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(54) Abstract Title: **Power converter with adjustable output voltage**

(57) A power converter 1 converts an input voltage to an output voltage V_{out} and comprises a converter body 1, a controller 2, and a connector 3 for an electrical appliance 4. The controller 2 adjusts the output voltage V_{out} , but only when a feedback device 22 of controller 2 is connected to the output voltage. The controller is not triggered and the output voltage is not adjustable when the connector is engaged with the output end 12 of the converter. The converter may comprise a plug 14 and wire 13, enabling the output to be connected to feedback device 22. The controller may comprise an operator interface such as buttons 211 for output adjustment and output display 212 and may be located inside body 1 or externally, connected by a wire (fig 4, 61). By ensuring that the output may only be altered when appliance 4 is disconnected accidental output changes and consequential damage to electrical appliance 4 are avoided. Appliance 4 can be a computer, cell phone or MP3 player.

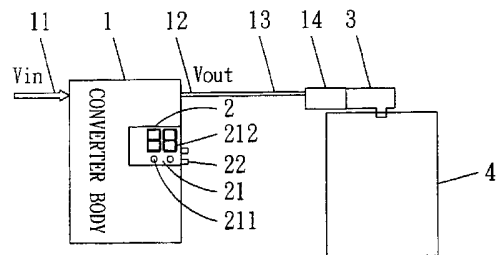


FIG. 2

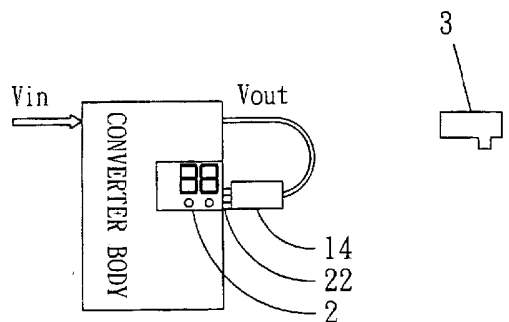
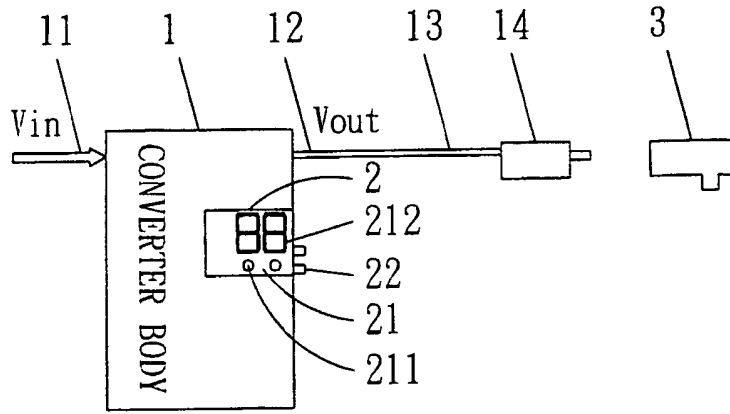
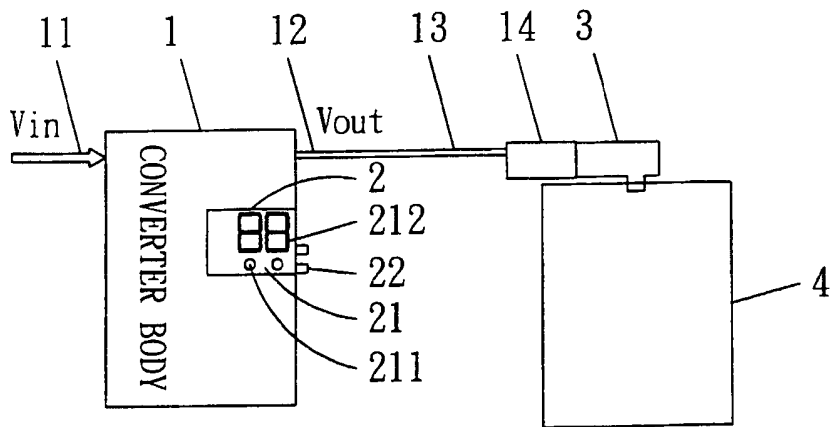


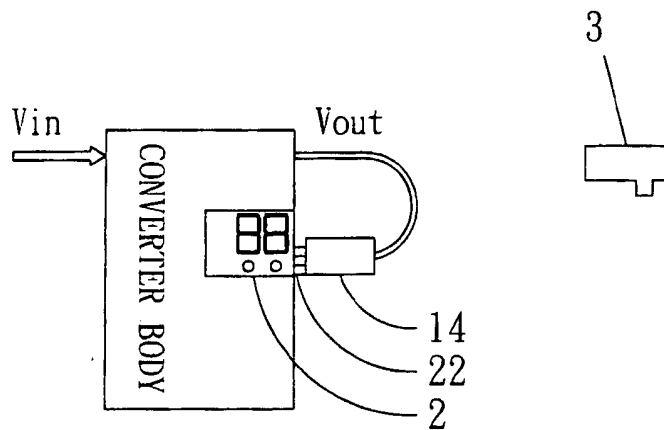
FIG. 3



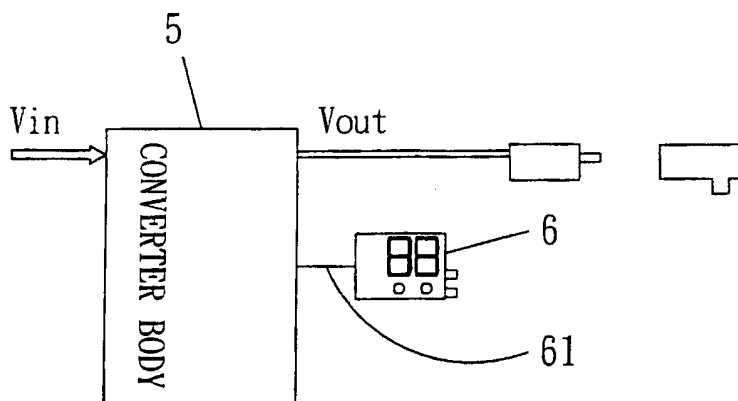
F I G . 1



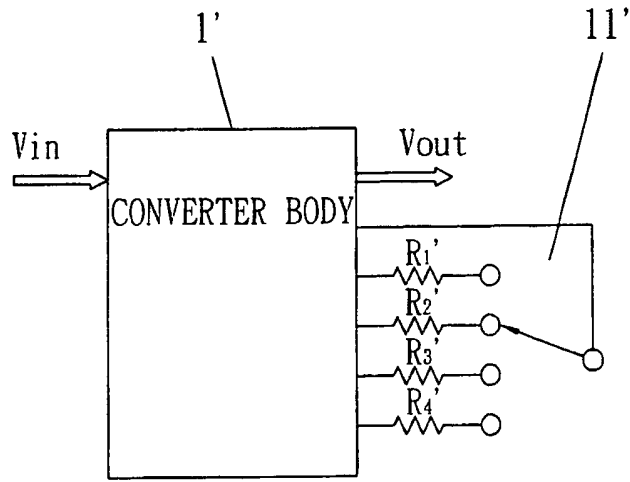
F I G . 2



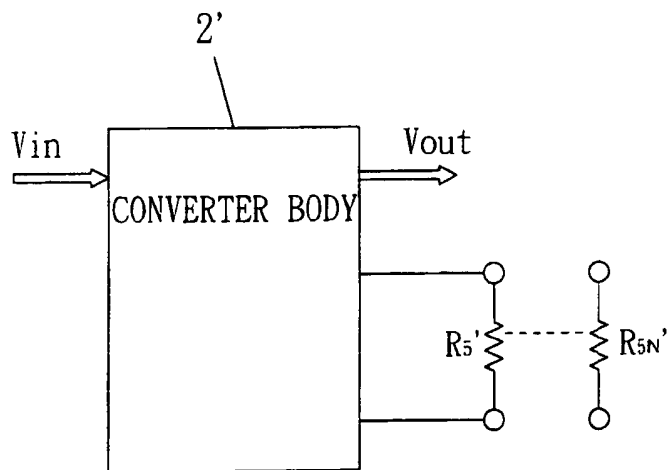
F I G . 3



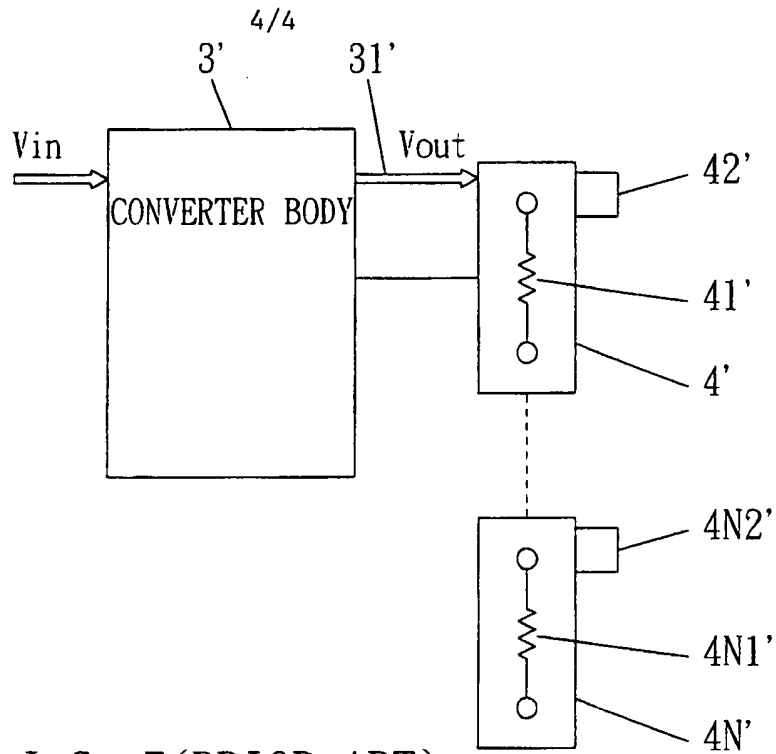
F I G . 4



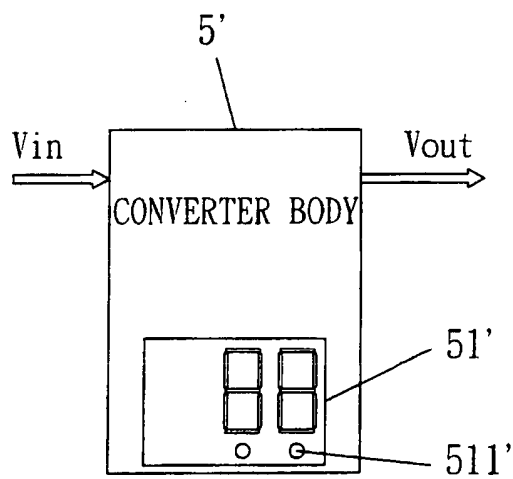
F I G . 5 (P R I O R A R T)



F I G . 6 (P R I O R A R T)



F I G . 7 (P R I O R A R T)



F I G . 8 (P R I O R A R T)

POWER CONVERTER WITH A FEEDBACK CONTROLLER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

5 **1. Field of the Invention**

The present invention relates to a power converter and, more particularly, to a power converter with a controller that monitors and regulates variations in output voltage sent as a feedback for output reliability.

10 **2. Description of the Related Art**

A power converter converts an input voltage to an output voltage to meet various demands of electric appliances. Power converters include AC to AC converters, AC to DC converters, DC to AC converters, and DC to DC converters. Power converters with a controller to regulate an output voltage for an input voltage are available in charging various electric appliances, including computers, cell phones, MP3, etc requiring different input voltages.

A conventional output-adjustable power converter includes a converter body with a circuit to regulate the input voltage for a desired output voltage. FIG. 5 shows a switching power converter including a converter body 1' having a circuit (not shown in Fig. 5) for manipulating on an input voltage V_{in} for a desired output voltage value V_{out} . The converter body 1' is connected at the same time with four resistors of different resistances, R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , and R_4 , the connection of which with the converter body is controlled by a selective-switching controller 11'. The output voltage V_{out} can thus be adjusted depending on different reference voltages due to the specifically selected connection of the resistors (R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , and R_4) by the selective-switching controller 11'.

Although the above conventional power converter in Fig. 5 has the merit of simplicity in structure, in operation the selective-switching controller 11' may nevertheless inadvertently jump to an undesired connection with any of the resistors and effects adversely the output. Furthermore, the output voltage V_{out} can potentially be adjusted even when an electric appliance is being powered by the output voltage V_{out} of the converter, leading to safety issues and damage to the electric appliance being used.

FIG. 6 shows a second conventional power converter with a converter body 2' and a plurality of external resistors R_5 to R_{5N} of different resistances, the connection of which with the converter body 2' is selectively made depending upon desired output voltage V_{out} .

Even though the power converter in Fig. 6 has the advantage of a simple structure and a low manufacturing cost, it also has the same disadvantage stated before: during the time an electric appliance is being powered by the output voltage V_{out} of the converter, the potentially adjustable output voltage may cause safety issues and damage to the electric appliance being charged. Furthermore, external resistors are not conveniently portable, and such a power converter is inoperable in absence of external resistors .

FIG. 7 shows a third conventional power converter having a converter body 3' and a plurality of output connectors 4' to 4N'. The converter body 3' includes a multiple-conductor cable 31' at an output end thereof. Each output connector of 4' to 4N' includes a resistor of 41' to 4N1' of different resistances, as well as a connector 42' to 4N2' for connection with electric appliances. One of the connectors of 42' to 4N2' is selected to connect to the multiple-conductor cable 31' for regulating the output voltage V_{out} for a desired value.

Such a power converter illustrated in Fig. 7 assures more usage safety since no output voltage V_{out} is directed to the electric appliance being powered. However, multiple output connectors 4'-4N' are not handy for users.

FIG. 8 shows a fourth conventional power converter of the type controlled by a
5 micro computer. The power converter includes a converter body 5' connected to a controller 51' for adjusting output voltage V_{out} via a control button 511'. Such a power converter is handy without burdensome external components, and also allows output of various voltages through easy operation of a button. However, the button 511' can be inadvertently activated by an unintentional contact.

10

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

An objective of the present invention is to provide an output-adjustable power converter that regulates an output voltage for a desired value.

A power converter according to the preferred teachings of the present invention
15 includes a converter body, a controller, and a connector. The converter body has an input end for an input voltage and an output end for an output voltage. The output end of the converter body connects to a wire and a power plug for output voltage. The converter body further includes a converter circuit for converting an input voltage to an output voltage. A controller connects to the converter circuit (of the converter body) either
20 externally (outside of the converter body) or internally (inside of the converter body). The controller includes a controller circuit for regulating the output voltage from the converter body, an operating interface with a press button and a monitor, and a feedback device with a power outlet connected to the output plug of the converter body. The output voltage of the converter body is regulated by the controller when the press
25 button (of the controller) is activated, which occurs only when the power outlet (of the feedback device of the controller) connects with the output plug (of the converter body)

and hence receives the output voltage sent as a feedback from the feedback device (of the controller). Without a valid connection between the power outlet of the feedback device and the output plug (at the output end of the converter body), the act of pressing the button alone will not activate the controller to perform the regulating function on the
5 output voltage (sent as a feedback from the feedback device) for a desired output voltage V_{out} .

The connector is designed for connection with the output plug (at the output end of the converter body) and also for connection with an electric appliance for an output voltage V_{out} from the converter body being an input voltage to an electric appliance (via
10 intermediate devices of the output plug and the power outlet).

And yet when regulating an output voltage V_{out} , the output plug (at the output end of the converter body) will be disengaged from the connector and connects to the power outlet of the feedback device for the controller to receive the output voltage V_{out} (sent as a feedback from the feedback device). At this moment, the press button of the
15 operating interface (of the controller) can be activated for regulation of the output voltage V_{out} while the controller is, at the same time, monitoring the output voltage V_{out} for its accuracy. The monitoring function of the controller can be added as a supplementary function in addition to the main function of regulation of voltage. In the most preferred form, the circuit of the controller monitors the output voltage (sent as a
20 feedback from the feedback device) for more precise regulation of the output voltage.

The present invention will become clearer in light of the following detailed description of an illustrative embodiment of this invention described in connection with the drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The illustrative embodiment may best be described by reference to the accompanying drawings where:

FIG. 1 shows a schematic diagram of an output-adjustable power converter of a first embodiment according to the preferred teachings of the present invention.

FIG. 2 shows a schematic diagram of the power converter of FIG. 1 with the power converter in a state supplying power to an electric appliance.

FIG. 3 shows a schematic diagram of the power converter of FIG. 1 with the power converter in a state of regulating output voltage.

FIG. 4 shows a schematic diagram of an output-adjustable power converter of a second embodiment according to the preferred teachings of the present invention.

FIG. 5 shows a schematic diagram of a first conventional output-adjustable power converter.

FIG. 6 shows a schematic diagram of a second conventional output-adjustable power converter.

FIG. 7 shows a schematic diagram of a third conventional output-adjustable power converter.

FIG. 8 shows a schematic diagram of a fourth conventional output-adjustable power converter.

All figures are drawn for ease of explanation of the basic teachings of the present invention only; the extensions of the Figures with respect to number, position, relationship, and dimensions of the parts to form the preferred embodiment will be explained or will be within the skill of the art after the following teachings of the present invention have been read and understood. Further, the exact dimensions and dimensional proportions to conform to specific force, weight, strength, and similar requirements will

likewise be within the skill of the art after the following teachings of the present invention have been read and understood.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

5 A power converter of a first embodiment according to the preferred teachings of the present invention is shown in FIG. 1 to 3. According to the preferred form shown, the power converter includes a converter body 1, a controller 2, and a connector 3. The converter body 1 includes an input end 11 for an input voltage V_{in} and an output end 12 for an output voltage V_{out} . The output end 12 connects to a plug 14 via a wire 13. The
10 converter body 1 includes a circuit (not shown in figures) for converting an input voltage V_{in} to an output voltage V_{out} .

The controller 2 connects internally (within of the converter) in circuit to the converter body 1. The controller 2 includes a circuit (not shown) for regulating and monitoring the output voltage V_{out} from the converter body 1. Furthermore, the
15 controller 2 includes an operating interface 21 with a press button 211 and a display 22 for a user to issue a command via the press button 211 for a desired output voltage value. The controller 2 further includes a feedback device 22 with a power outlet for the plug 14 (of the output end 12 of the converter body 1). For the converter to adequately operate and to output a desired output voltage V_{out} , the power outlet of the feedback
20 device 22 is connected to the plug 14 (of the output end 12 of the converter body 1) to receive the output voltage sent as a feedback from the feedback device 22. To be more specific, without a valid connection between the power outlet of the feedback device 22 and the plug 14 (of the output end 12 of the converter body 1), the single action of
25 pressing the button 211 alone will not activate the controller 2 to regulate the output voltage V_{out} .

The connector 3 is used for connection with the plug 14 (of the output end 12 of the converter body 1) and with an electric appliance 4 (shown, for instance, in FIG. 2).

With reference to FIG. 2, when in use, the plug 14 (of the output end 12 of the converter body 1) connects with the connector 3; when the connector 3 connects with an electric appliance 4, an output voltage V_{out} is conveyed from the converter body 1 to the electric appliance 4. At this moment, since there is no connection between the power outlet of the feedback device 22 and the plug 14 (of the output end 12 of the converter body 1), and hence no output voltage sent from the feedback device 22, even if a user inadvertently hits the press button 211, the output voltage V_{out} will remain intact, assuring safety in usage and also avoiding damage to the electric appliance 4.

With reference to FIG. 3, when it is decided to be time to regulate an output voltage V_{out} , the plug 14 is disengaged from the connector 3 and connects to the power outlet of the feedback device 22 for the controller 2 to receive the output voltage V_{out} (sent as a feedback from the feedback device 22). At this moment, the press button 211 of the interface 21 can be triggered by being pressed for regulation of the output voltage V_{out} while the controller is monitoring the output voltage. The connector 3 in the current invention operates without the help of internal resistors, and hence is less burdensome and more conveniently portable.

The monitoring function of the invention needs not to be present in all embodiments of the invention but can serve as an optional supplementary function of the controller. In the case that the circuit of the controller 2 is not in charge of monitoring the output voltage (sent as a feedback from the feedback device), the output voltage can still be regulated for a desired value, which occurs, as stated before, only when the plug is disengaged from the connector and connects to the power outlet of the feedback device, avoiding damage to the electric appliance.

FIG. 4 shows a second embodiment of a power converter with a feedback controller based on the teachings of the present invention. The difference between the first and the second embodiment lies in that the controller 6 in the second embodiment is located outside the converter body 5 and connects to the converter body 5 via an external converter-controller connecting wire 61. Operation and advantages of the power converter of the second embodiment are substantially the same as those of the first embodiment.

Thus since the invention disclosed herein may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from the spirit or general characteristics thereof, some of which forms have been indicated, the embodiments described herein are to be considered in all respects illustrative and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is to be indicated by the appended claims, rather than by the foregoing description, and all changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are intended to be embraced therein.

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CLAIMS

I claim:

1. A power converter with a feedback controller, comprising:

a converter body

- 5
- with an input end for an input voltage,
 - an output end for an output voltage, and
 - a circuit to convert said input voltage to said output voltage;

a controller, connected in circuit to said converter body with said output voltage being regulated when said controller receives said output voltage as a feedback from said converter body, including

- 10
- a circuit to regulate said output voltage from said converter body, and
 - a feedback device connected to said output end of said converter body; and

a connector for connection with said output end of said converter body and for connection with an electric appliance, with said controller not being activated to regulate said output voltage when said connector is engaged with said output end of said converter body.

2. The power converter with a feedback controller as claimed in claim 1, with said circuit of said controller monitoring said output voltage sent as a feedback from said feedback device.

20 3. The power converter with a feedback controller as claimed in claim 1, with said output end of said converter body connects to a plug and a wire, said feedback device of said controller includes a power outlet for connection with said plug, and said connector serves as a connecting media for said plug.

25 4. The power converter with a feedback controller as claimed in claim 1, with said controller further including an operating interface, with the operating interface

including a plurality of buttons and a display, and said buttons are activated to regulate said output voltage.

5. The power converter with a feedback controller as claimed in claim 1, with said controller being located inside of said converter body.

5 6. The power converter with a feedback controller as claimed in claim 1, with said controller being located outside said converter body and connected to said converter body by a wire.

Application No: GB0803481.1

Examiner: Robert Barrell

Claims searched: 1-6

Date of search: 12 June 2008

Patents Act 1977: Search Report under Section 17

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular relevance
X	1-5	US5321349 A (CHANG) See: the whole document
X	1-5	US2005/0248332 A1 (LIU) See: the whole document

Categories:

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
&	Member of the same patent family	E	Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.

Field of Search:

Search of GB, EP, WO & US patent documents classified in the following areas of the UKC^X :

Worldwide search of patent documents classified in the following areas of the IPC

G05F; G06F; H02J; H02M

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report

WPI, EPODOC

International Classification:

Subclass	Subgroup	Valid From
G05F	0001/46	01/01/2006
H02M	0001/10	01/01/2006
H02M	0003/137	01/01/2006