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Apple Inc.

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Responsive to the Communication dated May 26, 2010

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I

Enclosed please find new set of claims 1 to 11, new description page 1a and replacement description page 1.

With regards to item 2 of the Communication, it is submitted that pages 27 to 33 of the description are in fact the transformed claims of the parent application as originally filed, and therefore they should be in compliance with Article 76(1) EPC. Description pages 34 to 40 are deleted.

With regards to item 4 of the Communication, original claim 11 has been deleted.

With regards to item 5.1 of the Communication, claim 1 has been amended to a "computer-implemented method".

With regards to item 5.2 of the Communication, “portable” replaces “hand-held” in the claims.

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Furthermore, claim 1 has been amended as follows:

- “method of unlocking” has been replaced by “method for preventing unintentional unlocking”. The suitability of the claimed method for preventing unintentional unlocking is disclosed in paragraph [0049] of the description.
- “unlock image” has been changed to “single unlock image”. Use of a single unlock image is disclosed, e.g., in Fig. 4A through 5C.
- Feature “detecting a contact with the touch-sensitive display at a first predefined location corresponding to a single unlock image” has been amended by “while the portable electronic device is in a locked state, wherein the single unlock image is a graphical, interactive user-interface object with which a user interacts in order to unlock the device”. The amendment is disclosed, e.g., in paragraph [0062] of the description.
- Feature “maintaining the portable electronic device in the locked state if the moving of the single unlock image on the touch-sensitive display does not result in movement of the single unlock image from the first predefined location to the predefined unlock region on the touch-sensitive display” has been added at the end of claim 1. This feature is disclosed, e.g., in paragraph [0007] of the description.

Independent claims 7 and 11 have been amended accordingly.

In dependent claim 6, “movement” has been amended to “movement of the single unlock image required to unlock the device”. The amendment is disclosed in claim 4, from which claim 6 depends.

With regard to item 8.1 of the Communication, it is submitted that the two-part form would be inappropriate in the present case because the features that distin-

guish the invention over the closest prior art (unlocking a portable device, moving a single unlock image) are not directly related to one another. For this reason, grouping them in a characterizing portion would render the claims unintelligible.

With regard to item 8.2 of the Communication, reference signs have been added to the claims.

With regard to item 9.5 of the Communication, documents D1 and D2 are discussed on additional description page 1a.

II

The subject-matter of the independent claims as amended is inventive.

According to the claim amendments, the invention uses a single unlock image. In contrast, D2 uses “two or more visual icons” in an “iconic password sequence” (D2, abstract, and column 2, lines 23 to 24). The subject-matter of the independent claims now differs from the disclosure of D2 at least in the following features: (1) the electronic device is portable; (2) the electronic device as a whole rather than a function on the device is unlocked; (3) the unlocking is effected by moving a single unlock image.

The present invention solves the problem of preventing unintentional unlocking of a portable electronic device, while at the same time providing an easy mechanism to unlock the device.

The claimed solution to this problem was not rendered obvious by D2.

First of all, D2 solves an entirely different problem, namely preventing unauthorized access, not preventing unintentional unlocking. The problem of uninten-

tional unlocking occurs only in the context of portable devices. D2 does not even deal with portable devices. Therefore, when looking for a solution to the problem of the present invention, the skilled person would not have considered D2.

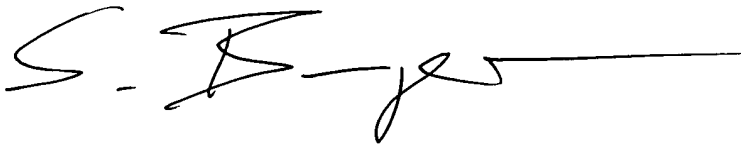
Secondly, the technique of D2 is unsuitable for solving the problem of the present invention. Moving multiple icons in an “iconic password sequence” makes it hard and time-consuming to unlock a portable device. The user must remember the password sequence, and he must carry out several finger gestures on the touch-sensitive display (cf. description of the present application, paragraph [0005]: *“The button combinations may be hard to perform. Creating, memorizing, and recalling passwords, codes, and the like can be quite burdensome. These drawbacks may reduce the ease of use of the unlocking process and, as a consequence, the ease of use of the device in general.”*). In addition, users who do not know the password sequence but who should nevertheless be able to unlock the portable device (e.g., friends of the owner of the device) cannot do so. The technique disclosed in D2 is therefore not easy when used for unlocking a portable device, and for this reason the skilled person could not simply apply this technique to the unlocking of portable devices for arriving at the solution of the present invention.

The claimed solution to this problem was also not rendered obvious by D1, which likewise requires interacting with multiple outlined contact areas to prevent unauthorized access, rather than using a single unlock image to prevent unintentional unlocking.

III

It is requested to grant a patent based on the set of claims currently on file.

Auxiliary, if there are still substantive objections with respect to patentability of the present invention, it is requested to perform an oral interview and/or oral proceedings according to Article 116 EPC.



Stefan Burger
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Enclosure

New claims 1 to 11 in clean and marked-up format

New description page 1a

Replacement description page 1