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Houston

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(54) **REFORMABLE KEYBOARD WITH VARIABLE KEY DESIGN**
(75) Inventor: **John S. Houston**, Hopewell Junction, NY (US)
(73) Assignee: **International Business Machines Corporation**, Armonk, NY (US)
(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 379 days.

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Primary Examiner—Michael Horabik
Assistant Examiner—Hung Dang
(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Floyd Gonzalez

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(51) **Int. Cl.**⁷ **H03M 11/00**
(52) **U.S. Cl.** **341/21; 341/26**
(58) **Field of Search** 341/26; 361/21, 361/22, 34; 400/87, 127, 128, 483, 485

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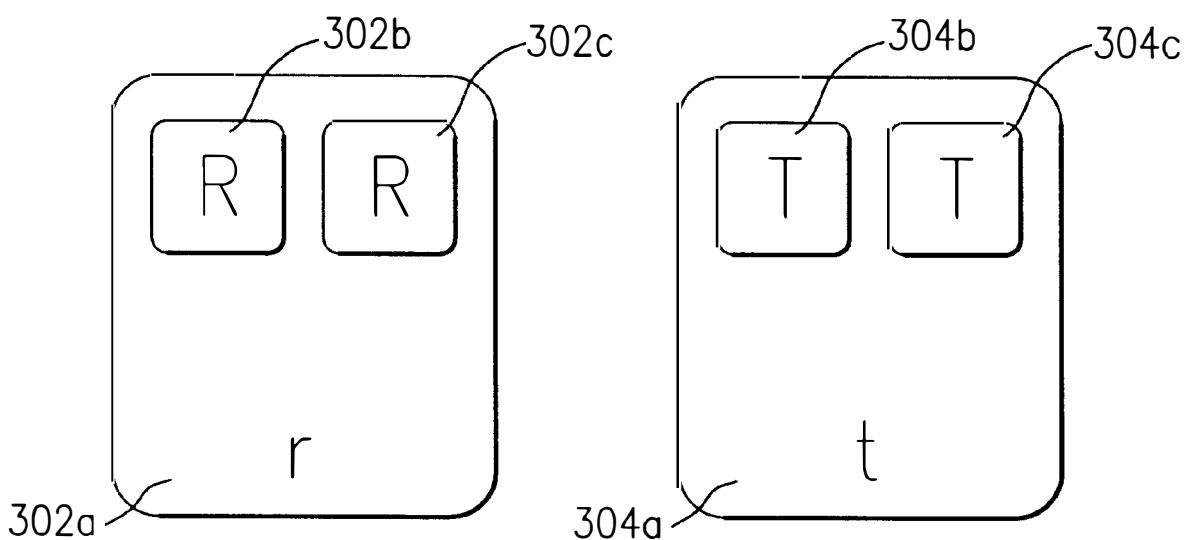
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Key patterns configured to accommodate the handicaps of the disabled user are imprinted or embossed on a sheet of conformable material. A matrix of sensing circuits for a keyboard are placed under the sheet to detect when and where the sheet is depressed and provides an output to a keyboard controller indicating which portion of the keyboard has been contacted. The keyboard controller relates the position data to the keyboard pattern on the sheet and provides key signals to the computer interface connector of the keyboard that are indistinguishable by a computer system from the QWERTY outputs of a standard keyboard. This enables the disabled user to carry this keyboard from one computer system to another and simply exchange it for the standard keyboard for the computer. Since the keyboard can be configured to accommodate the users handicap, no changes need be made to the operating system or any software of the computer in order to allow the disabled user to use the computer. Furthermore, other users are not required to do anything special to start using the computer system once the standard keyboard is re-installed.

12 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



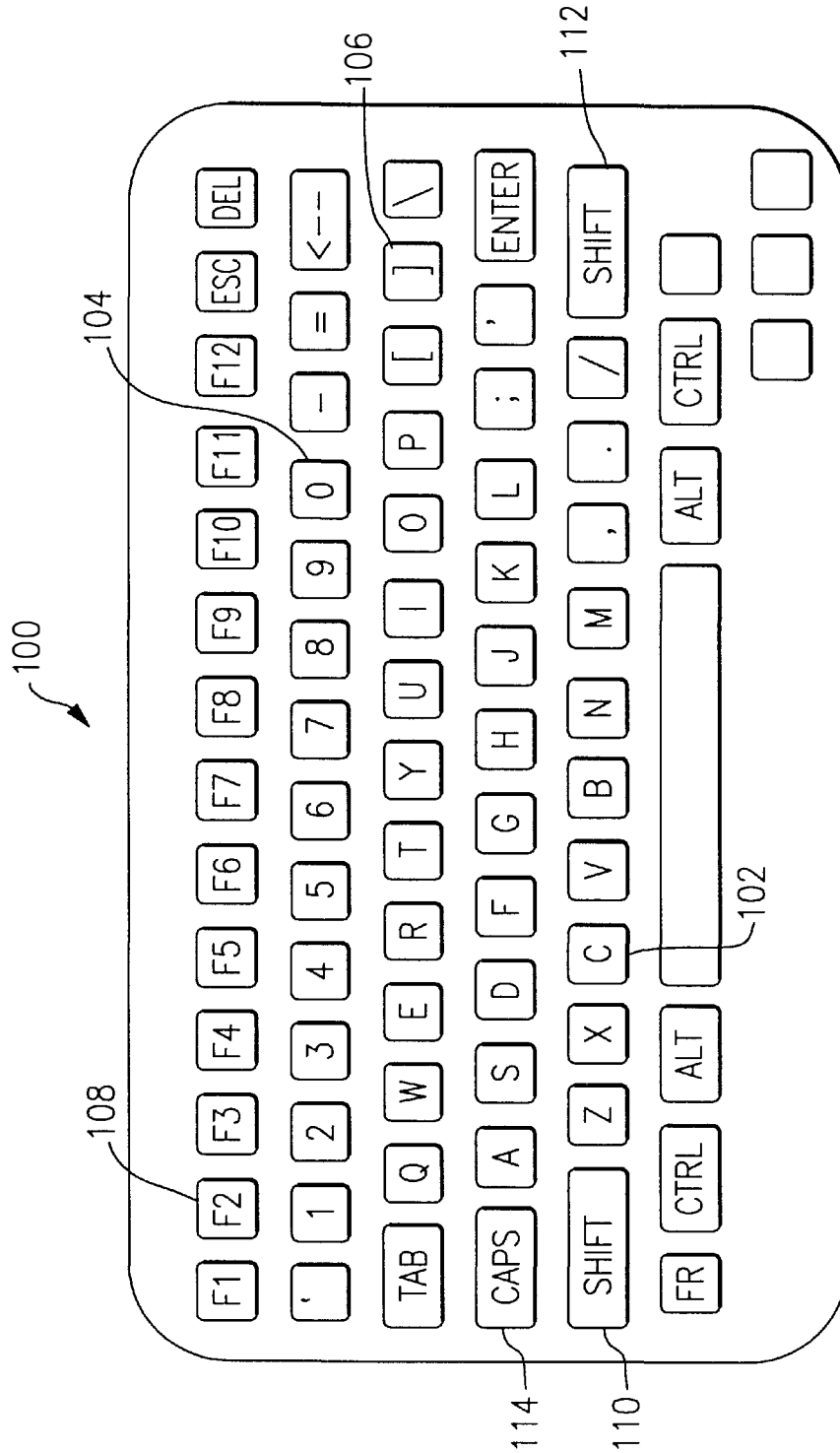


FIG. 1

Prior Art

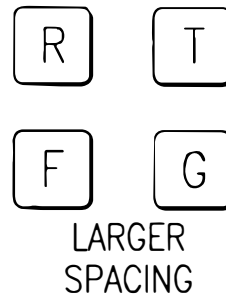
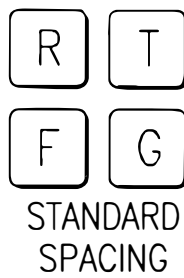
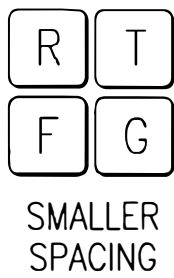
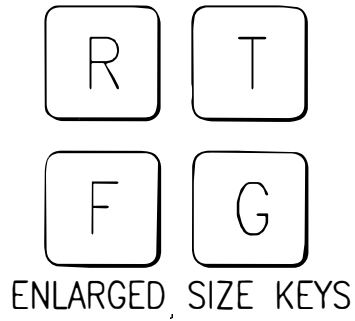
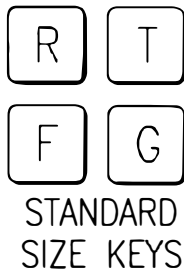
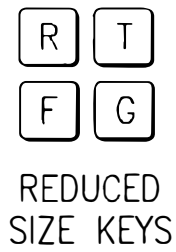


FIG.2

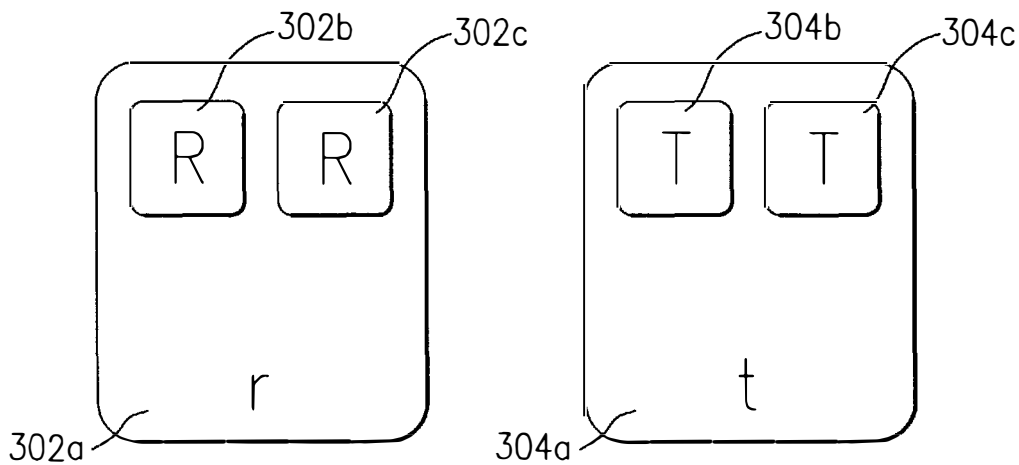
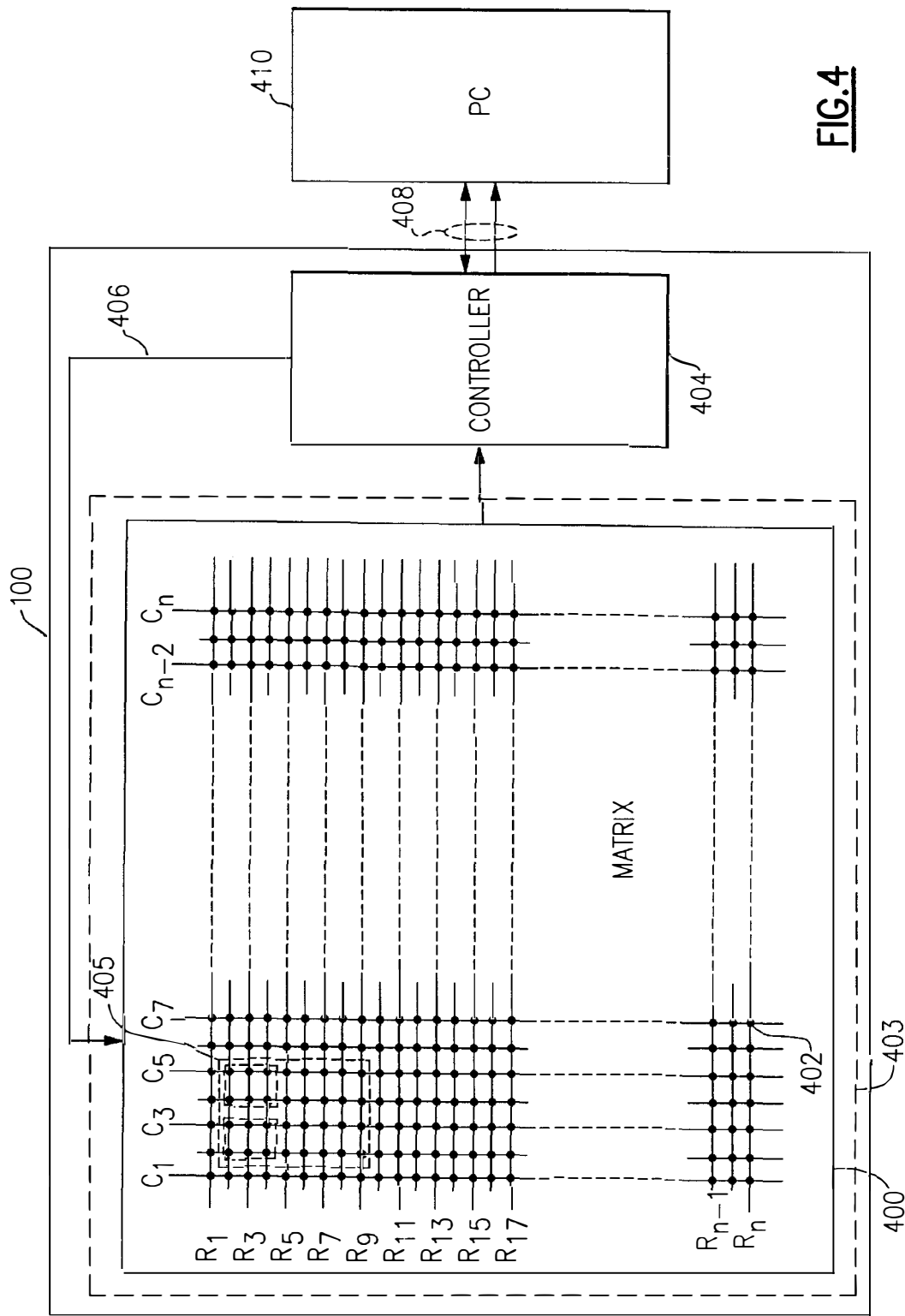


FIG.3



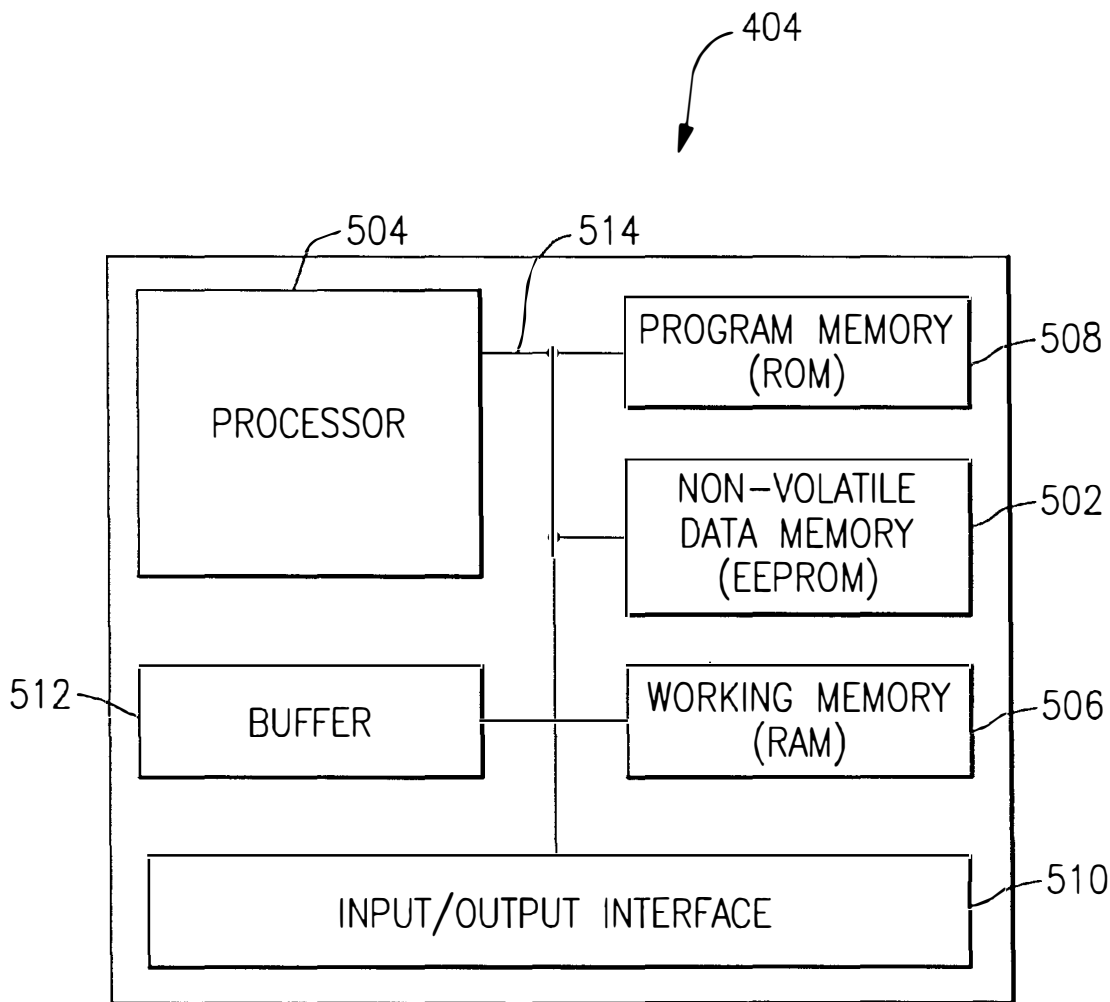


FIG.5

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