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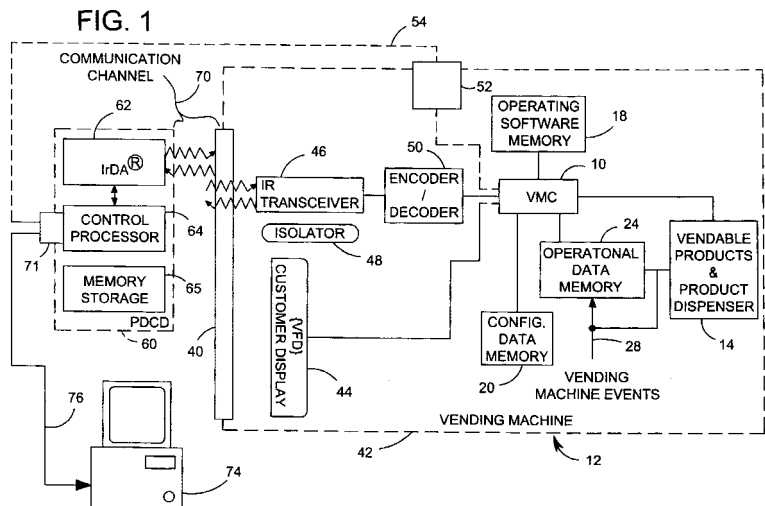
(54)

Vending machine communication system

(57)

A vending machine communication system and process including a vending machine (12) that vends a product. A vending machine operating software is stored in an operating software memory (18) associated with the vending machine (12). A vending machine controller (10) controls the vending machine (12) as a function of the vending machine operating software. A vending machine I/O port (46, 52) is associated with the vending machine controller (10). A handheld data transfer device (60) has a data transfer I/O port (62, 71) for communicating with the vending machine I/O port (46, 52). The handheld data transfer device (60) has a stor-

age. The transfer device (60) and the vending machine controller (10) are adapted to transfer the vending machine operating software between the storage and the operating software memory (18) via the data transfer I/O port (62, 71), the vending machine I/O port (46, 52), and the vending machine controller (10). As a result, the vending machine operating software is transferred between the operating software memory (18) and the storage. The system also includes the ability to transfer vending machine operating software and vending machine data from one vending machine (12) to another (12'), using the handheld data transfer device (60).





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 00 30 9499

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search MUNICH		Date of completion of the search 15 May 2002	Examiner Mennerun, S
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

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**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
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