

100, as described in FIG. 5, may comprise a step **102** of providing an electronic device such as the electronic device **10** having a touch screen, memory, and data processing apparatus.

[0038] The method **100** may comprise a step **104** of visually displaying switching areas such as those represented by the keys **114** of the touch screen as keys which may or may not initially have substantially equal visual characteristics, apart of course from legends identifying the various keys, as shown in FIG. 1.

[0039] The method **100** may comprise a step **106** of, responsively to a first switching area being depressed, determining and identifying as a first group switching areas which are more likely to be subsequently selected for depressing after the first switching area has been depressed, and determining and identifying as a second group switching areas which are less likely to be subsequently selected for depressing after the first switching area has been depressed.

[0040] The method **100** comprises a step **108** of visually enhancing display of the member switching areas of the first group relative to display of the member switching areas of the second group.

[0041] The step **106** may comprise a further step **110** of determining members of the first group by considering past switching history.

[0042] The step **106** may comprise a further step **112** of determining members of the first group by considering likelihood of each potentially selected character and associated switching area contributing to a known linguistic character progression. Known words of various languages are examples of known linguistic character progressions. Examples of known character progressions which are not words include well known acronyms and for example, the progression QWERTY, which is used representatively for designating the widely adopted array of letters for keyboards.

[0043] The method **100** may comprise a step **114** of visually enhancing switching areas which are immediately adjacent to a switching area which has been determined as more likely to be subsequently selected.

[0044] The method **100** may comprise a step **116**, wherein the method of visually enhancing immediately adjacent switching areas is different from that of visually enhancing switching areas which have been determined to be members of the first group.

[0045] The step **108** may comprise a further step **118** of causing each visually enhanced switching area to be presented as an enlarged key relative to visual presentation of the keys of the second group.

[0046] The method **100** may comprise a step **120** wherein selecting of a switching area causes members of the second group to be displayed in a size less than the size of their original depiction.

[0047] The step **118** may comprise a further step **122** of increasing width of the image of an enlarged key but not increasing height of the image of an enlarged key.

[0048] The method **100** may comprise a further step **124** of determining and identifying as a third group switching areas which are equally likely to be subsequently selected for depressing after the first switching area has been depressed, and a still further step **126** of visually distinguishing the third group from the first group and the second group.

[0049] The step **108** may comprise a further step **128** of causing each visually enhanced switching area to be pre-

sented as of color different from that used for visual presentation of the keys of the second group.

[0050] The various steps of the method **100** may be practiced out of the order described herein. Also, steps may be selectively adopted and deleted where feasible.

[0051] The step **104** may be modified such that initial display of letters or other characters visually enhances those letters which are most often used prior to any selection being made.

[0052] The invention should not be construed as being limited to the precise procedures and characteristics described prior, as other characteristics are contemplated.

[0053] Other visual enhancements may encompass pulsing, flashing and other dynamic effects which change appearance over time. Changes over time may occur once, constantly, or intermittently. Legends may be made to appear to pulse, flash, vibrate, otherwise move, enlarge, or otherwise to change visual appearance to become more conspicuous.

[0054] Treatments of background of keys may also be applied to legends of keys. As employed herein, color will be understood to signify hue, brightness, or both hue and brightness.

[0055] Circuitry will be understood to comprise the number of conductors, and specific connection schemes necessary to carry out the described functions, as well as supporting apparatus. Circuitry and any of its individual components may vary in logic from that specifically described herein.

[0056] Because it is depicted in representative capacity, the data processing device **10** will be understood to include components such as central processor, memory devices, power supply and others even though these components may not be explicitly shown. Peripheral data handling devices encompass functions which support, expand, increase, enhance, and otherwise improve on the original capabilities of the data handling device, and may include items such as PCMCIA cards, ExpressCards (RTM), and the like. The data handling port may receive signals, transmit signals, or both.

[0057] While the present invention has been described in connection with what is considered the most practical and preferred embodiment, it is to be understood that the present invention is not to be limited to the disclosed arrangements, but is intended to cover various arrangements which are included within the spirit and scope of the broadest possible interpretation of the appended claims so as to encompass all modifications and equivalent arrangements which are possible.

We claim:

1. A method of presenting switching areas of a touchscreen to an observer, comprising the steps of:
 - providing an electronic device having a touchscreen, memory, and data processing apparatus;
 - visually displaying switching areas of the touchscreen as keys initially having visual characteristics;
 - responsively to a first switching area being depressed, determining and identifying as a first group switching areas which are more likely to be subsequently selected for depressing after the first switching area has been depressed, and determining and identifying as a second group switching areas which are less likely to be subsequently selected for depressing after the first switching area has been depressed; and
 - visually enhancing display of the member switching areas of the first group relative to display of the member switching areas of the second group.