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(54) Title: SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR AUTOMATED MEDIA PROGRAMMING (AMP)

(57) Abstract: Automated media programming (AMP) systems and methods are provided. The systems and methods allow independent users to submit, edit, rate, and watch video content (preferably, although not necessarily, from other users) over a broadcast media channel or network. In one embodiment, among others, the AMP system a topic generator means for determining one or more topics that will be used for identifying one or more videos to be broadcast; an upload means for receiving uploads of one or more user videos relating to the determined topics; a prescreening means for allowing users to view the uploaded user videos; a rating means for rating the uploaded user videos, their respective producers, or both; a pre-production means for scheduling the uploaded videos for transmission based upon the ratings; and a broadcast means for enabling broadcast of the videos, hi preferred embodiments, the AMP system is controlled by independent users, and the settings, procedures for operation, and procedures for evaluations of the AMP system are user controllable.



WO 2007/103655 A2

SYSTEMS AND METHODS
FOR AUTOMATED MEDIA PROGRAMMING (AMP)

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FIELD OF THE INVENTION

10 This invention relates generally to systems and methods for implementing media
broadcasting, for example but not limited to, broadcasting in connection with television
(TV), the Internet, wireless networks, *etc.* More particularly, in connection with some
embodiments, the invention provides automated media programming (AMP) systems and
methods for effectively providing uploaded media content from independent users,
addressing predetermined topics, to viewers wanting to observe high quality direct
15 information without normal broadcast editing or censorship in any form (with limited or
no edits from the networks' internal management). The foregoing systems and methods
can produce other-user media content about predefined topics from other users without
system operators choosing content and in many cases allowing a broadcast to be received
by an individual user, group of users, or mass broadcast (*i.e.*, television, wireless, and/or
20 internet).

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

25 Television broadcasting has primarily remained a one-way static industry whose
production and distribution techniques have largely been unchanged for years. The
techniques through which old networks, such as ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, FOX, BBC, and
others, have created productions over the years has generally remained the same. Using
network controlled (owned and operated) analog and/or manually operated cameras,
video tape, or digital recorders, playback machines, switchers, lighting and editing
systems, these and other networks have generated local and national programming
30 combined with commercial content.

No longer are we limited to a few networks. There are hundreds of television (TV) stations, internet access, ISP applications, media sharing applications, wireless content systems, web phones, news and information toolbars, weather applications, auction assistants, shopping assistants, satellite and local radio stations, in-vehicle guidance systems, and all print and other media.

In a world of information, a source for “balanced information” that addresses two or more, or perhaps all viewpoints, is greatly needed and without regard for information that may be critical or negative toward the networks themselves. For example, if an important topic critically addressed a major news agency or station, such as Fox news, this type of information would likely be censored out and not broadcast by Fox. When users want the essence of news, straight forward and pointing out all sides so individuals recipients of news may make up their own mind, shaping news for any reason (including to sensationalize) is taking away individual choice and allowing media to be used for user/viewer manipulation. Finding “pure information” or information showing all sides or many different points-of-view, many times results in hours and hours of users searching articles or hours of watching media feeds from different networks. With such information, users attempt to determine what they believe or not believe.

Technology advancements in communication have changed the needs of many individuals from getting information, to managing or implementing techniques for sorting through the amount of the media received. Before 24-hour news programming, such as CNN and others, individuals wanting news would be forced to make themselves available to watch 6:00 pm or 11:00 pm broadcasts.

Today, obtaining unbalanced information at any time and from almost any location has become second nature for many individuals. Recent findings by comScore Media Metrix are that “over half of U.S. adult internet users have a TV and PC in the same room with half of those reporting they watch TV and use the Net simultaneously.”

The challenge is not getting information, but getting “pure” and “quality information.” Historically, professional news media, such as TV, radio, internet sites, newspaper, and magazines have become “overly processed” by editors, professional writers, journalist, anchormen, and announcers. Oftentimes, the media represents a particular side or point of view, and many times an unbalanced or biased perspective in

order to win-over viewers from competition, to sensationize, to report from dangerous locations, to say "our station has the exclusive" and "you'll only see it here," are important techniques for networks because it is about winning over viewers and increasing revenues.

5 Therefore, an easily accessible and more direct or pure media broadcast, not influenced by internal operators, owners, or management and bottom-lines, is needed. A pure media source direct from individuals to individuals without network influences and a user-operated broadcast channel or source for playing videos from users on predetermined topics without edits or censorship would be a great source of pure
10 information.

 Some attempts, in some form or another, to connect TV with independent users and their statement or views are now broadcast by networks by way of showing emails, statements from internet sites, and videos that were taken or captured from individuals. While the networks show content taken from individuals and not professionals, the
15 networks select what content will be aired and how the preamble leading into video or text will be made. Not getting around potential censorship or shaped viewpoints, but telling a story as a group or how the organization management wants the story to be told.

 Other attempts to air "viewer-submitted content" are seen in "Current TV" and ZeD. These companies do not get around censorship, but produce a show with some of it
20 containing uploaded videos. While some videos are directly from users, the management of these companies select "if" something airs (when a lot of viewers recommended a video (green lighted or recommended) it is highly considered by management, if the management agrees to air the video then it airs, management plays other content before or after user videos. The management has the opportunity to add commits or statements
25 that could effect viewers' perception. Just as important, videos are not targeted at predefined topics. Viewers cannot watch videos addressing the same topic, but watch a random selection of "green lighted" videos that management organizes. At the same time, each video is introduced by a network paid anchorman.

 Current TV can be found on channel 366 on DirecTV, providing a range of videos
30 and facts from the Internet of quick short-form video segments targeted at the iPod

generation (18 to 35 years of age). Segments called pods, run between two and five minutes and comprise a “mix and match” of short films on different topics (MTV-type snippets and video blogs). The producers and editors produce select and present stories (with presenters) including information, such as statistics from Google on the top 10 news items searched, or survey data like the value of the global cosmetics market. The mix of material is produced by an in-house team of young correspondents, queries from freelancers and submissions from the audience.

As reported by Wired News on 02:00 AM Sep. 14, 2005 PT, the writer “Niall McKay” writes (complains) about the media programming and selection: “Current TV would do well to hire more smart but witty presenters like Hanson rather than the preened, sickeningly insincere porn-star types that they seem to favor for most of their segments.” Maybe the key phrases are “hire” and “they like to favor”, their selection of what airs and by whom and when is censorship, good or bad? They, the producers or correspondents, control every aspect and therefore control the ability to shape content to match a predetermined age group, to match “what they feel” the audience wants, and in short the ability to censor out or to add additional areas to any story.

Current TV is an independent media company, led by former U.S. Vice President Al Gore, lawyer Joel Hyatt, and a team of industry professionals and young people. The cable television network went on the air in 2005, at midnight EDT (4:00 UTC) on the morning of August 1st. Until the minute before the launch, the channel carried Newsworld International from the CBC. Current TV is based off of an experimental 3-year-old Canadian show called ZeD, both of which rely on viewer-submitted content.

ZeD is a Canadian television series which bills itself as “open-source television.” It premiered in March 2002. The program, which airs every weeknight on the CBC, airs original music, short films, animation, performance, visual art and spoken word pieces from around the world. The subject matter is mature, and each episode begins with a humorously-worded call for viewer's discretion. Each episode is 40 minutes long and there are no advertisements within that time. While the show does not run in the summer, its website allows people to continue viewing certain works, and also upload their creations onto the website, which might then appear on television. Although some films

are not available on the website, viewers of the television show can e-mail ZeD and request replays on Fridays, which are dubbed "Feedback Fridays". Altogether, the website claims over 40,000 members.

Yet another way for users to watch videos from other users includes upload storage and/or hosting sites such as YouTube. YouTube is an online free storage and video viewing website. Currently, YouTube hosts over six million videos and claim to be growing at about 20 percent every month with the current videos taking up 45 terabytes of storage. Other similar sites include blip.tv, Atom Films, Dailymotion, Internet Archive, Google Video, Ourmedia, Revver, Eefoof.com, Panjea.com, dabble.com and many more. Not to mention the ability for management or owners of these sites to promote their own chosen materials for the front page. Any information presented to the users, by its management, has the potential to be used for swaying an audience toward its own view point. As an example, YouTube writes: "People always wonder how videos are chosen for the homepage and as part of our effort to improve communication with you, I thought it was time to introduce you to some of our editors and give you a glimpse of what goes on behind the scenes here at YouTube. First up is Big Joe Smith -- everyone say, "Hi Joe!" -- who made this video for you and then outlined a typical week on homepage duty (including some extra video goodies). Let us know if you like this kind of stuff and we'll make it a regular feature. I'm even charging up the battery on my own video camera and getting out the rouge and mascara... -- Mia"

One major problem with video hosting sites, users registered or not, is searchable labeling for the video being correct with only user supplied text. Therefore existing search engines rely on searchable text and videos do not have searchable text within each video, unlike most web pages that do contain searchable text.

As these sites host larger databases of information, the inherent challenges for all users of video hosting type sites are finding relevant and high quality information about specific topics. Even when topics seem to match users' criteria, time associated with accessing and playing these files, only to determine that the description did not match the actual information, or the quality of the information is poor, thus sending most users back to text based internet searches and information is common from users of these sites. Even

when users find videos matching searchable descriptions, users normally find these uploaded videos having different subject matter than described.

Another challenge for users wanting high quality videos on specific topics, includes being able to seek professional looking and acting people in their videos, while others may seek people in videos that come from certain areas, particular backgrounds, have similar life styles, political view points, similar taste in music, have back grounds in topic areas and many other criteria that help people locate specific information by high quality producers and not waste time viewing non-useful information.

Thus, I have recognized that a user-operated broadcast with its “users” having control over content, to the extent possible, is greatly needed. More specifically, there is a need for a broadcast system that allows users to determine topics, that allows users to determine how much time each topic is given (videos discussing a topic for 15, 30, 45, 60 or more minutes), that allows users to edit or make recommendations to the independent producers of videos, that implements a prescreening rating system and a user “producer” rating system (normally from past videos), that permits information about the producer to also be aired on screen with each video, and that implements user selected criteria for automatically forming algorithms that assist in balancing both sides of any topic (example, the users of this program voted to air 33% democratic view points, 33% republican view points and 34% of other candidates), all without organizational censorship associated with broadcast companies or organizations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides various embodiments of systems and methods for implementing media broadcasting (television (TV), Internet, wireless, *etc.*).

One embodiment of the invention, among others, can be summarized as a method for a broadcast system having the following steps: defining a time or time period indicating when media content (videos, images, sound recordings, or other user perceptible information) that pertain to a topic will be broadcast; permitting users to rate the media content that pertains to a topic prior to the time or time period; and broadcasting the media content that meets predefined rating criteria at the time or during

the time period. Another embodiment is a broadcast system that is designed to implement the foregoing steps.

Another embodiment of the invention, among others, can be summarized as a broadcast system, comprising a means for permitting users to rate media content (videos, images, sound recordings, or other user perceptible information) that pertains to a topic prior to broadcast; and a means for broadcasting the media content that meets one or more predefined rating criteria.

Other embodiments of the present invention, among others, provide an integrated broadcast media system capable of receiving, managing, generating, and distributing broadcast content to a large number of remote users (viewers). In the typical embodiments, the automation for determining what airs and its calculating criteria is user defined and controlled. Maintaining an openly-controlled media content broadcasting system relies on users, compared to an internal management group, controlling system changes, filters, views, voting criteria, and almost all of the decisions.

User videos in-part are selected by an individual CVR (current video rating) on each video in a prescreening area and compared when possible to a UPR (user producer rating) normally averaged from past/other videos from the same user or group. Automated screening from the MCP (media content programming) system may also be utilized (compliance to length / time, topic, content rating (profanity, nudity), *etc.* This invention, in most cases, removes the requirement for internally paid professional news anchorman, actors, journalist, announcers or anyone that could be influenced by owners or producers from the network.

Some other embodiments of the invention automatically broadcast to TV or an Internet communication system for allowing users to completely or in-part control the broadcast. Such systems and methods involve receiving videos from users and implementation of a user video selection (UVS) / rejection prescreening process for allowing users to rate videos. An email system may also be utilized to notify users when a video was selected for airing, and a broadcast system for automatically airing the selected videos over a TV, Internet, or wireless network.

Additionally, the automatic media content programming (MCP) system may utilize other rating systems for determining the quality of the videos, if videos follow

5 preset agendas / topics and others. There may be time-urgent news (such as in a national state of emergencies, war, *etc.*) that bypasses the normal (UVS) user video selection process and post videos for immediate attention (for voting approval). In emergency events, notifications are send to users for fast video uploads and viewing approval of others.

10 Embodiments of the invention may also include a TG (topic generator) that offers topic programming. Topics are determined by users, research (news), seasonal topics, and others. One or more topics may be voted on by users reviewing the topics that are list by the topic generator. A high/er amount of votes could automatically allow a topic and/or may move it up in a scheduled air broadcast time.

15 In other embodiments, the broadcast system may be designed to permit users to recommend changes to the MCP internal algorithms and selection processes (ASP) that are part of the programming, code, or methods that determine how videos are selected or displayed.

20 In yet other embodiments, the broadcast system may be designed to permit users to predefine onscreen viewing positions when full screen videos are not used. As an example, the user may also provide additional personal information or links to additional information, such as a typed transcript or additional information that may be typed or other videos. Another example of additional onscreen information includes a continued (longer or addition) video of what was aired.

25 In still other embodiments, the broadcast system may be designed to permit users to provide location information (GPS, Mapping, Address, or other location determining information) that may be used for determining the recipients for viewing a location based video. The system allows the recipients to select videos within or at a predetermined location. For example, users in a traffic jam may summit a request for videos within a curtain location, time they were taken, on same or similar roads, or a point of interest nearby. As another example, users traveling toward roads automatically see road conditions from other cars or land based video cameras. Automatic triggering events for broadcasting road conditions may include actual speed of vehicles, average traffic flows, 30 or distance away from the approaching road.

Other systems, methods, features, and advantages of the present invention will be or become apparent to one with skill in the art upon examination of the following drawings and detailed description. It is intended that all such additional systems, methods, features, and advantages be included within this description, be within the scope of the present invention, and be protected by the accompanying claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Many aspects of the invention can be better understood with reference to the following drawings. The components in the drawings are not necessarily to scale, emphasis instead being placed upon clearly illustrating the principles of the present invention. Moreover, in the drawings, like reference numerals designate corresponding parts throughout the several views.

FIG. 1 shows a high-level system diagram of an example embodiment of an automated media programming (AMP) system in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 2 shows a flow chart of the decision determining process for code (DDP-C). The system can allow users to change or modify any element of operational design. The code is tabbed, tabled, and/or organized for users to access and build recommended changes or add-on modules for other users to review and vote on.

FIG. 3 shows a flow chart of the decision determining process for settings (DDP-S). The system can allow users to change or modify any setting. Users can vote to modify the system.

FIG. 4 shows a flow chart of the user controlled voting settings (UCV-S1). These settings control whether the voting is a success or failure for the complete system or individual topics.

FIG. 5 shows a flow chart of the user controlled voting settings (UCV-S2). These settings control the voting Values. Voting values are used to calculate components, in this example videos and producer. Each component's value may be adjusted to reflect importance within each area.

FIG. 6 shows a flow chart of the automatic topic generator (ATG). The diagram shows examples of some of the systems used for generating topics needed when users upload videos.

FIG. 7 shows a flow chart for determining the producer rating value (PRV). The producer rating value is sometimes calculated with the video rating, and then used as an overall value for passing or failing user videos.

FIG. 8 shows a flow chart for the highest rated producer program (HRPP). The system may promote high rated producers for payments, special broadcasts, or other events.

FIG. 9 shows a flow chart of an automated system for the purchase of advertisements. The example allows users wanting to purchase advertisements two options: locate time spots based on upcoming scheduled events and dollar range matching that highlights times and events based on the highest amount a user will pay.

FIG. 10 shows a flow chart of the producer payment system (PPS). As producers achieve high ratings, this system may automatically calculate and pay producers based on one or more ratings. The calculation may also include part of a revenue sharing program, or part of the highest producers offering viewers a pay service.

FIG. 11 shows a flow chart of the system edit. Users control the system and may introduce modifications, changes or additional areas for users to vote on. If a change is passed, the proposed change may be posted to companies to write new code.

FIG. 12 shows a flow chart and diagram of a video on-demand system. The users may request videos to be played containing only highly rated producers. This allows viewers to not waste time watching videos without ratings or videos with low ratings, acknowledging lower quality.

FIG. 13 shows an on-screen area for allowing users to rate videos.

FIG. 14 shows possible methods for enabling the user to rate the producer. Producer ratings may be automatically generated based on historic information or user selections or a combination of these and more.

FIG. 15 shows different possible methods for enabling users to rate aired videos by email or telephone.

FIG. 16 shows one of the methods for determining the quality of each user's vote to determine the weight, if any, it will be accorded by the system. In this example, a user's vote is compared to the amount of time the user watched the video. Users watching the complete video may have a stronger vote, as opposed to a user that only

watches 10% of the video then rates the video. Although not shown here, it should be noted that if a preset percentage (as an example, 90%) of the viewers stop watching the video early, additional calculations may be made to balance the overall rating score.

FIGs. 17 and 18 show an example of videos taken while moving (VWM). The example illustrates users recording traffic or road conditions from vehicles equipped with cameras, prior to traveling on these roads.

FIGs. 19, 20, 21 and 22 are examples of the many different video selection screens for allowing viewers an opportunity to watch different videos (selecting the newest video, videos with extreme view points, videos with view points based on a location, videos with view points based on the most agreed to or most opposed, most neutral, political view points, age, *etc.*) It should be noted that these videos may be sorted by system or user preferences (and may include the highest rated in each area or may include matched user points of view, religion, or other characteristics).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The present invention provides various embodiments of systems and methods for implementing media broadcasting (television (TV), Internet, wireless, *etc.*). Although not limited to the following configuration, the preferred embodiments of the invention are implemented in software executed on a suitable computer system, *i.e.*, a server, which may or may not have a distributed architecture, that is communicatively coupled to the internet to enable access by users via other suitable computer systems, *i.e.*, a clients. The server produces a web site that is accessed by the client computer systems.

In the preferred embodiments, the system limits owner or management influenced content, while providing users information on topics with the highest quality videos within a broadcast. This invention, in its broadcast on-demand or user-specific broadcast embodiments, allows each user to define what determines higher quality videos through matching a user definable preferences area. One embodiment, among others, comprises an automatic production system, an automatic broadcasting system, a video and producer sorting system, a user video prescreening and rating system, a producer rating system, a producer payment system, an advertisement system, a broadcast viewer rating, a topic generator, an open architecture configuration and a settings module for allowing users to

modify or change one or more system settings. Furthermore, although the present invention is not limited to this particular configuration, this illustrative embodiment broadcasts media content in the form of videos and/or images, as described hereafter.

The automated media programming (AMP) system operates from user information collected by the website. Each user visits the AMP website 18 and sets up an account by entering login security, personal self-descriptive information, and personal preference information. Once the user has an account, the user may watch and vote on videos in the prescreening areas, vote on topics or recommend new topics, setup criteria for the selection of videos, setup personal broadcast information, vote on system changes, and be part of the control process of the AMP system.

In the preferred embodiments, a user is defined as either an interactive user (IU) or a viewer only (VO).

Videos

Referring to FIG. 1, for users wanting to become producers, or interactive users (IU), the system acquires its broadcast contents by users capturing and then uploading videos. These videos 22 are taken by 12 wireless portable devices (video enabled PDAs, wireless/cellular phones, *etc.*), camcorders, and computer equipped with video capabilities, or any device capable of capturing video or still images with narration.

It should also be noted that live video 17 feeds from producers may also be used within this embodiment. Examples of when live video feeds are used, include but are not limited to, late breaking news, events or concerts, two or more users at a location but in different areas that are showing different perspectives or view points, before, during or after a user video is played, based on a location and people moving.

Video Uploading Area (UA)

For pre-recorded videos, the uploading area (UA) is located on the AMP website 18 and is used for storing and filing videos based on a predefined topic. Each user logs into his/her account before entering into this area. After logging in, the user may access the area by clicking on the tab (marked "Uploading Area"). Each user may upload videos on a specific topic.

The UA area contains a list of topics 82. Each user selects which topic 82 the video addresses. While the user may place a video in the holding tank (limited disk space), this is normally done only for users compiling additional footage and not used as common storage. After edits are completed, and the topic is selected, the user may publish the video into the prescreening area.

Video Editing

After the video is uploaded, the user may select video editing tools from the menu. Some of the features may include, for example, cutting/pasting, reducing the length, adding narration/audio, changing the background, combining two or more videos, rendering video with animation or user personal information, *etc.*

The user matches the video with the topic 82 inside a prescreening room/area. The prescreening area 88 offers other users the ability to watch and rate each video and producer within this area. In the embodiment for a timed broadcast, unless enough positive votes are received and/or the video is pre-selected, the video will remain in the prescreening area until a deadline has been reached. After the time limit has been reached, the video is archived for viewers to watch at any time or later date.

In an embodiment wherein users receive a personalized broadcast, each video will be rated, but stored for retrieval. When user defined information matches this video, it will be selected for a personalized or tailored broadcast.

For videos successfully passing through the voting phase of a timed broadcast, the video moves from the prescreening area to the preproduction area. The preproduction area organizes videos with a schedule and potentially adds advertisements. The copyright releases and all necessary releases for airing the video were received at the time of the upload. At this time, the producer (user) is notified on the exact time and date of the video airing.

The video waits in the preproduction area for broadcasting at its scheduled time. Viewers may visit the website or receive programming scheduling updates via email or other wireless messaging service.

Viewers watch scheduled programming of videos from individuals on predefined topics. The videos that each viewer watches during a broadcast are videos focusing on topics normally from the topic generator FIG. 6.

Control Processes and Systems

To operate a fully automated AMP system without internal management takes user inputs or user recommendations guided by majority votes from other users of the system. Many user systems for this embodiment will be described in detail.

User Profile

Each user signs up for an account. The information provided in the users account will be utilized when the video is played. As the user obtains a producer rating, the information will help manage topic and broadcast balance (for example, 33% republican, 33% democrat and 33% independent) along with male/female balancing, age balancing and endless others.

As an example, the user enters the following information:
“Email account information = myname@host.com”

“User Name = “

“Password = “

“Age = “

“Male or Female = “

5 “Political Party = “

“Hobbies = “

“Published Work or Articles = “

“Street Address = City = State= Zip =”

“Telephone # = “

10 “Notification Y/N = Selected Topics Only Y/N =”

“Please click all topics of interest (see topics list)”

The user profile also contains historic information, such as a list of uploaded videos, amount broadcast to date, average rating of each video, the producer rating, *etc.* The producer rating may also show the paying level (example, your rating is 6.3 – raise your rating by 1.7 to 8.0 and start making money!). The historic information may also provide a rating balance that shows how the user rates against the majority votes.

Prescreening Area

20 The prescreening area (PSA) is where videos waiting for potential airing, are viewed by other members, and rated (for example, 1.0 to 10.0 scale, with 10 the highest rating). As a video is being viewed, questions popup for the reviewer to answer, and at the end of watching the video, the viewer is ask to rate the video.

As an example, the user can be provided with the following options that can be selected by the user:

- 25
- 1.) Watch videos within the topic area
 - 2.) Rate each video

- 3.) You may write the producer a message for encouragement or for suggestions
- 4.) See which videos make the cut (if they air on a broadcast)
- 5.) Review feedback from others that have watched your video
- 6.) Ask to be notified via email or in a message area, if someone rates your video
5 lower than a predefined level.
- 7.) Notify other reviewers after you have edited your video.

Highest Rated Producer Area

10 The highest rated producer area allows users to watch the best in action. The best producers are in a list starting from highest rated. To the side of each producer is a tab to review their works, those from the past and those waiting in the prescreening areas.

Production Room

15 Users with web-access may watch live broadcasts from anywhere. They can watch the same broadcasts as individuals watching on TVs.

Audience Rating Area

20 While all videos are watched in the prescreening room by other users, the audience rating area allows viewers (members or non-members) to rate each video in a broadcast. There are many methods that can be implemented for enabling non members to rate videos, examples of which are as follows:

- 1.) email response (with video identification number) with rating
- 2.) go to AMP website and enter "rate a broadcast video"

- 3.) call from any telephone, into the AMP interactive voice response telephone entry system
- 4.) respond to onscreen TV areas
- 5.) respond to pop ups or video overlays

5

User Subsystem

Each user subsystem will now be described in detail. These are systems that allow the AMP operations to occur without onsite management or that allow the AMP system to be controlled by its users.

10

The automatic topic generator of FIG. 6 provides topics to producers. These topics are used as scheduling spots (time periods) that videos address within this time period. A topic is given a total time period by voters. The topics are generated by three or more main areas:

15

- 1.) Automatic search engine 80 that looks for highest accessed news 86b, sports 86c, movies 86c, blog site 86d, highest viewed business website 86e, and highest used search strings 86f.
- 2.) User recommended topics 87a that user name a topic area 87b, description 87c, time allotment 87d and time period 87e.
- 3.) The system initial topics 88a, such as holidays 88b, political elections 88c, horoscopes 88d, stock, or daily events 88e.

20

The topic generator recommends topics, but the users vote on topics they would like to see videos address.

25

FIG. 7 shows the subsystem for determining producer rating values (PRV) 370. The producer rating is calculated into a video rating. For example, the PRV may be 8.0 but the producer's last video may have been rated a 6.0. The PRV determines the calculation for determining a number for the video. The criteria may include the amount

of prior videos 376, the averaged rating 378, how many users request work from this producer 380, what is the value of the topic area this producer works within the majority of the time 382, use all or some of the past videos 384, 386, 388, what is a minimum number of videos before calculations start 390, *etc.*

5 The users determine the calculations for the most accurate balance between producer ratings and video ratings. It should be noted that videos control, at least in part, the producer rating. Examples of FIGs. 13, 14 and 15 show screens for both prescreening and in the broadcast. Videos are judged by AMP users and observers of the AMP broadcast. FIG. 15 shows how a user watching a broadcast on TV may respond (rate) a
10 video by email or calling into the system. Additionally, it should be noted that an easier method to rate a video is within an interactive TV system that allows the user to enter a rating on the remote (or keyboard).

FIG. 8 shows a highest rated value producer program. This is used for selected programming wherein only the highest producers are invited. As an example, in an
15 emergency where fast responses are necessary, the AMP may notify the highest rated producers for a fast video or live feed.

Promoting and supporting the best producers can be achieved, optionally, by payments as is illustrated in FIG. 10. The payments vary in different topic areas 516 by the rating of the producer 514, the total amount of money available for this area 518, and
20 the percentage of the total amount to be paid to the producer 520. While the AMP system over time determines the best producers, each video and its impact to their rating (or lack of producing videos reduces their rating also) is one of the best forms of management. The automated management system rewards consistent highly voted video production, but gradually removes producers that loose their edge (lower producer and video ratings).
25 It should be noted, many other paid programs or bonus programs are in effect, such as payments for “fast response” videos (when emergency notification is sent out on a particular topic), “best educational promotion”, “best house buying video”, “best investment video” or any other program that rewards the producer (not necessarily always the producer rating).

Additionally, many AMP system setups and usage are possible without listing every scenario herein. The system may be setup to deliver user videos at predefined times or upon request. The system may be setup by users with internet or network accessible TVs to retrieve videos by predefined criteria such as news. In this form the system supplies information (videos) to users at anytime of the day or day of the year. For example, if the user wants to purchase a fuel cell electric car, then the user may request all videos on this topic. In this example, the user also chooses “only the highest” rated videos, as shown in FIG. 12, from the highest rated producers. Another example includes a user asking for new videos on topics of their choice but the video 686 and/or producer must have a minimum rating of 7.0.

The AMP system may incorporate its own revenue modeling and advertisement selling system. Advertisements, donations, and the promotion of videos to other reporting sources would be the main revenue stream. The purchase/sale of advertisements as shown in FIG. 9, allows users to locate advertisement spots by upcoming broadcasts 434 or simply entering a dollar amount to see what is available 442. All advertisements go through a review process similar to the video rating module, although the ad passes or fails by the voters.

Guidance from User Subsystems

AMP addresses the rules that reflect many aspects of operations as guidance user subsystems. The systems open the architecture to allow a user to change many, if not all, settings and actual systems, even the software code.

DDP-C is the decision determining process code. As shown in FIG. 2, DDP-C allows users to easily look up code using tabs or other known organization methods. The open architecture allows any user to view and recommend changes to code. The user may select an area that they believe should be modified, changed or added/removed. They may make the change and post it for viewing 338. If the change is voted in, then the system is changed.

DDP-S is the decision determining process settings. As shown in FIG. 3, DDP-S allows control settings to be adjusted by the AMP users. Users recommend 356 changes, these recommendations are voted on 358 and when voting approval is given the system settings are changed 360.

5 A system edit option (preferably, all areas), as shown in FIG. 11, offers system wide changes as needed. Users can select the area and describe the needed change for others to review as indicated at reference numerals 606, 608. The changes are voted on and incorporated upon approval, as denoted at reference numeral 610.

10 USV-S1 is the process that controls one aspect of voting (FIG. 4). This system allows the users to enter values, such as minimum users 166 to vote on the issue, maximum time period 168 to be voted on, percentage of voters needed 170, and others.

15 USV-S2 controls the balancing values between video ratings and producer ratings (FIG. 5). The determination values are adjusted by giving values to content 186, addressing content 188, quality of production 190, and offensive content 192. The producer rating allows adjustments for existing producers and new producers 222 224.

20 It should be emphasized that the above-described embodiments of the present invention, particularly, any “preferred” embodiments, are merely possible examples of implementations, merely set forth for a clear understanding of the principles of the invention. Many variations and modifications may be made to the above-described embodiment(s) of the invention without departing substantially from the spirit and principles of the invention. All such modifications and variations are intended to be included herein within the scope of this disclosure and the present invention and protected by the following claims.

CLAIMS

5 At least the following is claimed:

1. A system for enabling broadcast of user-produced videos, comprising:
 a topic generator means for determining one or more topics that will be used for
10 identifying one or more videos to be broadcast;
 an upload means for receiving uploads of one or more user videos relating to the
determined topics;
 a rating means for rating the uploaded user videos, their respective producers, or
both;
 a preproduction means for scheduling the uploaded videos for transmission based
15 upon the ratings; and
 a broadcast means for enabling broadcast of the videos.

2. The system of claim 1, further comprising a prescreening means for allowing
users to view the uploaded user videos and for permitting the users to communicate user
20 ratings to the rating means.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the pre-production means schedules the uploaded
videos based on an individual user request or based upon one or more user-selected
criteria.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the pre-production means schedules the uploaded
videos based on a programming schedule of topics.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the rating means rates the uploaded user videos
30 based on a video rating and at least one other criteria, such as but not limited to, a
producer rating, a response speed to a request for videos, audio quality, video quality, *etc.*

6. The system of claim 1, further comprising a means for receiving one or more user-controlled values for determining whether or to what extent a user vote is to be given weight in the ratings.

5

7. The system of claim 1, further comprising a means for receiving one or more user-controlled values for determining whether or to what extent payments are made to producers.

10

8. The system of claim 1, further comprising a means for allowing viewers of a broadcast to rate an individual video by at least one of the following: entering a response on an interactive TV screen, responding via email, or communicating via an interactive telephone response system.

15

9. A broadcast system, comprising:
an automatic search engine for searching and retrieving one or more topics from internet sites;
means for permitting users to cast votes on the topics;
means for selecting one or more of the topics based at least upon the votes;
means for permitting uploading of videos associated with the selected topics; and
means for enabling broadcast of the videos.

20

10. A method for a broadcast system, comprising the steps of:
defining a time or time period indicating when media content (videos, images, sound recordings, or other user perceptible information) that pertain to a topic will be broadcast;
permitting users to rate the media content that pertains to a topic prior to the time or time period; and
broadcasting the media content that meets predefined rating criteria at the time or during the time period.

25

30

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of receiving some or all of the media content from users.
- 5 12. The method of claim 10, further comprising the steps of:
enabling users to log into a server computer over the Internet; and
receiving some or all of the media content from users.
- 10 13. The method of claim 10, wherein the predefined rating criteria identify highest rated media content, lowest rated media content, or both.
14. The method of claim 10, wherein the broadcasting is directed to televisions and/or to computers communicatively coupled to the Internet.
- 15 15. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of enabling users to cast votes to influence selection of the predefined rating criteria.
16. The method of claim 10, wherein the method steps are performed manually, are implemented by a computer system, or a combination thereof.
- 20 17. A broadcast system, comprising:
means for permitting users to rate media content (videos, images, sound recordings, or other user perceptible information) that pertains to a topic prior to broadcast; and
means for broadcasting the media content that meets one or more predefined
25 rating criteria.
18. The system of claim 17, further comprising a means for receiving some or all of the media content from users.

19. The system of claim 17, further comprising:
means for enabling users to log into a server computer over the Internet; and
means for receiving some or all of the media content from users.

20. The system of claim 17, wherein the predefined rating criteria identify highest rated videos and/or images.

21. The system of claim 17, wherein the predefined rating criteria identify lowest rated videos and/or images.

22. The system of claim 17, wherein the broadcasting is directed to televisions and/or to computers communicatively coupled to the Internet.

23. The system of claim 17, further comprising means for enabling users to cast respective votes to influence selection of the predefined rating criteria.

24. The system of claim 17, further comprising:
means for rating producers of uploaded media content; and
wherein the one or more predefined rating criteria include at least the following:
the producer rating and the user rating.

25. The system of claim 17, wherein the one or more predefined rating criteria include at least the following: a video quality rating.

26. The system of claim 17, further comprising a means for identifying a set of one or more highest rated producers so that the highest rated producers receive a payment.

27. The system of claim 17, further comprising a means for enabling a user to select an opposing view option associated with an opposing view of the topic and wherein the broadcast means broadcasts media content pertaining to the opposing view.

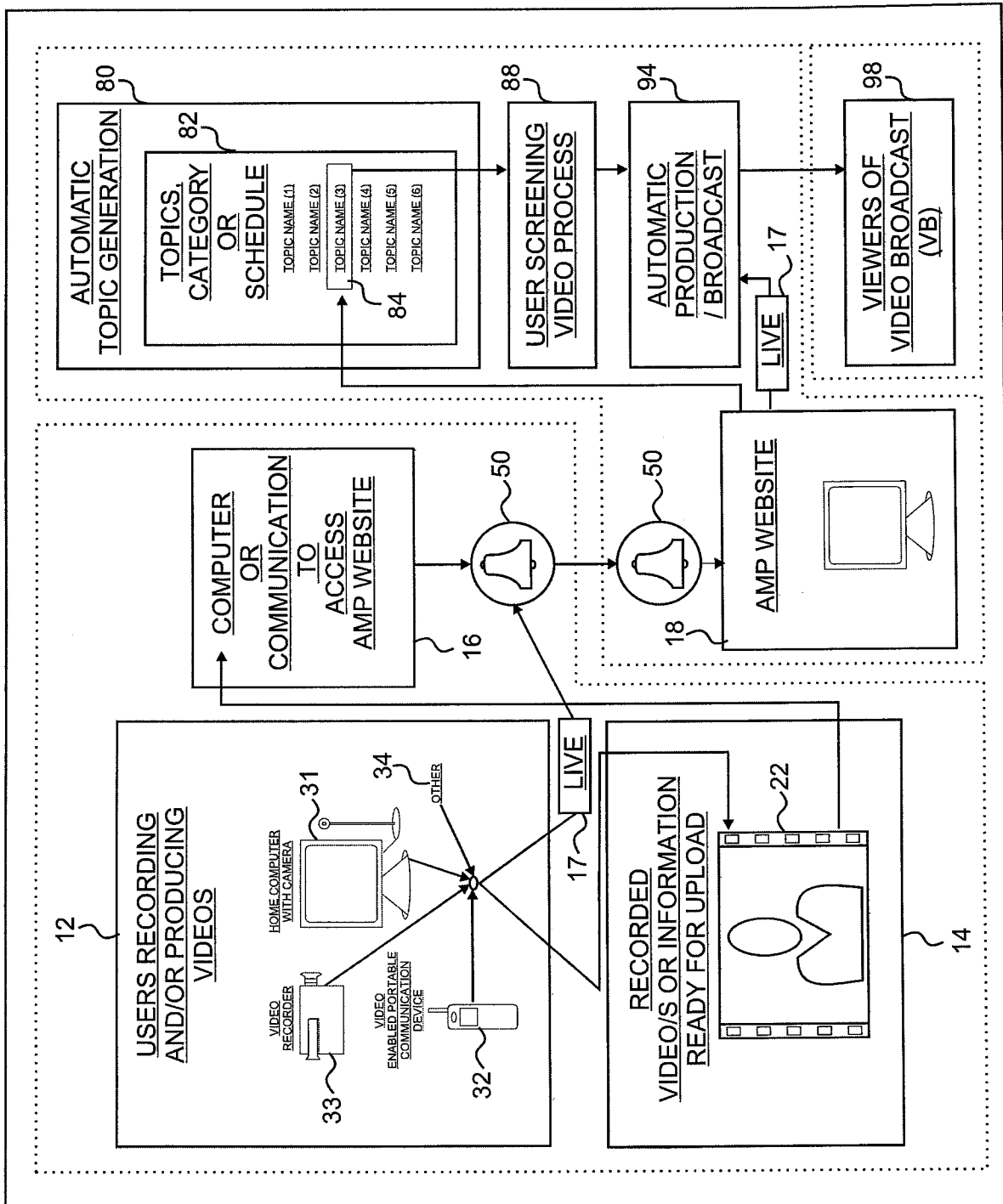


FIG 1

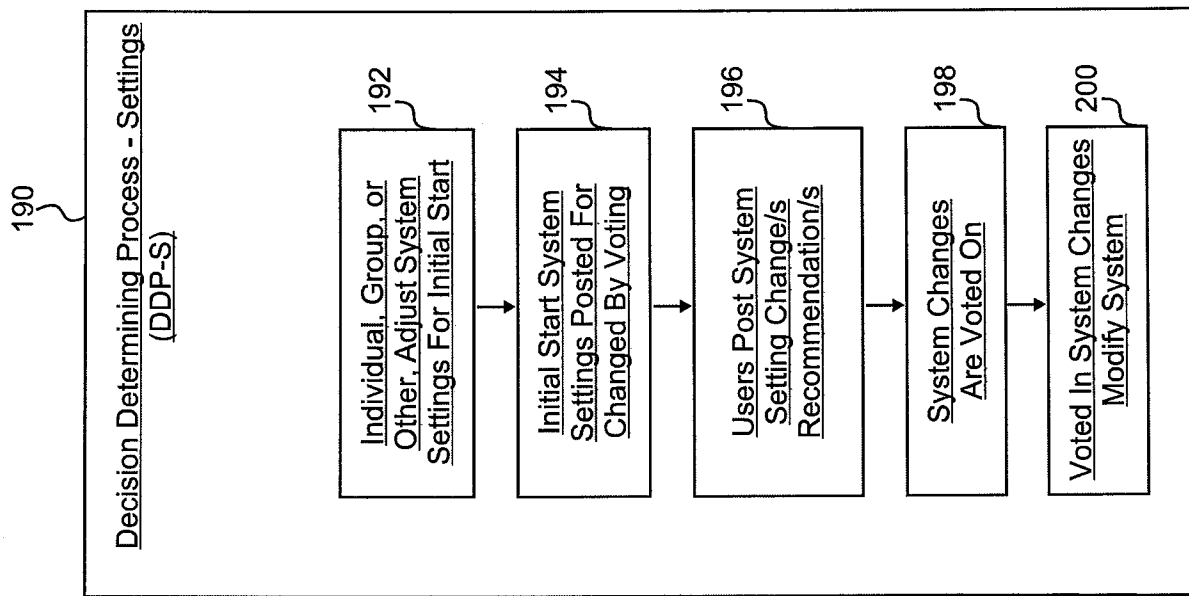


FIG 2

FIG 3

250

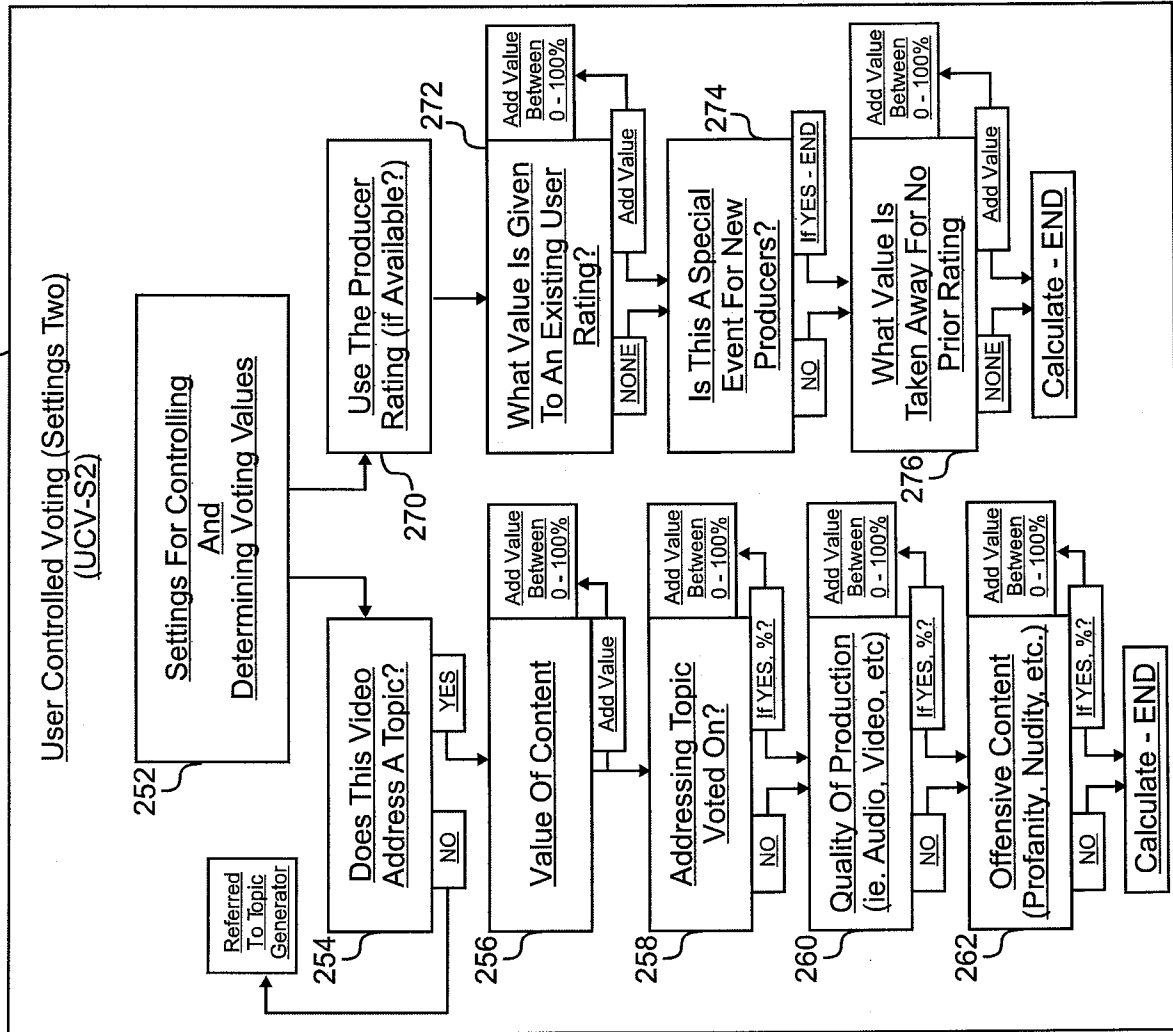


FIG 5

220

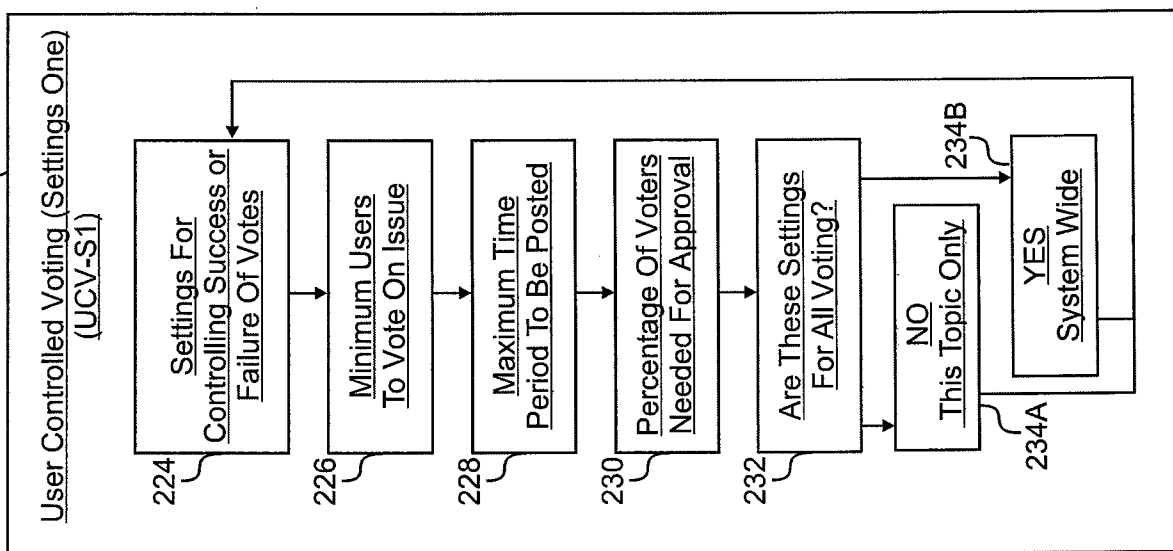


FIG 4

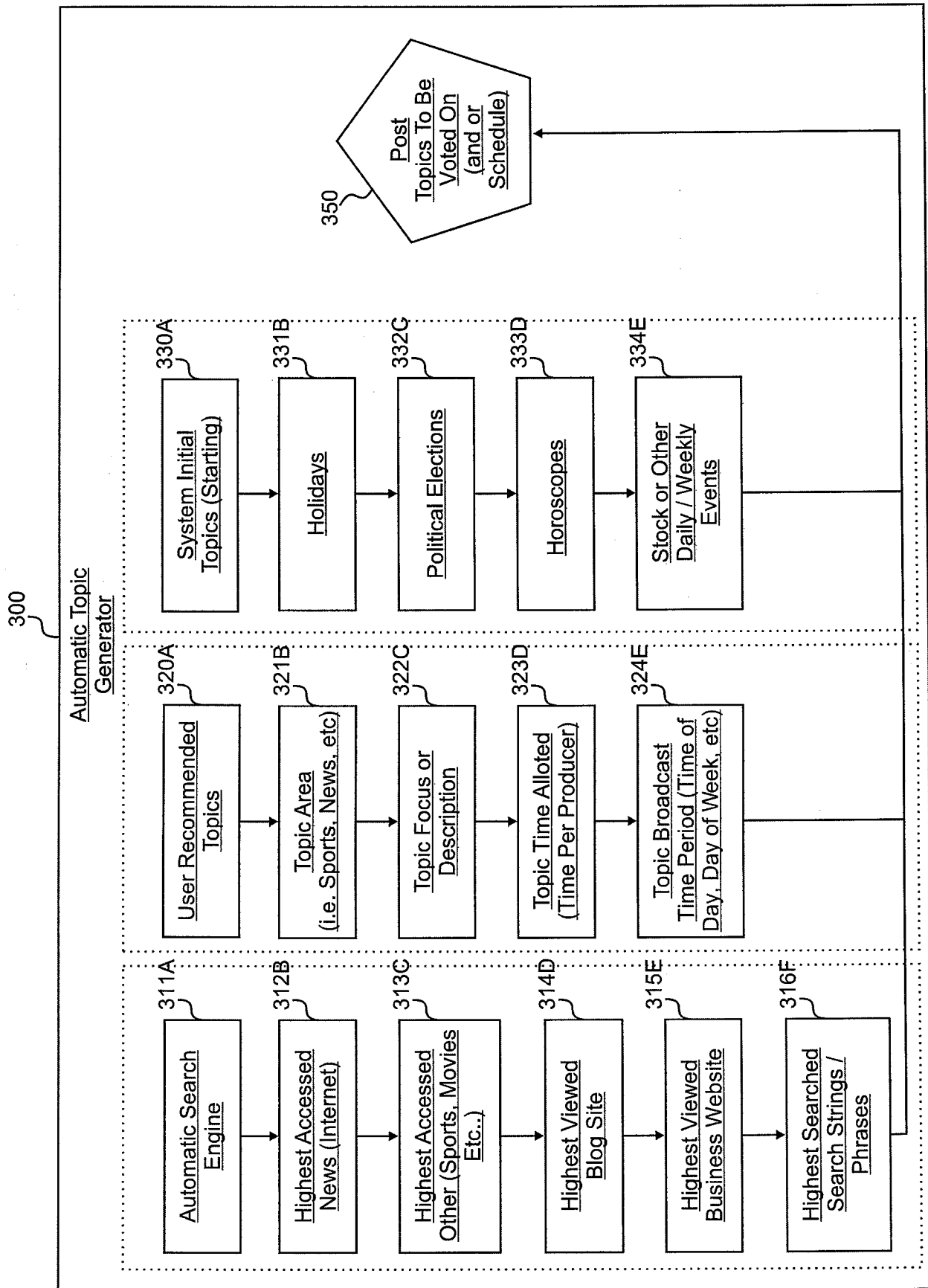


FIG 6

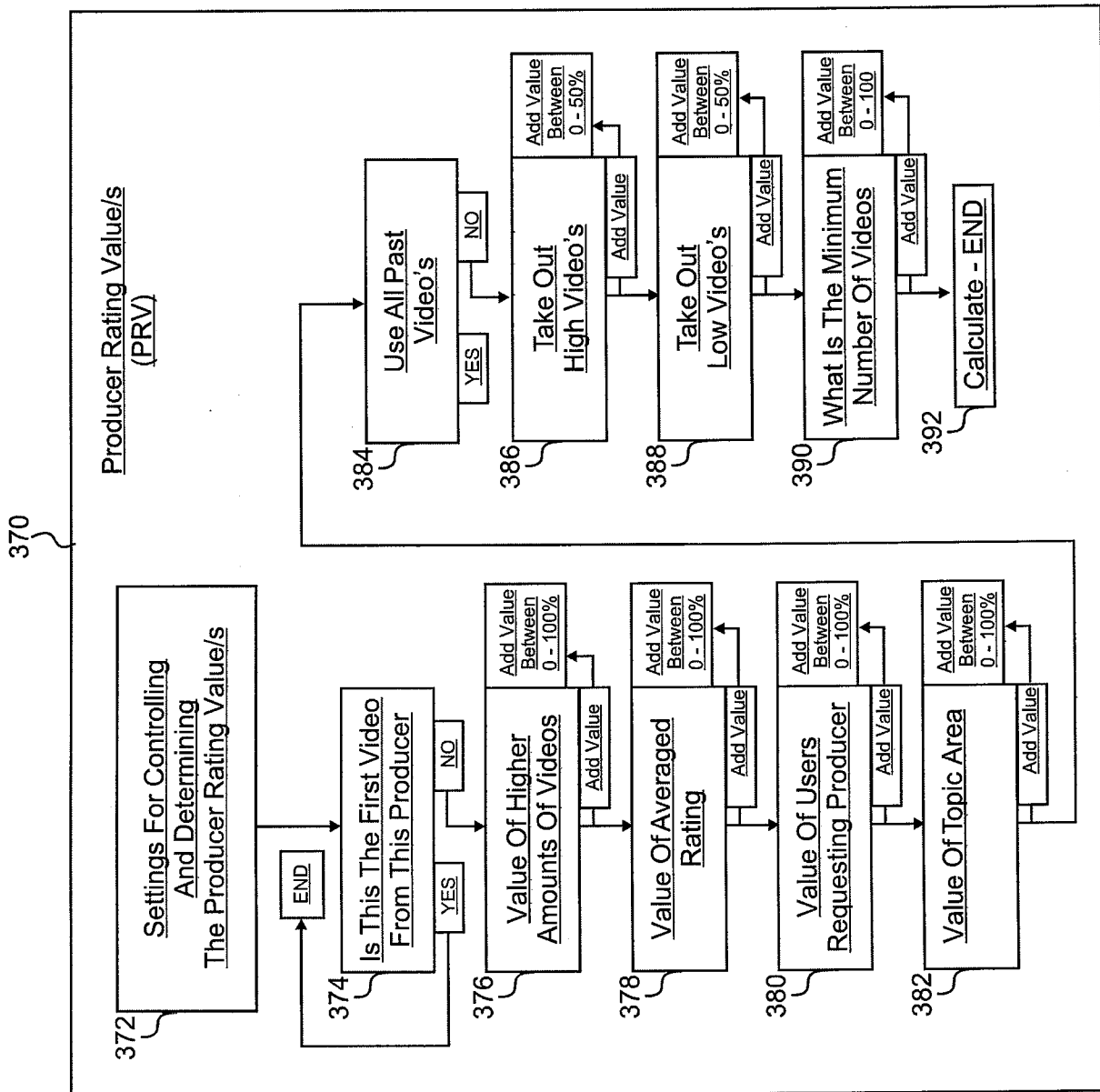


FIG 7

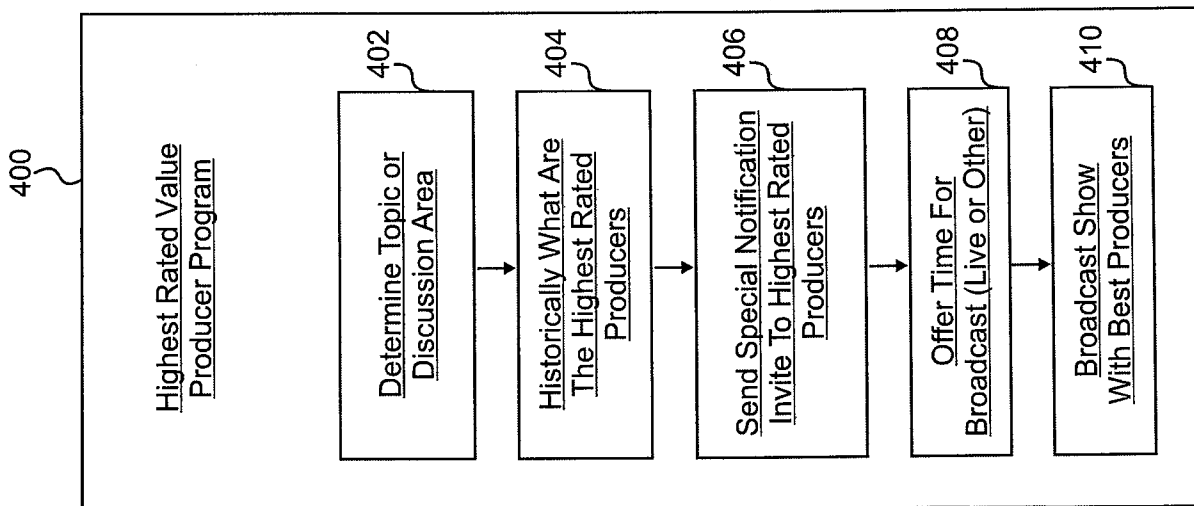


FIG 8

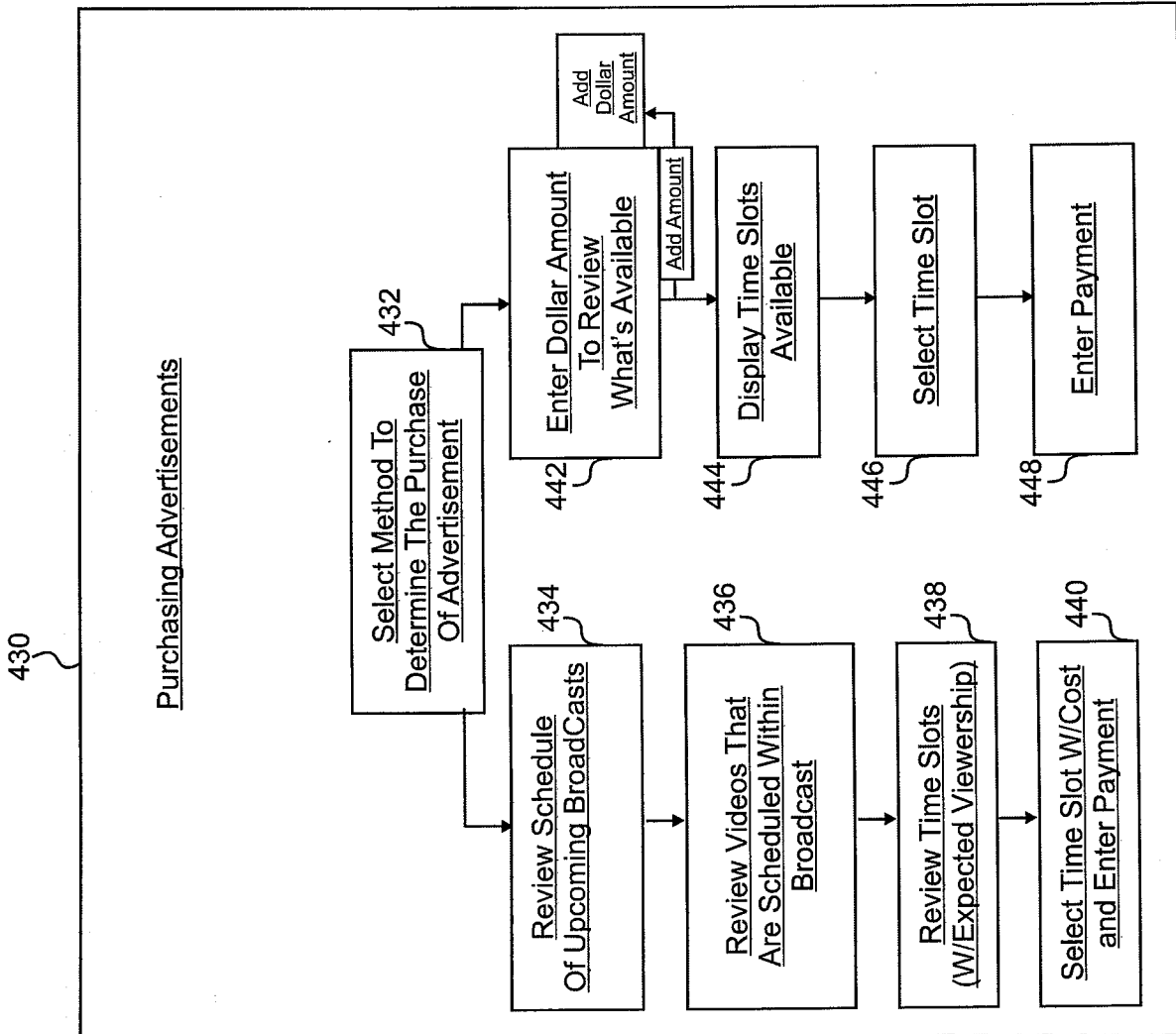


FIG 9

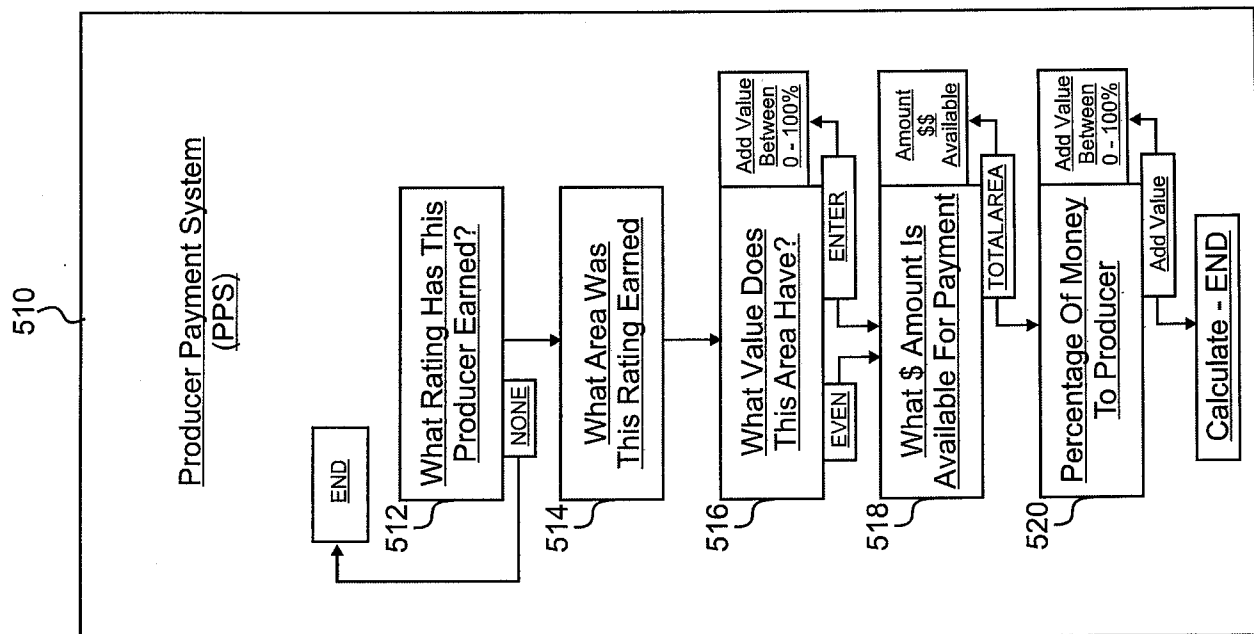
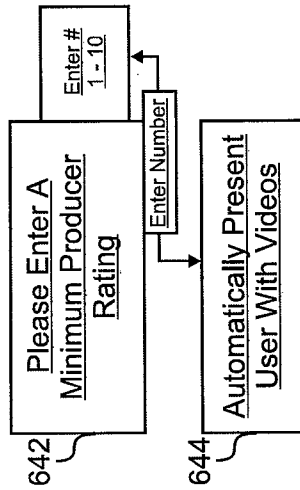


FIG 10

640

Video On Demand Setting/s
For High rated Producers Only



646

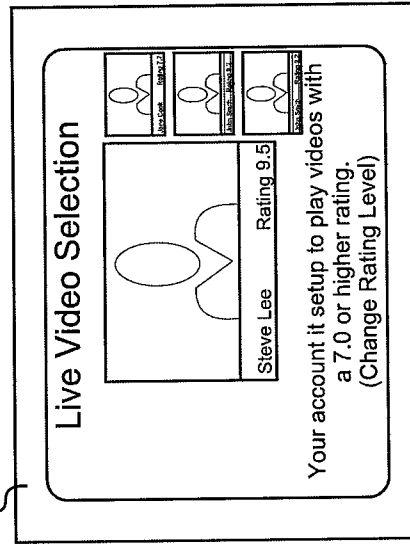


FIG 12

600

System Edit
(All Areas)

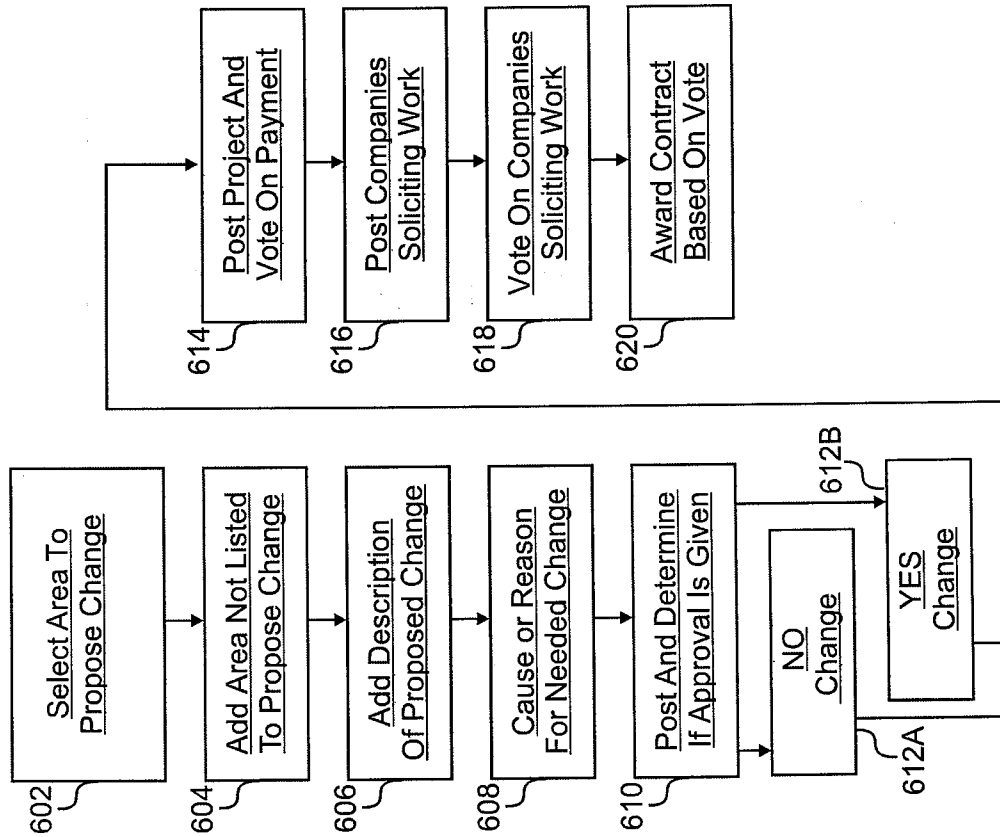


FIG 11

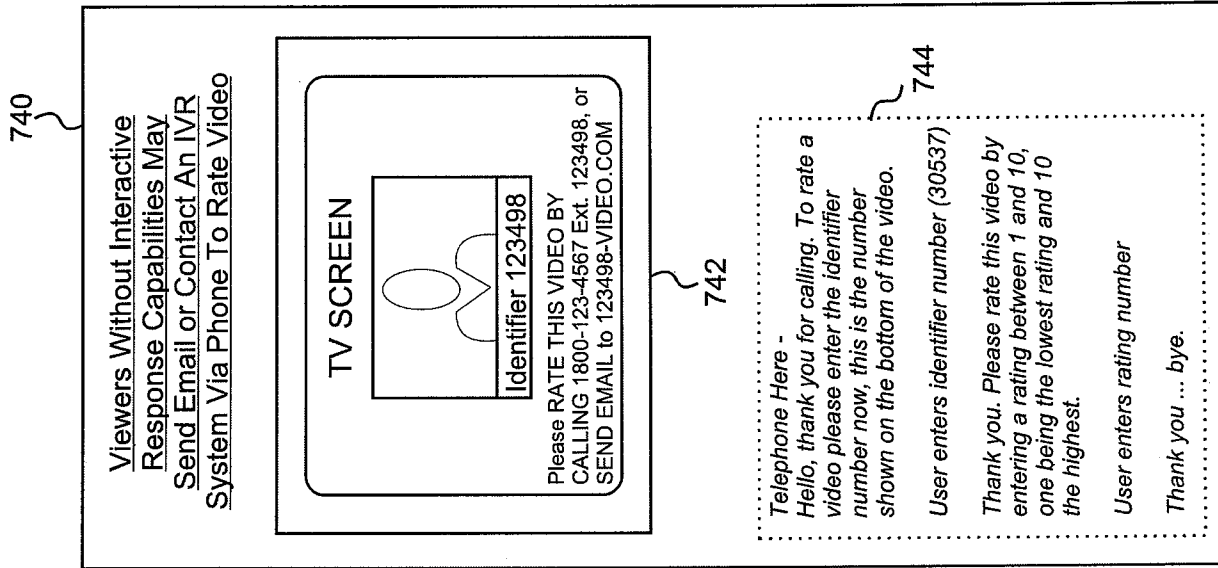


FIG 15

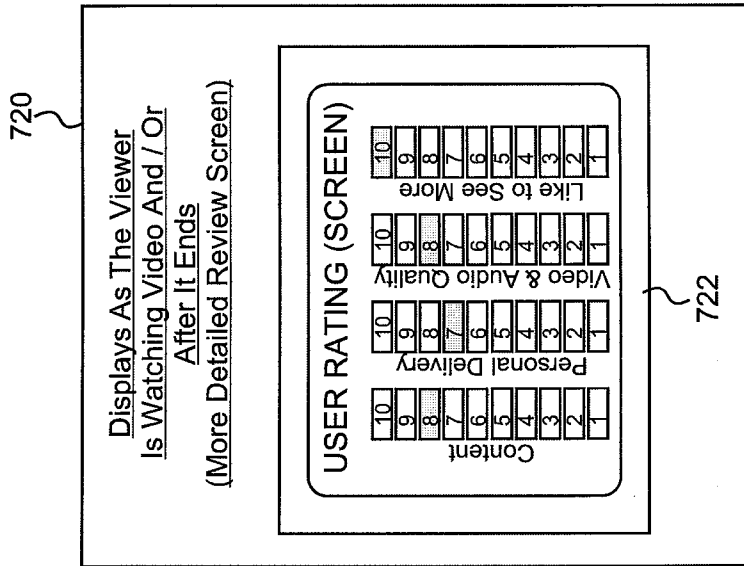


FIG 14

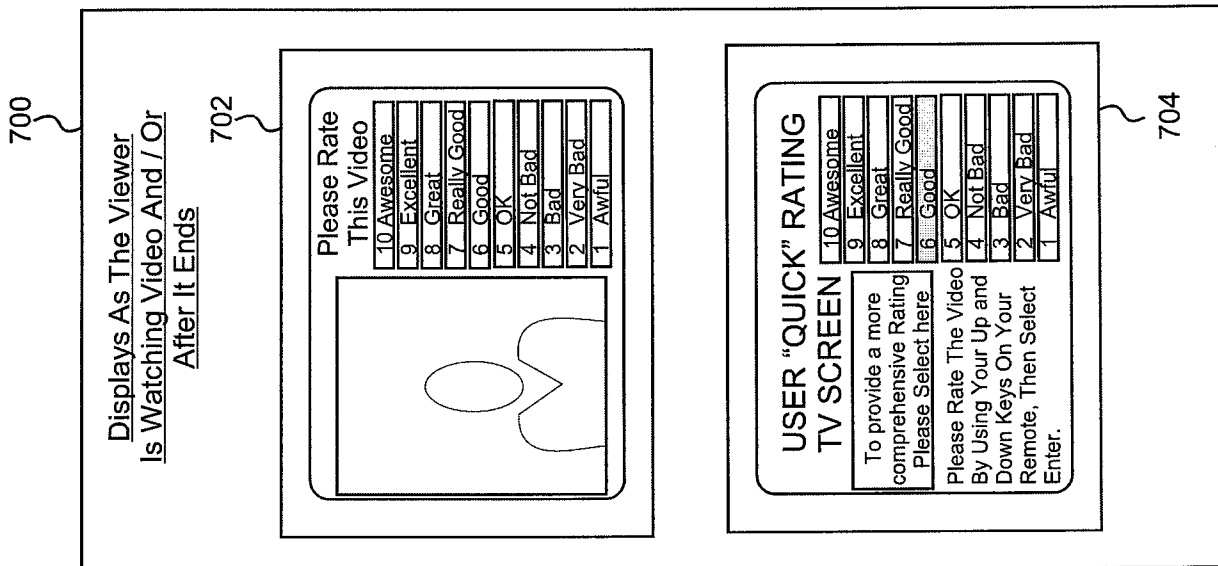


FIG 13

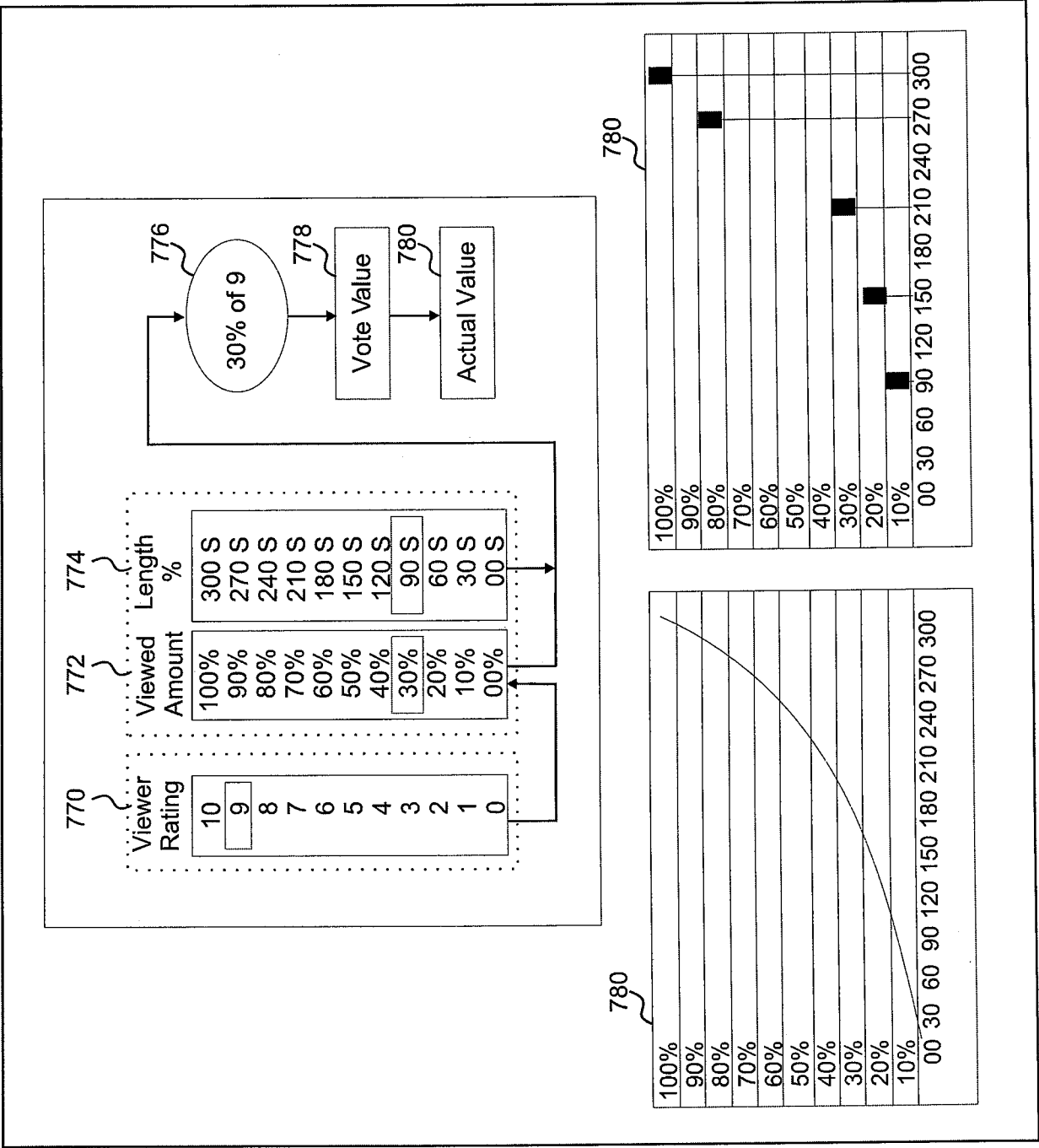


FIG 16

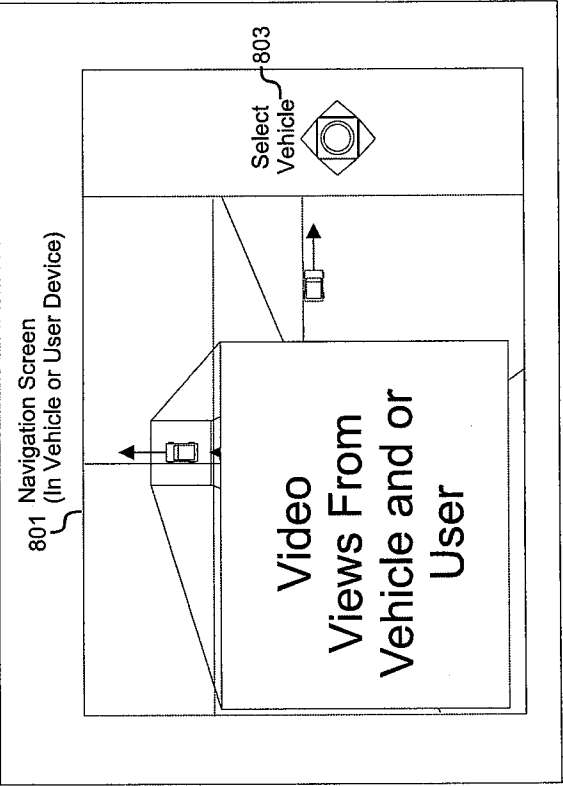


FIG 17

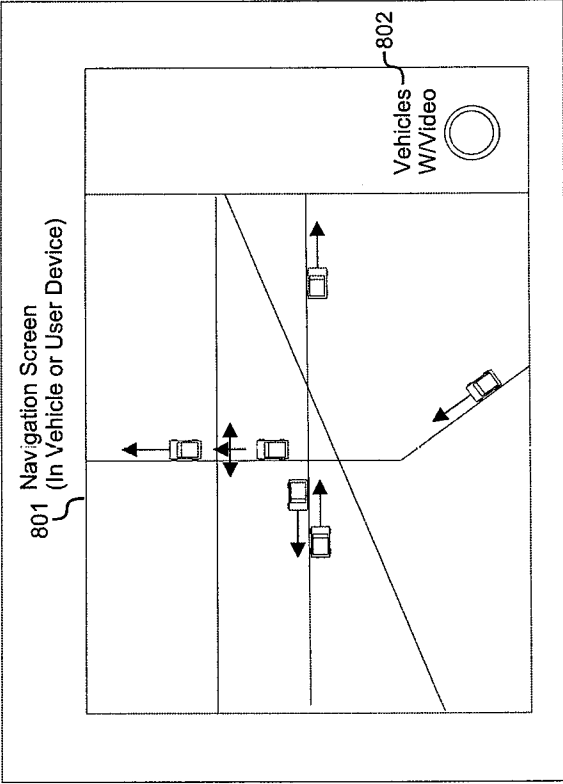


FIG 18

