

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application No.: 90/009,513
Filing Date: September 24, 2009
Applicant: Patent No. 7,457,250
Group Art Unit: 3992
Examiner: Eric B. Kiss
Title: SYSTEM FOR COMMUNICATING WITH
ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT
Attorney Docket: 9919-000002/RXF

Mail Stop *Ex Parte* Reexam
Central Reexamination Unit
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

RESPONSE

Sir:

In response to the Office Action mailed April 20, 2010, please consider the remarks set forth below.

A listing of the Patent Claims begin on page 2 of this paper.

Remarks begin on page 22 of this paper.

THE CLAIMS

The following is a listing of the claims in U.S. Patent No. 7,457,250. They are not being amended.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (Original) A system for communicating information on a network having pieces of electronic equipment that connect to the network by cables having a plurality of wires therein, said system comprising:

a central module having at least one power source;

a first piece of equipment;

a first cable having wires therein connected between the central module and the first piece of equipment;

a first remote module utilized in conjunction with the central module to alter a flow of current within at least a pair of wires in the first cable, the altered current flow communicating information about the first piece of equipment to the central module while the first piece of equipment is physically connected to the network via the first cable;

a second piece of equipment;

a second cable having wires therein connected between the central module and the second piece of equipment; and

a second remote module utilized in conjunction with the central module to alter a flow of current within at least a pair of wires in the second cable, the altered current flow communicating information about the second piece of equipment to the central module while the second piece of equipment is physically connected to the network via the second cable.

REMARKS

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 2, 5, 13, 15, 20-32, 34, 36, 41, 42, 45-47, 49, 50, 53, 54, 56-68, 70, 72, 77, 78, 81-83, 85, 86, 89, 90, 92-104, 106, 108, 113, 114, 117-119, 121, and 122 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 96/23377 A1 published August 1, 1996 ("*Intecom*") in view of IBM Technical Disclosure Bulletin, No. 01-78, pp. 3164-3165 published January 1978 ("IBM TDB").

Claims 43, 79, and 115 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Intecom* in view of IBM TDB and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,473,608 ("Lehr").

These rejections are respectfully traversed. The Examiner is requested to reconsider his rejection and issue an *ex parte* reexamination certificate confirming the patentability of the claims in U.S. Patent No. 7,457, 250 (the "250 Patent").

PATENT OWNER'S INTERVIEW STATEMENT

The patent owner has filed herewith its Patent Owner's Statement of Interview on May 12, 2010. This Statement was filed by way of a separate paper at the request of the Examiner Kiss.

ARGUMENTS

Claim 1

In his rejection, the Examiner states:

Regarding claim 1, *Intecom* discloses:

A system for communicating information on a network having pieces of electronic equipment that connect to the network by cables having a plurality of wires therein (*e.g.*, *Intecom* at Figs. 1 and 2), said system comprising:

a central module having at least one power source (*e.g.*, *Intecom* at Fig. 2 (power source 210 is in the central module); Page 35, line 27 – Page 36, line 20);

a first piece of equipment (*e.g.*, *Intecom* at Figs. 1 and 2 (showing various pieces of equipment));

a first cable having wires therein connected between the central module and the first piece of equipment (*e.g.*, *Intecom* at Figs. 1 and 2 (the Multimedia Hub is connected to the various pieces of equipment by the cable having wires (240,250) as shown in Fig. 2));

a second piece of equipment (*e.g.*, *Intecom* at Fig 1; p. 37, lines 10-18 (enabling phantom powering to many pieces of equipment)); and

a second cable having wires therein connected between the central module and the second piece of equipment (*e.g.*, *Intecom* at Fig. 1; p. 37, lines 10-18 ("In an overall LAN, many pieces of equipment, each with its own third and fourth transformers 270, 280, can take power as well as data from the bus.")).

Although *Intecom* discloses remote equipment reasonably interpreted as comprising "remote modules," that separate the DC bias of the power subsystem from the data inputs on the equipment and provide further conditioning of the data signals before they are introduced to the equipment (*Intecom* at Fig. 2; p. 38, lines 1-11), *Intecom* fails to expressly disclose:

a [first/second] remote module utilized in conjunction with the central module to alter a flow of current within at least a pair of wires in the [first/second] piece of

equipment to the central module while the [first/second] piece of equipment is physically connected to the network via the [first/second] cable.

However, IBM TDB teaches, in an analogous remote powering system, a piece of equipment connected to a central module (containing a remote power source) via a cable (a transmission line) and a remote module utilized in conjunction with the remote power source to alter a flow of current, particularly by an amount ΔI_0 , within a pair of wires, the altered current flow communicating information about the piece of equipment to the central module (containing the remote power source), particularly the increased current consumption and thus the requirement for an increased voltage supply, while the piece of equipment is physically connected to the central module via a cable.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the remote powering system described by *Intecom* with the remote power switching capabilities as taught by IBM TDB in order to gain the benefits of being able to switch from a low-voltage stand-by mode to a higher-voltage active mode as power requirements and load conditions change in a remote powering environment such as that taught by *Intecom*.

The Patent Owner's Contentions

Claim 1 is set forth below:

1. A system for communicating information on a network having pieces of electronic equipment that connect to the network by cables having a plurality of wires therein, said system comprising:

a central module having at least one power source;

a first piece of equipment;

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