

**PROVISIONAL PATENT APPLICATION
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TITLE:

METHOD FOR SAVING BANDWIDTH SENT TO A DIGITAL SET TOP BOX

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Attorney Docket No.: 17474ROUS01P

Invention Disclosure

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Bandwidth/Screen Saver for Network Media Gateway 1

This invention is a device and method which detects the activity indicating that a TV is in use, and sensing a lack of activity, performs an action to reduce or turn off the incoming signal bandwidth, using instead locally-stored or reduced quality images to display on the TV screen.

Need for this Invention

The requirement for this invention comes about because the Network Media Gateway (hereafter called the NMG) and the network would benefit from knowing whether or not a TV is in use or turned on. If the TV is not being used, then significant downstream bandwidth and processing can be saved in the network by not sending the detailed picture information to the TV.

A further benefit would result from displaying images on the TV which would not cause “burn-in” of certain repetitive images, for example the overnight test pattern, if the viewer forgets to turn off the TV before going to bed. This is a common problem with a number of display technologies such as CRT projection TVs. Instead, a random or blank image can be displayed.

Optionally, the Bandwidth/Screen saver can turn off power to the TV, thereby saving energy.

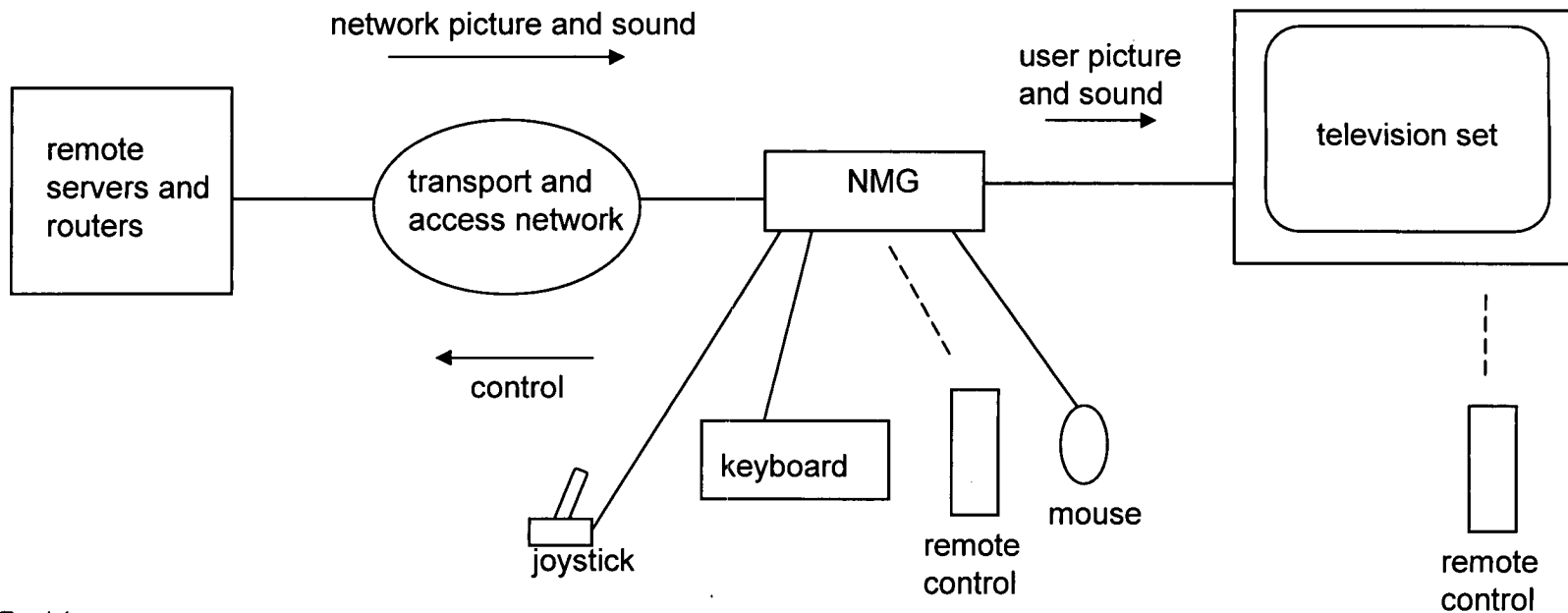
Prior Art

Screen Savers are a well-known example of a process which detected the user's interaction with a computer, and sensing a long idle period, would optionally display alternative information on the screen. This reduced "burn-in" of images, was sometimes used to save monitor power, and also alerted the user to an idle computer.

The present invention is different from the traditional screen saver in that the intended function is to reduce incoming bandwidth. Reducing "burn-in" and saving power are secondary advantages.

Detailed Description of Invention

Block Diagram of Components



Problem:

If television has been turned off using its remote control, how can we ensure that the network does not waste resources by continuing to send picture and sound to the NMG? That problem is solved with this invention.

controls:
 TV volume
 channel change
 PIP
 program guide
 Internet surfing
 email
 gaming
 etc.

controls:
 TV on/off
 TV volume

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