

## **A NETWORK-BASED SYSTEM ENABLING IMAGE COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Abstract**

A system is disclosed which enables a multitude of  
5 dissimilar end-system devices, appliances, and platforms  
to interchange image information. The inventive method  
utilizes a directory database of end-user profiles, a  
session manager, a conversion manager, individual  
conversation processors, a queuing database, and a store-  
10 and-forward file-folder database. The system accommodates  
pre-subscribed end-users as well as non-subscription  
users. The system handles both real-time and store-and-  
forward communications modes. The present invention may  
be practiced as either a one-node or a multi-node  
15 distributed architecture, scalable as required, and may be  
either network-based or premises-based, or a hybrid  
combination of these. Communications transport both into  
and out of the node(s) can range from voiceband telephone  
on analog circuits to high speed channel or fact-packet  
20 protocol communications modes.

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