

System And Method For Assigning A Network Address To A Wireless Device

FIELD

The technology described in this patent application relates generally to the field of
5 wireless communications. More particularly, the application describes a system and method
for assigning a network address to a wireless device.

BACKGROUND

Systems for transmitting data to and from a wireless device are known in this field.
10 The technology described in this patent application, however, overcomes many of the
deficiencies of these known systems by providing unique network identifications for
multiple wireless devices within the system that enable data to be transmitted through a
computer network to a wireless device using a network address, such as an internet protocol
(IP) address.

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SUMMARY

A system for assigning a network address to a wireless device includes a network
server, a virtual device manager, and an address resolution (AR) module. In one
embodiment, the system is operable to push information from an information source within
20 a computer network to the wireless device. The network server is coupled to the computer
network, and is operable to receive a network identification for the wireless device from the
information source and return a network address associated with the wireless device to the

information source. The virtual device manager is also coupled to the computer network, and may be accessed on the computer network using any of a plurality of network addresses, including the network address associated with the wireless device. The AR module is coupled to the virtual device manager, and is operable to receive the network address
5 associated with the wireless device and determine an identification of the wireless device within a wireless network. In operation, the virtual device manager receives information from the information source that is transmitted from the information source to the virtual device manager using the network address associated with the wireless device, and accesses the AR module to determine the identification of the wireless device within the wireless
10 network. The information is then transmitted to the wireless device via the wireless network using the identification of the wireless device within the wireless network.

In another embodiment, the system is operable to transmit information from a first wireless device to a second wireless device using an IP address assigned to the second wireless device. This embodiment includes a mobile data system, a network server, and a
15 virtual device manager. The mobile data system is coupled to a computer network, and is operable to communicate with a plurality of wireless devices over the computer network via one or more wireless gateways. The network server is coupled to the mobile data system, and is operable to receive a network identification for the second wireless device from the mobile data system and to return a corresponding internet protocol (IP) address to the
20 mobile data system. The virtual device manager is also coupled to the mobile data system, and is operable to receive the IP address from the mobile data system and to return a wireless identification for the second wireless device to the mobile data system. In

operation, the mobile data system receives information and the network identification for the second wireless device from the first wireless device, accesses the network server and the virtual device manager to resolve the network identification for the second wireless device into the wireless identification for the second wireless device, and transmits the information
5 and the wireless identification to the second wireless device.

In one embodiment, the system uses an IP address to transmit information from a first wireless device associated with a first computer network to a second wireless device associated with a second computer network. This embodiment includes a first mobile data system, a network server, a virtual device manager, an address resolution (AR) module, and
10 a second mobile data system. The first mobile data system is configured in the first computer network, and is operable to receive information and a network identification from the first wireless device via a wireless network. The network server is configured in the first computer network, and is operable to receive the network identification from the first mobile data system and to determine an internet protocol (IP) address associated with the second
15 wireless device. The virtual device manager is configured in the second computer network and may be accessed using any of a plurality of IP addresses, including the IP address associated with the second wireless device. The virtual device manager is operable to receive the information and the IP address associated with the second wireless device from the first computer network. The AR module is configured in the second computer network,
20 and is operable to receive the IP address associated with the second wireless device from the virtual device manager and to determine a wireless identification for the second wireless device. The second mobile data system is configured in the second computer network, and

is operable to transmit the information and the wireless identification to the second wireless device via the wireless network.

An example method of pushing information to a wireless device using a network address assigned to the wireless device, includes the following steps. Providing a network
5 identification for the wireless device that uniquely identifies the wireless device within a network. Using the network identification for the wireless device to determine a network address associated with the wireless device. Providing a virtual device manager that may be accessed on the network using any of a plurality of network addresses, including the network address associated with the wireless device. Transmitting information to the virtual
10 device manager using the network address associated with the wireless device. Using the network address associated with the wireless device to determine an identification of the wireless device within a wireless network. Transmitting the information to the wireless device using the identification of the wireless device within the wireless network.

An example method for transmitting information from a first wireless device to a
15 second wireless device, includes the following steps. Providing a network identification associated with the second wireless device. Transmitting the information and the network identification from the first wireless device to a processor in a computer network via a wireless network. Using the network identification to determine an internet protocol (IP) address associated with the second wireless device. Using the IP address to determine an
20 identification of the second wireless device within the wireless network. Transmitting the information to the second wireless device using the identification of the wireless device within the wireless network.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a diagram of an example system for pushing data from an information source to a wireless device using a network identification associated with the wireless device;

Fig. 2 is a diagram illustrating one example implementation of the system of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a diagram showing one example of how data may be pushed from an information source to a wireless device using the system of Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is a diagram of an example system for transmitting data from a first wireless device through a computer network to a second wireless device using a network identification associated with the second wireless device;

Fig. 5 is a diagram illustrating one example implementation of the system of Fig. 4 in which the first and second wireless devices are associated with the same computer network;

Fig. 6 is a diagram showing one example of how data may be transmitted from a first wireless device to a second wireless device using the system of Fig. 5; and

Figs. 7 and 8 are diagrams illustrating example implementations of the system of Fig. 4 in which the first and second wireless devices are associated with different computer networks.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring now to the drawing figures, Fig. 1 is a diagram of an example system for pushing data 11 from an information source 12 to a wireless device 14 using a network

identification 16 associated with the wireless device 14. In addition to the information source 12 and wireless device 14, the system 10 includes a network server 18, a virtual device manager 20, and an address resolution (AR) module 22.

5 The information source 12 may, for example, be an Internet or web server, a software application executing on a processor coupled to a computer network, or some other type of information source capable of communicating with a computer network. The data 11 and network identification 16 may be stored in a memory device accessible by the information source 12, may be input to the information source 12 through a user interface or from another device or system, or may be acquired by the information source 12 using some
10 other known method. The network identification 16 may, for example, identify both a host name for the wireless device 14 and a domain name for the network server 18, but could also be some other type of suitable network identification.

The network server 18 may, for example, be a domain name server (DNS) operating in a computer network. The network server 18 is operable to receive a network
15 identification 16, such as a domain name and host name, and identify a network address 24 associated with the network identification 16. For example, in the case of a domain name server operating on a TCP/IP network, the network server 18 may receive a domain name identification and a host name identification, and resolve the domain and host names into an internet protocol (IP) address that identifies a device on the TCP/IP network that is
20 associated with the host name.

The virtual device manager 20 may, for example, be a processing device operating in a computer network. The virtual device manager 20 may be accessed on the computer

network using any of a plurality of network addresses, with each of the network addresses corresponding to a different wireless device. That is, the network address 24 corresponding to the wireless device 14 is assigned, either statically or dynamically, to the virtual device manager 20. In addition, network addresses corresponding to other wireless devices are also
5 assigned to the virtual device manager 20, such that the virtual device manager 20 may service a group of wireless devices.

The address resolution (AR) module 22 may, for example, be a software module executing on a processing device operating in a computer network. In one embodiment, for example, the AR module 22 may be executed by the virtual device manager 20, or by
10 another processor coupled through the computer network to the virtual device manager 20. The AR module 22 is operable to receive a network address 24, such as an IP address, and identify a wireless identification 26 for the wireless device 14 corresponding to the network address 24. For example, the AR module 22 may access a lookup table to match the network address 24 received by the virtual device manager 20 with a Mobile Access
15 Number (MAN), or other type of wireless identification 26, that identifies the wireless device 14 within a wireless network.

The wireless device 14 may be any mobile communication device adapted to operate within a wireless network, and is preferably a two-way communication device. The operation of the wireless device 14 may vary dependent upon the wireless network in which
20 the device 14 is intended to operate. For example, a wireless device 14 that operates in North American may include a communication subsystem designed to operate with the Mobitex™ mobile communication system or the DataTAC™ mobile communication

system, whereas a wireless device 14 that operates in Europe may incorporate a General Packet Radio Service (GPRS) communication system. Thus, the format of the wireless identification 26 will depend upon the wireless protocol used by the particular wireless network in which the wireless device 14 operates. For example, wireless devices in the
5 Mobitex network are identified using a Mobile Access Number (MAN).

In operation, the information source 12 receives a network identification 16, such as a domain name and host name identification, that is associated with the wireless device 14, and queries the network server 18 to determine a network address 24, such as an IP address, corresponding to the network identification 16. Using the network address 24, the
10 information source 12 then transmits data 11 through a computer network to the virtual device manager 20. The information source may, for example, combine the network address 24 with the data 11 in accordance with a network data transfer protocol in order to transfer the resultant data packet 28 over a computer network to the virtual device manager 20. The data packet 28 may also include a sender identification for the information source (SDR ID),
15 such as an IP address or domain name, to enable two-way communication with the wireless device 14. Upon receiving the data packet 28 from the information source 12, the virtual device manager 20 queries the address resolution module 22 to determine a wireless identification 26, such as a MAN, for the wireless device 14 corresponding to the network address 24. The wireless identification 26 is then combined with the data 11 and the sender
20 identification (SDR ID), for example in accordance with an appropriate wireless protocol, and the resultant data packet 30 is transmitted to the wireless device 14 over the wireless network.

Fig. 2 is a diagram illustrating one example implementation 40 of the system 10 shown in Fig. 1. This embodiment 40 includes an information source 42, a domain name server (DNS) 44, an address resolution (AR) module 46, a virtual device manager 48, and a mobile data system 50. The system 40 also includes a DNS table 52 accessible by the DNS 44 and an AR table 54 accessible by the AR module 46. Also illustrated are a wireless gateway 58, a wireless network 60, and a wireless device 62.

The DNS 44, AR module 46, virtual device manager 48, and mobile data system 50 are preferably included within the same local area network (LAN) and protected behind a common firewall. The information source 42 is preferably also included within the LAN and protected behind the common firewall, but may alternatively communicate with the LAN through a wide area network (WAN).

The information source 42 uses a network identification to push data over a virtual TCP/IP connection to the wireless device 62. In this embodiment, the network identification associated with the wireless device 62 preferably includes a host name that identifies the wireless device 62 and a domain name that identifies the DNS 44. (See, e.g., Fig. 3). Using the network identification, the information source 42 queries the DNS 44 through the LAN or WAN for a network address associated with the wireless device 62. The network address may, for example, be determined by the DNS 44 by matching the network identification to a corresponding network address in the DNS table 52.

The network address is preferably one of a plurality of IP addresses assigned to the virtual device manager 48. The configuration of the virtual device manager 48 within the local area network is based on a networking technique called virtual host technology in

which multiple IP addresses are assigned to a single device, either statically or dynamically. The IP addresses assigned to the virtual device manager 48 may be tied to one network interface or to multiple network interfaces, using a networking technique called virtual interface binding. This network configuration provides a virtual TCP/IP stack for each IP address assigned to the virtual device manager 48, enabling the virtual device manager 48 to simulate multiple virtual devices, each having a TCP/IP stack.

Using the network address, the information source 42 transmits the data through the LAN or WAN to the virtual device manager 48. The virtual device manager 48 then queries the AR module 46, preferably using a standard address resolution protocol, to resolve the network address into a wireless identification, such as a MAN, that identifies the wireless device 62 within the wireless network 60. The AR module 46 may, for example, resolve the network address by matching it to a corresponding wireless identification in the AR table 54. (See, e.g., Fig. 3) The AR table 54 may, for example, be a database that is stored in a memory device accessible by the AR module 46.

The mobile data system 50 receives the data and wireless identification from the virtual device manager 48. The mobile data system 50 is a secure gateway between the virtual device manager 48 within the corporate LAN and a wide area network (WAN) 56, such as the Internet, and transmits the data and wireless identification over the WAN 56 to the wireless gateway 58. The mobile data system 50 preferably also converts the data into a format compatible with the wireless device 62, encrypts and compresses the data into a data packet, and formats the data packet and wireless identification for transmission over the WAN 58 to the wireless gateway 58. The mobile data system 50 may also perform

additional functions, as described in the following co-owned PCT applications, which are hereby incorporated into the present application by reference: International Application No. PCT/CA02/01074, entitled System And Method For Pushing Data From An Information Source To A Mobile Communication Device Including Transcoding Of the Data, filed July 12, 2002; International Application No. PCT/CA02/01072, entitled System And Method For Providing Remote Data Access For A Mobile Communication Device, filed July 12, 2002; International Application No. PCT/CA02/01073, entitled System And Method For Providing Remote Data Access And Transcoding For A Mobile Communication Device, filed July 12, 2002. In these related applications, however, the mobile data system 50 is instead referred to as an "IP Proxy." The terms "mobile data system" and "MDS" as used in the present application are therefore synonymous with the term "IP Proxy" as used in the above-referenced incorporated applications.

The wireless gateway 58 provides an interface between the WAN 56 and the wireless network 60, which transmits the data packet to the wireless device 62. The wireless gateway 58 may, for example, convert the data between WAN protocols and wireless network protocols, address the data packet for transmission over the wireless network using the wireless identification, store and forward data to and from the wireless device 62, and perform other typical interface functions.

Fig. 3 is a diagram 70 showing one example of how data may be pushed from an information source 42 to a wireless device 62 using the system of Fig. 2. In this example, the information source 42 first queries the DNS 44 to resolve the network identification "USER1.COMPANY.COM" into an IP address. In this case, the host name "USER1"

corresponds to the particular wireless device 62 to which the information is to be delivered. Using the DNS table 52, the DNS 44 determines the IP address (192.100.01.01) corresponding to the network identification "USER1.COMPANY.COM," and transmits the IP address over the network as a response to the information source 42. As illustrated, the
5 DNS table 52 may include a plurality (1-N) of network identifications and a corresponding plurality (1-N) of network addresses.

Having resolved the network identification, the information source 42 uses the resultant IP address (192.100.01.01) to transmit the data through the LAN to the virtual device manager 48. As illustrated, the virtual device manager 48 is assigned a plurality (1-
10 N) of IP addresses in the network (i.e., 192.100.01.01 - 192.100.01.N), in order to emulate a TCP/IP stack for multiple wireless devices having access to the system. The virtual device manager 48 then queries the AR module 46 to resolve the IP address (192.100.01.01) into an identification (2000AB1) of the wireless device 62 within the wireless network 60, as described above. The data and wireless identification (2000AB1) are then transmitted to the
15 mobile data system 50, which prepares the data for transport over the WAN 56 to the wireless gateway 58, as described above.

Fig. 4 is a diagram of an example system for transmitting data 82 from a first wireless device 84 through a computer network to a second wireless device 86 using a network identification 88 associated with the second wireless device 86. In addition to the
20 first and second wireless devices 84, 86, the system 80 includes a mobile data system 90, a network server 92, a virtual device manager 94, and an address resolution (AR) module 96.

The first and second wireless devices 84, 86 may be any two-way mobile communication devices adapted to operate within a wireless network. The network identification 88 and data 82 may be stored in a memory device on the first wireless device 84, or may be input to the wireless device 84, for example through a user interface. The
5 network identification 88 may, for example, include a host name for the second wireless device 86 and a domain name for the network server 92, but could alternatively be some other type of identification that uniquely identifies the second wireless device 86 within a computer network.

The mobile data system 90 may, for example, be a processing device operating in a
10 computer network. The mobile data system 90 is operable to communicate with the first wireless device via the wireless network and receive the data 82 and network identification 88 from the first wireless device 84. In addition, the mobile data system 90 is coupled through a computer network to the network server 92 and the virtual device manager 94. In alternative embodiments, however, the mobile data system 90 may operate on the same
15 processor as the network server 92 and/or the virtual device manager 94.

The network server 92 may, for example, be a domain name server (DNS) operating in the computer network. The network server 92 is operable to receive the network identification 88 from the mobile data system 90 and identify a network address 98, such as an IP address, associated with the network identification 88.

20 The virtual device manager 94 may, for example, be a processing device operating in the computer network. The virtual device manager 94, similar to the virtual device manager 20 described above with reference to Fig. 1, may be accessed on the computer network using

any of a plurality of network addresses, with each network address corresponding to a different wireless device. The address resolution (AR) module 96, similar to the AR module 22 of Fig. 1, may be a software module executing on a processing device operating in the computer network, and in one embodiment may be executed by the virtual device manager
5 94. The AR module 96 is operable to receive the network address 98 and identify a corresponding wireless identification 100 for the second wireless device 86.

In operation, the first wireless device 84 receives data 82 and a network identification 88 that is associated with the second wireless device 86, and combines the network identification 88 and data 82 into a data packet 102 for transmission over a wireless
10 network and to the mobile data system 90. The data packet 102 may also include a sender identification (SDR ID) for the first wireless device, such as a network identification, IP address, or wireless identification, to enable two-way communication with the second wireless device. The mobile data system 90 then queries the network server 92 to resolve the network identification 88 into a network address 98, such as an IP address. Using the
15 network address 98, the mobile data system 90 transmits the data 82 through the computer network to the virtual device manager 20. The mobile data system 90 may, for example, combine the network address 98 with the data 82 and sender identification (SDR ID) in accordance with a network data transfer protocol in order to transfer the resultant data packet 104 over the computer network to the virtual device manager 94. Upon receiving the
20 data packet 104 from the information source, the virtual device manager 94 queries the AR module 96 to determine a wireless identification 100, such as a MAN, for the second wireless device. The wireless identification 100 is then combined with the data 82 and

sender identification (SDR ID) in accordance with the appropriate wireless network protocol, and the resultant data packet 106 is transmitted over the wireless network to the second wireless device 86.

Fig. 5 is a diagram illustrating one example implementation 110 of the system 80 of Fig. 4. This embodiment 110 includes a domain name server (DNS) 112, a mobile data system 114, a virtual device manager 116, and an address resolution (AR) module 118. The system also includes a DNS table 120 accessible by the DNS 44 and an AR table 122 accessible by the AR module 118. Also illustrated are a wireless gateway 124, a first mobile device 126 operating within a first wireless network 128, and a second wireless device 130 operating within a second wireless network 132.

The DNS 112, mobile data system 114, virtual device manager 116, and AR module 118 are preferably included within the same local area network (LAN) 134, and are preferably separated from a wide area network (WAN) 136, such as the Internet, by a common firewall. The first and second wireless devices 126, 130 may operate within different wireless networks 128, 132, as illustrated, but could alternatively operate within the same wireless network.

In operation, data may be transmitted between the first and second wireless devices 126, 130 using unique network identifications assigned to each of the wireless devices 126, 130. For example, in order to transmit data from the first wireless device 126 to the second wireless device 130, a network identification for the second wireless device 130, such as a domain name and host name identification, may be input to the first wireless device 126 through a user interface. The first wireless device 126 may then format the data and

network identification using the appropriate wireless protocol, and transmit the resultant data packet over the wireless network 128 to the wireless gateway 124.

The wireless gateway 124 provides an interface between the wireless network(s) 128, 132 and the WAN 136, similar to the wireless gateway 58 described above with
5 reference to Fig. 2. The wireless gateway 124 reformats the data for transmission over the WAN 136 and transmits the data to the mobile data system 114.

The mobile data system 114 is a secure gateway between the LAN 134 and the WAN 136, similar to the mobile data system 50 described above with reference to Fig. 2. Upon receiving data and a network identification from the WAN 1136, the mobile data system 114
10 queries the DNS 114 to resolve the network identification into a network address, such as an IP address, associated with the second wireless device 130. The network address may, for example, be determined by the DNS 112 by matching the network identification to a corresponding network address in the DNS table 120. As described above with reference to Fig. 2, the network address is preferably one of a plurality of IP addresses assigned to the
15 virtual device manager 48, which simulates a TCP/IP stack for multiple mobile devices 126, 130 within the system 110.

Having received the network address from the DNS 112, the mobile data system 114 uses the network address transfer the data to the virtual device manager 116 through the LAN 134. The virtual device manager 116 queries the AR module 118, preferably using a
20 standard address resolution protocol, to resolve the network address into a wireless identification, such as a MAN, that identifies the second wireless device 130 within the wireless network 132. The AR module 118 may, for example, resolve the network address

by matching it to a corresponding wireless identification in the AR table 122. (See, e.g., Fig. 6). The AR table 122 may, for example, be a database in a memory device accessible by the AR module 46. Having resolved the network address into a wireless identification, the virtual device manager 116 then sends the data and wireless identification back through
5 the LAN to the mobile data system 114 for transmission to the second wireless device 130.

The mobile data system 114 formats the wireless identification and the data, and transmits the resultant data packet over the WAN 136 to the wireless gateway 124. In addition, the mobile data system 114 may also convert the data into a format compatible with the wireless device 130, encrypt and compress the data, and perform additional
10 functions, as described above with reference to Fig. 2. The wireless gateway 124 then converts the data packet from the mobile data system 114 into a wireless network protocol, addresses the data packet for transmission over the wireless network 132 using the wireless identification, and transmits the data to the wireless device 130. As noted above, the wireless gateway 124 may also perform other interface functions, for instance in the case of
15 multiple wireless networks 128, 132, the wireless gateway 124 may determine which of the wireless networks 128, 132 was last in communication with the wireless device 130.

Fig. 6 is a diagram 140 showing one example of how data may be transmitted from a first wireless device 126 to a second wireless device 130 using the system 110 of Fig. 5. In this example, the first wireless device 126 transmits data to the mobile data system (MDS)
20 114 addressed with the network identification "USER2.COMPANY.COM." The host name "USER2" in this example identifies the second wireless device 130. The MDS 114 then queries the DNS 112 to resolve the domain name and host name into the IP address

"192.100.01.02" using the DNS table 120. As illustrated, the DNS table 120 includes a plurality (1-N) of network identifications and a corresponding plurality (1-N) of network addresses.

With the IP address (192.100.01.02) from the DNS table 120, the MDS 114 opens a
5 network connection with the virtual device manager 116, and sends the data to the virtual device manager 116 in order to resolve the IP address into a corresponding wireless identification (2000AB2) for the second wireless device 130. As described above, the virtual device manager 116 is assigned a plurality (1-N) of IP addresses in the network (i.e., 192.100.01.01 - 192.100.01.N), in order to emulate a TCP/IP stack for multiple wireless
10 devices 126, 130. The virtual device manager 116 queries the AR module 118 to resolve the IP address (192.100.01.02) into the wireless identification (2000AB2) using the AR table 122. The data from the first wireless device 126 along with the wireless identification (2000AB2) are then transmitted back to the MDS 114, and from the MDS 114 to the second wireless device 130, as described above.

15 Fig. 7 is a diagram illustrating one example implementation 150 of the system 80 of Fig. 4 in which the first and second wireless devices 126, 130 are associated with different local area networks 152, 154. Both local area networks 152, 154 include a mobile data system (MDS 1 and MDS 2) 156, 158, a virtual device module (VDM 1 and VDM 2) 160, 162, an address resolution (AR) module 164, 166, and a domain name server (DNS 1 and
20 DNS 2) 168, 170. Also illustrated are the first wireless device 126 operating with a first wireless network 128 and a first wireless gateway 172, and the second wireless device 130 operating with a second wireless network 132 and a second wireless gateway 174. It should

be understood, however, that in other embodiments the first and second wireless devices 126, 130 may operate within the same wireless network. It should also be understood that the system 150 could alternatively include a single wireless gateway that interfaces multiple wireless networks 128, 132 to the wide area network (WAN) 136.

5 Similar to the system 110 described above with reference to Fig. 5, data may be transmitted in this system 150 between the first and second wireless devices 126, 130 using unique network identifications assigned to each of the wireless devices 126, 130. For example, in order to transmit data from the first wireless device 126 to the second wireless device 130, a network identification for the second wireless device may be input to the first
10 wireless device 126 through a user interface. The first wireless device 126 formats the data and network identification for wireless transmission, and transmits the resultant data packet over the wireless network 128 to the first wireless gateway 172. The wireless gateway 172 reformats the data and network identification for transmission over the WAN 136 and forwards it to the MDS 156 in the first LAN 152.

15 Upon receiving the data and network identification from the WAN 136, the MDS 156 in the first LAN 152 queries the DNS 168 to resolve the network identification. Because the second wireless device 130 in this embodiment 150 operates in association with the second LAN 154, however, the network identification should identify the second LAN 154. For example, the network identification may include a host name identifying the
20 second wireless device 130 and a domain name identifying the DNS 170 in the second LAN 154. Therefore, upon being queried with the network identification, the DNS 168 in the first LAN 152 instructs its MDS 156 to forward the data through the WAN 136 to the virtual

device manager (VDM) 162 in the second LAN 154. The DNS 168 may, for example, access the DNS 170 in the second LAN 154 to provide the MDS 156 with a network address within the WAN 136 for the VDM 162.

Similar to the virtual device managers described above, the VDM 162 in the second
5 LAN is preferably assigned a plurality of network addresses in order to simulate a TCP/IP stack for multiple mobile devices operating in association with the second LAN 154, including the second mobile device 130. Having received the data and network address from the first LAN 152, the VDM 162 queries the AR module 166 in the second LAN 154 to resolve the network address into a wireless identification, such as a MAN, that identifies
10 the second wireless device 130 within the wireless network 132. The data and wireless identification are then forwarded to the MDS 158.

The MDS 158 in the second LAN 154 formats the wireless identification and data and transmits it over the WAN 136 to the second wireless gateway 124. The MDS 158 may also encrypt and compress the data, and perform additional functions as described above.
15 The second wireless gateway 174 converts the data packet received from the MDS 158 in the second LAN into a wireless network protocol, addresses the reformatted data using the wireless identification, and transmits the resultant data packet over the wireless network 132 to the second wireless device 130.

Fig. 8 is a diagram illustrating another example implementation 180 of the system 80
20 of Fig. 4 in which the first and second wireless devices 126, 130 are associated with different local area networks 182, 184. Both local area networks 182, 184 include a mobile data system (MDS 1 and MDS 2) 186, 188, a virtual device module (VDM 1 and VDM 2)

190, 192, and an address resolution (AR) module 194, 196. In addition, each of the local area networks 182, 184 are coupled to a common network server 198.

Similar to the system 150 described above with reference to Fig. 7, data may be transmitted in this system 180 from the first wireless device 126 to the second wireless
5 device 130 via one or more wireless networks 128, 132 and a wide area network (WAN) 136. For convenience, however, the wireless network(s) 128, 132, wireless gateway(s) 172, 174, and wide area network (WAN) 136 are not illustrated in Fig. 8.

In the system 180 of Fig. 8, a data packet destined for the second wireless device 130 is transmitted from the first wireless device 126 to the MDS 186 in the first LAN 182. In
10 addition to its payload data, the data packet transmitted from the first wireless device 126 may include a sender identification of the first wireless device 126, such as a wireless network identification, and either a network identification or a network address uniquely identifying the second wireless device 130. For example, the data packet may be addressed with an IP address in the second LAN 184 that is associated with the second wireless device
15 130, or may be addressed with a unique network identification, as described above.

Upon receiving the data packet from the first wireless device 126, the MDS 186 in the first LAN 182 queries the AR module 194 to resolve the sender identification of the first wireless device 126 into a unique network address, such as an IP address, associated with the first wireless device 126. The AR module 194 may, for example, resolve the sender
20 identification by matching it to a corresponding network identification in an address resolution (AR) table. Similar to those described above, the network address of the first

wireless device 126 is preferably one of a plurality of IP addresses assigned to the VDM 190 in the first LAN 182, which simulates a TCP/IP stack for multiple mobile devices.

In addition, the MDS 186 in the first LAN 182 also opens a communication link with the network server 198, for example through a WAN. The network server 198 maintains a
5 table, such as an electronic database, that associates unique network identifications for the wireless devices 126, 130 with network addresses in the first or second LAN 182, 184. The MDS 186 queries the network server 198 to resolve the network address for the first wireless device 126 into a network identification for the first wireless device. In addition, if the network address for the second wireless device 130 was not provided in the data packet
10 transmitted from the first wireless device 126, then the MDS 186 also queries the network server 198 to resolve the network identification of the second wireless device 130 into a network address, such as an IP address, in the second LAN 184.

With the network address for the second wireless device 130, the MDS 186 opens a connection, for example through a WAN, to transmit the data and network identification of
15 the first wireless device 126 to the VDM 192 in the second LAN 184. Similar to those described above, the network address of the second wireless device 130 is preferably one of a plurality of IP addresses assigned to the VDM 192 in the second LAN 184. Having received the data and network identification from the first LAN 182, the VDM 192 in the second LAN 184 queries the AR module 196 to resolve the network address for the second
20 wireless device 130 into a wireless identification, such as a MAC address, that identifies the second wireless device 130 within a wireless network.

From the VDM 192, the data is forwarded to the MDS 188 along with the wireless identification of the second wireless device 130 and the network identification of the first wireless device 126. The MDS 188 opens a connection with the network server 198, for example over a WAN, and queries the network server 198 to resolve the network
5 identification of the first wireless device 126 into the associated network address. The MDS 188 then formats the data for transmission to the second wireless device 130 along with the wireless identification of the second wireless device 130 and the network address and network identification for the first wireless device 126.

This written description uses examples to disclose the invention, including the best
10 mode, and also to enable a person skilled in the art to make and use the invention. The patentable scope of the invention is defined by the claims, and may include other examples that occur to those skilled in the art.

It is claimed:

1. A method of pushing information to a wireless device, comprising the steps of:

providing a network identification for the wireless device that uniquely identifies the wireless device within a network;

using the network identification for the wireless device to determine a network address associated with the wireless device;

providing a virtual device manager that may be accessed on the network using any of a plurality of network addresses, the plurality of network addresses including the network address associated with the wireless device;

transmitting information to the virtual device manager using the network address associated with the wireless device;

using the network address associated with the wireless device to determine an identification of the wireless device within a wireless network; and

transmitting the information to the wireless device using the identification of the wireless device within the wireless network.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the network is a computer network.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the computer network is a TCP/IP network.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein the network identification includes a domain name identification and a host name identification.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein the computer network is a local area network (LAN).
6. The method of claim 3, wherein the plurality of network address are internet protocol (IP) addresses.
7. A system for pushing information from an information source within a computer network to a wireless device, comprising:
 - a network server coupled to the computer network, the network server being operable to receive a network identification for the wireless device from the information source and return a network address associated with the wireless device to the information source;
 - a virtual device manager coupled to the computer network that may be accessed on the computer network using any of a plurality of network addresses, the plurality of network addresses including the network address associated with the wireless device; and
 - an address resolution (AR) module coupled to the virtual device manager, the AR module being operable to receive the network address associated with the wireless device and determine an identification of the wireless device within a wireless network;wherein the virtual device manager receives information from the information source that is transmitted from the information source to the virtual device manager using the network address associated with the wireless device, and accesses the AR module to determine the identification of the wireless device within the wireless network, and wherein

the information is transmitted to the wireless device via the wireless network using the identification of the wireless device within the wireless network.

8. The system of claim 7, wherein the information source is a server operating on the computer network.

9. The system of claim 7, wherein the information source is a software application operating on a processor coupled to the computer network.

10. The system of claim 7, wherein the information is a stock quotation.

11. The system of claim 7, wherein the information is a weather report.

12. The system of claim 7, wherein the network identification includes a domain name identification and a host name identification.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein the computer network is a local area network (LAN).

14. The system of claim 7, wherein the plurality of network address are internet protocol (IP) addresses.

15. The system of claim 7, further comprising:

a mobile data system coupled to the virtual device manager and operable to interface the virtual device manager with a wide area network, wherein the mobile data system transmits the information to the wireless network via the wide area network.

16. The system of claim 15, further comprising a gateway coupled to the wide area network that interfaces the wide area network with the wireless network, wherein the mobile data system transmits the information over the wide area network to the gateway and the gateway then transmits the information to the wireless network.

17. The system of claim 15, wherein the mobile data system converts the information into a format compatible with the wireless device.

18. The system of claim 15, wherein the wide area network is the Internet.

19. A method for transmitting information from a first wireless device to a second wireless device, comprising the steps of:

providing a network identification associated with the second wireless device;

transmitting the information and the network identification from the first wireless device to a processor in a computer network via a wireless network;

using the network identification to determine an internet protocol (IP) address associated with the second wireless device;

using the IP address to determine an identification of the second wireless device within the wireless network; and

transmitting the information to the second wireless device using the identification of the wireless device within the wireless network.

20. The method of claim 19, comprising the additional step of:

using the IP address to transmit the information from the processor in the computer network to an additional processor in a second computer network via a wide area network (WAN);

wherein the information is transmitted to the wireless device from the second computer network.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the IP address is used by the processor in the second computer network to determine the identification of the second wireless device within the wireless network.

22. The method of claim 19, wherein the network identification includes a domain name identification and a host name identification.

23. The method of claim 19, wherein the computer network is a local area network (LAN).

24. A system for transmitting information from a first wireless device to a second wireless device, comprising:

a mobile data system coupled to a computer network, the mobile data system being operable to communicate with a plurality of wireless devices over the computer network via one or more wireless gateways;

a network server coupled to the mobile data system, the network server being operable to receive a network identification for the second wireless device from the mobile data system and return a corresponding internet protocol (IP) address to the mobile data system; and

a virtual device manager coupled to the mobile data system, the virtual device manager being operable to receive the IP address from the mobile data system and return a wireless identification for the second wireless device to the mobile data system;

wherein the mobile data system receives information and the network identification for the second wireless device from the first wireless device, accesses the network server and the virtual device manager to resolve the network identification for the second wireless device into the wireless identification for the second wireless device, and transmits the information and the wireless identification to the second wireless device.

25. The system of claim 24, further comprising an address resolution (AR) module coupled to the virtual device manager that resolves the IP address into the wireless identification.

26. A system for transmitting information from a first wireless device associated with a first computer network to a second wireless device associated with a second computer network, comprising:

a first mobile data system configured in the first computer network, the first mobile data system being operable to receive information and a network identification from the first wireless device via a wireless network;

a network server configured in the first computer network, the network server being operable to receive the network identification from the first mobile data system and determine an internet protocol (IP) address associated with the second wireless device;

a virtual device manager configured in the second computer network that may be accessed using any of a plurality of IP addresses, including the IP address associated with the second wireless device, the virtual device manager being operable to receive the information and the IP address associated with the second wireless device from the first computer network;

an address resolution (AR) module configured in the second computer network, the AR module being operable to receive the IP address associated with the second wireless device from the virtual device manager and determine a wireless identification for the second wireless device; and

a second mobile data system configured in the second computer network, the second mobile data system being operable to transmit the information and the wireless identification to the second wireless device via the wireless network.

27. The system of claim 26, further comprising:

a second network server configured in the second computer network, wherein the network server in the first computer network queries the second network server via a wide area network (WAN) to determine the IP address associated with the second wireless device.

28. The system of claim 26, wherein the first mobile data system receives the information and network identification from the first wireless device over a wide area network (WAN) via a wireless gateway.

29. The system of claim 26, wherein the second mobile data system transmits the information and wireless identification to the second wireless device over a wide area network (WAN) via a wireless gateway.

30. The system of claim 26, wherein the first and second wireless devices are in communication with different wireless networks.

31. A system for pushing information from an information source within a computer network to a wireless device, comprising:

means for receiving a network identification for the wireless device from the information source and returning a network address associated with the wireless device to the information source;

a virtual device manager coupled to the computer network that may be accessed on the computer network using any of a plurality of network addresses, the plurality of network addresses including the network address associated with the wireless device; and

means for receiving the network address associated with the wireless device and determine an identification of the wireless device within a wireless network;

wherein the virtual device manager receives information from the information source that is transmitted from the information source to the virtual device manager using the network address associated with the wireless device, and transmits the information to the wireless device via the wireless network using the identification of the wireless device within the wireless network.

32. The system of claim 31, further comprising:

means for interfacing the virtual device manager with a wide area network to transmit the information to the wireless network via the wide area network.

33. The system of claim 32, further comprising:

means for interfacing the wide area network with the wireless network.