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(12) **United States Patent**
Petite

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(54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR MONITORING THE LIGHT LEVEL AROUND AN ATM**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

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Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 09/172,554, filed on Oct. 14, 1998, now Pat. No. 6,028,522.

(51) **Int. Cl.**⁷ **G08B 21/00**

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **340/641; 340/521; 340/539; 340/232; 340/635; 340/642; 340/825.06; 340/825.35**

(58) **Field of Search** **340/641, 642, 340/573.1, 825.06, 825.35, 521, 539, 232, 635; 705/43; 348/232, 382, 211**

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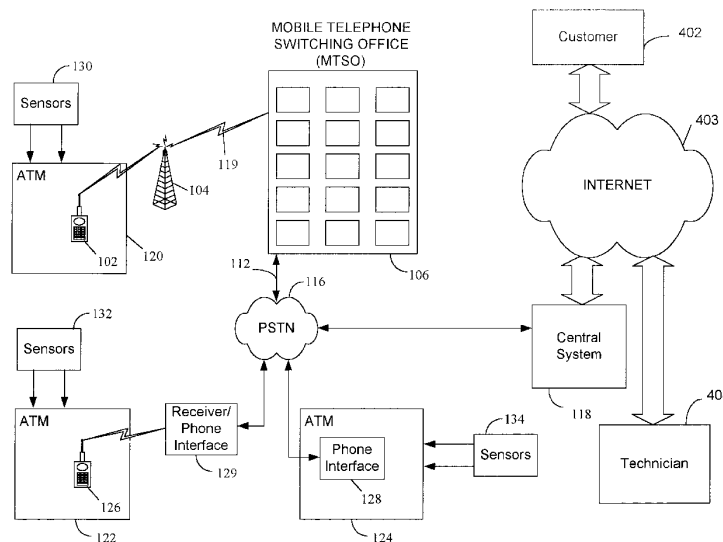
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention is generally directed to a system and method for monitoring the level of light surrounding an automatic teller machine (ATM). In accordance with one aspect of the invention, a system includes a plurality of light sensors disposed in varying locations around the ATM. Preferably, some sensors will be disposed near the ATM, while others will be dispersed at various distances surrounding the ATM, in order to effectively monitor the lighting around the ATM. A circuit is provided within the ATM in communication with the sensors. In addition, a radio frequency (RF) transmitter is disposed within the ATM, and is configured to communicate the status of the sensors to a remotely located receiver. Finally, a receiver is interfaced to a telephone line forming part of a public switched telephone network (PSTN), wherein the receiver is configured to receive the status of the sensors communicated from the RF transmitter and to communicate the status information to a remote system via the PSTN. Various methods also are provided for monitoring lighting conditions surrounding an automatic teller machine, with some embodiments incorporating a customer access feature which provides a customer with access to ATM status information.

19 Claims, 13 Drawing Sheets



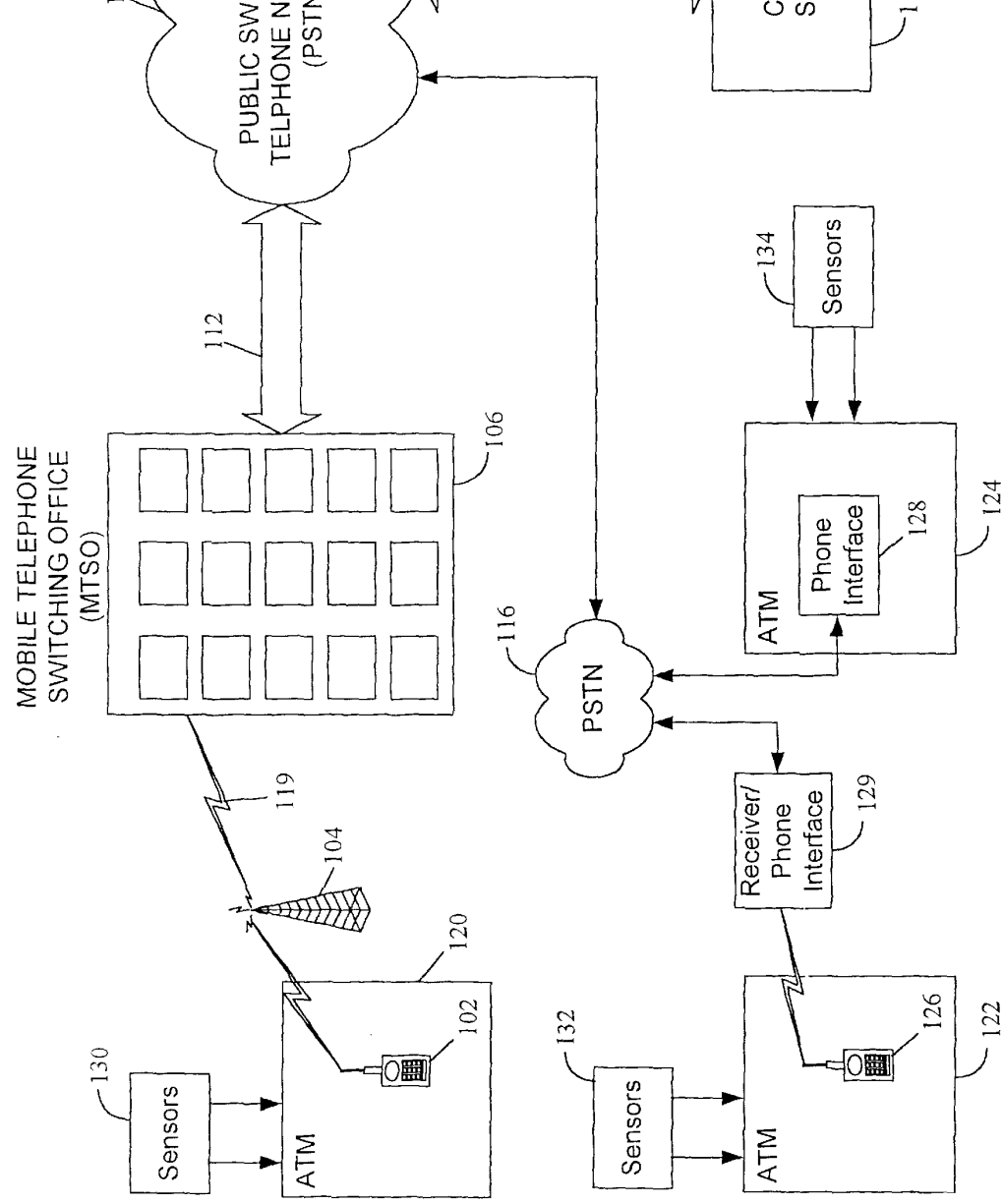


FIG. 1

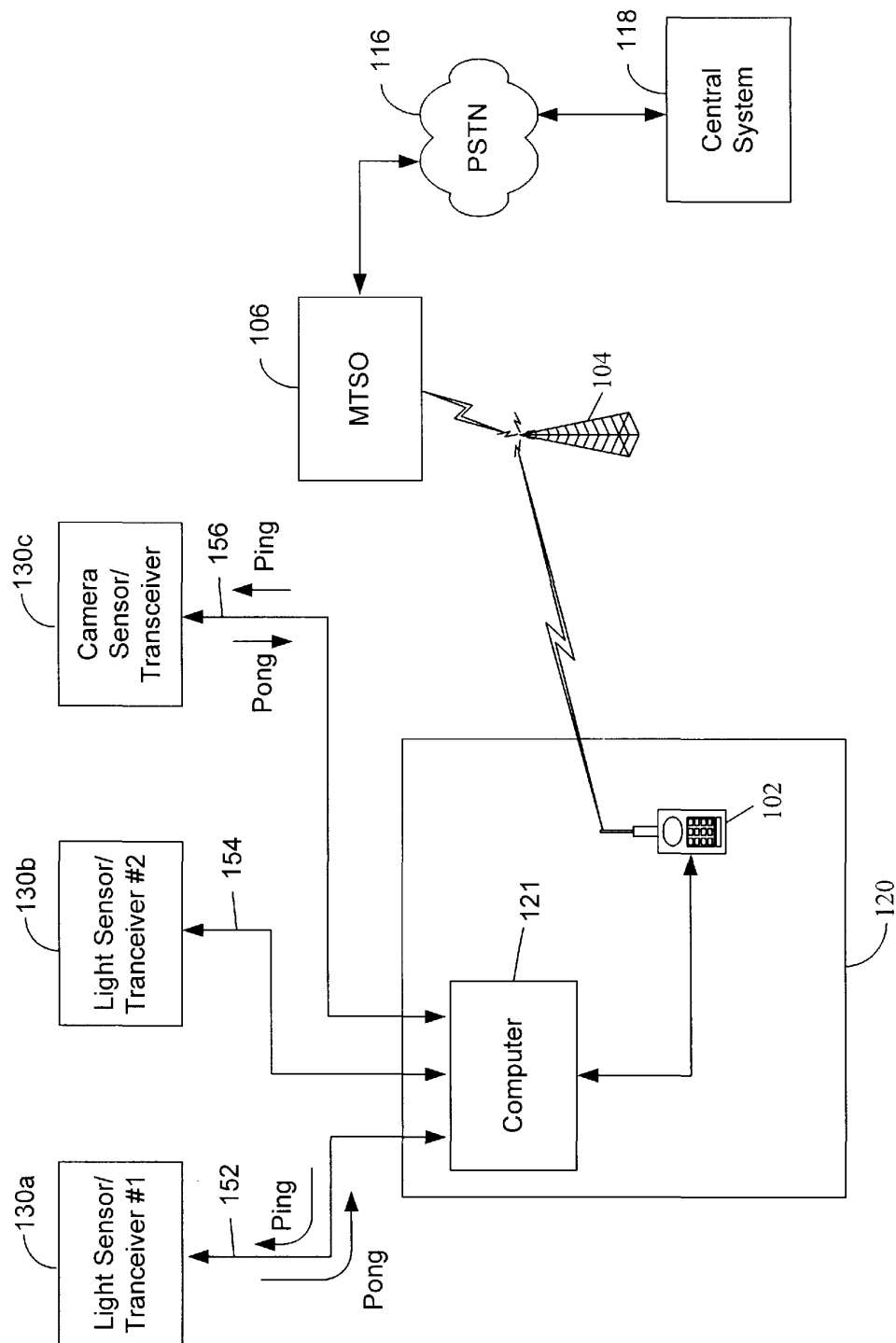


FIG. 2

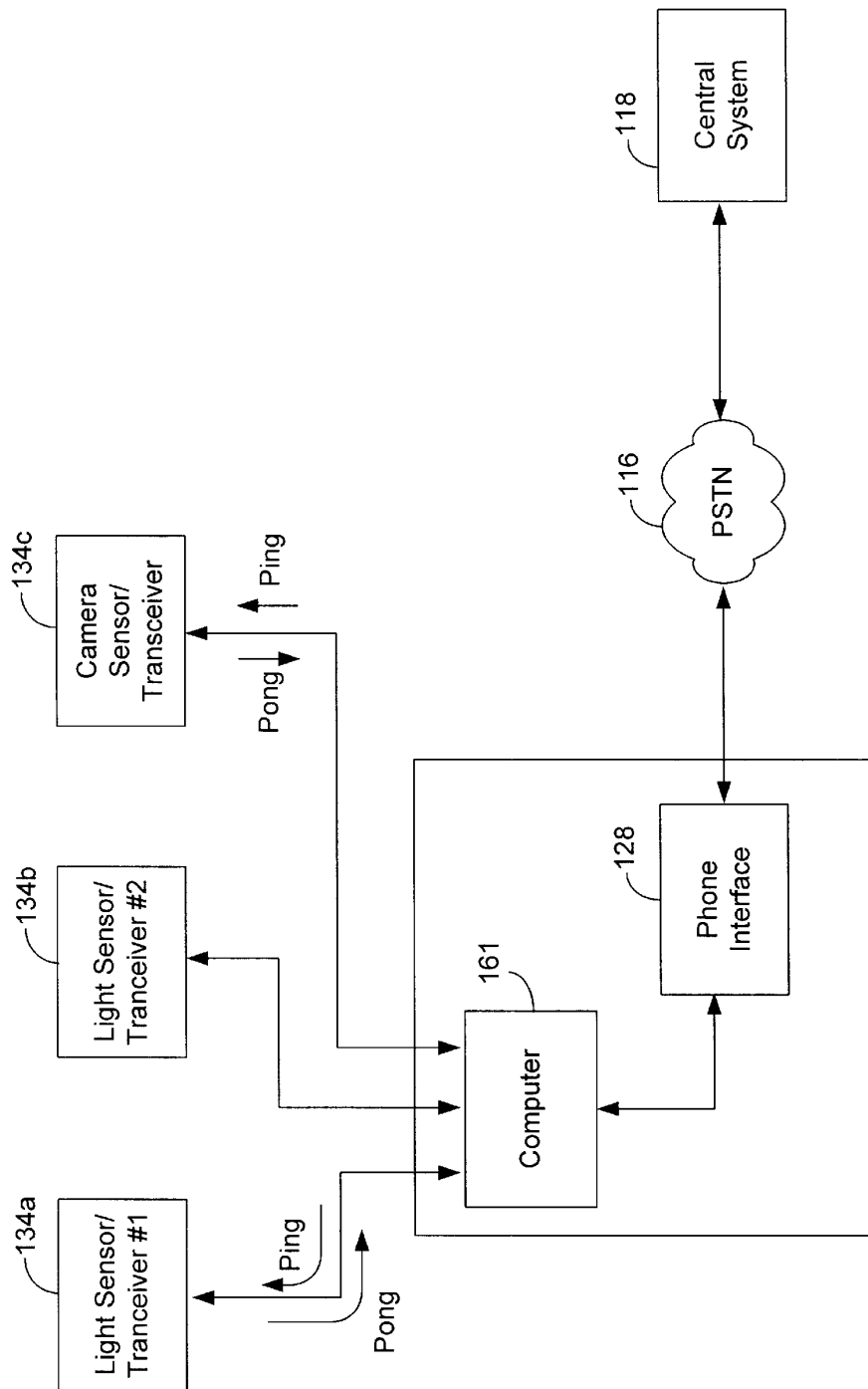


FIG. 3

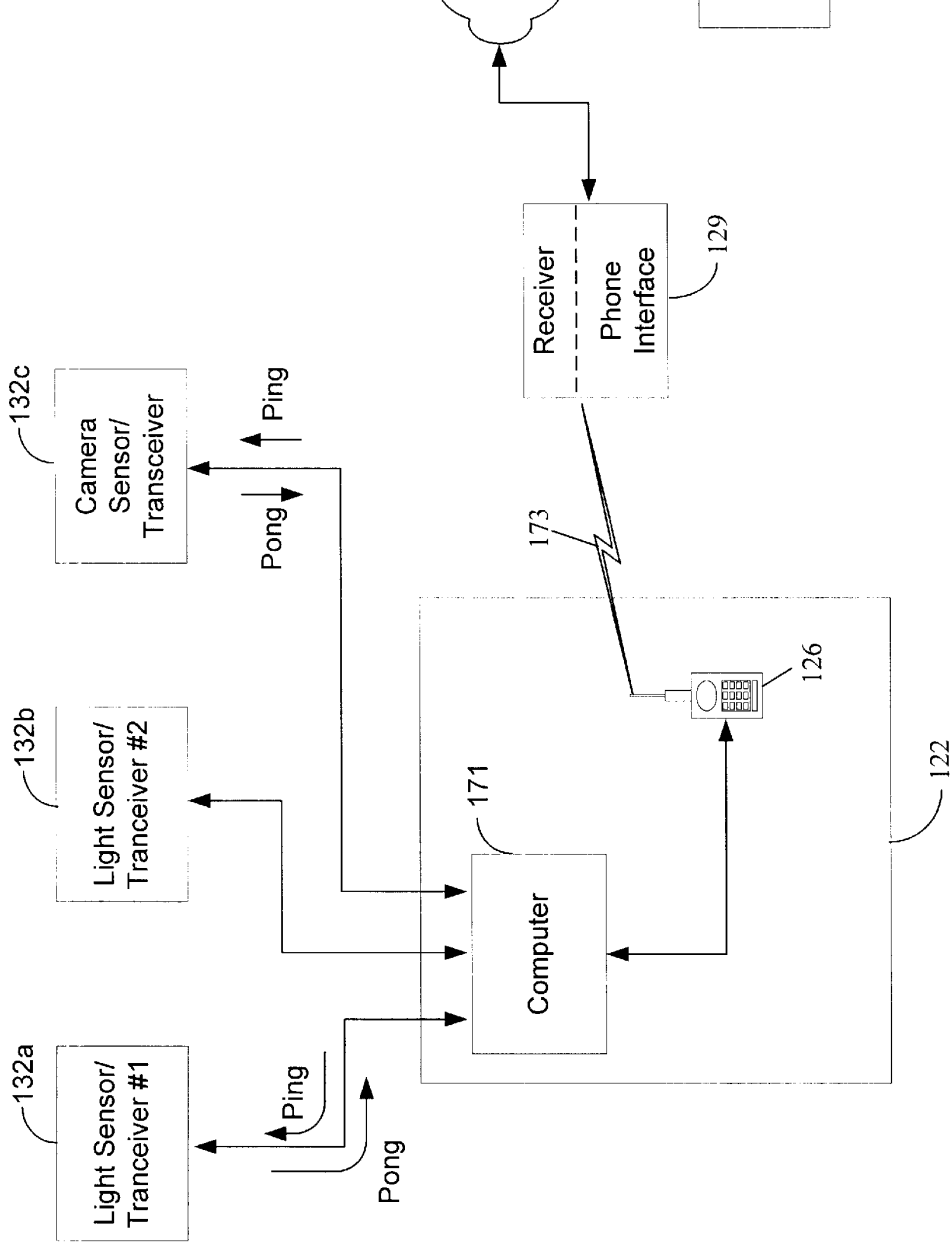


FIG. 4A

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