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(71) Applicant: REAL TIME DATA [US/US]; 1756 114th Avenue S.E. #255, Bellevue, WA 98004 (US).

(72) Inventors: ELDREDGE, Christopher; 22242 N.E. 31st, Redmond, WA 98053 (US). HERN, Steven; 16113 70th N.E., Bothell, WA 98011 (US). ROBINSON, Ian; 5835 South Fish, Freeland, WA 98249 (US).

(74) Agent: LIGHTBODY, William; 2121 East Ohio Building, 1717 East Ninth Street, Cleveland, OH 44114 (US).

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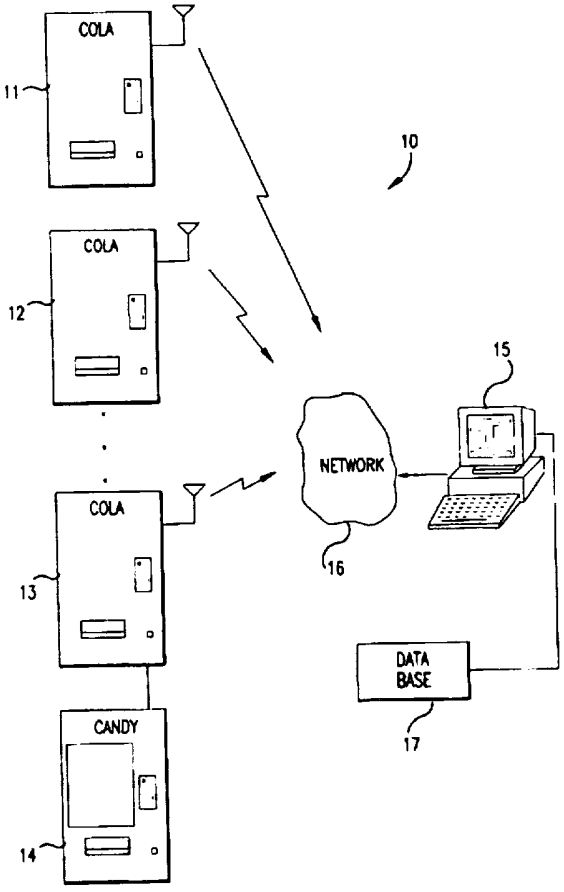
(54) Title: SYSTEM FOR MONITORING REMOTE VENDING MACHINES

(57) Abstract

A system for remotely monitoring a plurality of vending machines (11-14) from a central computer (15). The system includes a sensing and communication circuit that monitors the operation of the vending machine, translates the monitored operation into a common signal form whatever the machine, and transmits data packets including pertinent information back to the central computer (15). The sensing and communication circuit includes a plurality of sensors disposed throughout the vending machine. A microprocessor reads the output signals produced by the sensors and generates a data packet that is indicative of the sensor values and the operation of the vending machine. This microprocessor is coupled to a modem that transmits the data packet over a network to the central computer system. The central computer is similarly equipped with a modem to receive the data packets.



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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US94/09126

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(6) :G05B 15/00
US CL :364/479

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

U.S. : 364/479,478,401-408; 235/381,382,382.5; 340/825.35,825.54; 221/2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15,

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US, A, RE 29,450 (GOLDSBY ET AL) 18 October 1977, figures 1 and col.. 2 line 29 - Col. 3 line 11	1-111
X,P	US, A, 5,339,250 (DURBIN) 16 August 1994, figure 1	1-111
X	US,A, 4,412,292 (SEDAM ET AL) 25 October 1983, figure 1	1-111
X	US, A, 4,853,684 (HOPPSTADTER) 01 August 1989, col. 2 line 56 - col. 3 line 2.	1-111
X	US,A, 5,091,713 (HORNE ET AL.) 25 February 1992, figure 3 and Col. 5 lines 33+'	1-111

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Name and mailing address of the ISA/US
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Box PCT
Washington, D.C. 20231
Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230

Authorized officer
JAMES PAUL TRAMMELL
Telephone No. (703)-305-3800

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