(19) World Intellectual Property Organization

International Bureau





(43) International Publication Date 28 October 2004 (28.10.2004)

PCT

US

(10) International Publication Number WO 2004/092911 A3

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: H04J 15/00, 1/12
- (21) International Application Number:

PCT/US2004/011483

- (22) International Filing Date: 13 April 2004 (13.04.2004)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:

10/412,889 14 April 2003 (14.04.2003)

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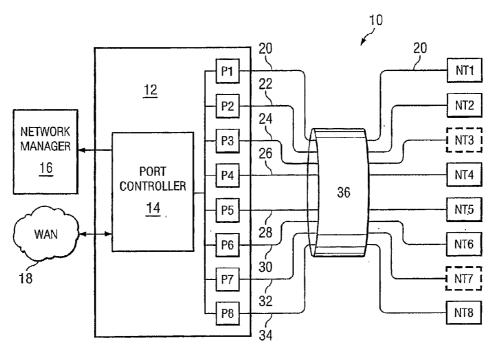
- (81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.
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Declarations under Rule 4.17:

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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PREVENTING PHANTOM DATA COMMUNICATION LINKS



(57) Abstract: A data communication system (10) is provided that comprises a head-end switching system (12) which comprises a plurality of communication ports. A port controller (14) causes the ports to sequentially issue inquiry signals to network termination points. This sequential processing of inquiry signals prevents the formation of phantom links that may occur if physical conductors which are susceptible to crosstalk interference with connected conductors erroneously convey a response signal back to an unattached port within the head-in switching system.

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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

$\textbf{(88)} \ \ \textbf{Date of publication of the international search report:}$

6 January 2005

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US04/11483

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.: 370/200, 201, 461-468, 442, 445, 449; 375/222,227,231,371;3791.01, 4, 22.01;455/7 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 6,473,438 B1 (Cioffi et al) 29 October 2002, see entire reference 1-7,9-15,17-22 X US 6,633,545 B1 (Milbrandt) 14 October 2001, see entire reference 8,16,23 Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. Special categories of cited documents: * To document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be considered to be considered to be considered to involve an inventive step when the document of particular relevance, the claimed invention to considered to be considered to be considered to be considered to be consented to particular relevance, the claimed invention counts the considered to be consented to a particular store and not necessitive to be consented to particular relevance, the claimed invention counts the consideration of particular relevance, the claimed invention to considered to be consented to a particular store and the consideration to involve an inventive step when the comment is a formati
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Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (July 1998)