

SYSTEM AND PROCESS FOR IMAGE RESCALING USING ADAPTIVE INTERPOLATION KERNEL WITH SHARPNESS AND OVERSHOOT CONTROL

Field of the Invention

[0001] The present invention generally relates to the field of digital image processing, and more particularly to a system and process for rescaling digital images using adaptive interpolation kernel with sharpness and overshoot control.

Background of the Invention

[0002] Digital images have become more popular in the field of image display because they offer clearness and less distortion during processing. Furthermore, a wider range of image processing algorithms can be applied to digital images. Interpolation is a common stage in image processing to improve the appearance of the processed image on the output imaging medium. Interpolation is often performed during rescaling or resizing of digital images.

[0003] Rescaling or resizing of digital images includes magnification or reduction of image. For example, large screen displays have a native resolution that reaches or exceeds the well-known high-definition TV (HDTV) standard. In order to display a low-resolution digital image on a large screen display, it is desirable to rescale the image to a full screen resolution.

[0004] Traditionally, linear interpolation techniques such as bilinear or bicubic interpolation are used to rescale digital images. However, these linear interpolation techniques have certain drawbacks. For example, the interpolated image may suffer from blurring edges, resulting in a loss in image quality. Furthermore, artifacts such as overshoot and undershoot may be introduced around the edge areas. Therefore, many techniques have been proposed to improve the subjective quality of the interpolated images by using adaptive (interpolation) algorithms. These adaptive algorithms minimize loss in image quality by adapting the interpolation coefficients in the algorithms to better match the local structures around the edges of the image.

[0005] One approach/method for adaptive interpolation of image data is by selecting an appropriate interpolation kernel function from a plurality of different interpolation kernel functions based on one or more factors. The factors can be the input image format, the output imaging media, or the appearance characteristic of the interpolated image data.

[0006] Another approach/method (to provide a representation of image data) is by using a scaled kernel. The scaled kernel is constructed by transforming a kernel from a first range to a second range, where the second range is smaller than the first range. This method can improve the sharpness of the image data without any overshoot problem. However, transforming a kernel from one range to another range creates a dead-zone in the transformed range, which may result in an un-natural edge effect in the interpolated image.

[0007] Yet another approach/method (for digital image interpolation and sharpness enhancement) is by combining two interpolated images with sharpness level control. The two interpolated images are generated by two interpolation filters with different cut-off frequencies. This method will lead to overshoot and undershoot artifacts near the edge areas when using large sharpness control parameter.

[0008] Generally, the three methods as discussed above address the issues of loss in image quality by applying effective global sharpness control. In global sharpness control, the control parameter is fixed for all the pixels. However, the effect of local sharpness control for different characteristics of image content has not been adequately addressed. For example, whilst the three methods enhance the sharpness of the edge components, they also tend to amplify the noise in the signal. Furthermore, the three methods are unable to control the sharpness level locally through local sharpness control, thereby causing the weak edges to be enhanced without over-enhancing the strong edges. In local sharpness control, the control parameter is different for each individual pixel. As a result, the methods produce artificial-looking images.

[0009] One approach for local sharpness control is to apply an adaptive enhancement process on different edge magnitudes to achieve good edge enhancement. However, the soft edges can add depth perceptibility to the digital image, and therefore this approach is not suitable for steepening. Furthermore, the hard edges are already steep enough to demand further enhancement.

[0010] As described above, conventional linear interpolation techniques and the existing adaptive techniques suffer from blurring edges or introducing artefacts around edge area, such as overshoot and undershoot. The conventional techniques generally address the effectiveness of global sharpness control which is only based on different formats of input image data or different types of the output display media. They have not concerned about the local image content. Hence, they are noise sensitive.

[0011] In the case of downscaling, a number of input pixels in the original image are transformed to a single output pixel in the down-sampled image. The frequency sampling interval must be chosen very short based on Nyquist sampling theory in order to transform the entire data from input to output image, which is not feasible in most cases and aliasing artifacts can be introduced.

[0012] As shown in FIG 11, a conventional image size changing apparatus **1** includes a combination of the horizontal interpolator **2** and the vertical interpolator **5** for interpolating an input image signal SI in both the horizontal and vertical directions using the horizontal and vertical interpolation factors received from the horizontal interpolation factor generator **3** and the vertical interpolation factor generator **6** respectively. Using the horizontal size change rate received from the horizontal magnification storage **4** and the sync signal timed with the input image signal SI, the horizontal interpolation factor generator **3** produces three horizontal interpolation factors hw1, hw2, and hw3, each having a ratio between a horizontal component of the visual area determined by image data of an original image and a horizontal component of the visual area determined by image data of its size changed image. The horizontal interpolation factors hw1, hw2, and hw3 are timed with a clock signal of which the frequency is two times greater than the pixel clock signal of the input image signal SI. Also produced by the horizontal interpolation factor generator **3** is a horizontal pixel enable signal indicative of effective ones of the pixel data from the horizontal interpolator **2** to be received by the vertical interpolator **5** and a write-in controller **9**. Using the vertical size change rate received from the vertical magnification storage **7** and the syn signal timed with the input image signal SI, the vertical interpolator factor generator **6** produces three vertical interpolation factors vw1, vw2, and vw3, each having a ratio between a vertical component of the visual area determined by image data of an original image and a vertical component of the visual area determined by image data of its size changed image. The vertical interpolation factors vw1, vw2, and vw3 are timed

with the horizontal sync signal of the input image signal SI. Also produced by the vertical interpolation factor generator 6 is a vertical pixel enable signal indicative of effective ones of the pixel data from the vertical interpolator 5 to be received by the write-in controller 9. The write-in controller 9 is responsive to the horizontal pixel enable signal from the horizontal interpolation factor generator 3, the vertical pixel enable signal from the vertical interpolation factor generator 6, and the sync signal of the input image SI for controlling the writing of the pixel data received from the vertical interpolator 5 into the field memory 8. Each interpolator may comprise a group of latch circuits for delaying the input image signal by one pixel period or line memories for delaying the input image signal by one horizontal period, multipliers, and an adder.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0013] Preferred embodiments according to the present invention will now be described with reference to the Figures, in which like reference numerals denote like elements.

[0014] FIG 1 illustrates a block diagram of a digital video rescaling system in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

[0015] FIG 2 illustrates a block diagram of the adaptive spline interpolation kernel in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

[0016] FIG 3 illustrates the spline interpolation using four support pixels.

[0017] FIG 4 illustrates the interpolation curves with different sharpness control parameter values.

[0018] FIG 5 illustrates the interpolation curves with different overshoot control parameter values.

[0019] FIG 6 illustrates a block diagram of the adaptive spline interpolation kernel in accordance with one alternative embodiment of the present invention.

[0020] FIG 7 illustrates neighbourhood pixels for local gradient estimation.

[0021] FIG 8 illustrates the graphical relationship between the local sharpness control parameter and local gradient values.

[0022] FIG 9 illustrates a block diagram of the anti-aliasing filter in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention.

[0023] FIG 10 illustrates the list of coefficients of eight anti-aliasing low pass 7-tap filters according to the predetermined range of downscaling factors.

[0024] FIG 11 shows a conventional image size changing apparatus.

Detailed Description of the Invention

[0025] The present invention may be understood more readily by reference to the following detailed description of certain embodiments of the invention.

[0026] The present invention provides an effective process of video image rescaling. This process uses a controllable interpolation kernel to generate the interpolated outputs ranging from relatively sharp at one end to relatively soft at the other end. The levels of sharpness and overshoot can be either selected by users using a set of control parameters or adaptively steered by the image contents. In addition, a downscaling process with anti-aliasing low pass filtering is used to generate the downsampled images without aliasing artefacts.

[0027] The present invention provides a system for video image rescaling using a controllable interpolation kernel. The system comprises a global and local sharpness control functionality to generate the interpolated images with the visual qualities ranging from relative sharpness to softness. Furthermore, the system comprises an overshoot control functionality to adjust the levels of overshoot/undershoot effects along the edges in the interpolated images. In addition, a set of anti-aliasing low pass filters are designed and conducted according to a certain range of downscaling factors.

[0028] Now referring to FIG 1, the rescaling system **100** comprises an adaptive spline interpolation kernel **101**, a sharpness control module **102**, an overshoot control module **103**, a local sharpness control module **109**, an anti-aliasing filter **106**, and an input module **108**. The adaptive spline interpolation kernel **101** is coupled to the input module **108** to receive input image data and generate interpolated pixels. The sharpness control module **102** and overshoot control module **103** are configured to generate control parameters for the adaptive spline interpolation kernel **101** to improve the sharpness, and reduce overshoot/undershoot artifacts in edge areas of the image. The local sharpness control module **109** is provided to make the sharpness control module **102** adaptive to the local image content. In addition, the anti-aliasing filter **106** is coupled between the input module **108** and the adaptive spline interpolation kernel **101**, wherein the anti-aliasing

filter **106** comprises a set of low pass filters to reduce aliasing artifacts during image downscaling. The interpolation phase calculation **110** is used to calculate the phase value (S) of the pixel to be interpolated in the interpolation processing.

[0029] The adaptive spline interpolation kernel **101** uses a controllable third order polynomial function based on four input support pixels received from the input image data to generate an interpolated pixel. One embodiment of the implementation of the adaptive spline interpolation kernel **101** is shown in FIG 2, wherein the adaptive spline interpolation kernel **101** calculates the interpolated pixel $y_1(x)$ using a third order polynomial function with sharpness control parameter $Kshp$. The calculation is performed according to the following equation (1):

$$\mathbf{[0030]} \quad y_1(x) = \sum_{n=A,B,C,D} y_n * f_n(s, Kshp) \quad (1)$$

[0031] where y_A , y_B , y_C and y_D are four support pixels from input image data; s is the distance from interpolation position to the position of the support pixel y_B as shown in FIG 3; and $f_n(s, Kshp)$ ($n=A,B,C,D$) are four control synthesis functions which can be expressed by the following equations (2)-(5):

$$\begin{aligned} f_A(s, Kshp) &= Kshp * (-s^3 + 2 * s^2 - s) / 2 \\ \mathbf{[0032]} \quad f_B(s, Kshp) &= (3 * Kshp * s^3 - 5 * Kshp * s^2 + 2 * (Kshp - 1) * s + 2) / 2 \\ f_C(s, Kshp) &= (-3 * Kshp * s^3 + 4 * Kshp * s^2 + (2 - Kshp) * s) / 2 \\ f_D(s, Kshp) &= Kshp * (s^3 - s^2) / 2 \end{aligned}$$

[0033] $Kshp$ is the global sharpness control parameter generated from the sharpness control module **102**, wherein $Kshp$ is used to adjust the sharpness of the rescaled image. $Kshp$ has a predetermined range of negative to positive values to control the visual quality of the rescaled images from soft to sharp, wherein a negative $Kshp$ produces a softer rescaled image and a positive $Kshp$ produces a sharper rescaled image. FIG 4 illustrates some examples of the interpolation curves driven by different values of the global sharpness control parameter $Kshp$, wherein the values of $Kshp$ are set at 0.0, 1.0 and 5.0. A larger $Kshp$ value (e.g. $Kshp = 5.0$) produces a steeper interpolation curve as compared to a smaller $Kshp$ value (e.g. $Kshp = 1.0$), and the steeper interpolation curve gives a sharper rescaled image. Therefore, the setting of $Kshp$ value can effectively control the sharpness of the interpolation curve. The value of $Kshp$ can be determined by the user of the system or by the micro-controller (not shown) in the system.

[0034] From FIG 4, it can be observed that large values of $Kshp$ produce overshoot 401 and undershoot 402 effects. Strong overshoot and undershoot effects might result in an artificial-looking rescaled image. Hence, an overshoot/undershoot control parameter $Kovs$ is provided to control the overshoot and undershoot effects.

[0035] Referring back to FIG 2, the adaptive spline interpolation kernel 101 comprises a max-min calculation unit 202, a comparator 203, and a multiplier 204. The max-min calculation unit 202 is used to calculate the maximum value and the minimum value of the support pixels y_B and y_C . The outputs of the max-min calculation unit 202 are then compared with the output $y_1(x)$ of the kernel 201 in comparator 203 to generate the output $y_2(x)$ according to the following equation (6):

$$[0036] \quad y_2(x) = \begin{cases} \max(y_B, y_C) & \text{if } (y_1(x) > \max(y_B, y_C)) \\ \min(y_B, y_C) & \text{if } (y_1(x) < \min(y_B, y_C)) \\ y_1(x) & \text{else} \end{cases} \quad (6)$$

[0037] The outputs $y_1(x)$ and $y_2(x)$ are then subtracted to produce an output $(y_1(x) - y_2(x))$. The multiplier 204 multiplies the output $(y_1(x) - y_2(x))$ by the overshoot control parameter $Kovs$ to produce the output $Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x))$. Thereafter, $Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x))$ is added to $y_2(x)$ to generate the final output $y(x)$ with sharpness and overshoot control according to the following equation (7):

$$[0038] \quad y(x) = K_{ovs} * (y_1(x) - y_2(x)) + y_2(x) \quad (7)$$

[0039] FIG 5 illustrates some examples of the interpolation curves having the same $Kshp = 5.0$ but driven by different values of $Kovs$, wherein the values of $Kovs$ are set at 0.01, 0.5 and 1.0. A smaller $Kovs$ value (e.g. $Kovs = 0.01$) creates a larger reduction of the overshoot 401 and undershoot 402 effects. Therefore, the setting of $Kovs$ value can effectively control the overshoot and undershoot of the interpolation curve, thereby allowing the rescaling system 100 to produce a more natural-looking image.

[0040] An alternative embodiment of the adaptive spline interpolation kernel with sharpness control 201 is shown in FIG 6, wherein the adaptive spline interpolation kernel with sharpness control 201 comprises a kernel look up table (KernelLUT) 601, a spline interpolation module 602, and a linear interpolation module 603. The adaptive spline interpolation kernel with sharpness control 201 uses the KernelLUT 601 to reduce the complexity of the interpolation process. KernelLUT 601 is a look up table which stores

the values of four control synthesis functions. The contents of look up table can be calculated by the following equations (8)-(11):

$$\begin{aligned}
 f_A(s) &= (-s^3 + 2*s^2 - s) / 2 \\
 f_B(s) &= (3*s^3 - 5*s^2 + 2) / 2 \\
 f_C(s) &= (-3*s^3 + 4*s^2 + s) / 2 \\
 f_D(s) &= (s^3 - s^2) / 2
 \end{aligned}$$

The size of this look up table is dependent on the resolution of interpolation, which is initialized at the beginning of the rescaling process. The spline interpolation module **602** is used to calculate the interpolated pixel value $y_c(x)$ using the KernelLUT **601**. The interpolation can be obtained according to the following equation (12):

$$y_c(x) = y(A) * f_A(s) + y(B) * f_B(s) + y(C) * f_C(s) + y(D) * f_D(s) \quad (12)$$

The linear interpolation **603** is used to calculate the interpolated pixel value $y_l(x)$ which can be obtained according to the following equation (13):

$$y_l(x) = (1-s) * y(B) + s * y(C) \quad (13)$$

The outputs $y_c(x)$ and $y_l(x)$ are then subtracted to produce an output $(y_c(x) - y_l(x))$. The multiplier **604** multiplies the output $(y_c(x) - y_l(x))$ by the sharpness control parameter $Kshp$ to produce the output $Kshp * (y_c(x) - y_l(x))$. Thereafter, $Kshp * (y_c(x) - y_l(x))$ is added to $y_l(x)$ to generate the final output $y_l(x)$ with sharpness control according to the following equation (14):

$$y_l(x) = K_{shp} * (y_c(x) - y_l(x)) + y_l(x) \quad (14)$$

Referring back to FIG. 1, the rescaling system **100** comprises a local sharpness control module **109** to make the sharpness control module **102** adaptive to the local image content. Generally, the sharpness control is applied according to the local gradient magnitude (Gn) and the noise level (Sigma) estimated from the digital picture or video sequence. The local sharpness control module **109** comprises a local gradient estimation module **104**, a noise level estimator module **107**, and a local sharpness control parameter function module **105**.

The local gradient estimation module **104** is coupled to the input module **108** to estimate the local gradient magnitude Gn based on a 3x3 neighbourhood window (shown in FIG 7) from the input image data. The local gradient estimation module **104** calculates the local gradient magnitude Gn according to the following equation (15):

[0050]

(15)

[0051] The noise level estimator module 107 is coupled to the input module 108 to estimate the noise level σ from the input image or video. An example of a suitable noise level estimator or detector is disclosed in US 5,657,401, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference. Alternatively, the noise level can be predetermined before transmitting it to the system so as to simplify the implementation of the system.

[0052] The local gradient estimation module 104 and the noise level estimator module 107 are both coupled to the local sharpness control parameter function module 105, wherein the local gradient estimation module 104 transmits the local gradient magnitude G_n to the local sharpness control parameter function module 105, and wherein the noise level estimator module 107 transmits the noise level σ to the local sharpness control parameter function module 105. The local sharpness control parameter function module 105 is configured to control the sharpness control module 102 using a transfer function, wherein the transfer function indicates the relationship between the control parameter K_{shp} and the local image content. FIG 8 illustrates an example of the transfer function $K_{shp}(G_n)$, wherein the transfer function $K_{shp}(G_n)$ can be defined according to the following equation (16):

$$[0053] \quad K_{shp}(G_n) = AK_{shp}(G_n) + GK_{shp} \quad (16)$$

[0054] GK_{shp} is a fixed value that is defined by the global sharpness control parameter K_{shp} . $AK_{shp}(G_n)$ is a variable value that is defined by the control parameters $\max K$, $\min K$, $K1$, $K2$, $K3$ and σ . The $AK_{shp}(G_n)$ can be expressed by a transfer function according to the following equation (17):

$$[0055] \quad AK_{shp}(G_n) = \begin{cases} \frac{|\min K| * G_n}{\sigma} + \min K & \text{if } (G_n \leq \sigma) \\ \frac{\max K * (G_n - \sigma)}{K1 - \sigma} & \text{if } (\sigma < G_n \leq K1) \\ \max K & \text{if } (K1 < G_n \leq K2) \\ \frac{\max K * (K3 - G_n)}{K3 - K2} & \text{if } (K2 < G_n \leq K3) \\ 0 & \text{else} \end{cases} \quad (17)$$

[0056] When the local gradient magnitude value (G_n) is lower than the noise level σ , the pixels are considered as being corrupted by noise. In this case, the sharpness control value will be lower than GK_{shp} and decreases linearly to a minimum value

$(minK+GKshp)$, as illustrated by segment **801** in FIG 8. When G_n is between the range of $Sigma$ and $K1$, the sharpness control value increases linearly to achieve the maximum value $(maxK+GKshp)$ as illustrated by segment **802**. The sharpness control value is kept at the constant value $(maxK+GKshp)$ until the G_n is larger than $K2$. The pixels with gradient magnitudes G_n falling in the segment **802** and segment **803** are considered as low and middle edges respectively. Hence, higher sharpness control parameter values are used on these edge pixels. On the other hand, pixels with gradient magnitude G_n that is larger than $K2$ are considered as large edge pixels. The sharpness control parameter value then decreases linearly as shown by segment **804**. For gradient magnitude G_n that is larger than $K3$, the sharpness control parameter value is kept constant at $GKshp$ as shown by segment **805**.

[0057] Referring back to FIG 1, the rescaling system **100** further comprises the anti-aliasing filter **106** to reduce any aliasing artifacts during image downscaling. In particular, the input image data **108** is coupled to the anti-aliasing filter **106** via a switch device **111**. The switch device **111** is configured to select or bypass the anti-aliasing filter **106** depending on the rescaling factor. Supposed the rescaling factor is more than 1, the switch device **111** would bypass the anti-aliasing filter **106**. If the rescaling factor is less than 1, the switch device **111** would select the anti-aliasing filter **106**. Then, the anti-aliasing filter **106** processes the input image data and sends a filtered image data to the adaptive spline interpolation kernel **101**.

[0058] The anti-aliasing filter **106** comprises a plurality of 1D low pass filters that are activated according to a predetermined range of downscaling factors. FIG 9 illustrates a block diagram of the anti-aliasing filter **106**, which comprises a low pass filtering module **901** and a low pass filter bank **902**. During downscaling, one set of filter coefficients, $h(m)$, is selected from the low pass filter bank **902** according to the downscaling factor. The selected set of filter coefficients are then applied on the input image data in the low pass filtering **901** to produce the filtered image data to the adaptive spline interpolation kernel **101** according to the following equation (18):

[0059]
$$y(n) = \sum_{i=n-m/2}^{n+m/2} h(i) * Yin(i) \quad (18)$$

[0060] where m is the length of the filter,

[0061] The low pass filter coefficients stored in the low pass filter bank **902** are designed using finite impulse response (FIR) filter design method based on adjustable Hanning window. The cutoff frequencies used in the filter design depend on the downscaling factors. Therefore, different downscaling factors corresponding to different low pass filters. In one embodiment, eight filters are operated according to eight pre-divided ranges of downscaling factors. FIG 10 shows an example of eight sets of 7-tap low pass filter coefficients that are stored in the low pass filter bank **901**. Furthermore, the effective range of the downscaling factors is 0.20 to 0.99.

[0062] While this detailed description has set forth some embodiments of the present invention, the appended claims are sufficiently supported to cover and will cover other embodiments of the present invention which differ from the described embodiments according to various modifications and improvements.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A digital video rescaling system comprising:
 - an input module configured to receive an input image data;
 - an adaptive spline interpolation kernel coupled to the input module, wherein the adaptive spline interpolation kernel is configured to generate an interpolated pixel based on the input image data;
 - a sharpness control module coupled to the adaptive spline interpolation kernel, wherein the sharpness control module is configured to generate sharpness control parameters to control the adaptive spline interpolation kernel; and
 - an overshoot control module coupled to the adaptive spline interpolation kernel, wherein the overshoot control module is configured to generate overshoot control parameters to control the adaptive spline interpolation kernel.
2. The digital video rescaling system of claim 1, wherein the adaptive spline interpolation kernel is configured to generate an interpolated pixel $y_1(x)$ based on the calculation according to the following equation:

$$y_1(x) = \sum_{n=A,B,C,D} y_n * f_n(s, Kshp)$$

wherein y_A , y_B , y_C and y_D are four support pixels from input image data, wherein s is the distance from interpolation position to the position of the support pixel y_B , wherein **Kshp** is a global sharpness control parameter generated by the sharpness control module, and wherein $f_n(s, Kshp)$ ($n=A,B,C,D$) are four control synthesis functions which can be expressed by the following equations:

$$f_A(s, Kshp) = Kshp * (-s^3 + 2 * s^2 - s) / 2$$

$$f_B(s, Kshp) = (3 * Kshp * s^3 - 5 * Kshp * s^2 + 2 * (Kshp - 1) * s + 2) / 2$$

$$f_C(s, Kshp) = (-3 * Kshp * s^3 + 4 * Kshp * s^2 + (2 - Kshp) * s) / 2$$

$$f_D(s, Kshp) = Kshp * (s^3 - s^2) / 2$$

3. The digital video rescaling system of claim 2, wherein the overshoot control module comprises:

a max-min calculation unit configured to receive the data of pixels y_B and y_C , and configured to calculate the maximum value and the minimum value of the support pixels y_B and y_C ;

a comparator coupled to the max-min calculation unit and adaptive spline interpolation kernel, wherein the comparator is configured to compare the maximum value and the minimum value of the support pixels y_B and y_C with the interpolated pixel $y_1(x)$ to generate an output $y_2(x)$ according the following equation:

$$y_2(x) = \begin{cases} \max(y_B, y_C) & \text{if } (y_1(x) > \max(y_B, y_C)) \\ \min(y_B, y_C) & \text{if } (y_1(x) < \min(y_B, y_C)) \\ y_1(x) & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

a subtractor coupled to the max-min calculation unit and the comparator, configured to subtract the outputs $y_1(x)$ and $y_2(x)$, thereby generating an output $(y_1(x) - y_2(x))$; and

a multiplier coupled to the subtractor, wherein the multiplier is configured to multiply the output $(y_1(x) - y_2(x))$ by an overshoot control parameter $Kovs$ to generate an output $Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x))$; and

whereby the final output $y(x) = Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x)) + y_2(x)$ is based on the addition of $y_2(x)$ to $Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x))$.

4. The digital video rescaling system of claim 1 further comprising a local sharpness control module to adapt the sharpness control module to the local image content of the input image data, wherein the local sharpness control module comprises:

a local gradient estimation module coupled to the input module, wherein the local gradient estimation module is configured to generate a local gradient magnitude based on the input image data;

a noise level estimator coupled to the input module, wherein the noise level estimator is configured to generate a noise level based on the input image data; and

a local sharpness control parameter function module configured to control the sharpness control module using a transfer function based on the local gradient magnitude and the noise level.

5. The digital video rescaling system of claim 4, wherein the transfer function of the local sharpness control parameter function module can be expressed as:

$$Kshp(G_n) = AKshp(G_n) + GKshp,$$

wherein GKshp is a fixed value that is defined by a global sharpness control parameter Kshp, AKshp(Gn) is a variable value that is defined by the control parameters $maxK$, $minK$, $K1$, $K2$, $K3$ and $Sigma$, wherein $Sigma$ is the noise level, wherein G_n is the local gradient magnitude, and

wherein $AKshp(G_n)$ can be expressed by a transfer function according to the following equation:

$$AKshp(G_n) = \begin{cases} \frac{|\min K| * G_n}{Sigma} + \min K & \text{if } (G_n \leq Sigma) \\ \frac{\max K * (G_n - Sigma)}{K1 - Sigma} & \text{if } (Sigma < G_n \leq K1) \\ \max K & \text{if } (K1 < G_n \leq K2) \\ \frac{\max K * (K3 - G_n)}{K3 - K2} & \text{if } (K2 < G_n \leq K3) \\ 0 & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

6. The digital video rescaling system of claim 1 further comprising an anti-aliasing filter coupled between the input module and the adaptive spline interpolation kernel, wherein the anti-aliasing filter comprises a set of low pass filters that are configured to reduce aliasing artifacts during image downscaling.

7. The digital video rescaling system of claim 6 further comprising a switch device coupled between the input module and the anti-aliasing filter, wherein the switch device is configured to activate the anti-aliasing filter during downscaling, and wherein the switch device is configured to deactivate the anti-aliasing filter during upscaling.

8. A method of rescaling video images including:
receiving data corresponding to an input image;

calculating interpolated pixel values based on the input image data by using an adaptive spline interpolation kernel;

generating sharpness control parameters to control the adaptive interpolation kernel by using a sharpness control module; and

generating overshoot control parameter to control the adaptive interpolation kernel by using an overshoot control module.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the adaptive spline interpolation kernel is configured to generate an interpolated pixel $y_1(x)$ based on the calculation according the following equation:

$$y_1(x) = \sum_{n=A,B,C,D} y_n * f_n(s, Kshp)$$

wherein y_A , y_B , y_C and y_D are four support pixels from input image data, wherein s is the distance from interpolation position to the position of the support pixel y_B , wherein **Kshp** is a global sharpness control parameter generated by the sharpness control module, and wherein $f_n(s, Kshp)$ ($n=A,B,C,D$) are four control synthesis functions which can be expressed by:

$$\begin{aligned} f_A(s, Kshp) &= Kshp * (-s^3 + 2 * s^2 - s) / 2 \\ f_B(s, Kshp) &= (3 * Kshp * s^3 - 5 * Kshp * s^2 + 2 * (Kshp - 1) * s + 2) / 2 \\ f_C(s, Kshp) &= (-3 * Kshp * s^3 + 4 * Kshp * s^2 + (2 - Kshp) * s) / 2 \\ f_D(s, Kshp) &= Kshp * (s^3 - s^2) / 2 \end{aligned}$$

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the operation of generating overshoot control parameter to control the adaptive interpolation kernel comprises:

calculating the maximum value and the minimum value of the support pixels y_B and y_C ;

comparing maximum value and the minimum value of the support pixels y_B and y_C with the interpolated pixel $y_1(x)$ to generate an output $y_2(x)$ according to the following equation:

$$y_2(x) = \begin{cases} \max(y_B, y_C) & \text{if } (y_1(x) > \max(y_B, y_C)) \\ \min(y_B, y_C) & \text{if } (y_1(x) < \min(y_B, y_C)) \\ y_1(x) & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

subtracting the outputs $y_1(x)$ and $y_2(x)$ to generate an output $(y_1(x) - y_2(x))$;
 multiplying the output $(y_1(x) - y_2(x))$ by an overshoot control parameter $Kovs$ to
 generate an output $Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x))$; and
 generating the final output $y(x) = Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x)) + y_2(x)$ by adding $y_2(x)$ to
 the output $Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x))$.

11. The method of claim 8 further comprising:
 generating a local gradient magnitude based on the input image data;
 generating a noise level based on the input image data; and
 controlling the sharpness control module by using a transfer function based on the
 local gradient magnitude and the noise level.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the transfer function can be expressed as:

$$Kshp(Gn) = AKshp(Gn) + GKshp,$$

wherein $GKshp$ is a fixed value that is defined by a global sharpness control
 parameter $Kshp$, $AKshp(Gn)$ is a variable value that is defined by the control parameters
 $maxK$, $minK$, $K1$, $K2$, $K3$ and $Sigma$, wherein $Sigma$ is the noise level, wherein Gn is the
 local gradient magnitude, and

wherein $AKshp(Gn)$ can be expressed by a transfer function:

$$AKshp(G_n) = \begin{cases} \frac{|\min K| * G_n}{Sigma} + \min K & \text{if } (G_n \leq Sigma) \\ \frac{\max K * (G_n - Sigma)}{K1 - Sigma} & \text{if } (Sigma < G_n \leq K1) \\ \max K & \text{if } (K1 < G_n \leq K2) \\ \frac{\max K * (K3 - G_n)}{K3 - K2} & \text{if } (K2 < G_n \leq K3) \\ 0 & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

13. The method of claim 8 further comprising:
 selecting a set of filter coefficients from a low pass filter bank according to a
 downscaling factor; and
 applying the set of filter coefficients on the input image data to reduce anti-aliasing
 effects during downscaling.

14. A chip comprising a computer executable medium embedded therein computer executable instructions for rescaling video images, wherein the instructions comprises:

- receiving data corresponding to an input image;
- calculating interpolated pixel values based on the input image data by using an adaptive spline interpolation kernel;
- generating sharpness control parameters to control the adaptive interpolation kernel by using a sharpness control module; and
- generating overshoot control parameter to control the adaptive interpolation kernel by using an overshoot control module.

15. The chip of claim 14, wherein the adaptive spline interpolation kernel is configured to generate an interpolated pixel $y_1(x)$ based on the calculation according the following equation:

$$y_1(x) = \sum_{n=A,B,C,D} y_n * f_n(s, Kshp)$$

wherein y_A , y_B , y_C and y_D are four support pixels from input image data, wherein s is the distance from interpolation position to the position of the support pixel y_B , wherein **Kshp** is a global sharpness control parameter generated by the sharpness control module, and wherein $f_n(s, Kshp)$ ($n=A,B,C,D$) are four control synthesis functions which can be expressed by:

$$\begin{aligned} f_A(s, Kshp) &= Kshp * (-s^3 + 2 * s^2 - s) / 2 \\ f_B(s, Kshp) &= (3 * Kshp * s^3 - 5 * Kshp * s^2 + 2 * (Kshp - 1) * s + 2) / 2 \\ f_C(s, Kshp) &= (-3 * Kshp * s^3 + 4 * Kshp * s^2 + (2 - Kshp) * s) / 2 \\ f_D(s, Kshp) &= Kshp * (s^3 - s^2) / 2 \end{aligned}$$

16. The chip of claim 15, wherein the operation of generating overshoot control parameter to control the adaptive interpolation kernel comprises:

- calculating the maximum value and the minimum value of the support pixels y_B and y_C ;

comparing maximum value and the minimum value of the support pixels y_B and y_C with the interpolated pixel $y_1(x)$ to generate an output $y_2(x)$ according to the following equation:

$$y_2(x) = \begin{cases} \max(y_B, y_C) & \text{if } (y_1(x) > \max(y_B, y_C)) \\ \min(y_B, y_C) & \text{if } (y_1(x) < \min(y_B, y_C)) \\ y_1(x) & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

subtracting the outputs $y_1(x)$ and $y_2(x)$ to generate an output $(y_1(x) - y_2(x))$;

multiplying the output $(y_1(x) - y_2(x))$ by an overshoot control parameter $Kovs$ to generate an output $Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x))$; and

generating the final output $y(x) = Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x)) + y_2(x)$ by adding $y_2(x)$ to the output $Kovs * (y_1(x) - y_2(x))$.

17. The chip of claim 14, wherein the instructions further comprises:
generating a local gradient magnitude based on the input image data;
generating a noise level based on the input image data; and
controlling the sharpness control module by using a transfer function based on the local gradient magnitude and the noise level.

18. The chip of claim 17, wherein the transfer function can be expressed as:

$$Kshp(Gn) = AKshp(Gn) + GKshp,$$

wherein $GKshp$ is a fixed value that is defined by a global sharpness control parameter $Kshp$, $AKshp(Gn)$ is a variable value that is defined by the control parameters $maxK$, $minK$, $K1$, $K2$, $K3$ and $Sigma$, wherein $Sigma$ is the noise level, wherein Gn is the local gradient magnitude, and

wherein $AKshp(Gn)$ can be expressed by a transfer function:

$$AKshp(G_n) = \begin{cases} \frac{|\min K| * G_n}{Sigma} + \min K & \text{if } (G_n \leq Sigma) \\ \frac{\max K * (G_n - Sigma)}{K1 - Sigma} & \text{if } (Sigma < G_n \leq K1) \\ \max K & \text{if } (K1 < G_n \leq K2) \\ \frac{\max K * (K3 - G_n)}{K3 - K2} & \text{if } (K2 < G_n \leq K3) \\ 0 & \text{else} \end{cases}$$

19. The chip of claim 14, wherein the instructions further comprises:
- selecting a set of filter coefficients from a low pass filter bank according to a downscaling factor; and
 - applying the set of filter coefficients on the input image data to reduce anti-aliasing effects during downscaling.