

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
9 September 2005 (09.09.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/083578 A1

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **G06F 13/40**

AZ 85284 (US). **EDIRISOORIYA, Geetani** [LK/US]; 640 East Vinedo Lane, Tempe, AZ 85284 (US).

(21) International Application Number:

PCT/US2005/002045

(74) **Agent: VINCENT, Lester, J.**; Blakely Sokoloff Taylor & Zafman, 12400 Wilshire Boulevard, 7th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (US).

(22) International Filing Date: 21 January 2005 (21.01.2005)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:

10/780,372 17 February 2004 (17.02.2004) US

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

(81) **Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available):** AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

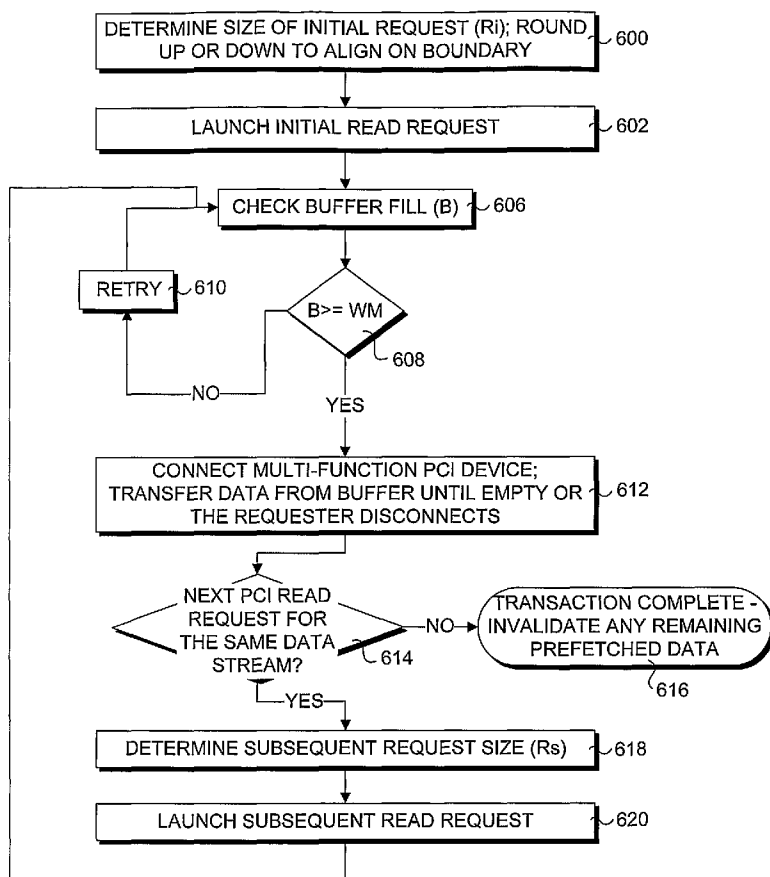
(72) **Inventors; and**

(75) **Inventors/Applicants (for US only): JOSHI, Aniruddha** [IN/US]; 781 North Granada Drive, Chandler, AZ 85226 (US). **LEE, John** [US/US]; 554 East Yvonne Lane, Tempe,

(84) **Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available):** ARIPO (BW, GH,

[Continued on next page]

(54) **Title:** METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR SUPPORTING DELAYED TRANSACTIONS OF MULTI-FUNCTION PCI DEVICES IN PCI BRIDGES



(57) **Abstract:** Method and apparatus for supporting multi-function PCI devices in PCI bridges. Respective pre-fetch buffers are allocated in response to respective initial data transfer requests issued by a multi-function PCI device. A programmable buffer fill watermark is set up for each pre-fetch buffer. While a portion of data corresponding to the data transfer requests fill the pre-fetch buffers, the fill level of each buffer is monitored to determine if it meets or exceeds its buffer fill watermark. In response to such a condition, the multi-function PCI device is connected to the PCI bridge and a virtual buffer is mapped to the pre-fetch buffer. The pre-fetch buffer is then emptied. During subsequent data transfers, each of the pre-fetch buffer becomes filled, the PCI device is connected, and the virtual buffer is mapped to the filled buffer. The process is continued until all data corresponding to the original data transfer request is received by the multi function PCI device.



GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:

— *with international search report*

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