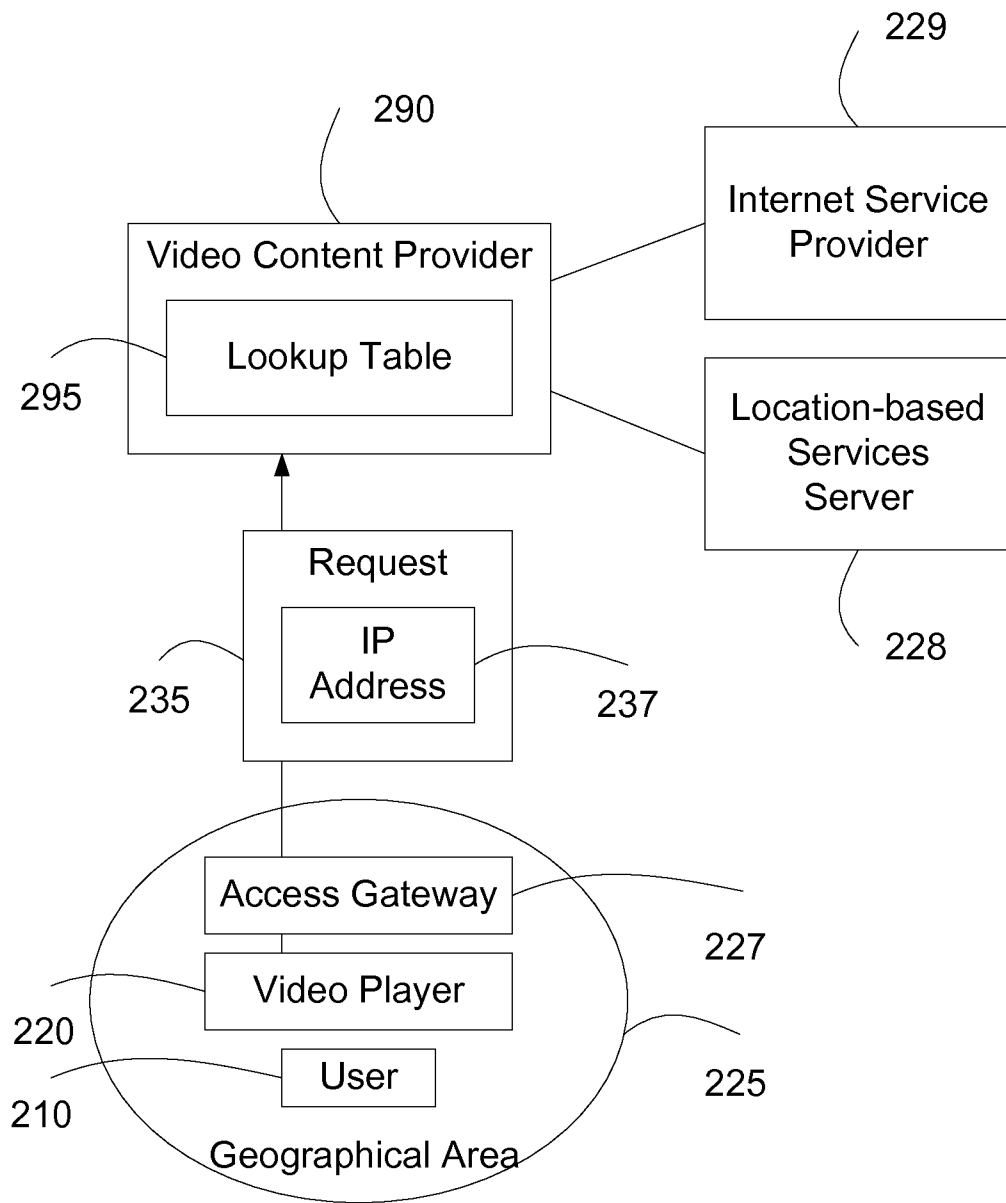


Figure 2b

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DYNAMIC POPULARITY-BASED ADVERTISEMENT SELECTION FOR VIDEO ON DEMAND

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present application is a continuation of co-pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/701,291, filed on Jan. 31, 2007.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field

This invention relates to system and method for selecting an advertisement for video on demand.

2. Related Arts

Businesses constantly look for new and more effective ways to advertise their merchandises or services.

With the advent of the Internet, on-line advertising becomes an important venue for businesses. On-line advertisers draw on experience of the traditional advertising channels, including advertising decision based on demographics information. This is particularly attractive to on-line advertising as it is easy to collect demographics information using consumer information, for example, in the form of user inputs or client-side cookies.

With the popularity of viewing video contents over the Internet, attaching an advertisement to a video content is common. However, selecting an effective advertisement for a video content remains a challenge. It is often inadequate to only take into account demographics information or consumer information.

In one example, John uses his personal computer (PC) at his downtown New York apartment to watch a Houston Rocket's basketball game highlight video from a sports web portal. Based on demographics information about the video, the portal attaches an advertisement for an athletic shoe store weekend promotion in Houston, Tex. The athletic shoe store fails to attract John, while having to pay the portal for the advertisement.

In another example, while vacationing at Maui, Hi., Jenny uses her smartphone to view a recorded episode of "Desperate Housewives" from an on-line video site. Based on demographics information about the episode and user information of Jenny, the on-line video site attaches an advertisement for a jewelry store at Palo Alto, Calif. where Jenny resides.

Therefore, there is a need to select an advertisement for video on demand that is based upon both demographics information and location of the viewing device.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In a method and system for selecting an advertisement for video on demand, a video player is connected to a video content provider over a network via an access gateway. The video content provider receives a request for a video content from the video player, determines a popularity count for the video content and a geographical area for the video player, selects the advertisement based on the popularity count and the geographical area, and sends the video content combined with the advertisement to the video player. In one embodiment, the advertisement has a corresponding advertisement rule with an advertising condition which specifies a required popularity count and geographical area. If the advertisement condition is satisfied, then the advertisement is selected. In this manner, an advertisement for video on demand is selected

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based upon both demographics information and location of the video player, increasing the effectiveness of the advertisement.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE FIGURES

FIG. 1 illustrates a user using a video player to request a video content.

FIG. 2a illustrates a process for selecting an advertisement based on popularity count of video content and geographic area of video player.

FIG. 2b illustrates a process for determining the geographical area of video player.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

FIG. 1 illustrates a user using a video player to request a video content.

User **110** uses video player **120** located in a geographical area **125** to request a video content **160** from a video content provider **190**.

Video content **160** includes video information. In one embodiment, video content **160** is a movie, an animation clip, a video clip, a recorded television program, or a video recording. In one embodiment, video information is encoded in a media digital format such as Moving Picture Experts Group-4 (MPEG-4), Adobe Flash, Windows Media Video (WMV), MPEG-1, MPEG-2, QuickTime file, or Audio Video Interleave (AVI) format.

In one embodiment, video content **160** is a news report, a weather update, a local weather report, a live traffic view or an entertainment story. In one embodiment, video content **160** is a movie, such as a drama, a comic, a romance, or a horror movie. In one embodiment, video content **160** is a documentary, such as a wild life, history, archeology, travel, or sport documentary. In one embodiment, video content **160** is a recorded episode of a television series, such as a sitcom, a crime story, a reality show, a talk show. In one embodiment, video content **160** is a recorded television production such as a sport event, a variety show or a beauty pageant contest. In one embodiment, video content **160** is an instructional video, such as for cooking, sport, bonsai, exercise, weight-loss or home improvement video. In one embodiment, video content **160** is a Music TV™ (MTV) production, or a concert recording. In one embodiment, video content **160** is a short video about arts, pets, music, politics, religion, sports highlights, or people. In one embodiment, video content **160** is a short video about news and Internet blogs.

Video player **120** is a computing device capable of playing video content. In one embodiment, video player **120** includes a personal desktop computer, a personal laptop computer, a hand-held computing device, a video appliance, or a media center. In one embodiment, video player **120** includes a graphical display screen based on technologies such as Thin-Film Transistor (TFT), Plasma Display Panel (PDP) or Liquid Crystal Display (LCD). In one embodiment, video player **120** includes a media output interface, such as an RCA jack, a High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) jack. In one embodiment, video player **120** includes a Personal Area Network (PAN) interface based on, for example, Bluetooth technology. In one embodiment, video player **120** includes a software program such as a web browser such as Internet Explorer™, Netscape™, Safari™ or Firefox™. In one embodiment, video player **120** includes a browser plugin. In one embodiment, video player **120** includes a standalone media player application such as Adobe™ Flash Player,

Microsoft™ Media Player, RealPlayer™, or QuickTime™. In one embodiment, video player 120 is a mobile device. In one embodiment, video player 120 is a smartphone, a Personal Data Assistance (PDA) or an MP4 player.

In one embodiment, geographical area 125 is a metropolitan area such as the San Francisco Bay Area, Washington DC Metro Area, or Detroit Mich. In one embodiment, geographical area 125 is a regional division such as the Pacific Coast that includes the states of Oregon, Washington and California, or the Mountain States that includes Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming. In one embodiment, geographical area 125 is a city, such as New York, Chicago, or San Jose. In one embodiment, geographical area 125 is within a section in a shopping district or a shopping center, such as a street block, courtyard, town square, portion of a street block, several adjacent street blocks, a shopping center section, a court yard, a restaurant, a food court, a department store, a rest area, or a parking lot.

Video player 120 connects to video content provider 190 over a public data network 139. In one embodiment, data network 139 includes the Internet.

In one embodiment, video player 120 accesses data network 139 via an Internet service provider. Video player 120 accesses data network 139 via an access gateway 127 operated by the Internet service provider. Access gateway 127 is located in the geographical area 125. In one embodiment, access gateway 127 is a Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexer (DSLAM), a Broadband Remote Access Server (BRAS), a Gateway GPRS Support Node (GGSN), a Cable Modem Termination System (CMTS) or a Cable Data Modem Termination System (CDMTS). In one embodiment, the access gateway is a wireless hotspot access point.

In one embodiment, video content provider 190 is an Internet portal such as Yahoo!™, America Online™ (AOL), or Microsoft Service Network™ (MSN) portal. In one embodiment, video content provider 190 is an Internet portal with journal style content about politics, sports, hobbies or news. In one embodiment, video content provider 190 is a website for social networking or online diaries. In one embodiment, video content provider 190 is a video sharing website such as Yahoo!™ Video, or Google™ Video. In one embodiment, video content provider 190 is an e-commerce website.

Video content provider 190 selects an advertisement 170 based on a popularity count 165, and geographical area 125.

Popularity count 165 indicates the popularity of video content 160. In one embodiment, popularity count 165 includes the number of times video content 160 has previously been requested by video players located within geographical area 125. In one embodiment, popularity count 165 includes the number of times video content 160 has previously been requested by video players located within geographical area 125 during a time period.

In one embodiment, advertisement 170 is for promoting brand recognition such as automobiles, airline service, vacation cruises, hotel chains, food or beverage. In one embodiment, advertisement 170 is for promoting a local business such as an auto service station, a dental office, a real estate broker, a restaurant, a gym, a retail store, or a beauty salon. In one embodiment, advertisement is for personal business that offers music or sports lesson, palm reading, or private instruction.

In one embodiment, advertisement 170 includes video information. Video content provider 190 combines video content 160 and advertisement 170 to generate combined video content 130. In one embodiment, video content provider 190

combines video content 160 and advertisement 170 by inserting advertisement 170 at the beginning, at the end, or within video content 160.

Video content provider 190 delivers combined video content 130 to video player 120. In one embodiment, video content provider 190 sends a Universal Resource Identifier (URI) of combined video content 130 to video player 120. In one embodiment, the URI is based on Real Time Streaming Protocol (RTSP), File Transfer Protocol (FTP), or Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP).

In one embodiment, video player 120 receives a RTSP-based URI for combined video content 130. Video player 120 uses the RTSP-based URI to obtain combined video content 130 streamed from video content provider 190. In one embodiment, video player 120 receives a FTP-based URI for combined video content 130. Video player 120 uses the FTP-based URI to download combined video content 130 from video content provider 190. In one embodiment, video player 120 receives a HTTP-based URI for combined video content 130. Video player 120 uses the HTTP-based URI to obtain combined video content 130.

Video player 120 plays combined video content 130.

FIG. 2a illustrates a process for selecting an advertisement based on popularity count of video content and geographic area of video player.

Video content provider 290 receives a request 235 from video player 220 via access gateway 227 for video content 260.

Video content provider 290 determines advertisement 270 based on popularity count 265 of video content 260, and geographical area 225 of video player 220.

In one embodiment, video content provider 290 connects to a datastore 297. Datastore 297 stores a plurality of popularity counts, including popularity count 265. In one embodiment, datastore 297 includes flash memory or a hard disk. In one embodiment, datastore 297 includes a database.

In one embodiment, datastore 297 stores a plurality of advertising rules, including advertising rule 275. Advertising rule 275 includes advertising condition 276 and advertisement 270 identity. Advertising condition 276 includes a required popularity count and a required geographical area. Video content provider 290 selects advertisement 270 if advertising condition 276 is satisfied. In one embodiment, advertising condition 276 is satisfied if popularity count 265 matches the required popularity count, and geographical area 225 matches the required geographical area.

In one embodiment, popularity count 265 includes a number counting the times video content 260 has previously been requested by video players located within geographic area 267.

Advertising condition 276 is satisfied if popularity count 265 is at least 1 million and geographical area 225 matches geographic area 267.

Video content provider 290 determines geographical area 225. The process to determine geographical area 225 is illustrated later in FIG. 2b.

In one example, popularity count 265 is 1,357,902; geographical area 267 is San Francisco Bay Area; and geographical area 225 is San Francisco Bay Area. Video content provider 290 determines that advertising condition 276 is satisfied; video content provider 290 selects advertisement 270.

In another embodiment, advertising condition 276 includes time period 269. Popularity count 265 includes a number counting the times video content 260 has previously been requested by video players in geographical area 267 during time period 269 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. Advertising

condition **276** is satisfied if popularity count **265** is at least 300,000; geographical area **225** matches geographic area **267** and time of request **235** is within time period **269**.

In one example, popularity count **265** is 652,802; geographical area **267** is San Francisco Bay Area; time period **269** is from 7:00 pm to 12:00 am; geographical area **225** is San Francisco Bay Area. In one embodiment, video content provider **290** connects to a clock. Video content provider **290** determines the time of request **235** is 7:23 pm by reading the clock when video content provider **290** receives request **235**. Video content provider **290** determines that advertising condition **276** is satisfied; video content provider **290** selects advertisement **270**.

In one embodiment, popularity count **265** is further based on capabilities of video player **220**, including display screen capabilities such as size and resolution.

In one embodiment, popularity count **265** is further based on an access network type. Examples of access network types include cellular network, broadband network, hotspot network, WiFi network, or WiMax network.

In one embodiment, popularity count **265** is further based on Internet service provider through which video players request for video content **260**. Examples of Internet service provider include cable broadband service providers, DSL Internet service providers, or wireless broadband service providers.

In the current state of the art, the video content provider **290** does not have information about the location of the video player where the request **235** comes from. This location information is associated with and known to the entity that operates the access gateway **227**. FIG. *2b* illustrates a process for determining the geographical area of video player based on location information about the access gateway **227**.

Video content provider **290** determines geographical area **225** based on request **235** sent by video player **220** via access gateway **227**.

In one embodiment, request **235** includes an Internet Protocol (IP) data packet. Video content provider **290** extract the source IP address **237** from request **235**. Video content provider **290** determines geographical area **225** based on IP address **237**.

In one embodiment, access gateway **227** is a BRAS. Video content provider **290** obtains a name about access gateway **227**. In one embodiment, video content provider **290** uses IP address **237** to obtain the name by means of a reverse Domain Name Service (DNS) query. In one embodiment, video content provider **290** connects to a web site that provides reverse DNS lookup service, for example, web site "remote.12dt.com". In one embodiment, the name includes an identity of access gateway **227**; video content provider **290** uses access gateway **227** identity to determine geographical area of access gateway **227**. In one embodiment, video content provider **290** includes a lookup table **295**; video content provider **290** queries lookup table **295** with the identity of access gateway **227** to obtain geographical area of access gateway **227**. In one embodiment, the name includes an identity of an Internet service provider **229** that operates access gateway **227**. Video content provider **290** queries Internet service provider **229** using the identity of access gateway **227** for the geographical area of access gateway **227**.

Video content provider **290** determines geographical area **225** to be the geographical area of access gateway **227**.

In one embodiment, access gateway **227** is a mobile access gateway such as GGSN. Video content provider **290** uses IP address **237** to obtain mobile location of video player **220**. In one embodiment, video content provider **290** queries a Location-based Services (LBS) server **228** with IP address **237**

using Open Mobile Alliance (OMA) Mobile Location Protocol (MLP). In one embodiment, video content provider **290** receives geographical coordinates or a longitude/latitude pair of video player **220**. Video content provider **290** uses the geographical coordinates to determine geographical area **225**.

In one embodiment, access gateway **227** is a wireless access point and geographical area **225** is an area covered by access gateway **227**. Video content provider **290** uses IP address **237** to obtain location of access gateway **227** by querying a location server. In one embodiment, request **235** includes a TCP port number or an UDP port number. Video content provider **290** uses IP address **237** and the port number to query the location server for the location of access gateway **227**. In one embodiment, the location of access gateway **227** further includes a coverage radius of access gateway **227**, such as 50 feet, 150 feet or 300 feet. Video content provider **290** uses the location of access gateway **227** to determine geographical area **225**.

In one embodiment, video content **160** is associated with a grouping of a plurality of video contents. Popularity count **165** is related to the grouping. In one embodiment, the grouping is based on content similarity of the plurality of video contents, such as sports, comic or history. In one example, the grouping is based on sports; the plurality of video contents includes a recorded basketball game, a documentary about the origin of the Olympic Games, and a skateboard short video. In one embodiment, the grouping is based on the length of the plurality of video contents, such as shorter than 2 minutes, 3-5 minutes, or over 20 minutes. In one embodiment, the grouping is based on language of the plurality of video contents. In one embodiment, the grouping is based on publishing era of the plurality of video contents, such as the 1960s, the 1980s, or 1971-1972. In other embodiments, the grouping is based on the director, the actors or actresses, or the producer of the plurality of video contents. In one embodiment, the grouping is based on age of users of the plurality of video contents, such as age 7-10, 13-18, or over 65. In one embodiment, the grouping is based on user opinion. In one embodiment, the grouping is based on business driven factors such as the highest bidders. In one embodiment, the grouping is based on random selections.

In one embodiment, video player **220** includes a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver and request **235** includes geographical coordinates of video player **220** determined by the GPS receiver. Video content provider **290** uses the geographical coordinates in request **235** to determine geographical area **225**.

In one embodiment, video player **220** provides time information in request **235**, and video content provider **290** determines advertisement **270** based on the time information.

Foregoing described embodiments of the invention are provided as illustrations and descriptions. They are not intended to limit the invention to precise form described. In particular, it is contemplated that functional implementation of invention described herein may be implemented equivalently in hardware, software, firmware, and/or other available functional components or building blocks, and that networks may be wired, wireless, or a combination of wired and wireless. Other variations and embodiments are possible in light of above teachings, and it is thus intended that the scope of invention not be limited by this Detailed Description, but rather by Claims following.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for delivering content to a mobile device over a data network by a content provider, comprising the steps of:
 - (a) receiving, by the content provider, a request for a given non-advertisement content from a given mobile device with given display screen capabilities over the data network; and
 - (b) in response to receiving the request:
 - (b1) querying, by the content provider, for a given geographical area of the given mobile device based on a mobile location of the given mobile device;
 - (b2) connecting, by the content provider, to a database comprising a plurality of popularities and a plurality of advertisement rules, wherein a given popularity of the plurality of popularities comprises a count associated with the given non-advertisement content, the given display screen capabilities, and the given geographical area, wherein the count indicates a number of times the given non-advertisement content has been requested by other mobile devices with the given display screen capabilities while in the given geographical area, wherein a given advertisement rule of the plurality of advertisement rules comprises an advertisement identity associated with an advertisement condition, wherein the advertisement condition comprises a required count for the given non-advertisement content and a required geographical area;
 - (b3) retrieving, by the content provider from the database, the given popularity of the plurality of popularities associated with the given non-advertisement content, the given display screen capabilities, and the given geographical area of the given mobile device;
 - (b4) determining whether the given advertisement rule matches the request, wherein the given advertisement rule matches the request when the required geographical area in the given advertisement rule matches the given geographical area and the required count in the given advertisement rule matches the given popularity retrieved from the database; and
 - (b5) in response to determining that the given advertisement rule matches the request, selecting, by the content provider, an advertisement identified by the advertisement identity in the given advertising rule.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - (c) delivering by the content provider the selected advertisement as a response to the request.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the given display screen capabilities comprise one or more of the following: a screen size; and a screen resolution.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein the mobile location comprises one or more of the following: a geophysical location of the given mobile device; and a location of a wireless access gateway to which the given mobile device is connected.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein the required geographical area in the given advertising rule comprises one or more of the following: a state; a city; a metropolitan city; a region; a section of a building; a shopping center; a street; a restaurant; and a department store.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein the given advertising rule further comprises a required time of day, wherein the given advertisement rule matches the request when the required geographical area in the given advertisement rule matches the given geographical area, the required count in the given advertisement rule matches the given popularity

retrieved from the database, and a current time of day matches the required time of day in the given advertising rule.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the non-advertisement content comprises one or more of the following: video content; web content; music; news; and sports.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the count associated with the given non-advertisement content is related to a piece of information about a user of the given mobile device.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the count associated with the given non-advertisement content is related to opinions of users of the other mobile devices.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the count associated with the given non-advertisement content is based on a data network type.

11. A system, comprising:

a given mobile device comprising a display screen with given display screen capabilities; and

a content provider for:

(a) receiving a request for a given non-advertisement content from the given mobile device with the given display screen capabilities over the data network;

(b) in response to receiving the request:

(b1) querying for a given geographical area of the given mobile device based on a mobile location of the given mobile device;

(b2) connecting to a database comprising a plurality of popularities and a plurality of advertisement rules,

wherein a given popularity of the plurality of popularities comprises a count associated with the given non-advertisement content, the given display screen capabilities, and the given geographical area,

wherein the count indicates a number of times the given non-advertisement content has been requested by other mobile devices with the given display screen capabilities while in the given geographical area,

wherein a given advertisement rule of the plurality of advertisement rules comprises an advertisement identity associated with an advertisement condition, wherein the advertisement condition comprises a required count for the given non-advertisement content and a required geographical area;

(b3) retrieving from the database the given popularity of the plurality of popularities associated with the given non-advertisement content, the given display screen capabilities, and the given geographical area of the given mobile device;

(b4) determining whether the given advertisement rule matches the request, wherein the given advertisement rule matches the request when the required geographical area in the given advertisement rule matches the given geographical area and the required count in the given advertisement rule matches the given popularity retrieved from the database; and

(b5) in response to determining that the given advertisement rule matches the request, selecting, by the content provider, an advertisement identified by the advertisement identity in the given advertising rule; and

(c) delivering the selected advertisement to the given mobile device, wherein the given mobile device further presents the selected advertisement on the display screen.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the delivering (c) comprises:

(c1) delivering the selected advertisement as a response to the request.

13. The system of claim 11, wherein the given display screen capabilities comprise one or more of the following: a screen size; and a screen resolution.

14. The system of claim 11, wherein the mobile location comprises one or more of the following: a geophysical location of the given mobile device; and a location of a wireless access gateway to which the given mobile device is connected.

15. The system of claim 11, wherein the required geographical area in the given advertising rule comprises one or more of the following: a state; a city; a metropolitan city; a region; a section of a building; a shopping center; a street; a restaurant; and a department store.

16. The system of claim 11, wherein the given advertising rule further comprises a required time of day, wherein given

advertisement rule matches the request when the required geographical area in the given advertisement rule matches the given geographical area, the required count in the given advertisement rule matches the given popularity retrieved from the database, and a current time of day matches the required time of day in the given advertising rule.

17. The system of claim 11, wherein the non-advertisement content comprises one or more of the following: video content; web content; music; news; and sports.

18. The system of claim 11, wherein the count associated with the given non-advertisement content is related to a piece of information about a user of the given mobile device.

19. The system of claim 11, wherein the count associated with the given non-advertisement content is related to opinions of users of the other mobile devices.

20. The system of claim 11, wherein the count associated with the given non-advertisement content is based on a data network type.

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