

[0115] The item selected by the user is identified by referring to the hyperlink table, which hyperlink table comprises an indication of the position (coordinates X, Y) of each hyperlinked items on each page of the document. In our example, the coordinates measured by the proximity sensing foil are approximately X=225 and Y=160, which correspond to the hyperlinked item "Afallach" in the hyperlink table.

[0116] The hyperlink table is either stored locally in the user workstation, or is retrieved from a remote server and then stored locally in the use workstation, or is stored in a remote server and accessed remotely.

[0117] (1009) Identifying the information associated with the selected item: As shown in FIG. 4, the hyperlink table includes, for each hyperlinked item of each page of the Braille document, the location within the network of the requested information and/or service. The information and/or service may be located by means of a destination address. In the Internet network, Web pages in Web Servers are identified by means of a URL (Uniform Resource Locator). In our example, the hyperlink table associates the hyperlinked Braille item "Afallach" with the URL <http://freespace.virgin.net/david.ford2/gods.html#Afallach>.

[0118] (1010) Accessing the information and/or service: The user workstation Web activates the hyperlink (destination address, URL, and so forth) associated with the selected hyperlinked item in the hyperlink table. In our example, the hyperlink labeled "Afallach" is activated because the computed distance between the sensed position and the hyperlink on the hyperlink table, page 16 with coordinates X=225, Y=160 and labeled "Afallach" page 16, is smaller than a predetermined minimum value. It is concluded that user's fingertips are positioned over the hyperlink labeled "Afallach". Thus, the following Web site is accessed: <http://freespace.virgin.net/david.ford2/gods.html#Afallach>.

[0119] (1011) Retrieving and displaying the requested information and/or service: As shown in FIG. 7, the information or service associated with the selected destination address (URL) is retrieved and displayed on the user workstation (e.g., an audio record about "Afallach: The god of the underworld").

[0120] While the invention has been particularly shown and described with reference to a preferred embodiment, it will be understood that various changes in form and detail may be made therein without departing from the spirit, and scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A method for use in a user system (104, 606) of creating hyperlinks for accessing information or services from a Braille document (101, 601) comprising one or a plurality of pages, comprising the steps of:

identifying and selecting (902) one or a plurality of pages; for each selected page of the Braille document (601):

detecting (908) by means of a proximity sensed foil (104, 604) placed and aligned (905) under the page, items touched by user on the surface of the page;

for each touched item on the page:

determining the physical position of said touched item on the page by means of the proximity sense foil (104, 604);

a storing in an hyperink table (608) an identification of said touched item based on the physical position on the proximity sense foil of said touched item;

creating (904) in said hyperlink table (608) an hyperlink from said touched item to information and/or service.

2. The method of creating hyperlinks according to the preceding claim comprising the preliminary steps of:

identifying (901) the Braille document (101, 601), the Braille document comprising an identifying means, preferably a reference number (201) or optionally a bar code (302).

3. The method of creating hyperlinks according to any one of the preceding claims wherein said step of identifying (901) the Braille document, comprises the further step of:

creating the hyperlink table (608);

associating said hyperlink table with the Braille document;

storing in said hyperlink table said means (201, 302) for identifying the Braille document.

4. The method of creating hyperlinks according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the step of storing in said hyperlink table (608) said means (201) for co identifying the Braille document (101, 601), comprises the further step of:

storing in the hyperlink table (608) means for identifying each page of the Braille document, preferably a page number (303) or optionally a bar code (102, 301).

5. The method of creating hyperlinks according to any one of the preceding claims wherein a page of the Braille document is defined as a portion of said Braille document.

6. The method of creating hyperlinks according to any one of the preceding claims wherein said detected items (603) are engraved or embossed item, preferably Braille characters or Braille words.

7. The method of creating hyperlinks according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the step of storing in said hyperlink table (605) the identifying means of the Braille document, comprises the further step of:

storing in said hyperlink table additional Information related to the Braille document such as title, author, ISBN (International Standard Book Number), date.

8. The method of creating hyperlinks according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the step of creating the hyperlink table (608) comprises the further step of:

storing said hyperlink table within the user system or in an external memory accessible from the user system.

9. The method of creating hyperlinks according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the proximity sense foil (104, 602) communicates with the user system (108, 600).

10. The method of creating hyperlinks according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the step of creating (904) in said hyperlink table an hyperlink from said touched item to an information and for service, comprises the further step of:

associating an information and/or service with said touched item;

storing in said hyperlink table means for identifying and locating said associated information and/or service.

11. The method of creating hyperlinks according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the user system (606)