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22 July 2003

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APPARATUS FOR SEPARATING A
DIGITAL COMPOSITE VIDEO
SIGNAL INTO COMPONENTS



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5 This invention relates to video signal processing in general and in particular to digital apparatus for separating a composite video signal into luminance and chrominance signal components.

10 In NTSC and PAL television systems it is common practice to combine video luminance ("Y") and chrominance ("C") signal components to form a single composite video ("CV") signal for transmission. After transmission, it is usually necessary to separate the composite video signal into its component parts, luminance and chrominance, for further signal processing.

15 An elementary method of separation comprises low-pass filtering a composite video signal to obtain the luminance component and bandpass or high-pass filtering the composite signal to obtain the chrominance component. This approach, while having the virtue of simplicity, has the disadvantage of not being an efficient form of separation since the composite signal is
20 transmitted with the chrominance component spectrally interleaved with the luminance component. Much better separation may be realized by means of comb filtering techniques. Such filters exhibit periodic band-pass and band reject characteristics which can efficiently separate the components of a
25 composite signal. One method of applying comb filtering comprises comb filtering the composite video signal to obtain a separated chrominance component and then subtracting the separated chrominance component from the composite video signal to obtain the separated luminance component.

30 As an example, in a digital composite video separator the composite signal is first sampled and converted to digital form. The samples are then delayed in a memory and the delayed samples are subtractively combined with the non-delayed samples to produce an output signal which comprises two
35 components. One of the components comprises a "vertical detail" component which represents luminance detail in a vertical

direction and occupies frequencies below the chrominance signal band. The other portion is the desired chrominance signal. To obtain only the chrominance signal it is necessary to filter the combed signal to exclude the vertical detail signal component. Once this is done, the remaining separated combed chrominance component may be subtractively combined with the composite video signal to obtain the luminance component. Since the luminance component was formed by subtraction of the separated chrominance component, the luminance component will be uncombed below the chrominance band and combed within the chrominance band at locations of the chrominance signal spectra.

It is herein recognized that, under certain picture content conditions, digital composite video signal separators of the general type described, may tend to exhibit undesired contouring effects. The present invention is directed to meeting a need for a digital composite video signal separator in which such a tendency is reduced.

Apparatus for separating a luminance component from a composite, video input signal, in accordance with the invention, comprises a filter responsive to the composite video input signal for providing a separated chrominance component. A symmetrical rounding unit is provided for removing a given number of least significant bits of the separated chrominance component to provide a modified chrominance component having a reduced number of bits. A combiner combines the composite video signal with the modified chrominance component for providing the separated luminance component.

In accordance with a first aspect of the invention, there is provided apparatus for separating a digital composite video signal composite video signal (CV) into a luminance component (Y) and a chrominance component (C), comprising a source (14) for providing said digital composite video signal (CV) including said luminance component (Y) and said chrominance component (C); a chrominance signal recovery filter (20, 30) coupled to said source and having an output (58) for providing said separated chrominance component (C); and a binary subtractor (80) coupled to said and to said chrominance filter (20, 30) for subtracting said separated chrominance (c) from said composite

video signal to provide at an output thereof said separated luminance component (Y), characterised in that said separated chrominance component (C) is coupled from said chrominance filter to said subtractor via a symmetrical rounding unit (100A; 100B); said symmetrical rounding unit (100A; 100B); said symmetrical rounding unit (100A; 100B) reducing the number of bits of said separated chrominance component (c) such that symmetric positive and negative excursions of said chrominance component (C) relative to a binary value of zero maintain its symmetry after rounding for reducing a tendency of said separated luminance component (Y) to exhibit contouring when displayed.

The foregoing and further features of the invention are illustrated in the accompanying drawing, wherein like elements 30 are denoted by like reference characters, and in which:

FIGURE 1 is a block diagram of apparatus, embodying the invention, for separating a digital composite video signal into luminance and chrominance components;

FIGURE 2 is block diagram illustrating a known method of 3-5 bit reduction by truncation;

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FIGURE 3 is a block diagram illustrating a modification of a portion of the embodiment of FIGURE 1;

FIGURES 4A-4D are filter diagrams illustrating operation of the composite video separation apparatus of FIGURE 1;

5 FIGURE 5 is a spatial pixel diagram illustrating five assumed input composite video signal conditions for the apparatus of FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 6 is a diagram, derived from FIGURE 5, illustrating comb filter output signal values inclusive of a vertical detail
10 component and a chrominance component for the five assumed input signal conditions of FIGURE 5;

FIGURE 7 is a diagram, derived from FIGURE 6, illustrating chrominance component signal values separated from the vertical detail component and prior to bit reduction, for the apparatus of
15 FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 8 is a pixel diagram, derived from FIGURE 7 and illustrating separated chrominance signal values produced after bit reduction by straight truncation as in FIGURE 2;

FIGURE 9 is a luminance signal diagram, derived from
20 FIGURE 8, and illustrating luminance signal values for the five assumed signal conditions of FIGURE 4 under the assumption of bit reduction by means of straight truncation as shown in FIGURE 2;

FIGURE 10 is a pixel diagram, derived from FIGURE 7 and
25 illustrating separated chrominance signal values produced after bit reduction in the embodiment of the invention in FIGURE 1; and

FIGURE 11 is a luminance signal diagram, derived from FIGURE 10, illustrating luminance signal values for the five assumed signal conditions of FIGURE 4 and obtained in the
30 embodiment of the invention in FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 12 is a block diagram of a further example of the invention for separating a digital composite video signal into luminance and chrominance components and including symmetrical rounding using sign-magnitude processing;

35 FIGURE 13 is a tabular diagram of a transfer function illustrating "wide" symmetrical rounding in the example of FIGURE

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1 for a case of 2-bit rounding with 5 zeros disposed about a point of symmetry (POS); and

FIGURE 14 is a tabular diagram of a transfer function illustrating "narrow" symmetrical rounding in the example of
5 FIGURE 1 for a case of 2-bit rounding with 3 zeros disposed about a point of symmetry (POS).

FIGURE 1 illustrates an exemplary application of a symmetrical "rounding" or "bit reduction" unit 100A embodying the invention in an application for separating a composite video
10 input signal into luminance and chrominance components.

The composite video signal separator 10 of FIGURE 1 comprises an analog to digital (A/D) converter 14 having an input
12 for receiving an analog composite video input signal to be separated into luminance and chrominance components and
15 having an output for providing a digital composite video (CV) output signal of, illustratively, 8-bits resolution. Also, for purposes of illustration, it will be assumed that the composite video signal is of the NTSC standard and that the A/D converter sampling rate is equal to four times the frequency of the color subcarrier. Under
20 these conditions there will be 4 sample intervals for one complete color cycle, 2 sample intervals equals one-half of one color cycle and there will be a total of 910 samples per line. A drawing convention used in FIGURE 1 is that a 45 degree hash mark drawn through a line and having a number beside it indicates that the
25 line is a bus and the number indicates bus conductors (this also indicates the number of bits per sample).

After conversion to digital form, the composite video signal CV is applied to a pair of linear digital filters 20 and 30 which produce the chrominance component C from the composite video
30 signal CV. The first filter 20 is a one line (1-H) comb filter in which the composite video signal is applied directly to the minuend (+) input 26 of a subtractor 24 and is applied via a one line (1-H) delay (e.g., 910 sample intervals or clock periods) 18 to the subtrahend (-) input 22 of subtractor 24. By subtracting the
35 delayed composite video signal CV from the undelayed composite video signal, the subtractor produces a combed filter response

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having the periodic passband response as shown in FIGURE 4A (not to scale).

The comb response of FIGURE 4A exhibits peaks at odd multiples of one half the horizontal line rate (e.g., $F_h/2$, $3F_h/2$, $5F_h/2$, etc.) and exhibits nulls at multiples of the line rate (e.g., F_h , $2F_h$, $3F_h$, etc.). This response recovers two signals from the composite video signal CV. At frequencies centered about the color subcarrier frequency, the comb output signal comprises mainly chrominance components (C1) substantially free of luminance components. At frequencies below the lower band edge of the chrominance signal band the comb output comprises what is commonly called the "vertical detail" component (VD) of the luminance signal. This signal conveys information regarding line to line luminance structure and contains essentially no chrominance information at all.

To recover the chrominance component alone, the vertical detail signal component (VD) from the comb filter 20 must be removed. This is done by a three stage, band-pass, finite impulse response (FIR) filter 30 having an input 32 to which the combed chrominance and vertical detail signals (C1 + VD) are applied. Filter 30 comprises a first adder 44 having a first input 34 directly coupled to the input 32 and a second input 36 coupled to the input 32 via a series connection of two delay element 40 and 38, each having a delay of two sample intervals. Delay is signified in the drawing by conventional "Z" transform notation in which the negative exponent of "Z" signifies a number of sample interval delays. The delayed signal at the common connection of delays 38 and 40 is multiplied by two in multiplier 50 (e.g., a one bit shift) and applied to the subtrahend (-) input of a subtractor 46 which subtracts the delayed and multiplied signal from the output 42 of adder 44.

A final stage of filtering in FIR filter 30 is provided by a filter formed by an adder 50 having a first input 52 directly connected to the output of subtractor 46 and having a second input 54 coupled to the output of subtractor 46 via a four sample delay element 56. The combination of the first two delay elements

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38 and 40 and adder 44 forms a first band pass filter. The combination of multiplier 50 and subtractor 46 with the first band pass filter forms a second band pass filter. The third filter stage is formed by adder 50 and delay element 56, as previously noted, 5 and all of the filters have poles centered at the chrominance carrier frequency. These filters have been found sufficient to remove the vertical detail component produced by comb filter 20 and so the chrominance output signal C58 produced at the output of adder 50 is free of significant luminance vertical detail 10 components.

FIGURES 4A-4D illustrate the overall composite video separation process. FIGURE 4A illustrates the periodic comb filter response of filter 20 as previously discussed. FIGURE 4B illustrates the pass-band of the filter 30 which removes the vertical detail 15 component from the output of filter 20 leaving only the chrominance component as shown in FIGURE 4C. Ultimately, as will be explained later, this component is subtractively combined with the composite video signal CV to essentially cancel the chrominance component thus leaving only the luminance 20 component as illustrated in FIGURE 4D.

During the process of filtering the composite video signal CV to obtain chrominance, the signal is subjected to a total of four (4) arithmetic operations. For example, in comb filter 20 the delayed and direct composite video signals were subtracted. This 25 "extends" or increases the number of bits of the resultant difference signal by one bit since it is possible that subtractor 24 may produce a "borrow". Accordingly, the combed chrominance signal is 9 bits wide at the subtractor 24 output. This is signified in the drawing by the "hash" line drawn through the output bus of 30 subtractor 24 with the number "9" written beside it. Other signal buses are similarly identified as to the bus "width". Some signals also include an indication of the number of bits concerned.

In the FIR filter 30 the chrominance component is subjected to a total of three arithmetic operations in adders 44 35 and 50 and subtractor 46. Each arithmetic operation adds another bit to the chrominance signal because the operation may produce

either a carry (for adders) or a borrow (for subtractors).

Accordingly, the 8-bit composite video signal applied to comb filter 20 is "extended" to a 9-bit signal after the first subtraction.

The 9 bit signal becomes 10 bits after the first addition in adder

5 44. The output of adder 44 becomes an 11-bit signal due to the second subtraction in subtractor 46 and finally the fully filtered chrominance signal has extended to 12 bits after the final addition in adder 50. The extension of the chrominance signal from 8 bits to 12 bits is similar to having multiplied the chrominance signal
10 by a factor of sixteen (16). In a presently preferred application of the invention, the "bit-extended" chrominance signal of 12 bits is "bit-reduced" to 10 bits by a 2-bit truncator 60 and converted by a 10 bit D/A converter 62 for application as an analog output signal to output terminal 64.

15 Luminance signal recovery requires different chrominance signal processing. Specifically, the technique of bit reduction by simple "truncation" or "chopping off" the lower bits for chroma presents a problem with regard to recovery of the luminance signal component. It has been found that the luminance signal
20 tends to produce undesirable visual artifacts in displayed images when one attempts to reduce the number of chrominance signal bits by simple truncation. It has been found that these artifacts, including contouring, become apparent when displaying images having very low luminance and chrominance spatial gradients.
25 Examples of such signals are discussed later.

Luminance signal recovery requires reduction of the number of chrominance bits to match the resolution (8-bits) of the composite video signal. This requires reducing the chrominance component from 12 bits to 8 bits without introducing any DC
30 component into the bit reduced signal. This bit reduction is achieved, in accordance with an aspect of the invention, by what is herein termed "symmetrical rounding". It is herein recognized that the processes of symmetrical rounding of the chrominance signal advantageously reduces a tendency toward undesirable
35 contouring in the luminance signal.

An example of a conventional symmetrical "rounding" or "truncation" circuit is described by Fling et al. in their US Pat. 4,589,084 entitled APPARATUS FOR SYMMETRICALLY TRUNCATING TWO'S COMPLEMENT BINARY SIGNALS AS FOR USE WITH INTERLEAVED QUADRATURE SIGNALS which issued 13 May 1986. In the Fling et al. apparatus symmetrical truncation of two's complement binary numbers is performed by simply discarding the LSB's of positive values and by adding "one" to the truncated negative value when any one of the discarded LSB's is a logical "one" value. Apparatus to perform an N-bit truncation includes an incrementer, a two input AND gate and an N-input OR gate. Such an arrangement is rather complex but is suitable for use for applying symmetrical rounding in a luma/chroma separation application. A preferred symmetrical rounding unit 100A is shown in FIGURE 1.

Symmetrical bit reduction or rounding, in the example of FIGURE 1, is provided by rounding unit 100A. As an overview, in this unit an M-bit (e.g., 12-bit) chrominance signal, the MSB thereof and an integer K (e.g., 0111 in binary) are added to produce a sum which is truncated by N bits (e.g., 4 bits) to provide a symmetrically rounded or bit reduced digital output signal having "N" fewer least significant bits, LSB's. The MSB may be applied in true or complemented form to the adder for selecting wide or narrow rounding modes having different numbers of output zeros disposed about a point of symmetry for a given input signal change. Advantageously, undesirable DC shifts due to bit reduction in digital signals are prevented and this has been found to be effective in reducing luminance signal "contouring" as will be described.

In detail, in the example of FIGURE 1, rounding unit 100A comprises a 12 bit full adder 101, a 4 bit truncation unit 103 and a binary number or bias source 102. In this embodiment the 12 bit chrominance component provided by filter 30 and a four bit bias number (e. g. digital "7" or binary "0111" in binary) are applied to the addend and augend inputs of adder 101. In this example employing "two's complement arithmetic", the most

significant bit (the sign bit) of the 12 bit chrominance signal is applied to the carry-in input of the 12 bit full adder 101 which, with its carry out, provides a 13 bit chrominance signal. The four LSB's of the modified chrominance signal are truncated by a 4-bit truncator 103 thereby producing a 9-bit symmetrically rounded chroma output signal for unit 100A. Stated another way, in unit 100A a number is added to the chrominance signal during symmetrical rounding dependent on the polarity of the chrominance signal. If the signal is positive, only the "0111" (decimal "7") value is added and the MSB applied to the carry-in of adder 102 is a zero. For negative numbers, a value of "1000" (decimal "8") is effectively added since the MSB applied to the carry-in of adder 101 will be "1" and will be added with "0111" to the input signal.

To understand symmetrical bit reduction as shown in FIGURE 1, it is helpful to consider the tables of FIGURES 13 and 14 which illustrate "wide" and "narrow" modes of symmetrical rounding, respectively. The wide mode is used in unit 100A. FIGURE 13 illustrates a case where two bits are to be rounded using the apparatus of unit 100A for signal levels ranging from -11 to +11. Column (a) lists the input signal values in decimal. Column (b) shows the binary input signal equivalents. Column (c) shows the MSB of the binary input signal. Column (d) presents a formula for determining the magnitude of the number "K" (produced by binary bias source 102) which is added to the input number and the MSB thereof in full adder 101. From the formula ($K = \{(2^N) - 2\} / 2$), the value of K for a reduction of 2 bits (N) equals "one".

Column (e) illustrates the output of the adder 101 for the sum of "M", "K" and "MSB" for the input signal from -11 to +11 (decimal). When these sums are truncated by two bits, the resultant truncated values, as shown in columns (f) and (g) range from -3 to +3 and are all symmetrical about zero of the input signal. The "step sizes" comprises four identical output values per step above or below the zero level. For symmetry about zero, there are a total of five zeroes that are symmetrically disposed

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relative to zero of the input signal (hereinafter, the "point of symmetry" or POS).

It will be noted that in unit 100A, where 4 LSB's are removed, there is a possibility of a MSB overflow or carry-out and so the total number of bits reduced is 3 so that the 12 bit input signal would be reduced to 9 bits, not the 8 bits ultimately desired. To avoid this condition, the MSB of the output signal of unit 100A is limited by limiter 104.

The "narrow" mode of symmetrical bit reduction is illustrated in the example of FIGURE 3 by unit 100B and its operation is shown by the table of FIGURE 14. The only difference between units 100A and 100B is that in unit 100B the MSB applied to the adder is inverted by inverter 300. The effect on the operation of unit 100B is a reduction in the number of output zeroes disposed about the point of symmetry of the input or output signals. In FIGURE 14, the narrow mode example, in which the MSB is applied in complemented form (inverted) to the adder, there are three zeros produced at the point of symmetry. In FIGURE 13, the wide mode example, in which the MSB is applied in true (non-inverted form) form to the adder, there are five zeros produced at the point of symmetry as previously noted. Advantageously, one has the option of widening or narrowing the "zero crossing point" of the symmetrically bit reduced output signal.

Returning now to the problem of luminance signal recovery in FIGURE 1, the foregoing rounding-off process may increase the number of bits of the chrominance signal to 13 for the reasons previously explained. This may appear to be opposite to what is needed for extracting the luminance component from the composite video signal CV. However, since the round-off circuit has effectively moved whatever chrominance information from the lower 4 bits that was useful and placed it in bit 5 and above, it is now possible to truncate the lower 4 bits without significant loss of the chrominance information whereby the luminance contouring effect is substantially reduced.

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Summarizing, to this point, the symmetrical bit reduction is provided by adding M, K and the MSB and truncating the sum by a four bit truncator 103. This reduces the number of LSB's of the chrominance signal by four and increases the number of MSB by 1
5 resulting in a total of 9 bits. This is only one more than the resolution of the composite video signal (8 bits). This last bit is removed by limiter 104 to produce an 8 bit chrominance output signal. The process of limiting after symmetrical rounding does not degrade the contouring performance of the overall system but
10 will facilitate subtraction with the 8 bit composite video signal without having to discard an LSB. In other words, it has been found that it is non-symmetrical truncation of chroma least significant bits that leads to the problem of luma contouring and so the limiting of the most significant bit of the chrominance
15 signal does not degrade contouring performance but does facilitate the later 8-bit subtraction for luma recovery.

Recovery of the luminance signal component is provided by subtractor 80 which subtracts the 8 bit chrominance signal at its subtrahend input 84 from the composite video signal CV at its
20 minuend input 82. Before subtraction, the composite signal CV is delayed by 4 sample intervals in delay unit 86. The reason for delaying the composite video signal by one full color cycle (4 sample intervals) is to provide temporal alignment with the 12 bit chroma signal which has been delayed by an average of 4 sample
25 intervals in band pass filter 30. Note that "subtraction" in digital circuits is usually performed by means of two's complementing the subtrahend and then performing addition and so the term "subtractively combining" as used herein and in the claims is intended to include such conventional subtraction techniques.

30 The arithmetic operation of subtractively combining the composite and chrominance signals produces a separated luminance component with a one bit extension to 9 bits (because of the possibility of a luminance "borrow" result of the subtraction). This extra bit is suppressed by limiting the separated
35 luminance signal Y to 8 bits in limiter 90. An analog luminance component output signal is obtained by applying the limited 8 bit

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luminance component to output terminal 94 via an 8 bit digital to analog (D/A) converter 92.

Consideration will now be given to operation of the example of FIGURE 1 in separating a luminance component from what will herein be called a "contouring-sensitive" signal. Five examples of contour sensitive signals are illustrated in FIGURE 5 by the signals labeled "signal one" to "signal five". Each signal is a composite video signal taken at the output of A/D converter 14 and having an AC component representing the chrominance at a frequency of the color subcarrier (F_c) and a DC component. The DC component represents the luminance component and will be constant for at least several subcarrier cycles. The five signal lines illustrate five different steady-state conditions of a luminance signal representing five different but "nearly equal" luminance values in 5 contiguous regions of a displayed video image. Although the analog chroma into A/D converter 14 is selected to be constant, the "digital chroma" at the output of A/D converter may not be because changes in the luma, when added to chroma and quantized, can produce changes in the digital separated chroma.

It will be noted from the table of FIGURE 5, that a change from "Signal One" to "Signal Two" is a change in only one of the four composite values. Specifically, the composite value of "9" appearing in each line of Signal One changes to "10" in each line of Signal Two. The values given are illustrative and may be considered as IRE units or IRE units converted to an 8-bit binary scale (e.g., 0-255). For either expression, the change from Signal One to Signal Two is very small. The same is true for the change between Signal Two and Signal Three ("4" changes to "5" in each line); the change between Signal Three and Signal Four ("2" changes to "3") and between Signal Four and Signal Five ("7" changes to "8"). These changes between the five assumed signals represents a nearly constant slowly increasing luminance component of the composite video signal and a constant chrominance component.

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FIGURE 6 illustrates the chrominance (C) and vertical detail (VD) components recovered from the output of comb filter 20 for the five lines of composite video of FIGURE 5. These values are steady state values calculated from the equation for "D"

5 (difference) in the heading of FIGURE 6. Specifically, the value of a current C+VD sample equals the value of the present sample minus that of the immediately vertically preceding sample (i.e., the corresponding sample of the previous line). For example, for Signal One the first sample difference for line 2 in FIGURE 6 is
 10 equal to the value (+4) of the current sample of Signal One line 2, minus the value of the corresponding previous sample of Signal One in line 1 ("-7") taken from FIGURE 5. All of the C+VD difference values of FIGURE 6 are derived in the same manner from FIGURE 5.

15 The next processing step, as previously explained with regard to FIGURE 1, is to remove the unwanted vertical detail from the comb filter 20 output. This is done by band pass filter 30 having the transfer function for "Pn" shown in the heading of FIGURE 7 for deriving the filtered values of the combed composite
 20 signal from the comb values of FIGURE 6. The value "Pn" for a current filtered "pixel" of chroma equals the current value (Po) of the corresponding pixel in the table of FIGURE 6, minus 2 times the value two pixels earlier in time, plus 2 times the value 4 pixels ahead, minus 2 times the value six pixels ahead and plus
 25 the value eight pixels ahead in time.

As an example, the value of the band pass filtered chrominance signal for Signal One, line 3, pixel 1 is determined as follows. The current value is +3, two pixels ahead the value is -3, four pixels ahead (of the current value) the value is +3, six and
 30 eight pixels ahead have values of -3 and +3, respectively. The value of Pn thus becomes:

$$P_n = (+3) - 2(-3) + 2(+3) - 2(-3) + 3 = 3 + 6 + 6 + 6 + 3 = +24$$

(1)

The remaining values of the chrominance pixels of FIGURE
 35 7 are calculated in the same manner.

To more fully appreciate the advantages of the present invention, it is believed helpful to now determine what the luminance component values would be if they were obtained by simply truncating 4 bits from the 12 bit chrominance signal provided by filter 30 and subtracting the difference from the composite signal CV. These results are presented in the tables of FIGURES 8 and 9. The results obtained from FIGURE 9 for simple truncation will then be compared with FIGURE 11 which provides the results for symmetrically rounding the chrominance signal.

FIGURE 8 illustrates the effect of "simple" truncation (not symmetrical) of 4 bits from the 12 bit chrominance signal of filter 30. FIGURE 9 illustrates the ultimate result on the luminance signal of subtraction of the truncated chroma values of FIGURE 8 from the original composite video values of FIGURE 5. As will be seen, substantial contouring results in the luminance signal where "simple" truncation is applied to the chrominance signal. The truncated chrominance values using the conventional "simple" truncator 200 of FIGURE 2 are determined by dropping the four least significant bits from the composite video values of FIGURE 7. The results are shown in FIGURE 8.

FIGURE 9 illustrates the luminance signal levels for the assumed condition of simple truncation of 4 bits from the 12 bit chrominance signal. In this array, there is only one signal that has the correct luminance value, that signal is Signal Three. FIGURE 9 is derived by subtracting each truncated chrominance value of FIGURE 8 from the original digital composite video signal values of FIGURE 5. For example, the value of the first luma pixel in FIGURE 5 at line 2 of Signal Three equals the composite video value from FIGURE 5 minus the chrominance value from FIGURE 8. From FIGURE 5 the composite video value CV equals "7". From FIGURE 8 the truncated chrominance value is "-1". Accordingly, for Signal Three, line 2, pixel 1, the luminance signal value equals "6". This is the "correct" value for the luminance signal as explained below.

To determine which luminance signal values of FIGURE 9 are correct for luma and which are not, it is helpful to examine the filtered chrominance values of FIGURE 7. There it is seen that for

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pixel 1 line 3 Signal Three, the filtered chroma value is "16" or "10000" in binary. When "10000" in binary is truncated there is no division error because the 4 LSB's that are discarded are all zero. Thus, all pixels in FIGURE 7 which equal +16 or -16 or any integer multiple thereof have undistorted values of chroma and so the corresponding pixel positions in FIGURE 9 have correct values of the luminance component. For example, every pixel in lines 2 and 3 of Signal Three in FIGURE 7 is either 16 or a multiple thereof (64) so all pixels of Signal Three, lines 2 and 3 are correct.

10 The remaining signals all contain chroma errors due to truncation and thus luma errors as well and this can lead to an undesired contouring effect when the components are ultimately displayed. In addition to the foregoing, Signals One and Five contain the exact same chroma but the luma differs by one count or signal level.

15 Between these two signal levels (6 and 7) there is only one intermediate luma value produced, and that is from Signal Four. This output may be viewed as a luma level of 6.5 (averaged).

FIGURES 10 and 11 illustrate the chrominance and luminance separation performance of the present invention and are derived from FIGURES 5, 6 and 7 using essentially the same methods as in FIGURES 8 and 9 except, of course, that here the 12 bit chrominance signal from filter 30 is subjected to symmetrical rounding prior to subtraction from the composite video component rather than being simply truncated. The effects of this treatment of the chrominance signal on the recovered luminance component will now be compared with the truncation example of FIGURE 9.

First, it will be noted that the average luminance output shown in FIGURE 11 is always equal to the average of the composite video. This is superior to the simple truncation example of FIGURE 9 which produces an unchanging video signal for several signal regions even though the luminance level (from one signal level to another) is changing. Also, in the example of FIGURE 1, each change in the input steady-state signal value produces a different average luminance output level. Three quarters of the time there is a residual subcarrier F_c component left in the luma

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but, in general, the appearance of contouring in the example of the invention will be less than that employing straight truncation due to greater luma accuracy for each of the five regions represented by the signals 1-5.

5 Various changes may be made in applying the principles of the invention to composite video signal separation. For example, as shown in FIGURE 12 the luma/chroma separation and symmetrical rounding may be implemented with sign/magnitude arithmetic processing. In FIGURE 12 source 1200 provides an 8-
10 bit composite video signal S1 in sign/magnitude form to a chrominance filter 1202 which separates the chrominance component producing, illustratively, a 12 bit filtered chrominance signal S2. The magnitude bits S3 of this signal are reduced to 8
15 magnitude bits S8 by symmetrical rounding unit 1204 and to 7 magnitude bits S9 by limiter 1218. The sign bit S4 of the 12 bit chroma signal S2 and the 7 magnitude bits S9 are subtracted in subtractor 1208 from the composite video signal S11 (after
processing delay 1210) to provide a separated luma output signal S12. The rounding unit 1204 in this example operates only on the
20 magnitude bits and comprises an adder 1212 which adds a binary bias signal S6 from source 1214 to the 11 bit chroma magnitude signal S3 to form a 12 bit chroma signal S7. The four least
significant bits LSB's of signal S7 are truncated by a truncator 1216 and limited by limiter 1218 for application along with the
25 sign bit S4 to the subtractor 1208. Since the four least significant bits of the magnitude signal are symmetrically reduced, the reduction does not introduce a DC component into the resultant signal and so contouring effects in the separated luminance signal are avoided.

30 Other modifications may be made to the embodiments within the principles of the invention as recited in the appended claims. For example, the filtering may be of differing types necessitating rounding off more than four or fewer than four chrominance bits. Also, although a one line (1-H) comb filter has
35 been used as an example, the chrominance filter may be a more complex comb such as a two-line (2-H) comb or a frame comb.

Also, although rejection of the vertical detail output of the comb is illustrated as being provided by a three stage band pass FIR chrominance signal filter, other suitable filters may be used having more or fewer stages of differing levels of complexity.

- 5 Also, the other chrominance filters may be of the high pass type or a combination of high-pass and band-pass types.

CLAIMS:

1. Apparatus for separating a digital composite video signal composite video signal (CV) into a luminance component (Y) and a chrominance component (C), comprising:
 - a source (14) for providing said digital composite video signal (CV) including said luminance component (Y) and said chrominance component (C);
 - a chrominance signal recovery filter (20, 30) coupled to said source and having an output (58) for providing said separated chrominance component (C); and
 - a binary subtractor (80) coupled to said and to said chrominance filter (20, 30) for subtracting said separated chrominance (C) from said composite video signal to provide at an output thereof said separated luminance component (Y),

characterised in that

said separated chrominance component (C) is coupled from said chrominance filter to said subtractor via a symmetrical rounding unit (100A; 100B);
said symmetrical rounding unit (100A; 100B);
said symmetrical rounding unit (100A; 100B) reducing the number of bits of said separated chrominance component (C) such that symmetric positive and negative excursions of said chrominance component (C) relative to a binary value of zero maintain its symmetry after rounding for reducing a tendency of said separated luminance component (Y) to exhibit contouring when displayed.

2. Apparatus as recited in Claim 1, further characterised in that said symmetrical rounding unit (100A; 100B) comprises an adder (101) having a first input for receiving said chrominance component (C) and having a third output for receiving a predetermined binary constant (102); and a truncating (103) for truncating the adder output signal by a predetermined number of bits.
3. Apparatus as recited in Claim 1 or 2, further characterised by a limiter (104) for limiting the output of said truncated (103) to a predetermined maximum of bits.

4. Apparatus as recited in one of Claims 1 to 3, characterised in that said symmetrical rounding unit comprises:
- a full adder (101) having a first input, a second input and a third output;
 - said separated chrominance component (C) comprising M-bits and being applied to said first input of said full adder;
 - a constant (K) being applied to said second input of said adder;
 - a circuit path for applying a most significant bit of said chrominance component (C) to said third input of said full adder; and wherein:
- said circuit path is a selected one of first a noninverting circuit path and second an inverting circuit path.