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(54) Title: SOFTWARE-DEFINED COMMUNICATION UNIT

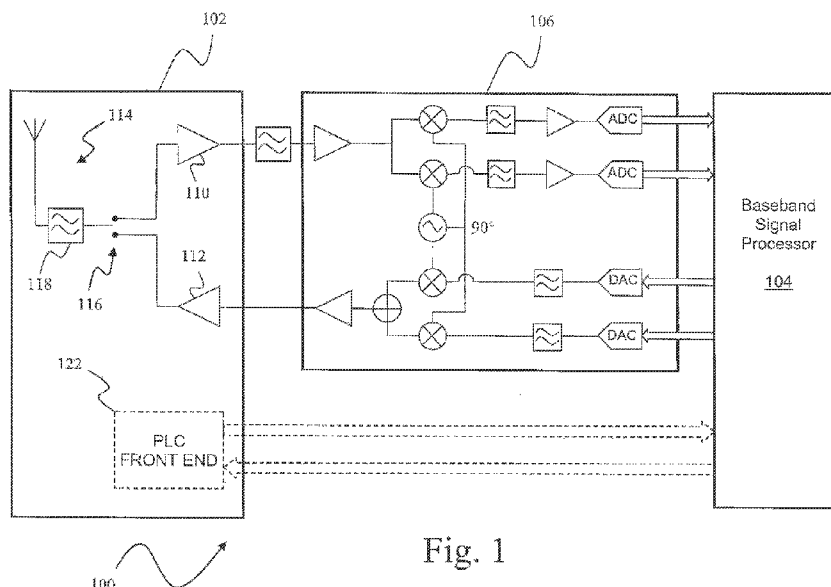


Fig. 1

(57) Abstract: The presently disclosed subject matter relates to communications units. In some uses thereof, such communications units may be respectively associated with utility meters for use in an advanced metering system infrastructure. Present communications units have a medium-agnostic front end module and associated transmitting and receiving functionalities that are programmable to provide simultaneous reception and transmission using multiple protocols over different media and to change to a single protocol functionality upon reception of a valid signal on one of the monitored transmissions. The communications unit may be field programmable for known and previously undefined transmission protocols to provide a future proof device.