



INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification ⁶ : H04N 5/913		A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 99/18723
			(43) International Publication Date: 15 April 1999 (15.04.99)
(21) International Application Number: PCT/US98/21036		94303 (US). RODRIGUEZ, Tony, Forrest [US/US]; 3104 N.E. 31st Avenue G, Portland, OR 97212 (US).	
(22) International Filing Date: 1 October 1998 (01.10.98)		(74) Agent: BRILL, Gerow, D.; Macrovision Corporation, 1341 Orleans Drive, Sunnyvale, CA 94089-1105 (US).	
(30) Priority Data:		(81) Designated States: AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, SD, SZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).	
60/061,488 8 October 1997 (08.10.97) US 60/076,668 3 March 1998 (03.03.98) US 60/076,777 4 March 1998 (04.03.98) US 60/077,452 10 March 1998 (10.03.98) US			
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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR A COPY-ONCE WATERMARK FOR VIDEO RECORDING

(57) Abstract

Method and apparatus for "copy-once" of a digital video signal uses a watermark in the video signal. The embedded watermark has two versions: one indicates copy-never and a second indicates copy-once, the difference being a single watermark bit. The watermark carries additional bits representing a digitized attribute (image characteristic) of a particular video frame of the video signal, for instance an average value of the amplitude of a video field. The frame whose attribute is carried in the watermark has a field (or frame) marker, which is a special signal located in the overscan portion of the frame. A compliant video recorder verifies the watermark and the copy-once bit (48, 54), extracts the associated attribute from the watermark (56), and compares (68) it to the measured attribute (58) of the marked video frame. Only if the extracted attribute value and the measured attribute value match, is recording enabled. During the recording process (70), the frame markers are stripped (72), preventing second generation copies of the recorded video signal, and the copy-once bit is set to copy-never.

