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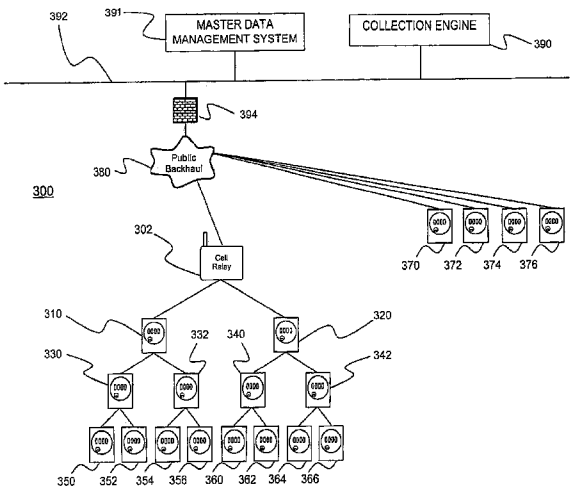
(54) **Title:** DISTRIBUTING METERING RESPONSES FOR LOAD BALANCING AN AMR NETWORK



(57) **Abstract:** Disclosed are methodology and corresponding apparatus subject matters for providing improved efficiency in the collection of data from a large number of metrology devices associated with an Automated Meter reading (AMR) network. AMR network operation produces randomly spaced transmissions from individual nodes in the network. When an AMR system wishes to retrieve data from a large number of points over an AMR network, a broadcast or multicast request is transmitted to appropriate nodes. A time window is defined either in such request or in the devices themselves such that start and end offsets from the time of the request are received by the node. The start offset provides a quiet period to insure request delivery to all the appropriate nodes. The end offset provides a time by which the requested data must be returned. Responses are sent randomly within the window established by the start and stop offset times.

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