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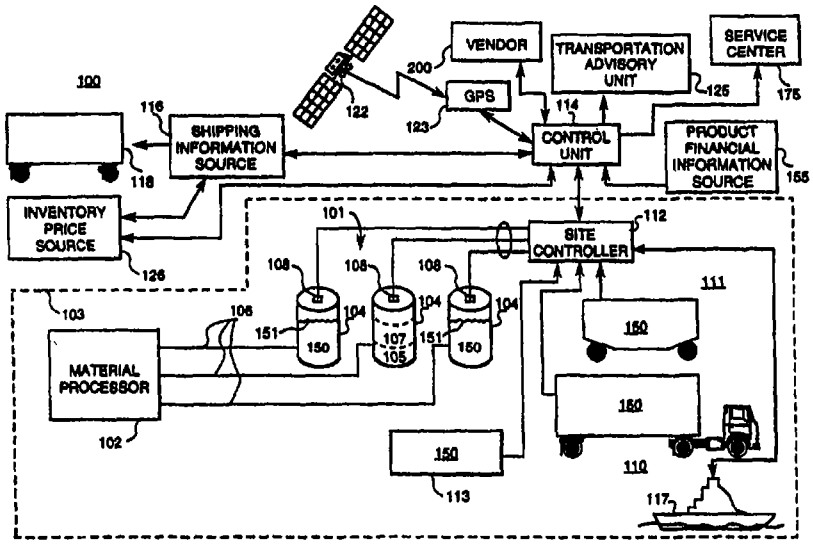


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(54) Title: INVENTORY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND METHOD



(57) Abstract

An inventory management system and method provide information concerning inventory amounts and inventory ordering to at least one of a manufacturing site and inventory vendor. The system comprises at least one storage receptacle that stores inventory; at least one amount indicator that determines an inventory amount in each receptacle, each amount indicator generating inventory amount signals representative of inventory amounts in the receptacle; at least one inventory price source that provides inventory price information; and a control unit that receives the inventory amount signals from the amount indicator and inventory price information from the inventory price source. The control unit analyzes the inventory amount signals to determine inventory amounts in the receptacle. The control unit also analyzes the inventory amounts and inventory price information, and determines if an inventory order should be placed.