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Title of Invention

Software License Purchasing and Registration System

Description of Invention

A Software Purchase Module registers purchased software licenses with the software vendor. The Software Purchase Module may generate purchase orders for additional software licenses and communicate the purchase order to the appropriate vendor server.

Problem/ Opportunity

Inefficiencies exist in the process of purchasing and registering new software products. In a setting in which one software product is required to be loaded onto several computing devices, it is time consuming and costly to purchase separate installation packages for the software product for each computing device. In some cases, this could create an incentive for the unauthorized copying and distribution of software products. A system is needed that allows a user to add additional licenses to their account, without the need to purchase more installation materials, such as CDs, DVDs, installer files, etc, eliminating distribution costs and waste from packaging.

Detailed Description of Invention

Implementing a Software Purchase Module with a self-contained License Registry can facilitate a more efficient software purchasing process. The Software Purchase Module resides within the operating system, such as Linux, of a computing device. A user initiates the installation process for a purchased software product by interacting with the user interface of the operating system. The user is presented with a license agreement that must be accepted to install the software. Once the license agreement is accepted, the Software License Registry is updated using information entered during the registration process including the user's name, company, license ID, and vendor URL. Once all of the fields are populated, the operating system communicates the registration information to the appropriate software vendor by querying the specified URL. The vendor server processes the registration information and subsequently authorizes the computing device to run the software product. The operating system completes the installation and the software product is rendered operational.

The Software Purchase Module can then be used to purchase additional software licenses in order to legally use the same installation package on other computing devices. This eliminates the need to purchase additional installation packages, reducing the associated transportation costs and waste from packaging. The user launches the Software Purchase Module and selects the software product(s) that he/she would like to purchase more licenses for. The Software Purchase Module generates an order form and automatically populates fields indicating the software product license to be purchased, the existing license ID, and the vendor URL. The user is prompted by means of a dialogue box to populate fields indicating the quantity of licenses to be purchased, user billing information, and an email address where the purchased license information will be delivered. The operating system sends the order form to the appropriate vendor server by querying the specified URL. The vendor server processes the order information and sends an email to the user-supplied email address with a file containing the purchased license information. The user can now install the software product on a different computing device by accessing the email account to view the purchased license information and registering the software product with the purchased license information using the installation method detailed above.

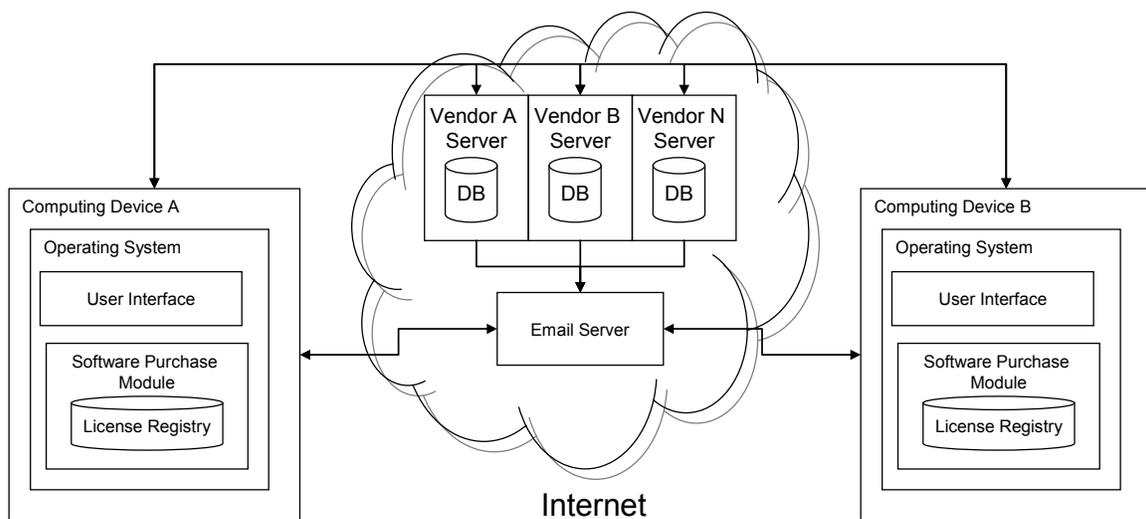


Figure 1: Software License Registry

Description of elements of Software License Registry in Figure 1

Computing Device A: Any computing device such as a PC or laptop. The initial software installation occurs on this machine.

Computing Device B: Any computing device such as a PC or laptop. Installation of additionally purchased software licenses occurs on this machine.

Operating System: Any standard operating system such as Linux.

Software Purchase Module: An operating system module that manages license information and purchase requests.

License Registry: Database within the Software Purchase Module that stores software license information.

User Interface: Interface through which users interact with the operating system.

Vendor Server A, B, N: Represent a plurality of physical locations that are accessed by the computing device through a URL for registering and purchasing new software licenses from various vendors.

Email Server: Physical location where email files are stored. The server's files are accessible by Computing Device A and Computing Device B through a URL. The server receives files from computing devices or vendor servers.

Figure 2 describes the method for the installation of new software using a **Software License Registry**

In step 1, the user initiates the installation of the software on the User Interface of Computing Device A.

In decision step 2, user is prompted by a dialog box in the User Interface containing the license agreement. The user is given the option to accept or decline the license agreement. If the license agreement is declined, the installation program terminates and the method ends. If the license agreement is accepted, continue to step 3.

In step 3, the user is prompted by a dialog box in the User Interface to input the user's name, company, license ID, vendor URL, and other relevant registration information. The license ID is a unique identification string that is distributed with each individual copy of the software.

In step 4, the License Registry is updated with the registration information.

In step 5, the Computing Device sends registration information from the License Registry, to the appropriate Vendor Server A, B, through N where it is processed and stored in a database.

In step 6, Vendor Server A, B, through N provides authorization to the OS to run the software.

In step 7, the OS renders the software operational.

The method ends.

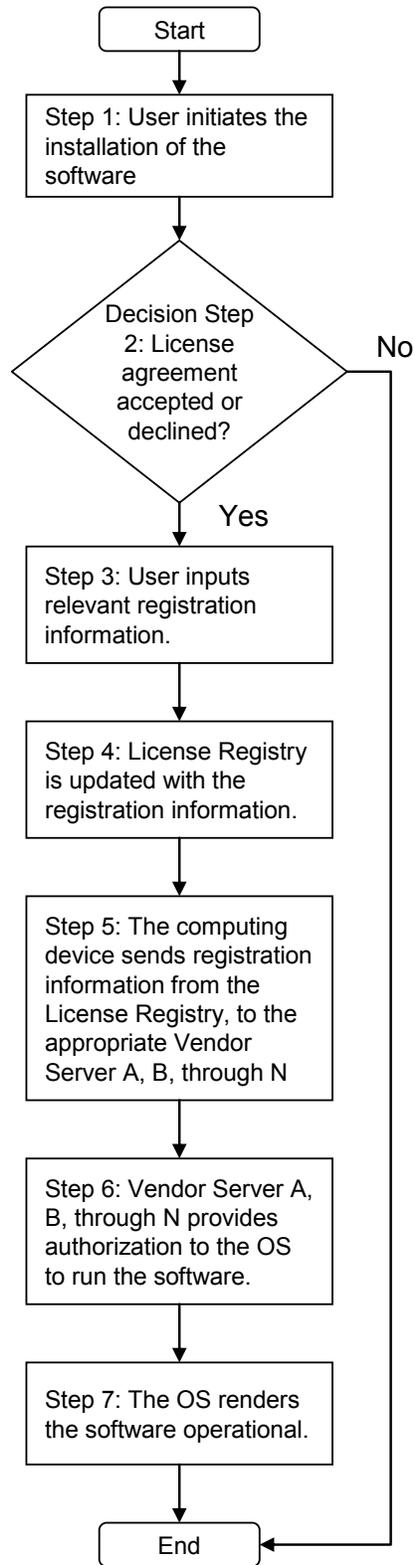


Figure 2 depicts the method for the installation of new software using a **Software License Registry**

Figure 3 describes the method for purchasing additional software licenses using a **Software License Registry**

In step 1, the user launches the Software Purchase Module via the User Interface on Computing Device A.

In step 2, using the Software Purchase Module, the user selects the software program(s) he/she would like to purchase more licenses for.

In step 3, the Software Purchase Module generates an order form. Fields indicating the software program to be purchased and the existing license ID are populated automatically.

In step 4, the OS prompts the user by means of a dialogue box to fill out the remaining fields of the order form indicating the quantity of software licenses desired, billing information, and an email address for delivery of new license information.

In step 5, the Computing Device sends the order form to the appropriate Vendor Server A, B, through N.

In step 6, the appropriate Vendor Server A, B, through N processes the request.

In step 7, the appropriate Vendor Server A, B, through N sends purchased software license information to the email address supplied by the user. This allows for easy access to software license information from Computing Device B.

In step 8, the user follows the installation procedure depicted in Figure 2 on Computing Device B using the license information provided by email from the software distributor in Step 7.

The method ends.

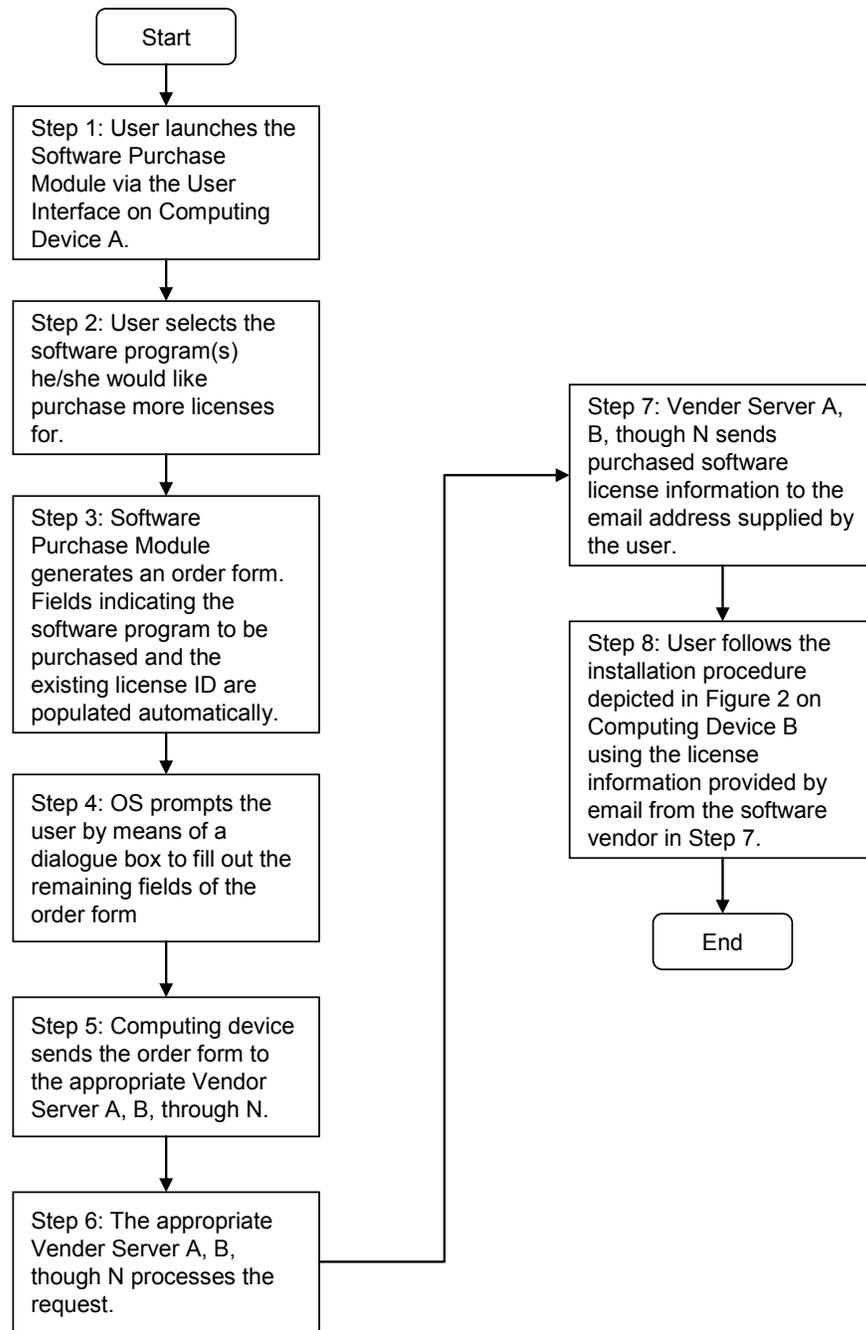


Figure 3 depicts the method for purchasing additional software licenses using a **Software License Registry**