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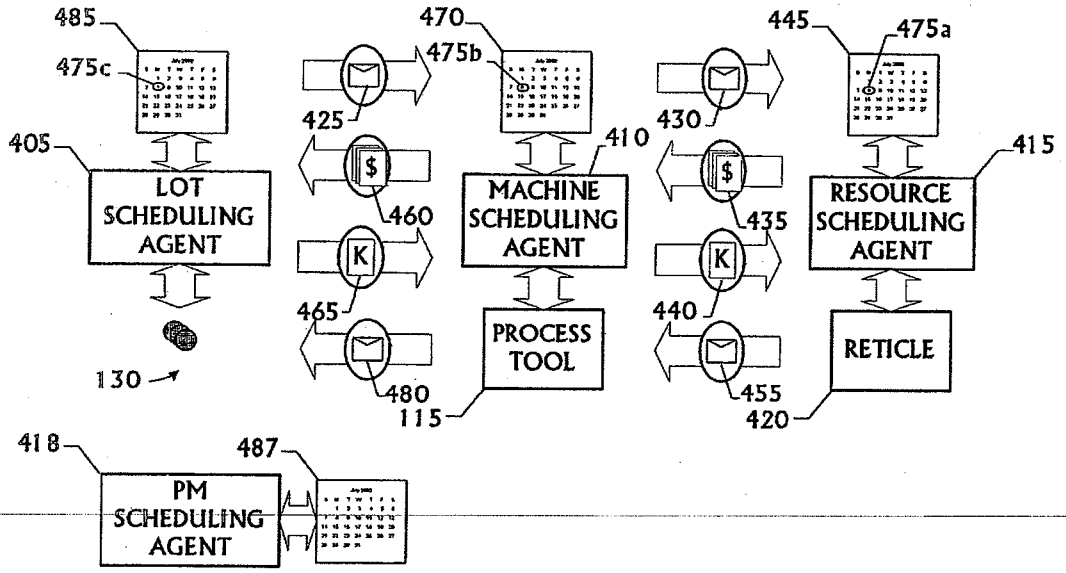
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(54) Title: SPECIALIZATION OF ACTIVE SOFTWARE AGENTS IN AN AUTOMATED MANUFACTURING ENVIRONMENT



(57) Abstract: An apparatus and method for implementing an automated processing environment employing specialized, autonomous, active software agents (265) are disclosed. The software agents (265) are specialized by the type of entity they represent and the function they perform in the process flow. The apparatus includes a process flow comprising a plurality of manufacturing domain entities (115, 130, 320, 420) and a plurality of such software agents (610) for scheduling a first subset of the manufacturing domain entities (115, 130, 320, 420) for consuming the process resources (420) provided by a second subset of the manufacturing domain entities (115, 130, 320, 420). The method includes instantiating such software agents (265) and then permitting them to operate as programmed.

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