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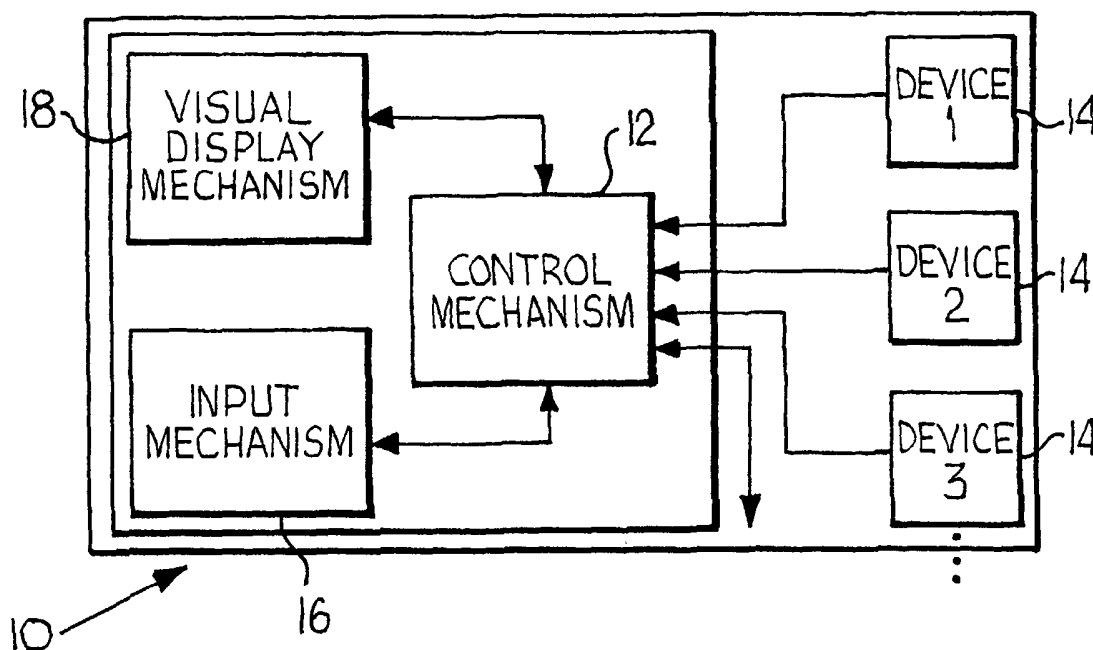
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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR REMOTELY CONTROLLING A PLURALITY OF DEVICES



(57) Abstract: Disclosed is a method for controlling usage times for at least one device, including the steps of: (a) identifying a device (14) to be controlled; (b) utilizing the device (14) by a user; (c) tracking a device usage value for the device (14) as the user utilizes the device; and (d) initiating an action sequence based upon the device usage value. Also disclosed is an apparatus (10) for controlling usage times for at least one device (14).

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*For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*

**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

International application No.

PCT/US03/16727

<p><b>A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER</b>                  IPC(7) : G08B 23/00; H04M 11/04; H04Q 5/22; G05B 23/02                  US CL : 340/323 R, 310.01,310.08,10.52,3.1                  According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC</p>														
<p><b>B. FIELDS SEARCHED</b></p> <p>Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)                  U.S. : 340/323 R, 310.01,310.08,10.52,3.1</p> <p>Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched</p> <p>Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)                  EAST                  Search term: device usage value, monitoring, entertainment device, visual display, power line communication.</p>														
<p><b>C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT</b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Category *</th> <th>Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th> <th>Relevant to claim No.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Y</td> <td>US 6,005,476 A (VALIULIS) 21 December 1999, col. 3, lines 26-67, col. 4, lines 1-67, and col. 5, lines 1-41.</td> <td>1-52</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Y</td> <td>US 5,586,174 A (BOGNER et al) 17 December 1996, col. 2, lines 12-65.</td> <td>1-52</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Y</td> <td>US 4,703,306 A (BARRITT) 27 October 1987, col. 2, lines 15-67, and col. 3, lines 1-9.</td> <td>1-52</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.	Y	US 6,005,476 A (VALIULIS) 21 December 1999, col. 3, lines 26-67, col. 4, lines 1-67, and col. 5, lines 1-41.	1-52	Y	US 5,586,174 A (BOGNER et al) 17 December 1996, col. 2, lines 12-65.	1-52	Y	US 4,703,306 A (BARRITT) 27 October 1987, col. 2, lines 15-67, and col. 3, lines 1-9.	1-52
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<p><input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.      <input type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.</p>														
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<p>Name and mailing address of the ISA/US                  Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US                  Commissioner for Patents                  P.O. Box 1450                  Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450                  Facsimile No. (703)305-3230</p>		<p>Authorized officer                  Phung Nguyen <i>Phung Nguyen</i>                  Telephone No. 703-308-6252</p>												