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(71) Applicant: SONY ELECTRONICS INC. [US/US]; 1 Sony Drive, Park Ridge, NY 07656 (US).

(72) Inventors: LUDTKE, Harold, A., 3587 Townsquare Drive, San Jose, CA 95127 (US). FAIRMAN, Bruce; 275 Martinez Road, Woodside, CA 94062 (US). SMYERS, Scott, D.; 6170 Manusco Street, San Jose, CA 95120 (US).

(74) Agents: HAVERSTOCK, Thomas, B. et al.; Haverstock & Owens LLP, Suite 420, 260 Sheridan Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94306 (US).

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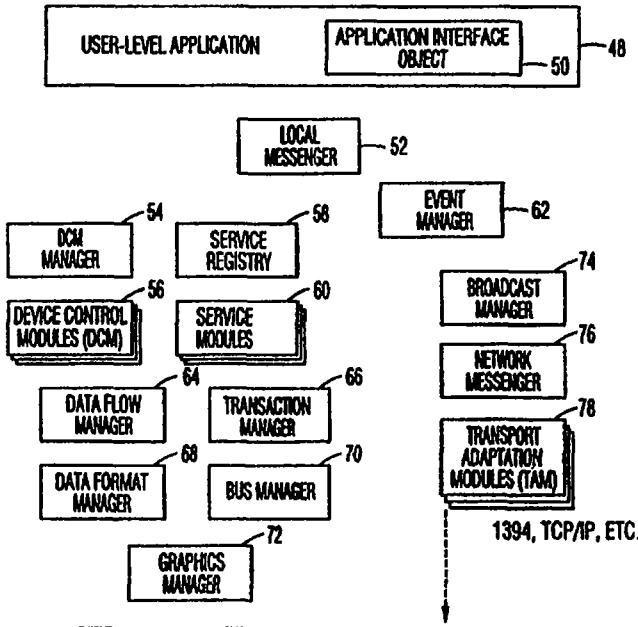


G00002

(54) Title: MEDIA MANAGER FOR CONTROLLING AUTONOMOUS MEDIA DEVICES WITHIN A NETWORK ENVIRONMENT AND MANAGING THE FLOW AND FORMAT OF DATA BETWEEN THE DEVICES

(57) Abstract

A media manager provides data flow management and other services for client applications on devices coupled together within a network. Preferably, these devices are coupled together within an IEEE 1394–1995 serial bus network. A device control module is generated for each available device for providing an abstraction for all of the capabilities and requirements of the device including the appropriate control protocol, physical connections and connection capabilities for the device. The media manager also manages the flow and format of data transfers between the devices on the network. Through an interface, a user accesses the media manager and enters functions which are to be completed using the devices coupled together on the network. If the appropriate devices are available, the media manager controls and manages the completion of the requested task. If the appropriate devices are not available, but the required subdevices are available in multiple devices, the media manager forms a virtual device from subdevices in multiple devices in order to complete the requested task. Once the appropriate devices and subdevices are assigned to a task, the media manager determines if the data to be transmitted needs to be converted from one format into another format. If necessary, the media manager will also control the format conversion during the data transfer operation. The media manager also provides network enumeration and registry searching capabilities for client applications to find available services, physical devices and virtual devices.



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