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Gilbert [US/US]; 4 Cider Mill Road, Framingham, MA 01701 (US). BERNSTEIN, Debra [US/US]; 443 Peakham Road, Sudbury, MA 01776 (US). ADILETTA, Matthew, J. [US/US]; 20 Monticello Drive, Worcester, MA 01603 (US). HOOPER, Donald, F. [US/US]; 19 Main Circle, Shrewsbury, MA 01545 (US).

(74) Agent: HARRIS, Scott, C.; Fish & Richardson P.C., 4350 La Jolla Village Drive, Suite 500, San Diego, CA 92122 (US).

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(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): INTEL CORPORATION [US/US]; 2200 Mission College Boulevard, Santa Clara, CA 95052 (US).

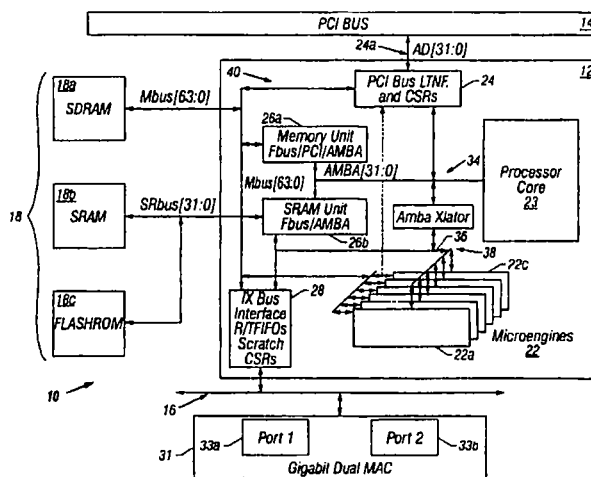
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(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): WOLRICH,

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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR GIGABIT PACKET ASSIGNMENT FOR MULTITHREADED PACKET PROCESSING



(57) Abstract: A network processor that has multiple processing elements, each supporting multiple simultaneous program threads with access to shared resources in an interface. Packet data is received from high-speed ports in segments and each segment is assigned to one of the program threads. Each packet may be assigned to a single program thread, two program threads - one for header segment processing and the other for handling payload segment(s) - or a different program thread for segment of data in a packet. Dedicated inputs for ready status and sequence numbers provide assistance needed for receiving the packet data over a high speed port. The dedicated inputs are used to monitor ready flags from the high speed ports on a cycle-by-cycle basis. The sequence numbers are used by the assigned threads to maintain ordering of segments within a packet, as well as to order the writes of the complete packets to transmit queues.

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