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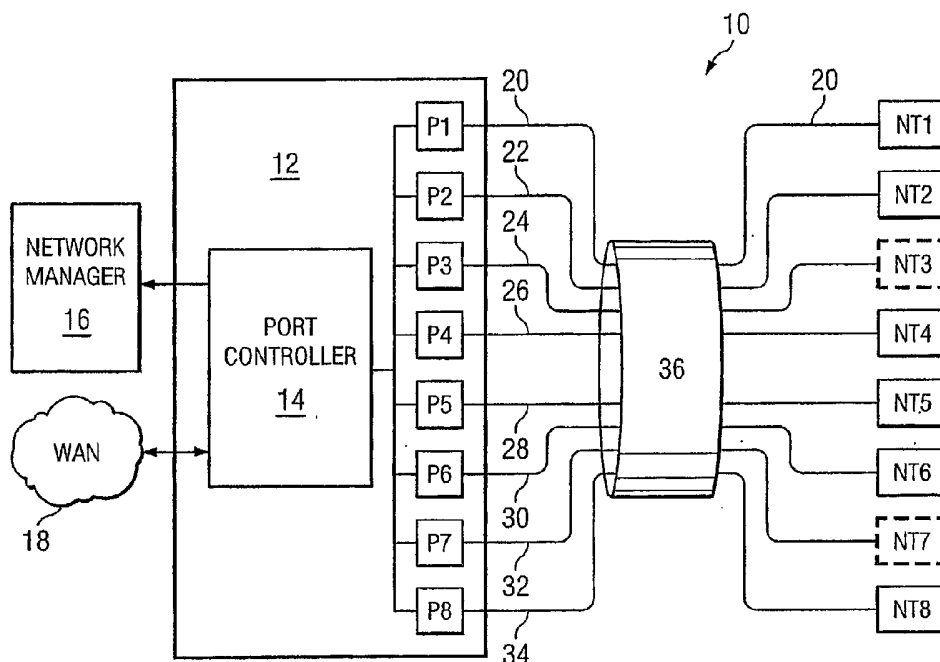
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Declarations under Rule 4.17:

— as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii)) for all designations

[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.



- *as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii)) for all designations*

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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;379/1.01, 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



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