



## **Clickshare Awarded Patent for System that Could Reduce Need For Central “big brother” Databases or Multiple User Accounts**

ONLINE VERSION: <http://www.clickshare.com/patent>  
PATENT FULL TEXT: <http://tinyurl.com/csc-patent-pdf>

AMHERST, Mass., Dec. 10, 2013 – A Massachusetts company has patented a system that it says could reduce the need for large, central databases of user names and accounts – a key emerging privacy challenge – while also reducing the need for users to have to have multiple online accounts.

The U.S. Patent Office on Tuesday issued [U.S. patent No. 8,606,719](#), “System for Management of Alternatively Priced Transactions on Network,” ([PDF](#)) to Clickshare Service Corp. The company already has a related patent for a “System for Management Payments on a Network – Four or More Parties,” and has been working on the service since at least 1997.

The key innovation, the company said, is a system that both authenticates users across multiple independent web services, and allows users to choose among multiple home-base registrars. The patent also describes methods for allowing the sharing of user preferences, and real-time, variable pricing of digital content.

“Our technology gives consumers control over who sees personal information, and creates the potential for publishers to conveniently share content and users across networks which permit variable pricing and service offerings,” said Richard Lerner, CEO.

In a key privacy aspect, the sharing system works when the consumer users are known to information-publishing websites -- and the system itself -- only by a unique number. Only the user's chosen home base (required for account reconciliation) associates the number with a person, and even then, need not know which content the user purchases.

Under the system patented by Clickshare, a person can have an account at one website, and purchase information, manage identity information, and get paid for advertising viewing at multiple other websites without having to repeatedly register or pass around name or unique identity information.

Unlike services such as iTunes or Facebook Connect, users of a Clickshare system would be able to choose their “home base” yet have a single account that works at multiple sites without repeated registration.

Clickshare said it continues to explore with its dozens of publishing clients applications for the technology. The Amherst-based company provides online registration, subscription, access control and billing services for millions of customers of newspaper and other information-publishing websites

"There has been no Internet-based customer management system for payments or demographic tracking which did not require the creation of a massive, central names database, raising difficult marketing, partnering and privacy issues," says Bill Densmore, founder of Clickshare. "Clickshare's patented approach leaves customer ownership distributed among participating partners, and can put significant privacy control in consumer hands."

The patent covers a system which manages and controls user accounts, payments and anonymous access to Internet websites where there are four parties involved. The four parties are the consumer user, the consumer's home-base website (where the consumer has an account and profile information), one or more information or service-vending websites where the consumer wishes to view or purchase, and a system website where the parties can authenticate, aggregate, transfer and share usage and billing data across the system. The new patent expands protection for the system first described by Clickshare in [U.S. Patent No. 7,324,972](#) issue Jan. 29, 2008.

## **ABOUT CLICKSHARE**

Clickshare has been providing services such as user registration, authentication, access control, subscription management, "per-click" purchasing, event ticket sales and online print subscription capture for the newspaper and media industries for over 10 years, registering over six million accounts. The Clickshare System supports many models including traditional purchasing, B-to-B applications such as tracking and payment for advertising click-throughs, reliable exchange of consumer information, federated authentication and management of loyalty programs.

Some of Clickshare's customers include:

- Boston Globe Media Partners (at Worcester, Mass.)
- BH Media (Berkshire Hathaway) at The Omaha World-Herald
- Sun-Times Media
- Crain Communications Inc.

Clickshare was formed in 1997, is privately owned. It raised \$2.9 million in initial equity capital through 2001, and has operated on revenues since. Shareholders include the University of Massachusetts, venture investors, PeopleSoft founder David Duffield and former publishing executives of the Los Angeles Times, Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Reader and Philadelphia Inquirer.

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On Jan. 29, 2008, Clickshare was awarded (<http://tinyurl.com/2wtlpu>) U.S. Patent No. 7,324,972 for "Managing transactions on a network: four or more parties." (Initial announcement: <http://tinyurl.com/2ukwj4>) The patent covers Clickshare's federated authentication, transaction and personalization news and advertising social network.