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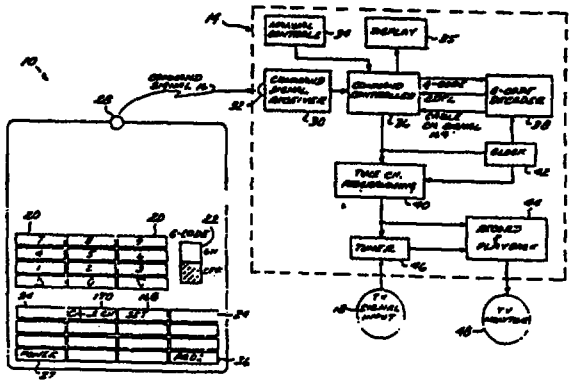
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(54) Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR USING ENCODED VIDEO RECORDER/PLAYER TIMER PREPROGRAMMING INFORMATION

(57) Abstract

Encoded video recorder/player timer preprogramming information (212) listed in a television guide (200) allows a timer preprogramming feature on a video cassette recorder (VCR) (14) to be programmed using a compressed code (102, 158, 212) of only 1 to as few as 7 digits, which are decoded by a decoder (38) built into either the video cassette recorder or a remote controller (82) to convert the compressed code into channel, date, time and length (118, 142) information. The channel, date, time and length information is communicated to a VCR and used to automatically activate the VCR to record a given television program with the corresponding channel, date, time and length. Alternately, the channel, date, time and length information is decoded directly in a remote controller (80) and only start record, stop record and channel selection commands are sent to the VCR (70) at the appropriate times. The compressed codes (212) associated with each television program can be printed in a television program guide (200) in advance and used with a VCR or remote controller with the decoding means. The compressed codes for timer preprogramming can be utilized for just one program or repeatedly for daily or weekly use. The algorithm (100) for decoding the compressed codes can be a function of time (120, 42, 122) to ensure security of the decoding method. A method is included for use of the compressed codes with cable channels (176, 160, 162, 166) and a method and apparatus is described for timer preprogramming for a large number of programs (76). The coding technique can also be used for compressed coding of any multidimensional vector for commercial or industrial applications.



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