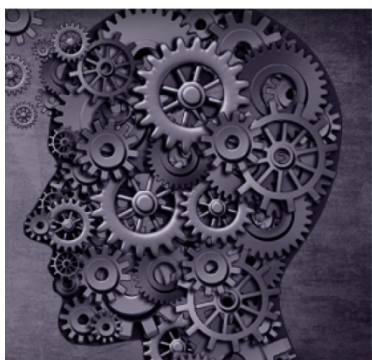


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USER CONTROLLED RE-TRANSMIT OPTION

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Original Publication Date: December 01, 1991
IP.com Number: IPCOM000006335D
IP.com Electronic Publication Date: December 26, 2001
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USER CONTROLLED RE-TRANSMIT OPTION

by Brad Murray

In the communications industry, more specifically the paging industry, messages are transmitted over the air via radio frequencies to a receiver or pager which is carried by a customer. The maximum distance between the transmitter and the receiver is determined by the amount of transmitter power and the number of transmitters. This distance is called the coverage area. A customer can remain completely mobile within the coverage area and still receive messages from the transmitter(s). However, there will be certain areas within the coverage area that radio frequencies can be blocked or altered (basements, tunnels, etc.) thus a message may not be received. These areas are generally well known by the service provider (Radio Common Carrier) and customers are generally made aware that coverage in these areas is not guaranteed. A customer may also leave the specified coverage area and will not receive any messages.

In order to overcome the possibility of a customer missing these messages, the paging terminal can be modified to store all messages for a given customer within a selected prior period of time. The messages can then be re-transmitted at a later time so that the customer may determine if any messages were missed. For example, if a customer realized that they had left the coverage area for 2 hours, they may, upon return to the coverage area, request a re-transmission of all messages directed to them for the last 2 hours. When the terminal is configured to accept direct customer input, this request can be made by phone using a multiple digit code to identify the customer and select the prior period of time that would need to be re-transmitted. The terminal would then recall the messages and transmit them. The customer would then receive all messages sent during the selected prior period of time. These messages could also contain date and time information of when the message was originally sent to assist the customer in determining any call-back priority.

Figure 1 is a flow chart indicating how messages are stored in the paging terminal which has been configured with the re-transmit option. A message is received, via a

transmission to a customer. The terminal can provide time stamp information which is then attached to the message. The message is then processed and transmitted in the same manner as a normal message but at the same time the message is stored in a re-transmit memory. All messages corresponding to an individual address are stored as a block of messages in the re-transmit memory. A pre-selected period of time, corresponding to the storage time limit, is added to the time stamp value of the message. When a request for re-transmission has not been received, all messages in the re-transmit

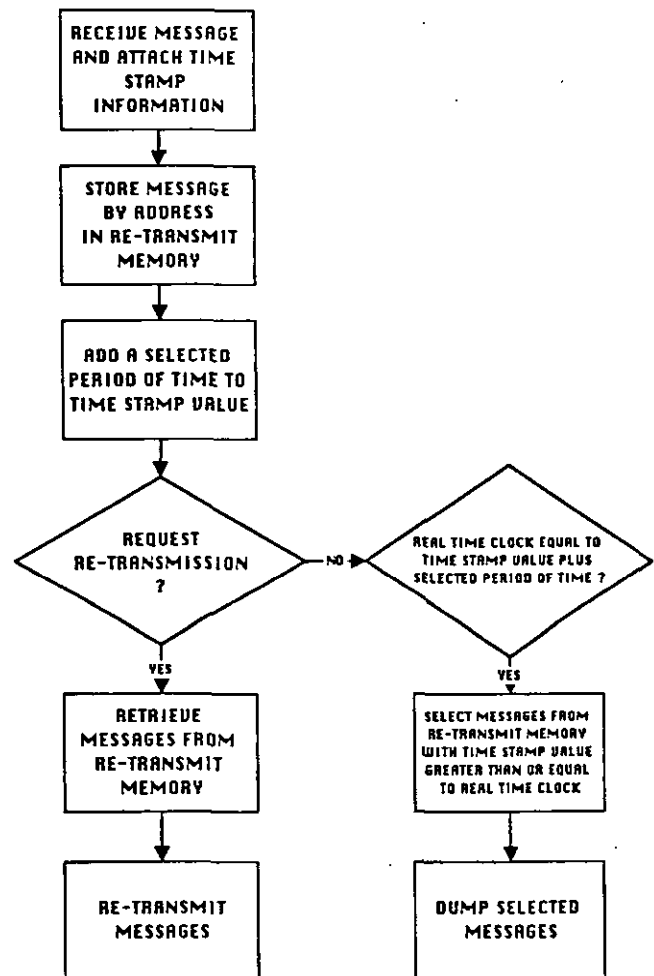


FIG. 1



memory with a time stamp value greater than or equal to the real time clock time will be erased to make room for future messages. If a re-transmit request is received, as

described above, all the messages for an address within a selected prior period of time will be retrieved from the re-transmit memory and re-transmitted to the customer.