

of December. The contact point would be transmitted to flexible touch sensor 501 disposed beneath flexible touch panel 500. Flexible touch sensor 501 would identify the point of contact, in this instance, Wednesday the 20th, and relay that information to processor 101, thereby initiating a subsequent process. In this example, the subsequent process initiates the displaying of a user's daily planner relating to the touched date, Wednesday the 20th, and is thusly shown in FIG. 6B.

[0081] Referring now to FIG. 6B and continuing with the current example, in one embodiment of the present invention, a user could then touch the area regarding the office meeting scheduled at 8:00 am, and that could trigger another screen to be displayed. This new screen could contain a description of the subject to be discussed in that meeting, and perhaps a listing of the people scheduled to attend.

[0082] With reference to FIG. 7, portable computer system 100 is shown in a front facing illustrated perspective view with front cover 300 in the closed (default) position, in one embodiment of the present invention. In this embodiment of the present invention, portable computer 100 is provided with a flexible two-sided display component integral with front cover 300. This two-sided flexible display component has a front flexible display panel 500A and a rear flexible display panel 500B. In this embodiment of the present invention, the technology employed in the fabrication of the flexible display panel is electronic paper technology. On/off button 95 is shown as being disposed on the top surface area of portable computer 100 and oriented on the right side. Region 550, shown as disposed toward the bottom of front cover 300, is adapted to provide access to dedicated and/or programmable buttons 75. In one embodiment of the present invention, when front flexible display panel 500A and flexible touch sensor 501A, disposed beneath front flexible display panel 500A, as shown in FIG. 4, is activated through the pressing of on/off button 95, the information displayed may need to be manipulated, and therefore access to buttons 75 is most advantageous. Front display panel 500A is shown as disposed integral with hinged front cover 300. Front cover 300 may rotate, as shown by the arrow, about the axis. A display control circuit 200 (FIG. 9) is included in portable computer 100 integral with the electronic circuitry within the portable computer, and is adapted to control the activation of the flexible display panels and the flexible touch panels, as described in more detail herein.

[0083] Referring to FIG. 7, when a user turns on/powers up palmtop computer 100, display control circuit 200 determines the orientation of front cover 300. If display control circuit 200 (FIG. 9) determines that front cover 300 is in the closed (default) position, it activates front flexible display panel 500A and flexible touch sensor 501A such that information or data becomes viewable. In the example shown, the data viewed is a monthly calendar, e.g., the month of December 2000. It should be appreciated that the data could be any data, e.g., a GUI (graphical user interface) or other information presented in a fashion associated with single panel displays.

[0084] Referring now to FIG. 8A, the portable computer 100 of FIG. 7 is shown as having front cover 300 in the open (non-default) position. Rear display panel 500B, on the left, is now visible. Rear panel display 500B is the other display panel contained within front cover 300, and is functionally analogous to front display panel 500A. Display screen 600 is

shown on the right, coupled to palmtop computer 100, and is also functionally analogous to either display panel 500A or 500B.

[0085] Still referring to FIG. 8A, by virtue of the orientation of front cover 300, display control circuit 200 automatically deactivates originally activated front flexible display panel 500A and flexible touch sensor 501A, and activates rear flexible display panel 500B of front cover 300 and flexible touch sensor 501B, disposed beneath flexible flat display panel 500B, as shown in FIG. 5A. Additionally, display control circuitry 200 activates now visible flexible display panel 600 and flexible touch sensor 601, disposed beneath flexible display panel 600, analogous to flexible display panel 500 and flexible touch sensor 501 of FIG. 6A and FIG. 6B. When front flexible display panel 500A is deactivated, the data or information previously viewable, e.g., the month of December 2000 as shown in FIG. 7, is reoriented so as to be identically viewable on rear flexible display panel 500B, as shown in FIG. 8A. Additionally, flexible display panel 600 is activated thereby providing another viewable screen through which new data or information may be displayed. In the current example, the information is a monthly calendar, e.g., the month of January 2001, and it is shown on the right of FIG. 8. Of course, the user may display any information on either of the multiple display panels.

[0086] It should be appreciated that by providing a second display panel to the functionality of a portable computer system, the amount of viewable surface area has been effectively doubled, therefore providing increased functionality to the portable computer system.

[0087] In one example, a user may display a calendar on one panel, and notes regarding the calendar on the other. In another example, a user may display a day planner on one panel and information about the daily plans on the other. In yet another example, a user may display the GUI (graphical user interface) on one panel, and have the selected icon's associated application appear on the other screen, reducing the time required to switch back and forth from the GUI to associated applications as is customary when using a conventional portable computer system. In still another example, a user would be able to view a graphic, e.g., elongated pictures, wide diagrams, complex and expansive formulas, and the like, in their entirety, no longer having to scroll or switch from one section or screen to another.

[0088] In another example, a user may wish to have multiple daily schedules, or multiple weekly, monthly, or yearly calendars displayed, thereby reducing the switching of screens normally associated with portable computers not configured with the present invention. In yet another example, a user may wish to view multiple financial documents, e.g., annual income statements from various years. In another example, a user may wish to view multiple web pages. In still another example, and by utilizing the networking functionalities contained within the portable computer, a user connected and communicating with other individuals via a network, could have information from other portable computers displayed on one or more panels and compared with or integrated into information contained within the other panels. In fact, a portable computer configured with multiple flexible display panels, in one embodiment of the present invention, provides, to a user, an almost endless array of functional configurations.