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[54] **DISTRIBUTION OF SOFTWARE IN A COMPUTER NETWORK ENVIRONMENT**

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **709/220**; 709/217; 709/221

[58] **Field of Search** 709/220, 217, 709/221, 224, 226; 395/712; 380/25

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[57] **ABSTRACT**

A method of distributing software files resident on a network server to a network client. To effectuate the distribution, the network client issues an HTTP formatted request message to the network server which requests that certain software files resident on the network server be downloaded to the network client. The HTTP formatted request message may include information indicative of one or more of the operating system or processor architecture associated with the network client that the network server can use as an aide in determining which software files to return to the network client. The software files are bundled into a cabinet file by the network server and returned to the network client which, in turn, automatically unbundles the cabinet file, checks the authenticity of certain of the individual software files, and installs the software files in an appropriate memory location associated with the network client. In this manner, a world wide distributed printing solution is provided that is capable of working transparently on intranets and the Internet.

18 Claims, 8 Drawing Sheets