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**Datasheet for the decision  
of 15 July 2021**

**Case Number:** T 0591/19 - 3.5.03

**Application Number:** 06774291.6

**Publication Number:** 1935152

**IPC:** H04K1/00, G06Q50/00, G06Q30/00

**Language of the proceedings:** EN

**Title of invention:**  
Revenue management system and method

**Applicant:**  
ORACLE INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION

**Headword:**  
Real-time billing system/ORACLE

**Relevant legal provisions:**  
EPC Art. 123(2)

**Keyword:**  
Added subject-matter - all requests (yes)



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Case Number: T 0591/19 - 3.5.03

**D E C I S I O N**  
**of Technical Board of Appeal 3.5.03**  
**of 15 July 2021**

**Appellant:**  
(Applicant)

ORACLE INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION  
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**Representative:**

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**Decision under appeal:**

**Decision of the Examining Division of the  
European Patent Office posted on 4 October 2018  
refusing European patent application  
No. 06774291.6 pursuant to Article 97(2) EPC.**

**Composition of the Board:**

**Chair** K. Bengi-Akyürek  
**Members:** K. Peirs  
R. Romandini

## Summary of Facts and Submissions

- I. The appeal is against the decision of the examining division refusing the present European patent application for added subject-matter (Article 123(2) EPC) and lack of inventive step (Article 56 EPC).
- II. Oral proceedings before the board were held on 15 July 2021 by videoconference.
- III. The appellant requests that
- the decision under appeal be set aside and
  - a patent be granted according to the claims of a **main request**;
  - in the alternative, a patent be granted according to the claims of one of **five auxiliary requests**.

None of the claim requests is identical to any of the claim requests underlying the decision under appeal.

At the end of the oral proceedings, the board's decision was announced.

- IV. Claim 1 of the **main request** reads as follows (board's feature labelling):
- (a) "A computer system configured to manage revenue for real-time charging for telecommunication services for at least one prepaid, at least one postpaid, and at least one now-pay account, the system comprising:
  - (b) a gateway layer communicatively coupled with a communications network, the gateway layer adapted to receive a request for service from a user via

the communication network and request authentication of the user and authorization of the service requested;

- (c) a revenue capture layer communicatively coupled with the gateway layer, the revenue capture layer adapted to receive the request for authentication of the user and authorization of the service requested from the gateway layer, perform authentication of the user and authorization of the service requested, and charge for the service requested;
- (d) a database layer communicatively coupled with the revenue capture layer; and
- (e) a storage layer communicatively coupled with the database layer;
- (f) wherein the gateway layer comprises: one or more gateway managers adapted to connect to the communications network;
- (g) and the revenue capture layer comprises:
  - (i) one or more connection managers communicatively coupled to the one or more gateway managers;
  - (ii) one or more in-memory object store managers communicatively coupled to one or more connection managers and adapted to access respective in-memory object stores; and
  - (iii) one or more database data managers communicatively coupled to one or more connection managers and adapted to access the database layer;
- (h) wherein the one or more gateway managers are adapted to operate in a degraded mode in the event the revenue capture layer does not respond within specified latency levels and

- (i) wherein, in the degraded mode, the one or more gateway managers are configured to save a request for processing following system recovery
- (j) wherein the one or more gateway managers further comprise:
  - (i) a timeout monitoring facility adapted to detect an unacceptable latency when handling a request; and
  - (ii) a timeout pipeline adapted to receive the request from the timeout monitoring facility and handle the request in the degraded mode according to a configurable set of rules."

V. Claim 1 of the **first and second auxiliary requests** likewise includes feature (b) of claim 1 of the main request, while claim 1 of the **third, fourth and fifth auxiliary requests** includes the following amended feature (b) (amendments highlighted by the board):

"(b') a gateway layer communicatively coupled with a communications network, the gateway layer adapted to receive a call request ~~for service~~ from a user via the communication network and request authentication of the user and authorization of the ~~service~~ call requested".

## **Reasons for the Decision**

### 1. *Technical background*

The present application concerns billing strategies for a telecom-network operator allowing for a real-time charging of its users and, by means of failure handling, aims to minimise delays in providing services

to the users.

2. *Main request: claim 1 - added subject-matter*

Claim 1 of the **main request** comprises added subject-matter for the reason set out below.

2.1 The sub-feature "request authentication of the user" recited in **feature (b)** is not directly and unambiguously disclosed in the application as filed:

2.1.1 Even under the assumption that the "gateway layer" of feature (b) were to comprise an "Authentication, Authorization, Accounting (AAA) gateway" as mentioned at lines 11 to 15 of page 12 of the application as filed, the board does not agree with the appellant's view that, based on the first and second "A" of the "AAA" gateway, the expression "grant the service" of that passage is to be understood as to involve "authentication" as well as "authorisation". This is so because an *authentication* may take place, for instance, once a day with the user entering their credentials in a particular tool, whereas an *authorisation* may be required for each and every call. In this respect, line 12 of page 12 of the description as filed states that granting the service is equivalent to authorising the call and nothing else ["in order to grant the service (i.e. authorize the call)" (emphasis added)]. Moreover, the passage on page 12, lines 11 to 15 of the description as filed is silent as to *when* the "authentication of the user" takes place. It does, in particular, not indicate that the "gateway layer" indeed requests authentication of the user.

2.1.2 Thus, even if one were to agree with the appellant's view, the term "Authentication" does not necessarily

relate to the authentication of a user, but could rather concern a particular device (e.g. a smartphone). The mere reference to an AAA gateway does not necessarily mean that an authentication of a user is to be requested and performed within the meaning of features (b) and (c).

2.2 For this reason alone, claim 1 of the main request does not comply with Article 123(2) EPC.

3. *Auxiliary requests: claim 1 - added subject-matter*

3.1 Given that the sub-feature "request authentication of a user" is included in feature (b) or (b') of each of the present **first to fifth auxiliary requests**, the above objection under Article 123(2) EPC applies *mutatis mutandis* to claim 1 of those auxiliary requests.

3.2 Hence, claim 1 of the first to fifth auxiliary requests does not comply with Article 123(2) EPC either.

**Order**

**For these reasons it is decided that:**

The appeal is dismissed.

The Registrar:

The Chair:



B. Brückner

K. Bengi-Akyürek

Decision electronically authenticated