

playing song broadcast technology, and station reliability. Each station will also have a "Map" button which, when clicked, will immediately display the Map Tab with the selected station displayed in the center of the map. Selecting a station will display the station's information in the Station Data.

[0308] World Tab

[0309] The World Tab will only display real world radio stations (FM and AM stations). Instead of the virtual world displayed in the Map Tab, this will be an actual map of the world. In one embodiment, when a user first enters the World Tab, SonicIsland.com will display the United States, since the majority of users will be from and want to listen to U.S. stations. In the future, the user's IP address might be used to determine the default region displayed. Using the same navigation bar displayed on the Map Tab, the user can zoom into the state they are interested to locate a real station.

[0310] When the user clicks on a station icon, the icon will be highlighted and the station's information will be displayed in the Station Data.

[0311] Search Tab

[0312] The Search Tab displays a standard search engine-like interface. At the top is the search box. The user types desired search criteria and SonicIsland.com will automatically search by Artist, Station Name, Genre, and Song.

[0313] The search results will be grouped logically by:

[0314] Genre

[0315] Station Name

[0316] Artist

[0317] Song played in the last 24 hours

[0318] Song being played now

[0319] Like the Yellow Pages tab, each station entry will show live information. When a station is selected, the station's information is displayed in the Station Data.

[0320] Preferences Tab

[0321] This will be only available to registered users. This allows to change the user's filtering criteria and preferences. The user can change:

[0322] Bandwidth Filter. Only display stations broadcasting within a specified range of bit rates. There will also be selections for common internet connections (e.g. 33.6 modem, 56K modem, or "High Speed").

[0323] Active Only Filter. Only display stations currently broadcasting.

[0324] Not Full Filter. Only display stations which haven't reached capacity.

[0325] Quality Filter. This will display stations meeting SonicIsland.com's quality heuristics.

[0326] Only Certified Stations. Limit stations shown to "real network stations".

[0327] Preferred Media Player Filter. Since some stations broadcast using a multiplicity of media streams (e.g. Real Audio and WMA), this allows the user to select their preferred stream. They can also exclude some types of streaming media if they do not

have a supported player installed on their system. For example, Linux users might want to exclude WMA.

[0328] Mailing information. Whether they want to receive the opt-in SonicIsland.com opt-in mailings.

[0329] Station Area

[0330] This is a area is positioned just below the tabs on the Map Tab, List Tab, World Tab, and Search Tab. It contains live information about the currently selected station, including:

[0331] Station Name.

[0332] URL. User may click on this to jump directly to the station's WEB site.

[0333] Bandwidth. Expressed in kbits/sec.

[0334] Currently song. This will be continuously updated.

[0335] Number of users in station. This will be continuously updated.

[0336] Popularity Ratings. These will include "x of y displayed", and "a of b in Genre"

[0337] Broadcast technology-displayed iconically-representing RealAudio, QuickTime, WMA, or streaming MP3.

[0338] Station Reliability. This will be represented by a "signal strength" graphical bar.

[0339] Play Button. This will launch the appropriate media player for the user. SonicIsland.com may allow radio stations to use custom buttons.

[0340] Rate Button. This allows the user to "rate" the station. This will be used in combination with actual station listening patterns to judge station popularity. It will also enhance SonicIsland.com's "stickiness", where users will tend to stay at the SonicIsland.com WEB site as long as possible.

[0341] Add Bookmark Button. This will add the bookmark for this station to the user's browser bookmark list (or "Favorites" in Internet Explorer). Selecting the bookmark will return the user to the exact station and View in SonicIsland.com, so that they can immediately click on the station to play it.

[0342] Add to Favorites Button. This adds the station to the Favorites list. If the user isn't registered, he/she will be asked to register before this feature is enable.

[0343] As discussed in the Implementation Details at the end of this document, there are different interfaces available, depending on the browser technology used by the user. Give a sufficiently recent technology browser (i.e. IE 4+ or NS 4+), the Station Area will also be able to check the client to station connection in real time.

[0344] Information Bar

[0345] The Information Bar is a multifunctional area on the left side of the Map, Yellow Pages, World, and Search tabs. There will be several panes:

[0346] Quick Filters. This allows the user to quickly filter the stations without having to switch to the Preferences Tab.