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YOU, Yu-Li; 889 St. Charles Drive #4, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360-4030 (US).

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(74) Agent: **WELCHER, Blake, A.**; Digital Theater Systems, Inc., 5171 Clareton Drive, Agoura Hills, CA 91301 (US).

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(71) Applicant: **DIGITAL THEATER SYSTEMS, INC.** [US/US]; 5171 Clareton Drive, Agoura Hills, CA 91301 (US).

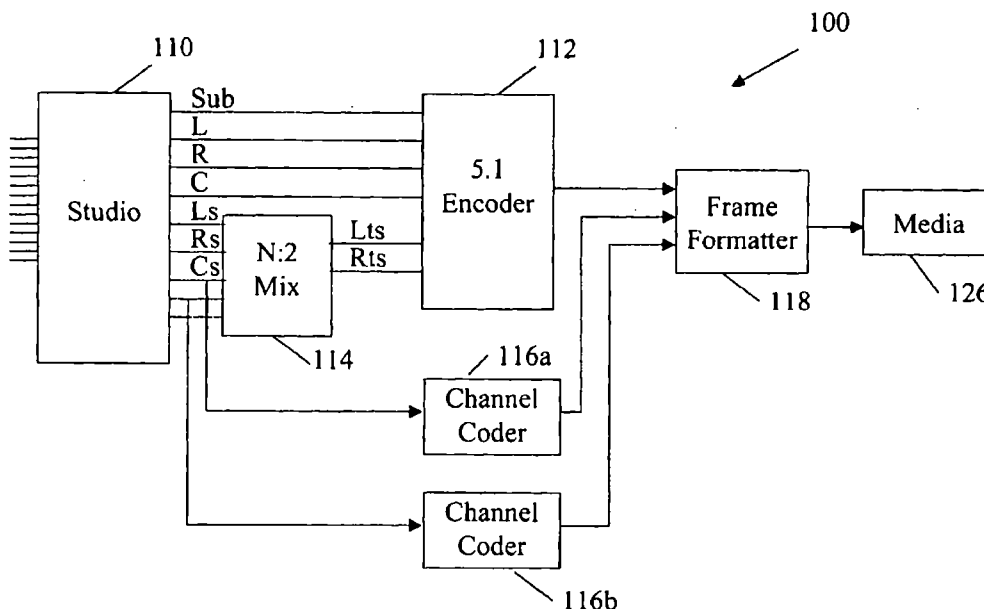
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(72) Inventors: **SMITH, William, P.**; 16 Kinwood Drive, Co. Down, Northern Ireland BT196UQ (GB). **SMYTH, Stephen, M.**; 172 Bangor Road, Newtownards, Co. Down, Northern Ireland BT23 7PH (GB). **YAN, Ming**; 11 Lord Wardens View, Bangor, Northern Ireland BT191GN (GB).

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(54) Title: DISCRETE MULTICHANNEL AUDIO WITH A BACKWARD COMPATIBLE MIX



(57) Abstract: A multichannel audio format provides a truly discrete as well as a backward compatible mix for surround-sound, front or other discrete audio channels in cinema, home theater, or music environments. The additional discrete audio signals are mixed with the existing discrete audio channels into a predetermined format such as the 5.1 audio format. In addition these additional discrete audio channels are encoded and appended to the predetermined format as extension bits (120) in the bitstream (124). The existing base of multichannel decoders (140) can be used in combination with a mix decoder (144) to reproduce truly discrete N.1 multichannel audio.

WO 01/087015 A3



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WO 01/087015 A3

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