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Preferably, the visualisation arrangement is provided with means for obtaining organisational data in relation to the software modules, and with means for processing the communications instances or data prior to display, such that said communications instances, or data relating thereto, can be displayed in a
5   manner determined by the organisational data.

It is also advantageous if the visualisation arrangement is provided with means to access data or executable software code held in one or more of the software modules, to download said data or code, to provide said data or code for modification and to load modified data or code to the software module. The data or
10   code may be modified by editing means provided within the visualisation arrangement itself, or by separate editing means.

It should be noted that there are several novel and innovative features of the embodiments of the present invention described below, not all of which are necessarily referred to above, and at least some of which have applicability
15   independently of other aspects of said embodiments.

It should also be noted that, in a distributed environment, software modules in practice may not themselves comprise data or software, such as collaboration or co-ordination strategies as mentioned above. They may instead simply have access to them, for instance for loading at the relevant run-time.
20   These arrangements should be taken as covered by the above.

An agent building system tool-kit known as the Collaborative Agent Building System ("CABS") will now be described, by way of example only, as an embodiment of the present invention, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:
25   Figure 1 shows an agent-based control system, built using CABS, as it interfaces with external hardware and/or software;

Figure 2 shows a schematic architecture for a software module constituting an agent for distributed control, monitoring and management of a system;
30   Figure 3 shows a CABS platform for building an agent as shown in Figure 2;

Figure 4 shows a layered model of an agent in terms of primary characterisation;