(54) Title: STREAM MERGING FOR VIDEO ON DEMAND

(57) Abstract: A channel merging method for a video on demand system, said method comprises the steps of: in response to requests from a plurality of clients for a video program, establishing a root channel (S1) and at least one sub-channel (S11), said root channel (S1) being established according to a request from a client that makes the earliest request, each of said sub-channels (S11) being established in response to a request from a client that makes a later request; and monitoring variation of the number of the clients that are using each of said established channels, and maintaining the channel if the number of the clients using the monitored channel is not zero, and closing the channel if the number of the clients using the monitored channel becomes zero.
Published:

— with international search report
— before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of amendments

(88) Date of publication of the international search report: 12 August 2004

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

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 H04N7/173

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)

IPC 7 H04N

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 practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages Relevant to claim No.


A

1-5,
10-12,
14,15

6-9,14,
15

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

[ ] Patent family members are listed in annex.

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Date of the actual completion of the international search

4 June 2004

Date of mailing of the international search report

17/06/2004

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk

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<td>HUA K A ET AL: &quot;SKYSCRAPER BROADCASTING: A NEW BROADCASTING SCHEME FOR METROPOLITAN VIDEO-ON-DEMAND SYSTEMS&quot; COMPUTER COMMUNICATION REVIEW, ASSOCIATION FOR COMPUTING MACHINERY. NEW YORK, US, vol. 27, no. 4, 1997, pages 69-100, XP000886096 ISSN: 0146-4833 the whole document</td>
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