APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR COMBINING HIGH BANDWIDTH AND LOW BANDWIDTH DATA TRANSFER

Abstract

Data communications apparatus and methods employing a bidirectional low bandwidth channel and a unidirectional high bandwidth channel. A PC is coupled to an information source by a communications system which provides both a bidirectional low bandwidth channel between the PC and the information source and a high bandwidth channel in which the information source is the source and the PC is the sink. A component of the communications system termed the director responds to a message received in the low bandwidth channel by switching the information being sent from the information source to the PC to the high or low bandwidth channel as specified in the message. The message may come either from the PC or the information source. A graphical user interface at the PC provides the user with "buttons" to specify the bandwidth. The apparatus and methods may be advantageously employed to provide telecommuting services.