COMPUTER SYSTEM INCORPORATING HOT DOCKING AND UNDOCKING CAPABILITIES WITHOUT REQUIRING A STANDBY OR SUSPEND MODE

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method for hot docking and hot undocking a portable computer and a docking station. The portable computer and docking station are physically coupled via a shared PCI bus and an expansion connector. Varying length pins in the expansion connector generate docking and undocking handshaking signals used by microcontrollers in the portable computer and docking station. The portable computer and docking station are functionally connected via low on-resistance switches located in the portable computer. Following a docking event, closure of the switches connects the portion of the shared PCI bus in the docking station with the PCI bus in the portable computer. When the switches are open, the PCI busses are functionally isolated. Both the portable computer and the docking station also include a local arbiter for arbitrating and granting bus control requests from devices coupled to the shared PCI bus. These local arbiters may be placed into an idled state by either the operating system (through system BIOS) or by the microcontrollers. The arbiters are idled during docking and undocking events in order to inhibit bus cycles on the PCI bus, thereby preventing cycles from being lost. Following completion of a hot docking or undocking event, Plug-and-Play system reconfiguration is carried out so that all system resources may be recognized and properly utilized by the operating system.

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