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(54) COMPUTER-BASED ONBOARD NOISE SUPPRESSION DEVICES WITH REMOTE WEB-BASED MANAGEMENT FEATURES

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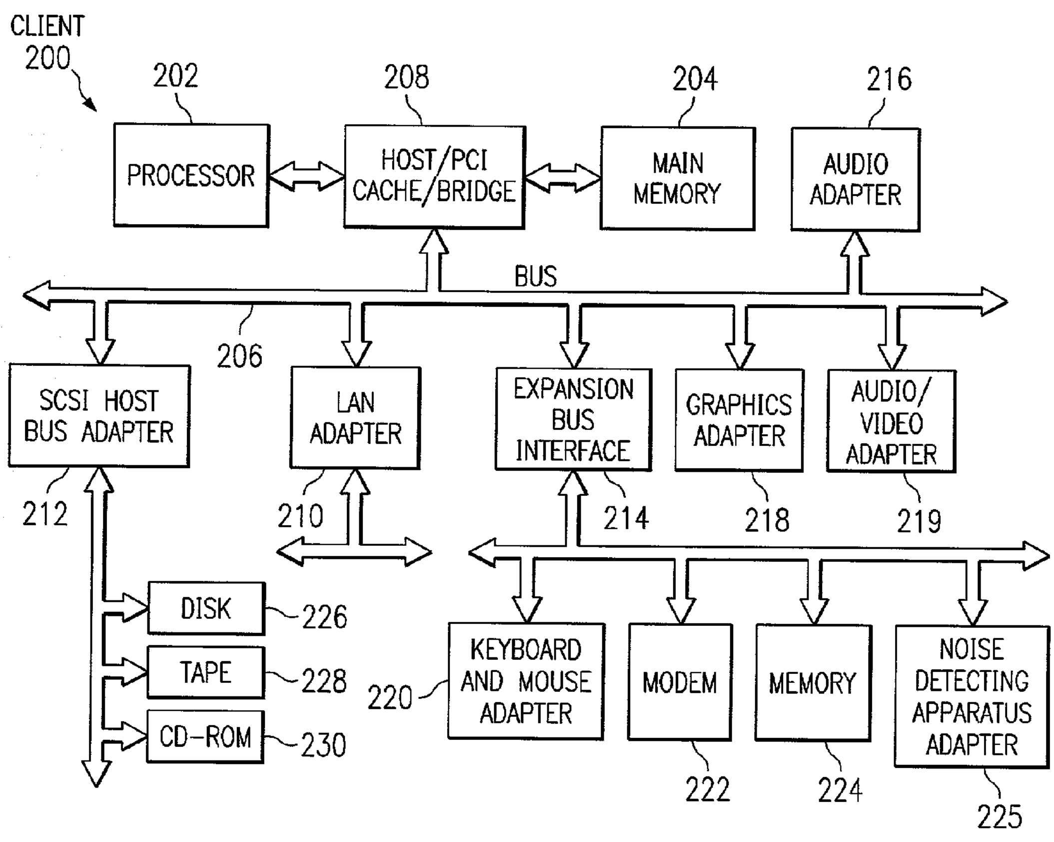
(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention provides a method, apparatus, and computer implemented instructions for computer-based onboard noise suppression devices with remote web-based management features. The present invention detects noise within a computer. A noise canceling signal is generated based on parameters. These parameters may include, for example, the percentage of noise to suppress. The noise canceling signal is broadcasted to reduce or eliminate noise. Additionally, the present invention provides the ability to remotely manage noise suppression within computers.



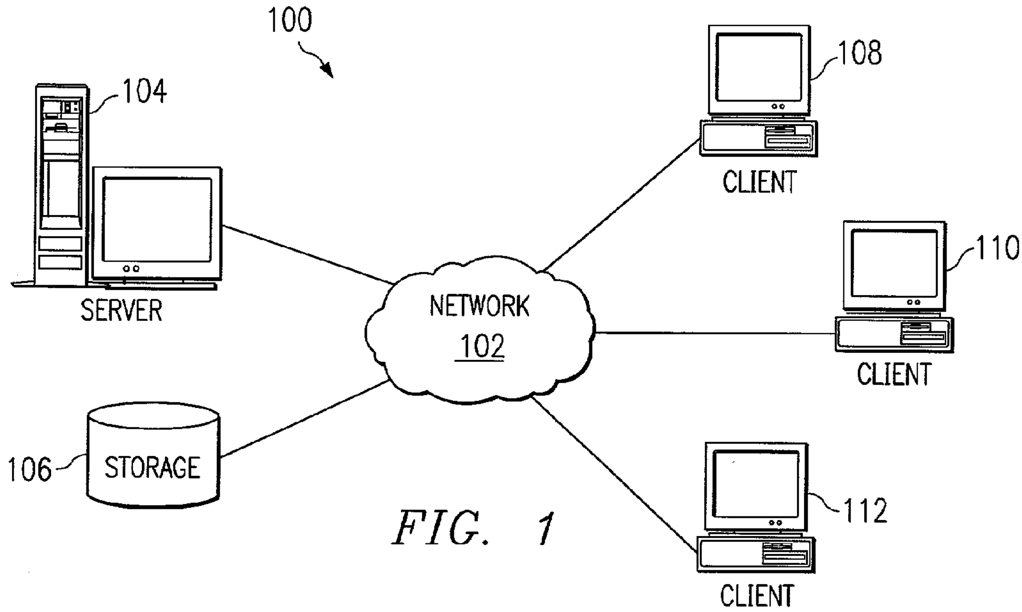

100
104
SERVER
108
CLIENT
110
CLIENT
NETWORK
102
106
STORAGE
112
CLIENT

*FIG. 1*

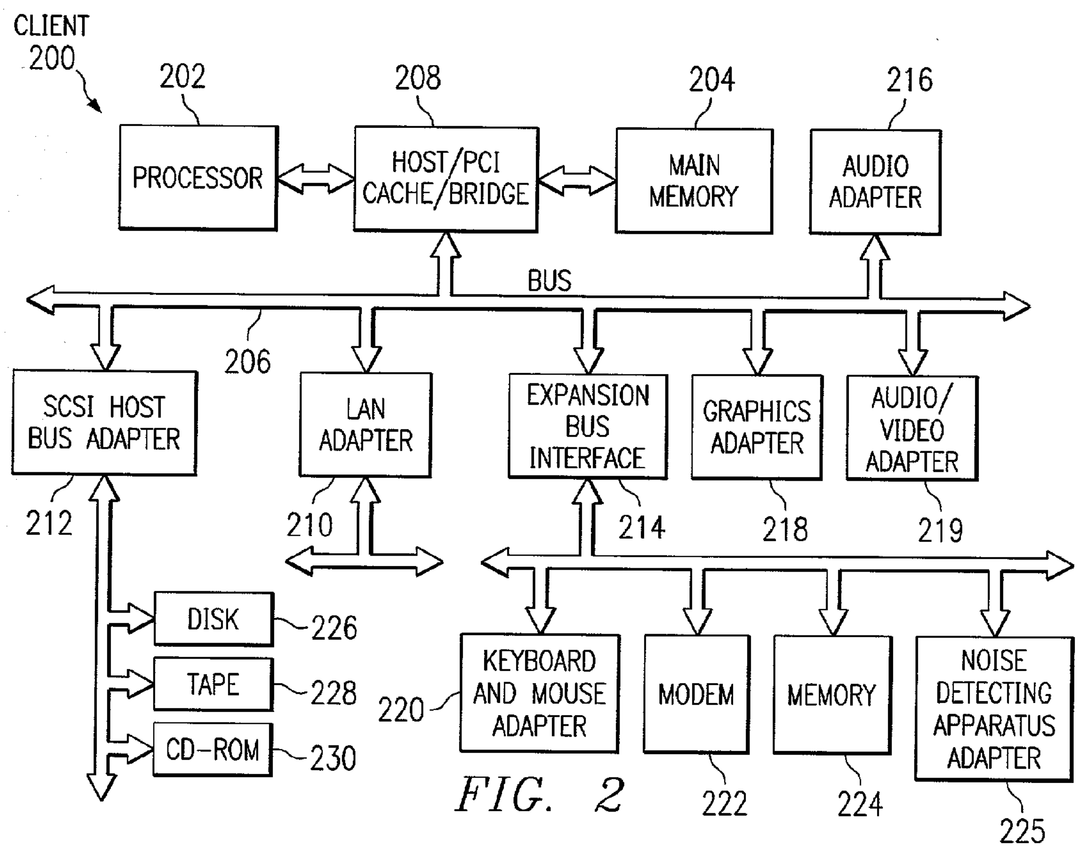

CLIENT
200
202
PROCESSOR
208
HOST/PCI CACHE/BRIDGE
204
MAIN MEMORY
216
AUDIO ADAPTER
BUS
206
SCSI HOST BUS ADAPTER
212
LAN ADAPTER
210
EXPANSION BUS INTERFACE
214
GRAPHICS ADAPTER
218
AUDIO/ VIDEO ADAPTER
219
DISK
226
TAPE
228
CD-ROM
230
220
KEYBOARD AND MOUSE ADAPTER
MODEM
222
MEMORY
224
NOISE DETECTING APPARATUS ADAPTER
225

*FIG. 2*

FIG. 3

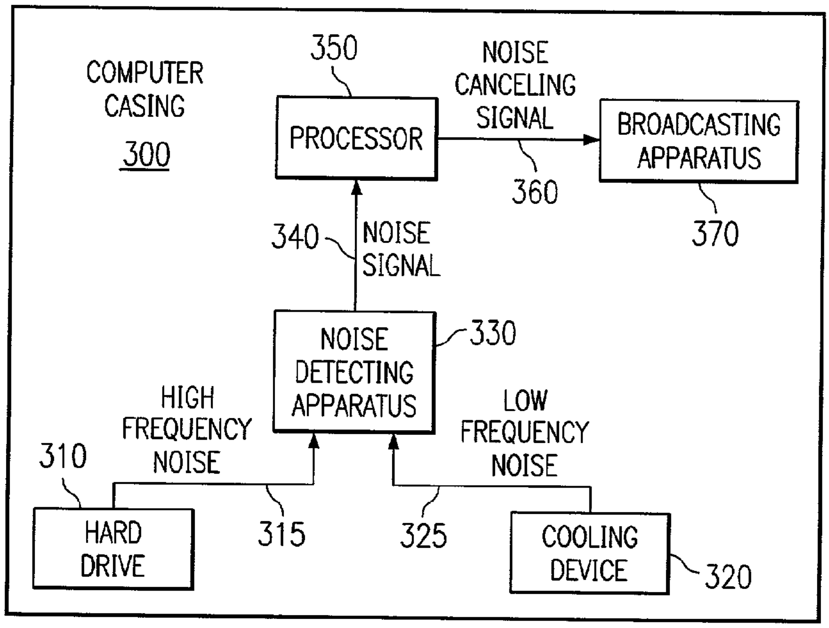



FIG. 4

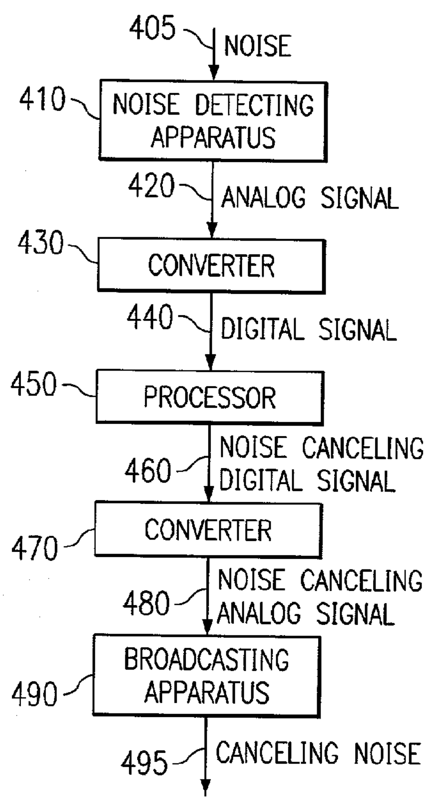



FIG. 5

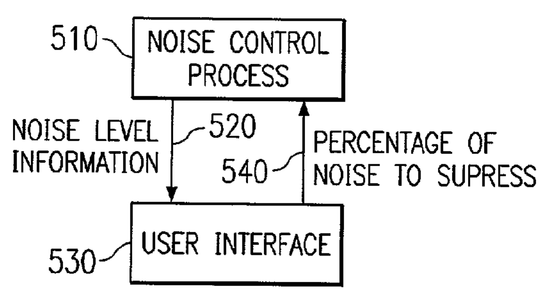


FIG. 6

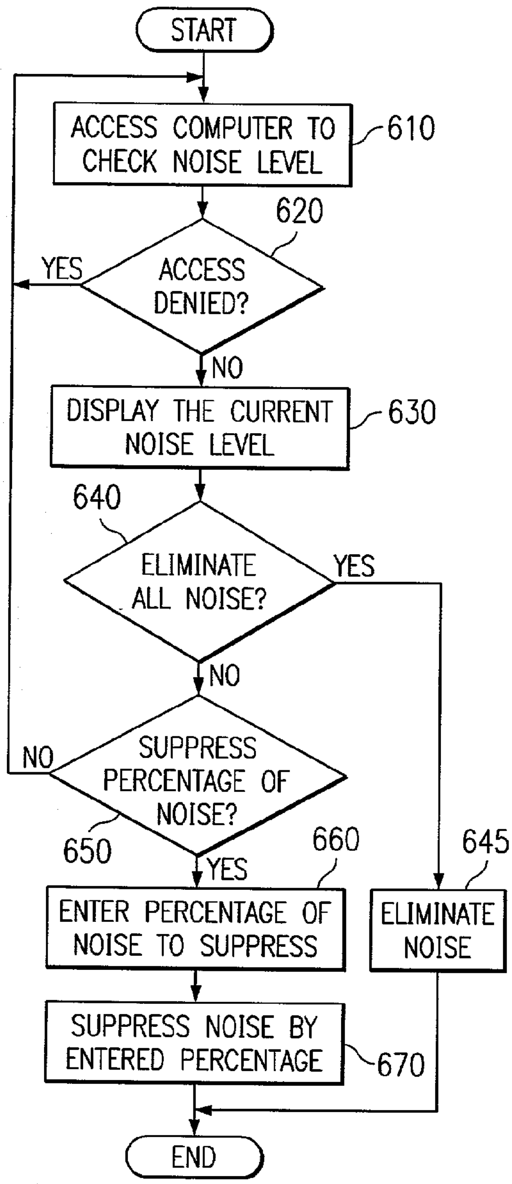



FIG. 7

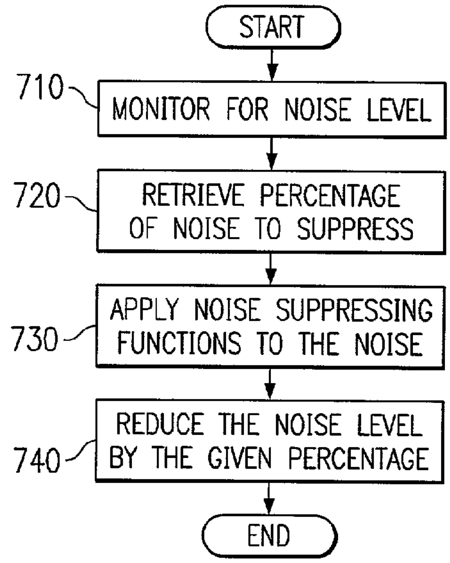
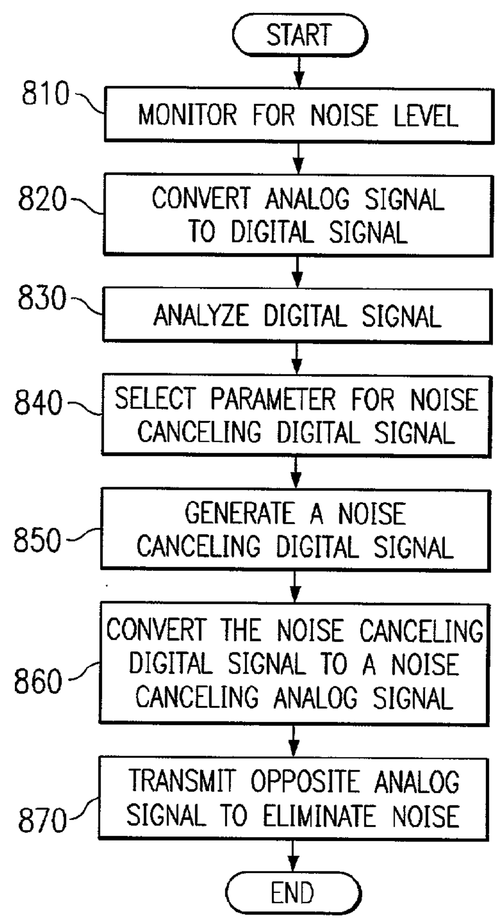



FIG. 8



# COMPUTER-BASED ONBOARD NOISE SUPPRESSION DEVICES WITH REMOTE WEB-BASED MANAGEMENT FEATURES

## BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Technical Field

[0002] The present invention relates to an improved data processing system. In particular, the present invention relates to a method, apparatus, and computer instructions for computer-based onboard noise suppression devices with remote web-based management features.

[0003] 2. Description of Related Art

[0004] In production environments, often times, noise levels are excessive where computing machinery may be operational. Excessive noise may be due to multiple pieces of computing machinery in a production area or the types of devices in the computing machinery. High frequency noise levels are generated by high speed disk storage devices and low frequency noise levels are generated by lower speed fan and cooling devices. Damaging high and low frequency noise levels are most often generated without concerns to people. At times, these noise levels can exceed what might be considered to be safe for operators of these various types of production equipment especially during extended periods of time. Likewise, these high decibel noise levels can be unsafe for visitors in surrounding noise affected areas. Exposure to dangerous noise levels could damage the hearing of an individual.

[0005] Therefore, it would be advantageous to have an improved method, apparatus, and computer instructions to allow users to set and monitor noise levels appropriate to their environment.

## SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The present invention provides a method, apparatus, and computer implemented instructions for computer-based onboard noise suppression devices with remote web-based management features. The present invention detects noise within a computer. A noise canceling signal is generated based on parameters. These parameters may include, for example, the percentage of noise to suppress. The noise canceling signal is broadcasted to reduce or eliminate noise. Additionally, the present invention provides the ability to remotely manage noise suppression within computers.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] The novel features believed characteristic of the invention are set forth in the appended claims. The invention itself, however, as well as a preferred mode of use, further objectives and advantages thereof, will best be understood by reference to the following detailed description of an illustrative embodiment when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0008] **FIG. 1** depicts a pictorial representation of a network of data processing systems in which the present invention may be implemented;

[0009] **FIG. 2** is a block diagram illustrating a data processing system in which the present invention may be implemented;

[0010] **FIG. 3** is a block diagram of components located within a computer casing in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

[0011] **FIG. 4** is a block diagram of components used to modify the noise level in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

[0012] **FIG. 5** is a block diagram of the noise control process in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

[0013] **FIG. 6** is a flowchart of the process for remote noise level management in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

[0014] **FIG. 7** is a flowchart of the process to suppress noise by a selected percentage in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention; and

[0015] **FIG. 8** is a flowchart of the process to eliminate noise in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0016] With reference now to the figures, **FIG. 1** depicts a pictorial representation of a network of data processing systems in which the present invention may be implemented. Network data processing system **100** is a network of computers in which the present invention may be implemented. Network data processing system **100** contains a network **102**, which is the medium used to provide communications links between various devices and computers connected together within network data processing system **100**. Network **102** may include connections, such as wire, wireless communication links, or fiber optic cables.

[0017] In the depicted example, server **104** is connected to network **102** along with storage unit **106**. In addition, clients **108**, **110**, and **112** are connected to network **102**. These clients **108**, **110**, and **112** may be, for example, personal computers or network computers. In the depicted example, server **104** provides data, such as boot files, operating system images, and applications to clients **108-112**. Clients **108**, **110**, and **112** are clients to server **104**. Network data processing system **100** may include additional servers, clients, and other devices not shown. In the depicted example, network data processing system **100** is the Internet with network **102** representing a worldwide collection of networks and gateways that use the TCP/IP suite of protocols to communicate with one another. At the heart of the Internet is a backbone of high-speed data communication lines between major nodes or host computers, consisting of thousands of commercial, government, educational and other computer systems that route data and messages. Of course, network data processing system **100** also may be implemented as a number of different types of networks, such as for example, an intranet, a local area network (LAN), or a wide area network (WAN). **FIG. 1** is intended as an example, and not as an architectural limitation for the present invention.

[0018] With reference now to **FIG. 2, a** block diagram illustrating a data processing system is depicted in which the present invention may be implemented. Data processing system **200** is an example of an apparatus that may be used as a client computer or even as a server computer. Data processing system **200** employs a peripheral component interconnect (PCI) local bus architecture. Although the depicted example employs a PCI bus, other bus architectures such as Accelerated Graphics Port (AGP) and Industry Standard Architecture (ISA) may be used. Processor **202** and main memory **204** are connected to PCI local bus **206** through PCI bridge **208**. PCI bridge **208** also may include an integrated memory controller and cache memory for processor **202**. Additional connections to PCI local bus **206** may be made through direct component interconnection or through add-in boards.

[**0019**] In the depicted example, local area network (LAN) adapter **210**, SCSI host bus adapter **212**, and expansion bus interface **214** are connected to PCI local bus **206** by direct component connection. In contrast, audio adapter **216**, graphics adapter **218**, and audio/video adapter **219** are connected to PCI local bus **206** by add-in boards inserted into expansion slots. Expansion bus interface **214** provides a connection for a keyboard and mouse adapter **220**, modem **222**, additional memory **224**, and noise detecting apparatus adapter **225**. Noise detecting apparatus adapter **225** provides a connection for a microphone, a decibel sensor, or other hardware that can detect noise.

[**0020**] Small computer system interface (SCSI) host bus adapter **212** provides a connection for hard disk drive **226**, tape drive **228**, and CD-ROM drive **230**. Typical PCI local bus implementations will support three or four PCI expansion slots or add-in connectors.

[**0021**] An operating system runs on processor **202** and is used to coordinate and provide control of various components within data processing system **200** in **FIG. 2**. The operating system may be a commercially available operating system, such as Windows 2000, which is available from Microsoft Corporation. An object oriented programming system such as Java or Perl may run in conjunction with the operating system and provide calls to the operating system from Java programs or applications executing on data processing system **200**. "Java" is a trademark of Sun Microsystems, Inc. "Perl" is programming language written by Larry Wall that combines syntax from several UNIX utilities and languages. Instructions for the operating system, the object-oriented operating system, and applications or programs are located on storage devices, such as hard disk drive **226**, and may be loaded into main memory **204** for execution by processor **202**.

[**0022**] Those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the hardware in **FIG. 2** may vary depending on the implementation. Other internal hardware or peripheral devices, such as flash ROM (or equivalent nonvolatile memory) or optical disk drives and the like, may be used in addition to or in place of the hardware depicted in **FIG. 2**. Also, the processes of the present invention may be applied to a multiprocessor data processing system.

[**0023**] As another example, data processing system **200** may be a stand-alone system configured to be bootable without relying on some type of network communication interface, whether or not data processing system **200** comprises some type of network communication interface. As a further example, data processing system **200** may be a personal digital assistant (PDA) device, which is configured with ROM and/or flash ROM in order to provide non-volatile memory for storing operating system files and/or user-generated data.

[**0024**] The depicted example in **FIG. 2** and above-described examples are not meant to imply architectural limitations. For example, data processing system **200** also may be a notebook computer or hand held computer in addition to taking the form of a PDA. Data processing system **200** also may be a kiosk or a Web appliance.

[**0025**] Next, **FIG. 3** is a block diagram of components located within a computer casing in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. Computer casing **300** may be for a client or server computer such as client **200** in **FIG. 2** or clients **108**, **110**, **112** or server **104** in **FIG. 1**. Noise generated within computer casing **300** may be undesirable. In this example, hard drive **310** produces high frequency noise **315** while cooling device **320** produces low frequency noise **325**. Of course other devices may also generate noise that is undesirable such as disk drives, tape drives, power supplies, processor fans, power unit fans, or storage devices.

[**0026**] These high and low frequency noises may be unsafe or undesirable for the people residing in the noise affected area. In the present invention, the user may choose to eliminate or suppress the noise level within a computer. The operating system of the computer or some other software component may be used to control the amount of noise canceled within the computer. This reduction of noise may be selected using different measures, such as, for example a percentage reduction in noise. Noise detecting apparatus **330** monitors the noise level within computer casing **300** by detecting noise such as high frequency noise **315** and low frequency noise **325**. Noise detecting apparatus **330** sends noise signal **340** to processor **350**. Processor **350** controls the phase and amplitude modulation control of noise canceling signal **360**.

[**0027**] Noise canceling signal **360**, also referred to as white noise, is an opposite signal to the noise level within the computer. "White noise" is a random interference generated by the movement of electricity and can be used to cancel noise. Although, white noise is well known in many noise intensive environments, self-correcting noise suppressing functions within a computer are a unique improvement in noise reduction techniques.

[**0028**] Noise canceling signal **360** is transmitted by broadcasting apparatus **370** to eliminate or reduce the noise level within computer casing **300**. A loudspeaker and a transducer are examples of broadcasting apparatus that may be used.

[**0029**] **FIG. 4** is a block diagram of components used to modify the noise level in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. Noise **405** is detected by noise detecting apparatus **410**. Noise detecting apparatus **410** may include for example a microphone mounted within the casing of the computer. Multiple microphones may be used depending on the particular implementation. With the multiple microphone implementation, the microphones may be mounted or located near noise sources within the computer casing, such as a hard disk drive, power supply, or fan. Microphones may also be located in specific areas within the computer, such as the center of the top and sides of the computer casing.

[0030] Noise detecting apparatus **410** sends analog signal **420** to converter **430**. Converter **430** converts analog signal **420** to digital signal **440**. In an alternative method, noise detecting apparatus **410** may include an analog to digital (ADC) signal converter rather than using a separate converter, such as converter **430**.

[0031] Digital signal **440** is stored by processor **450**. Processor **450** generates noise canceling digital signal **460**. Processor **450** sends noise canceling digital signal **460** to converter **470**. Converter **470** converts noise canceling digital signal **460** to noise canceling analog signal **480**. Converter **470** sends noise canceling analog signal **480** to broadcasting apparatus **490**. Broadcasting apparatus **490** may be for example a loudspeaker or transducer mounted within the casing of the computer. Multiple loudspeakers or transducers may be mounted within the computer and may be located in various locations, such as in the vicinity of the noise detecting apparatus. Broadcasting apparatus **490** transmits canceling noise **495** to reduce or eliminate noise.

[0032] In a preferred embodiment of the present invention the noise detecting apparatus and the broadcasting apparatus are located within the computer to avoid detecting extraneous noise. However, either or both the noise detecting apparatus and the broadcasting apparatus may be located outside the computer in an alternative configuration.

[0033] **FIG. 5** is a block diagram of the noise control process in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

[0034] Noise control process **510** includes programs, such as for example Perl scripts, C procedures, or UNIX scripts, within the computer, which is being monitored for the noise level. Noise control process **510** sends noise level information **520** to user interface **530**. Noise level information may be displayed to the user by user interface **530**. The user can use noise level information **520** to determine the percentage to suppress noise.

[0035] Alternatively, the percentage may be selected automatically based on preselected parameters that identify acceptable or safe levels of noise. The user may choose to suppress all noise, a portion of noise, or not to modify the noise. The user may enter a percentage and user interface **530** sends percentage of noise to suppress **540** to noise control process **510**. Noise control process **510** uses percentage of noise to suppress **540** as a parameter to generate the noise canceling signal such as noise canceling digital signal **460** in **FIG. 4**. Another example of a parameter that may be used is a value for the desired noise level, such as zero when all noise to be eliminated.

[0036] Additional parameters may include actual decibels, decibels to maintain, noise frequency, values for unsafe noise levels, and work values for noise predicted from a noise source. The processor could use the work values to predict the noise level and generate a noise canceling signal to prevent the unwanted noise. The present invention includes a continuous cycle of noise checking. In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, the Least Mean Square (LMS) algorithm is used for noise reduction. LMS is a steepest descent search algorithm, which is well known in prior art.

[0037] Noise control process **510** may be executed remotely from a computer such as server **104** in **FIG. 1**.

[0038] Next, **FIG. 6** is a flowchart of the process for remote noise level management in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention, which is used by noise control process **510** in **FIG. 5**. A user tries to access a computer to determine the noise level (step **610**). A determination is made as to whether access is denied (step **620**). If access is denied, the process returns to the beginning at step **610**. If access is granted, the current noise level is displayed to the user (step **630**). A determination is made whether to eliminate all noise (step **640**).

[0039] If all noise is to be eliminated, eliminate all noise using a noise canceling signal (step **645**) with the process terminating thereafter. Step **645** is explained in detail with **FIG. 9**. Otherwise, a determination is made whether to suppress a percentage of noise (step **650**). If noise is not to be suppressed, the process returns to the beginning at step **610**. If noise suppression is desired, the user enters a percentage of noise to suppress (step **660**). The noise is suppressed by the entered percentage (step **670**) with the process terminating thereafter. Step **670** is discussed in more detail in **FIG. 7**.

[0040] **FIG. 7** is a flowchart of the process to suppress noise by a selected percentage in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. The noise within a computer is monitored to determine the noise level (step **710**). A parameter with the value of percentage of noise to suppress is retrieved (step **720**). Noise suppressing functions, such as the Least Mean Square algorithm, are applied to the noise (step **730**). The noise level is reduced by the given percentage in the parameter retrieved in step **720** (step **740**) with the process terminating thereafter.

[0041] **FIG. 8** is a flowchart of the process to eliminate noise in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. The noise within a computer is monitored to determine the noise level (step **810**). The analog signal of the noise is converted to a digital signal (step **820**). The digital signal is analyzed (step **830**). The parameter for the noise canceling digital signal is retrieved (step **840**). A noise canceling digital signal is generated (step **850**). The noise canceling digital signal is converted to a noise canceling analog signal (step **860**). Then, the noise canceling analog signal is transmitted to eliminate noise (step **870**) with the process terminating thereafter.

[0042] Thus, the present invention provides an improved method, apparatus, and computer instructions for computer-based onboard noise suppression devices with remote web-based management features. The present invention provides a method to eliminate or reduce unsafe and undesirable noise levels within a computer. Implementing the present invention with in a computer casing allows noise from within the computer to be reduced or eliminated without the added complexity of other outside noises. For example, a person passing by the computer could be creating loud noise, which would not effect the noise reduction of the present invention. Additionally, the present invention provides the advantage of remotely managing noise suppression within computers, which allows operators to reduce noise prior to entering noise affected areas. The present invention may be used to retrofit existing computers or implemented in newly built computer systems.

[0043] It is important to note that while the present invention has been described in the context of a fully functioning data processing system, those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the processes of the present invention are capable of being distributed in the form of a computer readable medium of instructions and a variety of forms and that the present invention applies equally regardless of the particular type of signal bearing media actually used to carry out the distribution. Examples of computer readable media include recordable-type media, such as a floppy disk, a hard disk drive, a RAM, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, and transmission-type media, such as digital and analog communications links, wired or wireless communications links using transmission forms, such as, for example, radio frequency and light wave transmissions. The computer readable media may take the form of coded formats that are decoded for actual use in a particular data processing system.

**[0044]** The description of the present invention has been presented for purposes of illustration and description, and is not intended to be exhaustive or limited to the invention in the form disclosed. Many modifications and variations will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. The embodiment was chosen and described in order to best explain the principles of the invention, the practical application, and to enable others of ordinary skill in the art to understand the invention for various embodiments with various modifications as are suited to the particular use contemplated.

What is claimed is:

**1**. A method in a data processing system for eliminating noise within a computer, the method comprising:

detecting a noise level within the computer using a noise detecting apparatus;

generating a noise canceling signal based on the noise level detected from the computer; and

broadcasting the noise canceling signal, wherein the noise level is reduced.

**2**. The method of claim 1, wherein a processor in the computer is used to control phase and amplitude modulation of the noise canceling signal.

**3**. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

converting an analog signal of the noise level to a digital signal of the noise level.

**4**. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

converting a digital noise canceling signal to an analog noise canceling signal.

**5**. The method of claim 1, wherein the noise detecting apparatus is a microphone or a decibel sensor.

**6**. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

managing the noise level of the computer remotely.

**7**. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

logging information related to the noise level within the computer.

**8**. The method of claim 1, wherein the broadcasting step includes:

using a loudspeaker within the computer to transmit the noise canceling signal.

**9**. The method of claim 1, wherein the noise level is detected from within the computer and wherein the noise canceling signal is broadcast within the computer.

**10**. A method in a data processing system for implementing self-correcting noise suppressing functions within a computer, the method comprising:

monitoring a noise level within the computer using a noise detecting apparatus;

identifying a percentage of noise to suppress within the computer; and

modifying the noise level within the computer based on the percentage of noise to suppress within the computer.

**11**. The method of claim 10 further comprising:

managing the noise level of the computer remotely.

**12**. The method of claim 10 further comprising:

logging information related to the noise level of the computer.

**13**. The method of claim 10, wherein the noise detecting apparatus is at least one of a microphone and a decibel sensor.

**14**. The method of claim 10, wherein the selecting step includes:

using an operating system such that a user can modify the percentage of noise to suppress within the computer.

**15**. The method of claim 10, wherein the identifying step comprises:

receiving the percentage of noise to suppress as a user input.

**16**. A method for reducing noise generated by a number of computers in a network data processing system, the method comprising the computer implemented steps of:

receiving noise level information from a computer within the number of computers in the network data processing system;

identifying parameters for a noise cancellation signal in response to receiving the noise level information; and

initiating broadcasting of the noise cancellation signal at the computer using the parameters, wherein the noise level is reduced.

**17**. The method of claim 16, wherein the noise level information includes an amplitude and a phase.

**18**. The method of claim 16, wherein the parameters includes an amplitude and a phase for the noise cancellation signal.

**19**. The method of claim 16, wherein the parameters include a selection of a percent of noise to suppress.

**20**. The method of claim 16 further comprising:

logging noise level information from the number of computers.

**21**. The method of claim 20, wherein the parameters are based on the noise level information from the number of computers.

**22**. The method of claim 16, wherein the noise cancellation signal is broadcast within the computer.

**23**. A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes as set of instructions; and a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to detect a noise level within the computer using a noise detecting apparatus; generate a noise canceling signal based on the noise level detected from the computer; and broadcast the noise canceling signal, wherein the noise level is reduced.

**24**. A data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes as set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to monitor a noise level within the computer using a noise detecting apparatus; identify a percentage of noise to suppress within the computer; and modify the noise level within the computer based on the percentage of noise to suppress within the computer.

**25**. A network data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes as set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to receive noise level information from a computer within the number of computers in the network data processing system; identify parameters for a noise cancellation signal in response to receiving the noise level information; and initiate broadcasting of the noise cancellation signal at the computer using the parameters, wherein the noise level is reduced.

**26**. A data processing system for eliminating noise within a computer, the data processing system comprising:

detecting means for detecting a noise level within the computer using a noise detecting apparatus;

generating means for generating a noise canceling signal based on the noise level detected from the computer; and

broadcasting means for broadcasting the noise canceling signal, wherein the noise level is reduced.

**27**. A data processing system for implementing self-correcting noise suppressing functions within a computer, the data processing system comprising:

monitoring means for monitoring a noise level within the computer using a noise detecting apparatus;

identifying means for identifying a percentage of noise to suppress within the computer; and

modifying means for modifying the noise level within the computer based on the percentage of noise to suppress within the computer.

**28**. A network data processing system for reducing noise generated by a number of computers in a network, the network data processing system comprising:

receiving means for receiving noise level information from a computer within the number of computers in the network data processing system;

identifying means for identifying parameters for a noise cancellation signal in response to receiving the noise level information; and

broadcasting means for initiating broadcasting of the noise cancellation signal at the computer using the parameters, wherein the noise level is reduced.

**29**. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for eliminating noise within a computer, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for detecting a noise level within the computer using a noise detecting apparatus;

second instructions for generating a noise canceling signal based on the noise level detected from the computer; and

third instructions for broadcasting the noise canceling signal, wherein the noise level is reduced.

**30**. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for implementing self-correcting noise suppressing functions within a computer, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for monitoring a noise level within the computer using a noise detecting apparatus;

second instructions for identifying a percentage of noise to suppress within the computer; and

third instructions for modifying the noise level within the computer based on the percentage of noise to suppress within the computer.

**31**. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for reducing noise generated by a number of computers in a network data processing system, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for receiving noise level information from a computer within the number of computers in the network data processing system;

second instructions for identifying parameters for a noise cancellation signal in response to receiving the noise level information; and

third instructions for initiating broadcasting of the noise cancellation signal at the computer using the parameters, wherein the noise level is reduced.

* * * * *