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(54) Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR DISTRIBUTION OF HIGH QUALITY IMAGE AND AUDIO PROGRAMS TO REMOTE LOCATIONS

(57) Abstract

Apparatus and method are provided for the distribution of very high quality audio or visual programming material from one or more central hubs (102) to one or more presentation locations (56, 104) such as theaters using high data rate links such as satellites (106). At the central hub (102), a source generation system (108) generates an electronic program signal from an analog signal, a compression/encryption system (110) codes and digitally encrypts the electronic signal, and a modulation/transmission system (114) processes the signal for transmission via the satellite (106). A network management system (112) at the central hub (102) controls the operation of the hub. At the theater (56) or other location, a receiver/demodulator (120) receives the programming signal transmitted using the satellite (106). A theater management system (122) then controls the storage, routing, decoding, and display of the received programming material. Storage arrays (124A-124N) in the theater system (104A-104N) provide for centralized storage of the programming material. The programming material is routed through a local area network to designated auditoriums, several of which may operate within a theater system (104A-104N). At each auditorium, the programming material is decompressed and decrypted for display using electronic projection equipment (132A) and standard auditorium sound systems (134A).

