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(54) **METHOD TO STOP CYBER-BULLYING BEFORE IT OCCURS**

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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A method to stop cyber-bullying before it occurs by alerting the user (potential bully) to pause, review and rethink before posting a hurtful messages to the recipient (potential victim (s)) is the essence of this patent. ReThink is designed to be setup as an optional software installed as an extension, plugin or add-on on web browsers and as a customized keyboard or add-on app on mobile platforms (smart phones, cell phones, tablets, phablets, mobile devices) that detects hurtfulness on all text, image or videos posted or shared on the internet in all languages by a user. Upon detection, ReThink alerts the user to rethink the decision before posting message and provides a chance for the user to edit message to make it non-hurtful to recipients. ReThink is backed by a sound scientific research that has found that the ReThink method prevents cyber-bullying over 93% of the time in adolescent users.

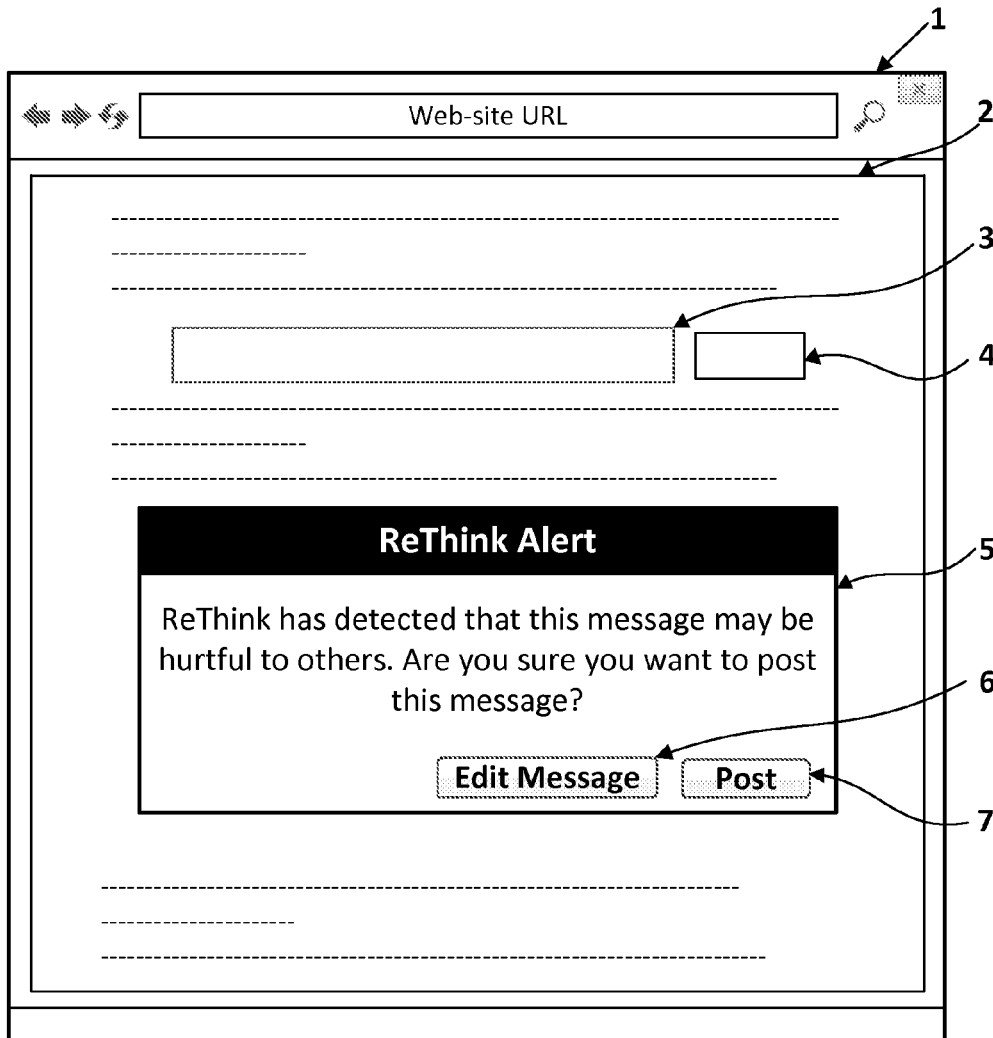
Related U.S. Application Data

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(51) **Int. Cl.**

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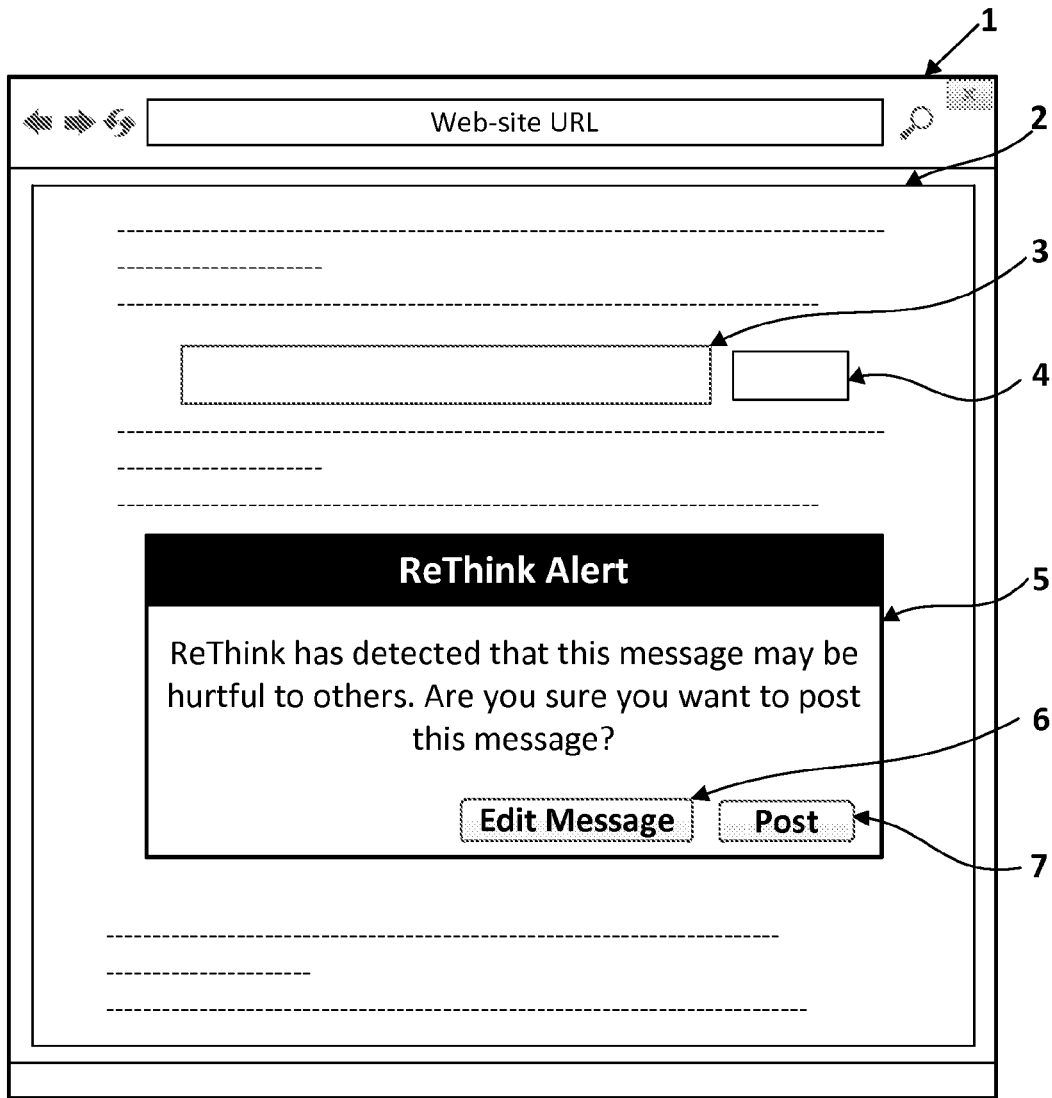


FIG. 1

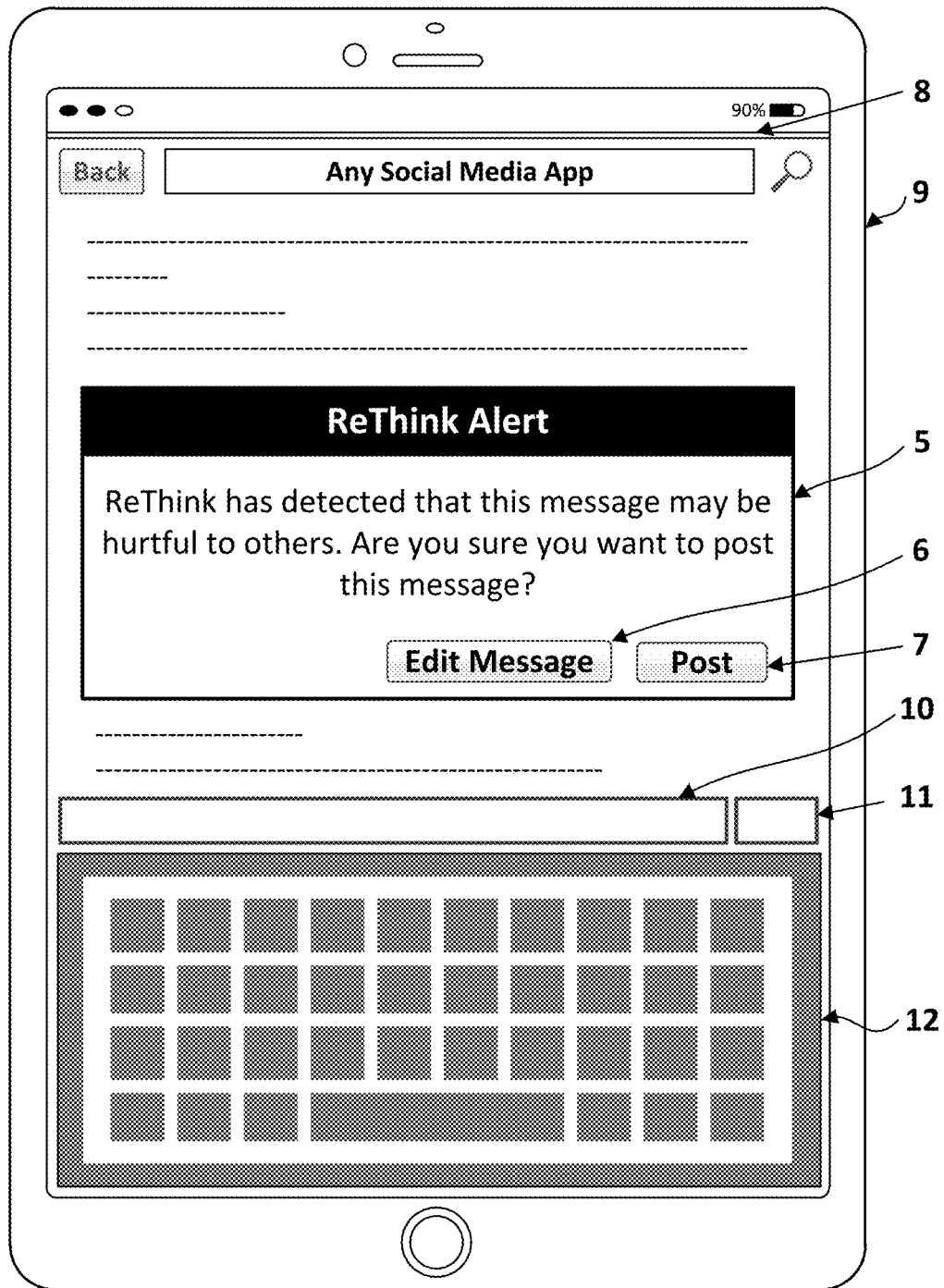


FIG. 2

METHOD TO STOP CYBER-BULLYING BEFORE IT OCCURS

(b) CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims the benefit of the filing date of Provisional Patent Application No. 62/012,296 filed Jun. 14, 2014.

(c) STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

[0002] NOT APPLICABLE

(d) THE NAMES OF THE PARTIES TO A JOINT RESEARCH AGREEMENT NOT APPLICABLE

(e) INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC OR AS A TEXT FILE VIA THE OFFICE ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEM (EFS-WEB)

[0003] NOT APPLICABLE

(f) STATEMENT REGARDING PRIOR DISCLOSURES BY THE INVENTOR OR A JOINT INVENTOR.

[0004] NOT APPLICABLE

(g) BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0005] 1. Field of the Invention

[0006] Cyber-bullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, and tablets as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites. Examples of cyber-bullying include mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

[0007] Recent research shows that a significant portion of the adolescent (12-18) users in United States of America online have experienced cyber-bullying. Over 38% of those victims that have been repeatedly cyber-bullied suffer from suicidal tendencies. Victims suffer from depression, low self-esteem, and higher school drop-out rates. Research also shows that the negative effects of cyber-bullying can affect victims into their 50s and 60s.

[0008] According to studies at American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry, the adolescent brain function differently than adults when decision-making and problem solving. The adolescent brain's pre-frontal cortex, which is part of the frontal lobe, is not developed. Research shows that for this reason, adolescents are more likely to act on impulse and are less likely to pause and think to consider the potential consequences of their actions before they act.

[0009] Reactive solutions to cyber-bullying exist and are popular on existing social media sites. Such reactive features can include but are not limited to: blocking features, which include blocking cyber-bullies at victim's request, reporting users that are bullying others, etc. Due to the fact that these solutions are reactive and aim to stop the cyber-bullying after it has happened, these features often prove to be ineffective as long-term solutions to stop cyber-bullying.

[0010] Reactive solutions are also often not embraced by victims of cyber-bullying. Research has found that 9 out of 10 times, adolescent victims of cyber-bullying do not report their situation to a parent/guardian and suffer in silence.

[0011] ReThink employs a unique method to proactively stop cyber-bullying before it occurs. Research related to the decision-making process that occurs in the frontal lobe of the brain has determined that that process occurs in the following steps:

a. The Situation: Adolescents need to realize they need to stop/think in an important situation

b. Think: Adolescents need to think about the possible choices/consequences in a situation

c. Their Decision: Adolescents need to decide what to do

d. Evaluate their Decision Later: Later, adolescents evaluate whether they could've made a better decision.

[0012] The inventor developed the ReThink product that detects hurtful messages before they are posted, disseminated, sent or shared and gives users a second chance to reconsider their decision by providing them the opportunity to pause, review, and rethink. Users can then decide to edit message, or continue to post the message that prompted the ReThink alert. The inventor conducted an internationally acclaimed 1500 trial study that proved that over 93% of the time, adolescents (ages 12-18) who had originally been willing to post an offensive message changed their mind and decided against their initial decision.

[0013] (2) Description of Related Art including information disclosed under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.

[0014] NOT APPLICABLE

(h) BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0015] At least one embodiment of the present invention describes a computer-implemented method for detecting hurtful messages that carry negative sentiments to be posted or disseminated or sent by a potential cyber-bully on a social media site on web browser and mobile platforms, is being provided a ReThink alert suggesting the user to pause, review and rethink their decision before posting that hurtful message. For purposes of this patent application, the web browser (commonly referred to as a browser) is a software application for retrieving, presenting and traversing information resources on the World Wide Web platforms capable of internet access, web page display, alerts, and pop-ups. A browser extension is a computer program that extends the functionality of a web browser in some way. Depending on the browser and the version, the term may be distinct from similar terms such as plug-in or add-on. Mobile platforms refer to the software enabled mobile devices or smartphones, which are mobile telephone devices which incorporates a hand-held computer with its own operating system, and which is capable of internet access, data storage, e-mail and SMS text communications. The term "mobile platforms" and "mobile phones" referred in this document refer to mobile devices, smart phones, cell phones, tablets and phablets running on a variety of mobile operating systems. The web browsers and mobile operating system (OS) provides a standardized interface and platform for compatible application software.

[0016] At least one embodiment of the present invention consists of ReThink software setup on web browsers wherein the ReThink software is installed, setup and configured as an extension available on a browser's store where typically apps

and extensions are downloaded. As with any other extension or plugin, ReThink software may be enabled or disabled at the user or administrator's will.

[0017] At least one embodiment of the present invention consists of ReThink software optional setup on mobile devices from a mobile platform store, from where the ReThink software may be downloaded, installed, setup and configured. This setup is done by installing ReThink software on the mobile device in the form of a new customized, optional keyboard that enhances the functionality of detecting what is typed on the keyboard to detect hurtful messages for all text based communications.

[0018] At least one embodiment of the present invention provides a user interface for ReThink software's administration module on web browsers wherein the administrators would be able to establish security measures, including a password, to access the ReThink software's settings. This controls access to modifications by authorized access so as to disallow an unauthorized user from making changes at their will to override any settings that their administrators have put in place.

[0019] At least one embodiment of the present invention provides a user interface for ReThink software's administration module on web browsers which the administrators use to determine the social media sites to be ReThink-enabled. This may include all or any of text-based, image-based, video-based social media sites or any other website that an administrator or user believes may benefit from the ReThink functionality.

[0020] At least one embodiment of the present invention describes functioning of ReThink software on web platforms in which a user (potential cyber-bully) attempts to send or disseminate or post a hurtful message to a recipient (potential victim) on a social media site on the Internet. Using the social media site's "post" or "send" button or simply an "enter" key board action or any other action that results in a post or send or dissemination of the hurtful message, presents a ReThink alert to the user in the form of an alert message on the web site where the communication is happening, with a message that encourages potential cyber-bully to rethink their decision before posting that message.

[0021] At least one embodiment of the present invention describes functioning of ReThink software on mobile platforms in which user (potential cyber-bully) attempts to type or send a hurtful message to a potential victim on the internet using the customized optional ReThink keyboard on mobile device. Clicking the customized ReThink keyboard's "post" button or the "enter" button or a tap or a click on the phone, that results in a post action or dissemination or sending of the hurtful message on the phone, presents a ReThink alert to the user (potential cyber-bully) as a form of an alert on the display area of the mobile device where the communication is happening, with a message that encourages the user to rethink their decision to post that message.

[0022] At least one embodiment of the present invention describes functioning of ReThink software on web browsers which presents an alert which consists of two user interface buttons—"Edit message" button that is meant for user (potential cyber-bully) to edit the message and make it not hurtful and subsequently post or disseminate or send that non-hurtful message; "Post" button that is meant for the user (potential cyber-bully) to go ahead and post or disseminate or send that message ignoring the ReThink alert.

[0023] At least one embodiment of the present invention describes functioning of ReThink software on mobile platforms which presents an ReThink alert which consists of two user interface buttons—"Edit Message" button that is meant for user (potential cyber-bully) to edit the message and make it not hurtful and subsequently post that non-hurtful message; "Post" that is meant for the user (potential cyber-bully) to go ahead and post or disseminate or send that message overriding the ReThink alert.

(i) BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0024] FIG. 1 comprises of a scenario depicting how ReThink provides users a chance to pause, review and rethink by alerting the user before hurtful messages are posted and allowing users to "Edit message" or "Post" the message on web browsers in the preferred embodiment of the present invention.

[0025] FIG. 2 comprises of a scenario depicting how ReThink provides users a second chance to pause, review and rethink by alerting the user before hurtful messages are posted and allowing user to either "Edit message" or "Post" the message on mobile devices in the preferred embodiment of the present invention.

(j) DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0026] FIG. 1 is just one representation of how a ReThink enabled website may function on web browsers. Web-site 1 represents a website on a ReThink enabled web browser. Area 2 represents a message interface on the website. Box 3 represents the hurtful message attempted to be posted by a user. Button 4 represents the button or widget that upon a clicking or tapping or swiping or mouse-over sends, posts or disseminates that hurtful message. When button 4 is actioned, a ReThink alert 5 is presented to the user that detects this hurtful message before it was disseminated, sent or posted and provides user a chance to pause, review and rethink the decision to send that message. Button 6 represents the "Edit Message" button that allows for the user to edit the message to change, modify or delete to make it not hurtful and subsequently post, send or disseminate. Button 7 represents the "Post" button that allows for the user to go-ahead and post, send or disseminate the message although it is hurtful, thereby ignoring ReThink alert.

[0027] FIG. 2 is a just one representation of how a ReThink enabled app or website may function on mobile platforms. Device 9 represents the mobile device. Screen 8 represents an application ("app") on a mobile device. Box 10 represents a hurtful message that is being typed on the new, customized, optional, ReThink keyboard 12. Button 11 represents the button or widget that upon a clicking or tapping or swiping or mouse-over action would send, post or disseminate this hurtful message to the recipient. When button 11 is actioned, a ReThink alert 5 is presented to the user as it detects this hurtful message before it is being disseminated, sent or posted, and allows for the user to pause, review and rethink the decision to send that message. The user has the opportunity to click "Edit message" button 6 that allows for the user to edit the message to change, modify or delete to make it not hurtful and subsequently post, send or disseminate. User may also click the "Post" button 7 that allows for the user to go-ahead and post, send or disseminate the message although it is hurtful, thereby ignoring ReThink alert.

1. A method for a user to pause, review and rethink before posting, sending, communicating, sharing or disseminating a hurtful message to the recipient(s) on the internet by means of a ReThink alert in the form of a popup or notification or an alert of any manner that appears in the display area of the interface upon the user's attempt to post a hurtful message that is in text, image or video format in any language, requiring user action on the alert; the method comprising: providing web browsers with an optional ReThink software; the method comprising providing mobile platforms (mobile devices, mobile phones, smart phones, cell phones, tablets, phablets, mobile smart devices running on a variety of mobile operating systems) with optional ReThink software.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein an optional ReThink software that alerts the user by means of a popup or notification or audio or video or in any manner that appears in the display area of the interface upon the user's attempt to post a hurtful message in any language, providing them a chance to pause, review, rethink what they are about to post before disseminating, sending, posting that message to the recipient.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein ReThink software provides a chance for the user to edit the message, image or video to change it to become not hurtful and subsequently post, send, disseminate or share the message OR continue without any edit to post, send or disseminate the message that they are about to post.

4. The method of claim 1, comprising of ReThink software, wherein one of action is the "post" button or the "send" button or the "enter" button or any such button or widget or action that results in a post action or dissemination or sending of the hurtful message to the recipient or recipients, presents a ReThink alert to the user as a popup or a notification or an audio or a video or an alert that in any manner appears in the display area of the interface upon the user's attempt to post a hurtful message, with a message with any appropriate verbiage that indicates how this may be hurtful for the recipient and encourages user to rethink their decision to post that message.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the user is presented with the ReThink alert when attempting to post a hurtful message, consists of two sub-action modules presented as buttons; "Edit Message" that is meant for the user to edit the message to make it not hurtful; "Post" that is meant for the user to go-ahead and post or disseminate or send that message to the recipient or recipients ignoring ReThink alert.

6. The method of claim 4, wherein the user is presented with the ReThink alert when attempting to post a hurtful message, consists of two sub-action modules presented as buttons; one of the sub-action module consisting of "Edit Message" that is meant for the user to edit the message consisting of sending the user back to the application interface where the user may be able to edit and modify the message to be a not-hurtful message and subsequently send, disseminate, share or post the message to the recipient.

7. The method of claim 4 wherein the user is presented with the ReThink alert when attempting to post a hurtful message,

consists of two sub-action modules presented as buttons or any actionable widget; one of the sub-action module consisting of "Post" that is meant for the user to go ahead and post or disseminate or send the message to the recipient or recipients indicating a decision to ignore the ReThink alert.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the ReThink software on the web platforms that is installed and configured in all web browsers as an optional extension, plugin or add-on with user's and or administrator's consent.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the ReThink software may be integrated with any website implementation as optional software upon the website user's and or administrator's request and consent.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein ReThink software is setup by downloading it from a source other than web browser store upon administrator or user's request and consent, enable or disable ReThink software on the web browser at user's and or administrator's consent.

11. A method of claim 1, wherein ReThink software may be integrated with any mobile platform upon user's and or administrators' request and consent.

12. A method of claim 1, wherein ReThink is setup as a new and customized optional ReThink keyboard on the mobile platform by downloading from the mobile platforms app stores as an optional software or a tool in any language of administrator's and or user's preference.

13. A method of claim 1, wherein ReThink is setup as new and customized optional ReThink keyboard from sources other than the mobile platform app store upon administrator or user's request and consent, as an optional ReThink keyboard in any language of user's and or administrator's preference.

14. A method of claim 1, wherein ReThink software that provides the option for the user or administrator to switch back to a default or another keyboard of user's and or administrator's choice.

15. A method of claim 1, wherein the ReThink alert is displayed in the display area of the mobile platform if the user attempts to type, post, send, share, send or disseminate a hurtful text or image based message in any language.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the ReThink software for web and mobile platform would detect hurtful messages by detecting hurtful words present using text matching and/or sentiment analysis in all languages, or by detecting hurtful message by detecting hurtful words present in the message that carry negative sentiments in all languages, or detecting hurtful message using text matching and/or sentiment analysis by detecting hurtfulness that carry negative sentiments based on the context of the conversation in all languages.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein a ReThink software for web and mobile platforms that detects hurtfulness of image-based messages and video-based messages by detecting hurtfulness that carry negative sentiments based on either the hurtful labels present in the message or hurtfulness detected from the context of the conversation in all languages.

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