



United States Patent [19] Hair

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[54] **SYSTEM FOR TRANSMITTING DESIRED DIGITAL VIDEO OR AUDIO SIGNALS**

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[21] Appl. No.: **607,648**

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Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Ansel M. Schwartz

[22] Filed: **Feb. 27, 1996**

[57] ABSTRACT

Related U.S. Application Data

[63] Continuation of Ser. No. 23,398, Feb. 26, 1993, abandoned, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 586,391, Sep. 18, 1990, Pat. No. 5,191,573, which is a continuation of Ser. No. 206,497, Jun. 13, 1988, abandoned.

A method for transferring desired digital video or digital audio signals. The method comprises the steps of forming a connection through telecommunications lines between a first memory of a first party and a second memory of a second party. The first memory has the desired digital video or digital audio signals. Then, there is the step of selling electronically by the first party to the second party through telecommunications lines, the desired digital video or digital audio signals in the first memory. Then, there is the step of transferring the desired digital video or digital audio signals from the first memory of the first party to the second memory of the second party through the telecommunications lines while the second memory is in possession and control of the second party. Additionally, there is a system for transferring digital video or digital audio signals.

[51] Int. Cl.⁶ **H01J 13/00**; H04L 9/00

[52] U.S. Cl. **395/200.01**; 380/4; 380/43

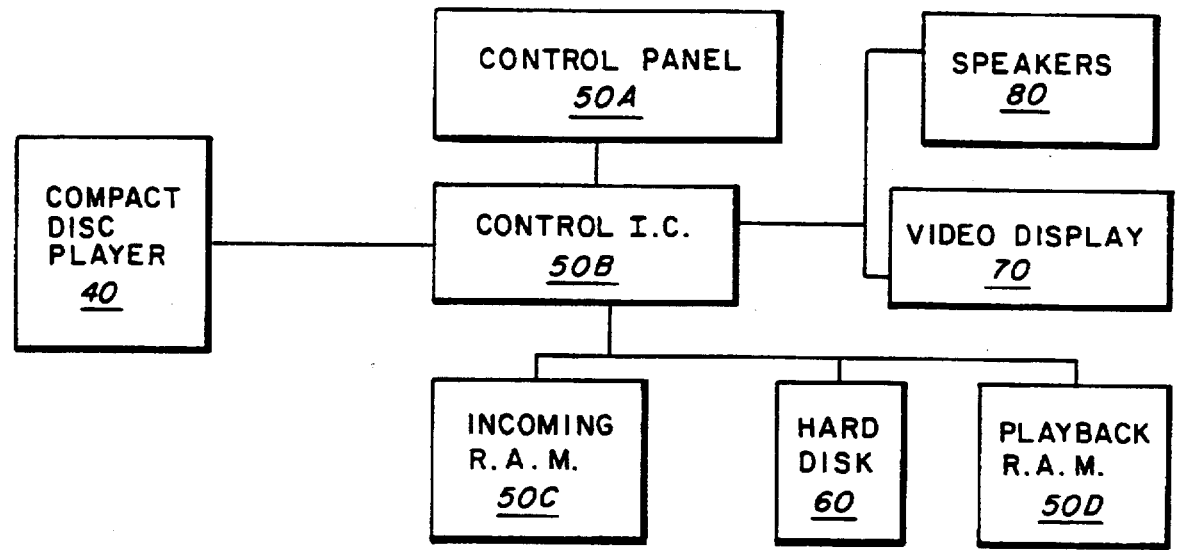
[58] Field of Search 395/200.1; 235/381, 235/380, 375; 364/479.04, 410; 369/33, 34, 84, 85; 380/4, 43; 379/77; 360/55

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34 Claims, 2 Drawing Sheets



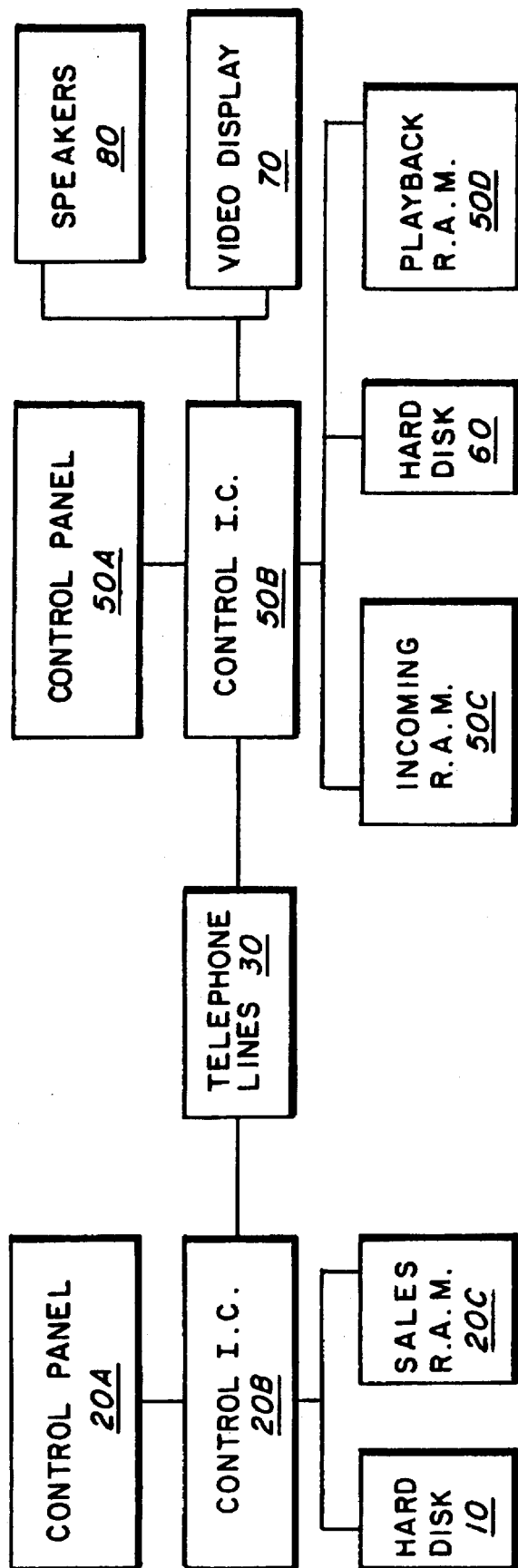


FIG. 1

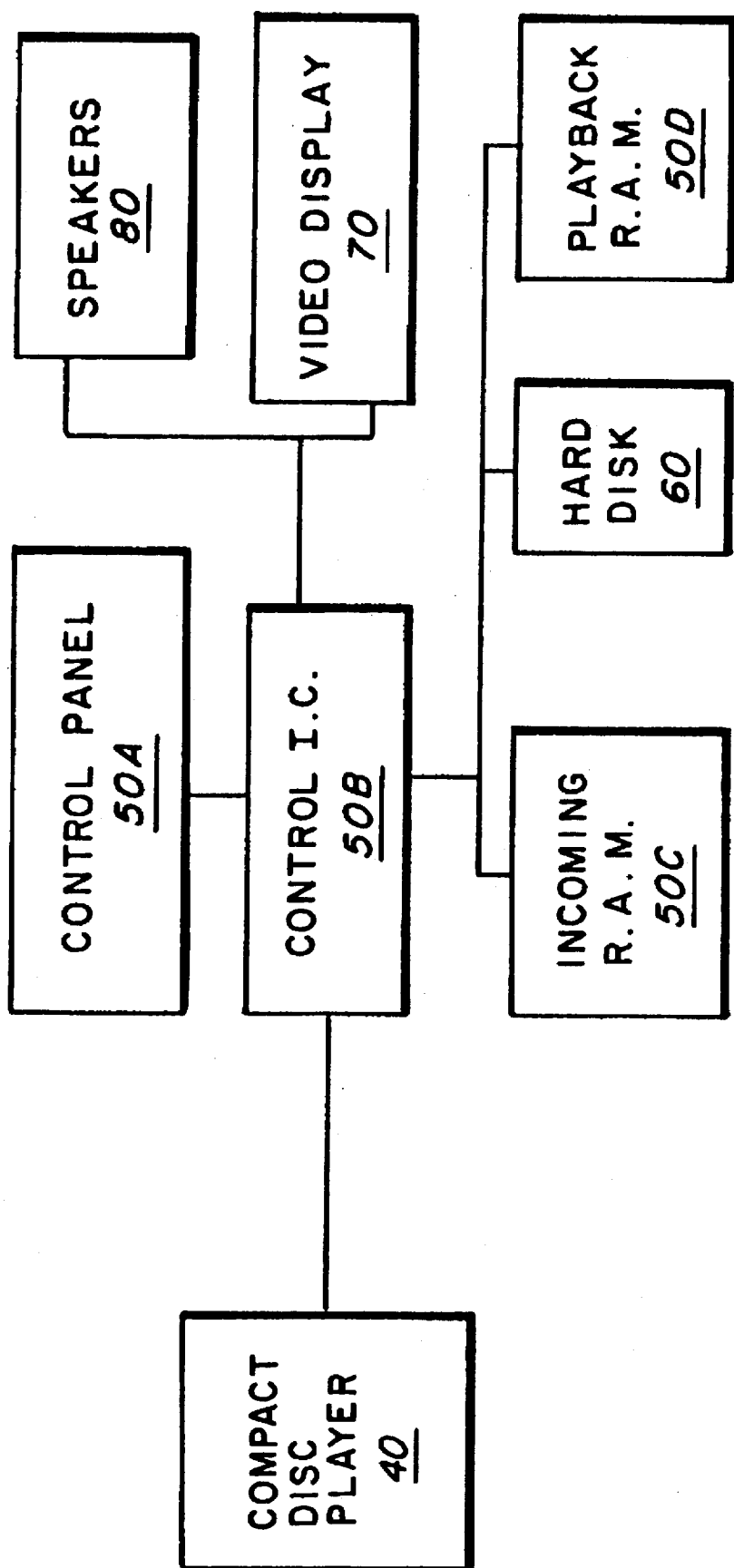


FIG. 2

SYSTEM FOR TRANSMITTING DESIRED DIGITAL VIDEO OR AUDIO SIGNALS

CROSS REFERENCE TO OTHER PATENTS

This application is a continuation of application Ser. No. 08/023,398 filed on Feb. 26, 1993, now abandoned which is a continuation application of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 07/586,391 filed Sep. 18, 1990, now U.S. Pat. No. 5,191,573, issued Mar. 2, 1993, which is a continuation application of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 07/206,497, filed Jun. 13, 1988, abandoned.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is related to a system and associated method for the electronic sales and distribution of digital audio or digital video signals, and more particularly, to a system and method which a user may purchase and receive digital audio or digital video signals from any location which the user has access to telecommunications lines.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The three basic mediums (hardware units) of music: records, tapes, and compact discs, greatly restricts the transferability of music and results in a variety of inefficiencies.

CAPACITY: The individual hardware units as cited above are limited as to the amount of music that can be stored on each.

MATERIALS: The materials used to manufacture the hardware units are subject to damage and deterioration during normal operations, handling, and exposure to the elements.

SIZE: The physical size of the hardware units imposes constraints on the quantity of hardware units which can be housed for playback in confined areas such as in automobiles, boats, planes, etc.

RETRIEVAL: Hardware units limit the ability to play, in a sequence selected by the user, songs from different albums. For example, if the user wants to play one song from ten different albums, the user would spend an inordinate amount of time handling, sorting, and cueing the ten different hardware units.

SALES AND DISTRIBUTION: Prior to final purchase, hardware units need to be physically transferred from the manufacturing facility to the wholesale warehouse to the retail warehouse to the retail outlet, resulting in lengthy lag time between music creation and music marketing, as well as incurring unnecessary and inefficient transfer and handling costs. Additionally, tooling costs required for mass production of the hardware units and the material cost of the hardware units themselves, further drives up the cost of music to the end user.

QUALITY: Until the recent invention of Digital Audio Music, as used on Compact Discs, distortion free transfer from the hardware units to the stereo system was virtually impossible. Digital Audio Music is simply music converted into a very basic computer language known as binary. A series of commands known as zeros or ones encode the music for future playback. Use of laser retrieval of the binary commands results in distortion free transfer of the music from the compact disc to the stereo system. Quality Digital Audio Music is defined as the binary structure of the Digital Audio Music. Conventional analog tape recording of Digital Audio Music is not to be considered quality inasmuch as the binary structure itself is not recorded. While Digital Audio Music on compact discs is a technological

breakthrough in audio quality, the method by which the music is sold, distributed, stored, manipulated, retrieved, played and protected from copyright infringements remains as inefficient as with records and tapes.

COPYRIGHT PROTECTION: Since the invention of tape recording devices, strict control and enforcement of copyright laws have proved difficult and impossible with home recorders. Additionally, the recent invention of Digital Audio Tape Recorders now jeopardizes the electronic copyright protection of quality Digital Audio Music on Compact Discs or Digital Audio Tapes. If music exists on hardware units, it can be copied.

Thus, as is apparent from the above discussion, the inflexible form in which the songs are purchased by an end user, and the distribution channels of the songs, requires the end user to go to a location to purchase the songs, and not necessarily be able to purchase only the songs desired to be heard, in a sequence the end user would like to hear them. This is not limited to just songs, but also includes, for example, videos.

Accordingly, it is an objective of this invention is to provide a new and improved methodology/system to electronically sell and distribute Digital Audio Music or digital video.

A further objective of this invention to provide a new and improved methodology/system to electronically store and retrieve Digital Audio Music or digital video.

Another objective of this invention is to provide a new and improved methodology/system to electronically manipulate, i.e., sort, cue, and select, Digital Audio Music or digital video for playback.

Still another objective of this invention is to offer a new and improved methodology/system which can prevent unauthorized electronic copying of quality Digital Audio Music or digital video.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Briefly, this invention accomplishes the above cited objectives by providing a new and improved methodology/system of electronic sales, distribution, storage, manipulation, retrieval, playback, and copyright protection of Digital Audio Music. The high speed transfer of Digital Audio Music as prescribed by this invention is stored onto one piece of hardware, a hard disk, thus eliminating the need to unnecessarily handle records, tapes, or compact discs on a regular basis. This invention recalls stored music for playback as selected/programmed by the user. This invention can easily and electronically sort stored music based on many different criteria such as, but not limited to, music category, artist, album, user's favorite songs, etc. An additional feature of this invention is the random playback of songs, also based on the user's selection. For example, the user could have this invention randomly play all jazz songs stored on the user's hard disk, or randomly play all songs by a certain artist, or randomly play all of the user's favorite songs which the user previously electronically "tagged" as favorites. Further, being more specific, the user can electronically select a series of individual songs from different albums for sequential playback.

This invention can be configured to either accept direct input of Digital Audio Music from the digital output of a Compact Disc, such transfer would be performed by the private user, or this invention can be configured to accept Digital Audio Music from a source authorized by the copyright holder to sell and distribute the copyrighted materials, thus guaranteeing the protection of such copyrighted mate-

rials. Either method of electronically transferring Digital Audio Music by means of this invention is intended to comply with all copyright laws and restrictions and any such transfer is subject to the appropriate authorization by the copyright holder. Inasmuch as Digital Audio Music is software and this invention electronically transfers and stores such music, electronic sales and distribution of the music can take place via telephone lines onto a hard disk. This new methodology/system of music sales and distribution will greatly reduce the cost of goods sold and will reduce the lag time between music creation and music marketing from weeks down to hours.

The present invention is a system for transmitting desired digital video or digital audio signals stored on a first memory of a first party to preferably a second memory of a second party. The system comprises means or mechanism for electronically selling the desired digital video or digital audio signals preferably via telecommunications lines to the first party from the second party. Moreover, the system preferably comprises means or mechanism for connecting electronically via telecommunications lines the first memory preferably with the second memory such that the desired digital video or digital audio signals can pass therebetween. Additionally, the system comprises means or mechanism for transmitting the desired digital video or digital audio signals from the first memory with a transmitter in control and in possession of the first party to a receiver preferably having the second memory while the receiver is in possession and in control of the second party. The receiver is placed at a second party location determined by the second party. Preferably, there is also means or mechanism for storing the digital video or digital audio signal in the second memory.

Further objectives and advantages of this invention will become apparent as the following description proceeds and the particular features of novelty which characterize this invention will be pointed out in the claims annexed to and forming a part of this declaration.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a better understanding of this invention, reference should be made to the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIG. 1 is a pictorial flow chart which may be used in carrying out the teachings of this invention for the purposes of electronic sales, distribution, storage, manipulation, retrieval, playback, and copyright protection of Digital Audio Music; and

FIG. 2 is a pictorial flow chart which may be used in carrying out the teachings of this invention for the purposes of electronic storage, manipulation, retrieval, and playback of Digital Audio Music.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring now to the drawings wherein like reference numerals refer to similar or identical parts throughout the several views, and more specifically to figure thereof, there is shown

Referring now to the FIG. 1, this invention preferably is comprised of the following:

- 10 Hard Disk of the copyright holder
- 20 Control Unit of the copyright holder 20a Control Panel 20b Control Integrated Circuit 20c Sales Random Access Memory Chip
- 30 Telephone Lines/Input Transfer

50 Control Unit of the user 50a Control Panel 50b Control Integrated Circuit 50c Incoming Random Access Memory Chip 50d Play Back Random Access Memory Chip

- 60 Hard Disk of the user
- 70 Video Display Unit
- 80 Stereo Speakers

The Hard Disk 10 of the first party or agent authorized to electronically sell and distribute the copyrighted Digital Audio Music is the originating source of music in the configuration as outlined in FIG. 1. The Control Unit 20 of the authorized agent is the means by which the electronic transfer of the Digital Audio Music from the agent's Hard Disk 10 via the Telephone Lines 30 to the user's or second party's Control Unit 50 is possible. The user's Control Unit is comprised of a Control Panel 50a, a Control Integrated Circuit 50b, an Incoming Random Access Memory Chip 50c, and a Play Back Random Access Memory Chip 50d. Similarly, the authorized agent's Control Unit 20 has a control panel and control integrated circuit similar to that of the user's Control Unit 50. The authorized agent's Control Unit 20, however, only requires the Sales Random Access Memory Chip 20c. The other components in FIG. 1 include a Hard Disk 60, a Video Display Unit 70, and a set of Stereo Speakers 80.

Referring now to FIG. 2, with the exception of a substitution of a Compact Disc Player 40 (as the initial source of Digital Audio Music) for the agent's Hard Disk 10, the agent's Control Unit 20, and the Telephone Lines 30 in FIG. 1, FIG. 2 is the same as FIG. 1.

In FIG. 1 and FIG. 2, the following components are already commercially available: the agent's Hard Disk 10, the Telephone Lines 30, the Compact Disc Player 40, the user's Hard Disk 60, the Video Display Unit 70, and the Stereo Speakers 80. The Control Units 20 and 50, however, would be designed specifically to meet the teachings of this invention. The design of the control units would incorporate the following functional features:

- 1) the Control Panels 20a and 50a would be designed to permit the agent and user to program the respective Control Integrated Circuits 20b and 50b,
- 2) the Control Integrated Circuits 20b and 50b would be designed to control and execute the respective commands of the agent and user and regulate the electronic transfer of Digital Audio Music throughout the system, additionally, the sales Control Integrated Circuit 20b could electronically code the Digital Audio Music in a configuration which would prevent unauthorized reproductions of the copyrighted material,
- 3) the Sales Random Access Memory Chip 20c would be designed to temporarily store user purchased Digital Audio Music for subsequent electronic transfer via telephone lines to the user's Control Unit 50,
- 4) the Incoming Random Access Memory Chip 50c would be designed to temporarily store Digital Audio Music for subsequent electronic storage to the user's Hard Disk 60,
- 5) the Play Back Random Access Memory Chip 50d would be designed to temporarily store Digital Audio Music for sequential playback.

The foregoing description of the Control Units 20 and 50 is intended as an example only and thereby is not restrictive with respect to the exact number of components and/or its actual design.

Once the Digital Audio Music has been electronically stored onto the user's Hard Disk 60, having the potential to

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