

STOCKWELL & SMEDLEY

Attorneys at Law

SUITE 200
861 CORPORATE DRIVE
LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY 40503

TODD E. STOCKWELL*
CHRISTOPHER T. SMEDLEY
CHRISTOPHER M. TANNER**
WESLEY L. STRICKLAND****

OF COUNSEL:

RICHARD C. STEVENS***
ROBERT L. SHOWALTER*
MICHAEL D. FOLKERTS***
THOMAS P. GOODNESS

PATENTS, TRADEMARKS,
COPYRIGHTS & RELATED MATTERS

TELEPHONE: (859) 223-3400
FACSIMILE: (859) 224-1399
mail@stockwell-law.com

August 23, 2007

*ADMITTED IN KENTUCKY & OHIO
**ADMITTED IN KENTUCKY, FLORIDA & DC
***ADMITTED ONLY IN OHIO
****ADMITTED ONLY IN VIRGINIA & DC

Judy and H.B. Rice
PICS, LLC
3073 Many Oaks Park
Lexington, Kentucky 40509

Re: Novelty Opinion

Dear Judy:

We have performed a search of the files of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, as well as other resources, in an effort to determine the patentability of your proposed PICS system.

Summary of Opinion

Based on our analysis of the search results, it is our opinion that the likelihood of patentability for this invention is reasonably high.

Although our search of prior art references did find some examples of web-based maps that had features similar to your idea, none had all the specific features present in your invention.

Still, a patent examiner could argue that your invention would be an obvious combination of a number of known concepts. To overcome this, asserting patent claims which specifically and explicitly recite the exact principles of your invention, particularly the roles of the different DBMS's and the accessibility to data by a customer, would likely make such an argument difficult for an Examiner to sustain.

Summary of the Present Invention

As we understand it, your invention is directed to a system that provides interactive maps that can be easily updated by the individual locations shown on the map. In particular, the system allows a user to develop images that are displayed on the map and update ancillary information that is shown when an image is selected. The ancillary information can even include a link to an appropriate web page.

Summary of Relevant References

The database of the United States Patent and Trademark Office contains all patents issued from the year 1790 until the present, as well as some pending patent applications that were filed between 2001 and 2007. It is important to note that not all pending applications are published and thus relevant prior art may be pending that is not available to the public.

1. "Test Drive Our New Interactive Maps": This website shows an interactive map with somewhat realistic renderings of some of the map points. By clicking on a point, a link to a web page can be shown in a pop-up window. The map is provided by mapnetwork.com who advertises "client involvement" with content development.

This site appears related to your invention but does not provide the level of detail needed to determine the exact scope of similarity. No disclosure is made of the multiple RDBMS's that are present in your system; thus, such a feature can be used to distinguish over this reference. MAPNETWORK and NAVTEQ have a number of U.S. patents, but non appeared to be relevant to your invention.

2. U.S. Patent No. 7,171,389: The '389 patent relates to a web portal that allows customized web sites for selling land. The portal includes a map interface that allows a buyer to select an area of interest. Sellers maintain their own web sites for land they have for sale in these areas.

This patent operates more like a search engine to find matching web sites and is unrelated to a community interactive map that members of the community utilize to advertise helpful information about themselves or their business.

3. U.S Patent No. 6,983,313: The '313 patent relates to a system that mixes social networking and on-line maps. Any user can add information about a map point and publish it to family and friends. When someone accesses the map, then this additional information is viewable.

While a business owner could theoretically use this system to maintain information about a business; this system differs significantly from your invention in that the map provider is not receiving income from the business owner nor providing the business owner with exclusive control over information about the business.

4. U.S. Patent No. 6,879,702: The '702 patent relates to a geographical map that can be augmented with realistic pictures of map locations.

This system fails to disclose a number of features of your idea, but is included to show that on-line interactive maps with realistic images have been previously disclosed.

5. U.S. Patent No. 6,263,343: The '343 patent relates to a system that separates the map data from ancillary data. As shown in Fig. 1, the various data layers for a map are separated out to individual, responsible databases.

This system fails to disclose a number of features of your idea, but is included to show that, in principle, using separate back-end databases to manage map data has been previously disclosed.

Statement of Opinion

None of the patents or applications we discovered disclose an interactive map system having all of the features of your invention. However, there could be other relevant references that we did not uncover during our patent search, which was limited to the scope to complete a standard patentability opinion. For example, the Examiner at the United States Patent and Trademark Office, while conducting the examination, may search for the invention in foreign patents, international patent applications, and other literature.

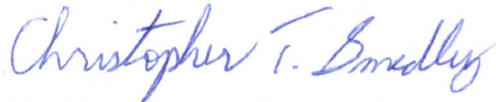
Judy and H.B. Rice
August 23, 2007
Page Four

Because none of the references we located anticipate all of the features of your invention, it is our opinion that the likelihood of patentability for your invention is reasonably high. We have included copies of the references for your review.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions about this opinion.

Very truly yours,

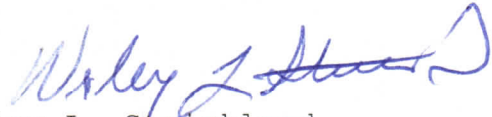
STOCKWELL & SMEDLEY, PSC



Christopher T. Smedley

Very truly yours,

STOCKWELL & SMEDLEY, PSC



Wesley L. Strickland

CTS:WLS:cbp

Enclosures