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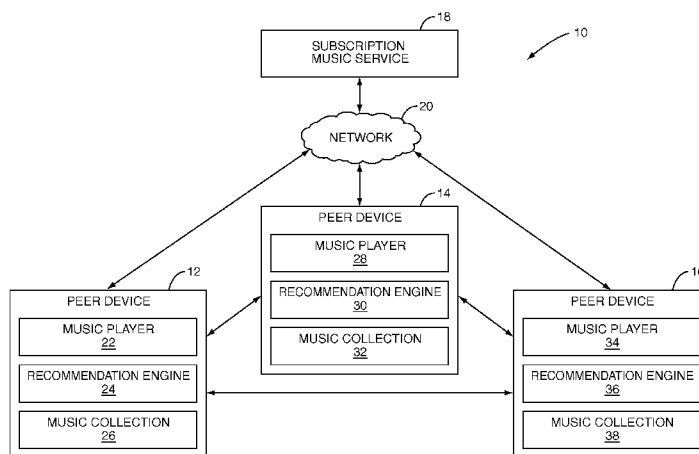
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(54) Title: P2P NETWORK FOR PROVIDING REAL TIME MEDIA RECOMMENDATIONS



(57) Abstract: A peer-to-peer (P2P) network for providing real time media recommendations is provided. The media recommendations may be song recommendations or video recommendations. Each time a media presentation is played by a peer device, the peer device provides a recommendation identifying the media presentation to other peer devices in the P2P network. A peer device having received recommendations from the other peer devices in the P2P network then programmatically, or automatically, selects a next media presentation to play from the media presentations recently played by the other peer devices and one or more locally stored media presentations. If the selected media presentation is not stored locally by the peer device, the peer device may obtain the selected media presentation from a subscription based service enabling streaming or download of the selected media presentation, an e-commerce service enabling purchase and download of the selected media presentation, or another peer device.

WO 2008/008563 A2

**P2P NETWORK FOR PROVIDING REAL TIME MEDIA
RECOMMENDATIONS**

Field of the Invention

5 **[0001]** The present invention relates to media recommendations, such as music or video recommendations, and more specifically relates to a peer-to-peer (P2P) network for providing real time media recommendations.

Background of the Invention

10 **[0002]** In recent years, there has been an enormous increase in the amount of digital media, such as music, available online. Services such as Apple's iTunes enable users to legally purchase and download music. Other services such as Yahoo! Music Unlimited and RealNetwork's Rhapsody provide access to millions of songs for a monthly subscription fee. As a
15 result, music has become much more accessible to listeners worldwide. However, the increased accessibility of music has only heightened a long-standing problem for the music industry, which is namely the issue of linking audiophiles with new music that matches their listening preferences.

20 **[0003]** Many companies, technologies, and approaches have emerged to address this issue of music recommendation. Some companies have taken an analytical approach. They review various attributes of a song, such as melody, harmony, lyrics, orchestration, vocal character, and the like, and assign a rating to each attribute. The ratings for each attribute are then assembled to create a holistic classification for the song that is then used by a
25 recommendation engine. The recommendation engine typically requires that the user first identify a song that he or she likes. The recommendation engine then suggests other songs with similar attributions. Companies using this type of approach include Pandora (<http://www.pandora.com>), SoundFlavor (<http://www.soundflavor.com>), MusicIP (<http://www.musicip.com>), and
30 MongóMusic (purchased by Microsoft in 2000).

30 **[0004]** Other companies take a communal approach. They make recommendations based on the collective wisdom of a group of users with similar musical tastes. These solutions first profile the listening habits of a particular user and then search similar profiles of other users to determine

recommendations. Profiles are generally created in a variety of ways such as looking at a user's complete collection, the playcounts of their songs, their favorite playlists, and the like. Companies using this technology include Last.fm (<http://www.last.fm>), Music Strands (<http://www.musicstrands.com>),
5 WebJay (<http://www.webjay.org>), Mercora (<http://www.mercora.com>),
betterPropaganda (<http://www.betterpropaganda.com>), Loomia
(<http://www.loomia.com>), eMusic (<http://www.emusic.com>), musicmatch
(<http://www.mmguide.musicmatch.com>), genielab (<http://genielab.com/>),
upto11 (<http://www.upto11.net/>), Napster (<http://www.napster.com>), and
10 iTunes (<http://www.itunes.com>) with its celebrity playlists.

[0005] The problem with these traditional recommendation systems is that they fail to consider peer influences. For example, the music that a particular teenager listens to may be highly influenced by the music listened to by a group of the teenager's peers, such as his or her friends. As such, there is a
15 need for a music recommendation system and method that recommends music to a user based on the listening habits of a peer group.

Summary of the Invention

[0006] The present invention provides a peer-to-peer (P2P) network for
20 providing real time media recommendations. The media recommendations may be song recommendations or video recommendations. Each time a media presentation is played by a peer device, the peer device provides a recommendation identifying the media presentation to other peer devices in the P2P network. A peer device having received recommendations from the
25 other peer devices in the P2P network then programmatically, or automatically, selects a next media presentation to play from the media presentations recently played by the other peer devices and one or more locally stored media presentations. If the selected media presentation is not
30 stored locally by the peer device, the peer device may obtain the selected media presentation from a subscription based service enabling streaming or download of the selected media presentation, an e-commerce service enabling purchase and download of the selected media presentation, or another peer device. In one embodiment, the peer devices are portable devices forming the P2P network via local wireless communication. In

another embodiment, the peer devices may be any type of device and form the P2P network via a Wide Area Network (WAN) such as the Internet.

[0007] Those skilled in the art will appreciate the scope of the present invention and realize additional aspects thereof after reading the following
5 detailed description of the preferred embodiments in association with the accompanying drawing figures.

Brief Description of the Drawing Figures

[0008] The accompanying drawing figures incorporated in and forming a
10 part of this specification illustrate several aspects of the invention, and together with the description serve to explain the principles of the invention.

[0009] Figure 1 illustrates a system incorporating a peer-to-peer (P2P) network for real time media recommendations according to one embodiment of the present invention;

15 **[0010]** Figure 2 is a flow chart illustrating the operation of the peer devices of Figure 1 according to one embodiment of the present invention;

[0011] Figure 3 illustrates the operation of the system of Figure 1 according to one embodiment of the present invention;

20 **[0012]** Figure 4 illustrates a system incorporating a P2P network for real time media recommendations according to a second embodiment of the present invention;

[0013] Figure 5 illustrates the operation of the system of Figure 4 according to one embodiment of the present invention;

25 **[0014]** Figure 6 is a flow chart illustrating a method for automatically selecting media to play based on recommendations from peer devices and user preferences according to one embodiment of the present invention;

[0015] Figure 7 illustrates an exemplary graphical user interface (GUI) for configuring user preferences according to one embodiment of the present invention;

30 **[0016]** Figure 8 illustrates an exemplary GUI for assigning weights to various categories of media content as part of configuring the user preferences according to one embodiment of the present invention;

- [0017]** Figure 9 illustrates an exemplary GUI for assigning weights to individual users within a user category as part of configuring the user preferences according to one embodiment of the present invention;
- [0018]** Figure 10 illustrates an exemplary GUI for assigning weights to individual genres from a genre category as part of configuring the user preferences according to one embodiment of the present invention;
- [0019]** Figure 11 illustrates an exemplary GUI for assigning weights to individual decades from a decade category as part of configuring the user preferences according to one embodiment of the present invention;
- [0020]** Figure 12 illustrates an exemplary GUI for assigning weights to individual availability types from an availability type category as part of configuring the user preferences according to one embodiment of the present invention;
- [0021]** Figure 13 illustrates an exemplary GUI displaying a playlist including both songs from a local music collection of a peer device and recommended songs from other peer devices, where the songs are sorted by a score determined based on user preferences according to one embodiment of the present invention;
- [0022]** Figure 14 illustrates an exemplary GUI displaying a playlist including both songs from a local music collection of a peer device and recommended songs from other peer devices, where the songs are sorted by a both genre and score according to one embodiment of the present invention;
- [0023]** Figure 15 is a block diagram of a peer device of Figure 1 according to one embodiment of the present invention; and
- [0024]** Figure 16 is a block diagram of a peer device of Figure 4 according to one embodiment of the present invention.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

- [0025]** The embodiments set forth below represent the necessary information to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention and illustrate the best mode of practicing the invention. Upon reading the following description in light of the accompanying drawing figures, those skilled in the art will understand the concepts of the invention and will recognize applications of these concepts not particularly addressed herein. It

should be understood that these concepts and applications fall within the scope of the disclosure and the accompanying claims.

[0026] Figure 1 illustrates a system 10 incorporating a P2P network for providing real time song recommendations according to one embodiment of the present invention. Note that while the discussion herein focuses on song recommendations for clarity and ease of discussion, the present invention is equally applicable to providing recommendations for other types of media presentations such as video presentations, as will be apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art upon reading this disclosure. Exemplary video presentations are movies, television programs, and the like. In general, the system 10 includes a number of peer devices 12-16 which are optionally connected to a subscription music service 18 via a network 20, which may be a distributed public network such as, but not limited to, the Internet. Note that while three peer devices 12-16 are illustrated, the present invention may be used with any number of two or more peer devices.

[0027] In this embodiment, the peer devices 12-16 are preferably portable devices such as, but not limited to, portable audio players, mobile telephones, Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs), or the like having audio playback capabilities. However, the peer devices 12-16 may alternatively be stationary devices such as a personal computer or the like. The peer devices 12-16 include local wireless communication interfaces (Figure 15) communicatively coupling the peer devices 12-16 to form a peer-to-peer (P2P) network. The wireless communication interfaces may provide wireless communication according to, for example, one of the suite of IEEE 802.11 standards, the Bluetooth standard, or the like.

[0028] The peer device 12 includes a music player 22, a recommendation engine 24, and a music collection 26. The music player 22 may be implemented in software, hardware, or a combination of hardware and software. In general, the music player 22 operates to play songs from the music collection 26. The recommendation engine 24 may be implemented in software, hardware, or a combination of hardware and software. The recommendation engine 24 may alternatively be incorporated into the music player 22. The music collection 26 includes any number of song files stored in one or more digital storage units such as, for example, one or more hard-

disc drives, one or more memory cards, internal Random-Access Memory (RAM), one or more associated external digital storage devices, or the like.

[0029] In operation, each time a song is played by the music player 22, the recommendation engine 24 operates to provide a recommendation identifying the song to the other peer devices 14, 16 via the P2P network. The recommendation does not include the song. In one embodiment, the recommendation may be a recommendation file including information identifying the song. In addition, as discussed below in detail, the recommendation engine 24 operates to programmatically, or automatically, select a next song to be played by the music player 22 based on the recommendations received from the other peer device 14, 16 identifying songs recently played by the other peer devices 14, 16 and user preferences associated with the user of the peer device 12.

[0030] Like the peer device 12, the peer device 14 includes a music player 28, a recommendation engine 30, and a music collection 32, and the peer device 16 includes a music player 34, a recommendation engine 36, and a music collection 38.

[0031] The subscription music service 18 may be a service hosted by a server connected to the network 20. Exemplary subscription based music services that may be modified to operate according to the present invention are Yahoo! Music Unlimited digital music service and RealNetwork's Rhapsody digital music service.

[0032] Figure 2 illustrates the operation of the peer device 12 according to one embodiment of the present invention. However, the following discussion is equally applicable to the other peer devices 14, 16. First, the peer devices 12-16 cooperate to establish a P2P network (step 200). The P2P network may be initiated using, for example, an electronic or verbal invitation. Invitations may be desirable when the user wishes to establish the P2P network with a particular group of other users, such as his or her friends. Note that this may be beneficial when the user desires that the music he or she listens to be influenced only by the songs listened to by, for example, the user's friends. Invitations may also be desirable when the number of peer devices within a local wireless coverage area of the peer device 12 is large. As another example, the peer device 12 may maintain a "buddy list"

identifying friends of the user of the peer device 12, where the peer device 12 may automatically establish a P2P network with the peer devices of the users identified by the "buddy list" when the peer devices are within a local wireless coverage area of the peer device 12.

5 **[0033]** Alternatively, the peer device 12 may establish an ad-hoc P2P network with the other peer devices 14, 16 by detecting the other peer devices 14, 16 within the local wireless coverage area of the peer device 12 and automatically establishing the P2P network with at least a subset of the
10 detected peer devices 14, 16. In order to control the number of peer devices within the ad-hoc P2P network, the peer device 12 may compare user profiles of the users of the other peer devices 14, 16 with a user profile of the user of the peer device 12 and determine whether to permit the other peer devices 14, 16 to enter the P2P network based on the similarities of the user profiles.

[0034] At some point after the P2P network is established, the peer device
15 12 plays a song (step 202). Initially, before any recommendations have been received from the other peer devices 14, 16, the song may be a song from the music collection 26 selected by the user of the peer device 12. Prior to, during, or after playback of the song, the recommendation engine 24 sends a recommendation identifying the song to the other peer devices 14, 16 (step
20 204). The recommendation may include, but is not limited to, information identifying the song such as a Globally Unique Identifier (GUID) for the song, title of the song, or the like; a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) enabling other peer devices to obtain the song such as a URL enabling download or streaming of the song from the subscription music service 18 or a URL
25 enabling purchase and download of the song from an e-commerce service; a URL enabling download or streaming of a preview of the song from the subscription music service 18 or a similar e-commerce service; metadata describing the song such as ID3 tags including, for example, genre, the title of the song, the artist of the song, the album on which the song can be found,
30 the date of release of the song or album, the lyrics, and the like.

[0035] The recommendation may also include a list of recommenders including information identifying each user having previously recommended the song and a timestamp for each recommendation. For example, if the song was originally played at the peer device 14 and then played at the peer

device 16 in response to a recommendation from the peer device 14, the list of recommenders may include information identifying the user of the peer device 14 or the peer device 14 and a timestamp identifying a time at which the song was played or recommended by the peer device 14, and information
5 identifying the user of the peer device 16 or the peer device 16 and a timestamp identifying a time at which the song was played or recommended by the peer device 16. Likewise, if the peer device 12 then selects the song for playback, information identifying the user of the peer device 12 or the peer device 12 and a corresponding timestamp may be appended to the list of
10 recommenders.

[0036] The peer device 12, and more specifically the recommendation engine 24, also receives recommendations from the other peer devices 14, 16 (step 206). The recommendations from the other peer devices 14, 16 identify songs played by the other peer devices 14, 16. Optionally, the
15 recommendation engine 24 may filter the recommendations from the other peer devices 14, 16 based on, for example, user, genre, artist, title, album, lyrics, date of release, or the like (step 208).

[0037] The recommendation engine 24 then automatically selects a next song to play from the songs identified by the recommendations received from
20 the other peer devices 14, 16, optionally songs identified by previously received recommendations, and one or more songs from the music collection 26 based on user preferences (step 210). In one embodiment, the recommendation engine 24 considers only those songs identified by recommendations received since a previous song selection. For example, if
25 the song played in step 202 was a song selected by the recommendation engine 24 based on prior recommendations from the peer devices 14, 16, the recommendation engine 24 may only consider the songs identified in new recommendations received after the song was selected for playback in step 202 and may not consider the songs identified in the prior recommendations.
30 This may be beneficial if the complexity of the recommendation engine 24 is desired to be minimal such as when the peer device 12 is a mobile terminal or the like having limited processing and memory capabilities. In another embodiment, the recommendation engine 24 may consider all previously

received recommendations, where the recommendations may expire after a predetermined or user defined period of time.

[0038] As discussed below, the user preferences used to select the next song to play may include a weight or priority assigned to each of a number of categories such as user, genre, decade of release, and availability. Generally, availability identifies whether songs are stored locally in the music collection 26; available via the subscription music service 18; available for download, and optionally purchase, from an e-commerce service or one of the other peer devices 14, 16; or are not currently available where the user may search for the songs if desired. The user preferences may be stored locally at the peer device 12 or obtained from a central server via the network 20. If the peer device 12 is a portable device, the user preferences may be configured on an associated user system, such as a personal computer, and transferred to the peer device 12 during a synchronization process. The user preferences may alternatively be automatically provided or suggested by the recommendation engine 24 based on a play history of the peer device 12. In the preferred embodiment discussed below, the songs identified by the recommendations from the other peer devices 14, 16 and the songs from the music collection 26 are scored or ranked based on the user preferences. Then, based on the scores, the recommendation engine 24 selects the next song to play.

[0039] Once the next song to play is selected, the peer device 12 obtains the selected song (step 212). If the selected song is part of the music collection 26, the peer device 12 obtains the selected song from the music collection 26. If the selected song is not part of the music collection 26, the recommendation engine 24 obtains the selected song from the subscription music service 18, an e-commerce service, or one of the other peer devices 14, 16. For example, the recommendation for the song may include a URL providing a link to a source from which the song may be obtained, and the peer device 12 may obtain the selected song from the source identified in the recommendation for the song. Once obtained, the selected song is played and the process repeats (steps 202-212).

[0040] Figure 3 illustrates the operation of the peer devices 12-16 to provide real time song recommendations according to one embodiment of the

present invention. The illustrated process is the same as discussed above with respect to Figure 2. As such, the details will not be repeated. In general, the peer devices 14, 16 play songs and, in response, provide song recommendations to the peer device 12 (steps 300-306). The peer device 12
5 may optionally filter the recommendations from the peer devices 14, 16 (step 308). The recommendation engine 24 of the peer device 12 then automatically selects the next song to play from the songs identified by the recommendations, optionally songs identified by prior recommendations from the peer devices 14, 16, and locally stored songs from the music collection 26
10 based on user preferences of the user of the peer device 12 (step 310). The peer device 12 then obtains and plays the selected song (steps 312-314). Either prior to, during, or after playback of the selected song, the recommendation engine 24 of the peer device 12 provides a recommendation identifying the selected song to the other peer devices 14, 16 (step 316-318).

15 **[0041]** Figure 4 illustrates the system 10' according to second embodiment of the present invention. In this embodiment, the peer devices 12'-16' form a P2P network via the network 20 and a proxy server 40. The peer devices 12'-16' may be any device having a connection to the network 20 and audio playback capabilities. For example, the peer devices 12'-16' may be personal
20 computers, laptop computers, mobile telephones, portable audio players, PDAs, or the like having either a wired or wireless connection to the network 20. As discussed above with respect to the peer device 12, the peer device 12' includes music player 22', a recommendation engine 24', and a music collection 26'. Likewise, the peer device 14' includes a music player 28', a recommendation engine 30', and a music collection 32', and the peer device
25 16' includes a music player 34', a recommendation engine 36', and a music collection 38.

[0042] Figure 5 illustrates the operation of the system 10' of Figure 4. Prior to beginning the process, the peer devices 12'-16' form a P2P network. Since
30 the number of peer devices 12'-16' that may be connected to the network 20 may be very large, the peer devices 12'-16' may implement some technique for identifying a desired group of peer devices for the P2P network. For example, the P2P network may be initiated using, for example, an electronic or verbal invitation. As another example, the peer device 12' may maintain a

“buddy list” identifying friends of the user of the peer device 12', where the peer device 12' may automatically establish a P2P network with the peer devices of the users identified by the “buddy list” when the peer devices are connected to the network 20. Alternatively, the peer devices 12'-16' may form
5 an ad-hoc network where the participants for the ad-hoc network are selected based on similarities in user profiles.

[0043] In this example, once the P2P network is established, the peer device 14' plays a song and, in response, provides a song recommendation identifying the song to the peer device 12' via the proxy server 40 (steps 400-
10 404). While not illustrated for clarity, the peer device 14' also sends the recommendation for the song to the peer device 16' via the proxy server 40. The peer device 16' also plays a song and sends a song recommendation to the peer device 12' via the proxy server 40 (steps 406-410). Again, while not illustrated for clarity, the peer device 16' also sends the recommendation for
15 the song to the peer device 14' via the proxy server 40.

[0044] From this point, the process continues as discussed above. More specifically, the recommendation engine 24' may optionally filter the recommendations from the other peer devices 14', 16' based on, for example, user, genre, artist, title, album, lyrics, date of release, or the like (step 412).
20 The recommendation engine 24' then automatically selects a next song to play from the songs identified by the recommendations received from the other peer devices 14'-16', optionally songs identified by previously received recommendations from the peer devices 14'-16', and one or more songs from the music collection 26' based on user preferences (step 414). In the
25 preferred embodiment discussed below, the songs identified by the recommendations from the other peer devices 14'-16' and the songs from the music collection 26' are scored based on the user preferences. Then, based on the scores, the recommendation engine 24' selects the next song to play.

[0045] Once the next song to play is selected, the peer device 12' obtains
30 the selected song (step 416). If the selected song is part of the music collection 26', the peer device 12' obtains the selected song from the music collection 26'. If the selected song is not part of the music collection 26', the recommendation engine 24' obtains the selected song from the subscription music service 18, an e-commerce service, or one of the other peer devices

14'-16'. For example, the selected song may be obtained from a source identified in the recommendation for the song. Once obtained, the selected song is played and a recommendation for the song is provided to the other peer devices 14'-16' via the proxy server 40 (steps 418-426).

5 **[0046]** Figure 6 illustrates the process of automatically selecting a song to play from the received recommendations and locally stored songs at the peer device 12' according to one embodiment of the present invention. However, the following discussion is equally applicable to the peer devices 12-16 of Figure 1, as well as the other peer devices 14'-16' of Figure 4. First, the user
10 preferences for the user of the peer device 12' are obtained (step 500). The user preferences may include a weight or priority assigned to each of a number of categories such as, but not limited to, user, genre, decade of release, and availability. The user preferences may be obtained from the user during an initial configuration of the recommendation engine 24'. In addition,
15 the user preferences may be updated by the user as desired. The user preferences may alternatively be suggested by the recommendation engine 24' or the proxy server 40 based on a play history of the peer device 12'. Note that that proxy server 40 may ascertain the play history of the peer device 12' by monitoring the recommendations from the peer device 12' as
20 the recommendations pass through the proxy server 40 on their way to the other peer devices 14'-16'. The user preferences may be stored locally at the peer device 12' or obtained from a central server, such as the proxy server 40, via the network 20.

[0047] Once recommendations are received from the other peer devices
25 14'-16', the recommendation engine 24' of the peer device 12' scores the songs identified by the recommendations based on the user preferences (step 502). The recommendation engine 24' also scores one or more local songs from the music collection 26' (step 504). The recommendation engine 24' then selects the next song to play based, at least on part, on the scores of the recommended and local songs (step 506).
30

[0048] Figure 7 illustrates an exemplary graphical user interface (GUI) 42 for configuring user preferences. First, the user assigns a weight to various categories. In this example, the categories are users, genre, decade, and availability. However, the present invention is not limited thereto. The

weights for the categories may be assigned alphabetically by selecting radio button 44, customized by the user by selecting radio button 46, or automatically suggested based on a user profile of the user by selecting radio button 48. If alphabetical weighting is selected, the weights are assigned by

5 alphabetically sorting the categories and assigning a weight to each of the categories based on its position in the alphabetically sorted list of categories. As illustrated in Figure 8, if customized weighting is selected, the user may be presented with a GUI 50 for customizing the weighting of the categories. As illustrated in the exemplary embodiment of Figure 8, the weights of the

10 categories may be assigned by adjusting corresponding sliding bars 52-58. Sliding bar 60 may be adjusted to assign a weight to a "no repeat factor." The no repeat factor is a dampening factor used to alter a song's score based on when the song was previously played at the peer device 12' in order to prevent the same song from being continually repeated.

15 **[0049]** Once the weights are assigned, the user may select an OK button 62 to return to the GUI 42 of Figure 7 or select a REVERT button 64 to return the weights of the categories to their previous settings. In addition, the user may select a SUGGEST FROM PROFILE button 66 to have the recommendation engine 24' or the proxy server 40 suggest weights for the

20 categories based on a user profile. Note that the button 66 has the same effect as the radio button 48 of Figure 7.

[0050] Returning to Figure 7, radio buttons 68-72 are used to select a desired method for assigning weights to each user in the P2P network, radio buttons 74-78 are used to select a desired method for assigning weights to

25 each of a number of genres of music, radio buttons 80-84 are used to select the desired method for assigning weights to each of a number of decades, and radio buttons 86-90 are used to select the desired method for assigning weights to a number of song availability types.

[0051] Regarding users, if the radio button 68 is selected, the users are

30 assigned weights based on their respective positions in an alphabetically sorted list of users. If the radio button 70 is selected, a GUI 92 (Figure 9) enabling the user to customize the weights assigned to a number of users from which recommendations are received. An exemplary embodiment of the GUI 92 is illustrated in Figure 9, where sliding bars 94-98 enable the user to

assign customized weights to corresponding users. Returning to Figure 7, if the radio button 72 is selected, the recommendation engine 24' or the proxy server 40 generates suggested weights for the users based on a user profile associated with the peer device 12'.

- 5 **[0052]** Regarding genres, if the radio button 74 is selected, the genres are assigned weights based on their respective positions in an alphabetically sorted list of genres. If the radio button 76 is selected, a GUI 100 (Figure 10) enabling the user to customize the weights assigned to a number of genres. An exemplary embodiment of the GUI 100 is illustrated in Figure 10, where
- 10 sliding bars 102-116 enable the user to assign customized weights to corresponding genres. Returning to Figure 7, if the radio button 78 is selected, the recommendation engine 24' or the proxy server 40 generates suggested weights for the genres based on a user profile associated with the peer device 12'.
- 15 **[0053]** Regarding decades, if the radio button 80 is selected, the decades are assigned weights based on their respective positions in a chronologically sorted list of decades. If the radio button 82 is selected, a GUI 118 (Figure 11) enabling the user to customize the weights assigned to a number of decades. An exemplary embodiment of the GUI 118 is illustrated in Figure
- 20 11, where sliding bars 120-130 enable the user to assign customized weights to corresponding decades. Returning to Figure 7, if the radio button 84 is selected, the recommendation engine 24' or the proxy server 40 generates suggested weights for the decades based on a user profile associated with the peer device 12'.
- 25 **[0054]** Regarding availability, if the radio button 86 is selected, the availability types are assigned weights based on their respective positions in an alphabetically sorted list of availability types. If the radio button 88 is selected, a GUI 132 (Figure 12) enabling the user to customize the weights assigned to a number of availability types. An exemplary embodiment of the
- 30 GUI 132 is illustrated in Figure 12, where sliding bars 134-140 enable the user to assign customized weights to corresponding availability types. Returning to Figure 7, if the radio button 90 is selected, the recommendation engine 24' or the proxy server 40 generates suggested weights for the availability types based on a user profile associated with the peer device 12'.

[0055] An exemplary equation for scoring a particular song is:

$$Score = NRF \cdot (WU \cdot WUA + WG \cdot WGA + WD \cdot WDA + WA \cdot WAA) \cdot 100,$$

5 where NRF is the “no repeat factor”; WU is the weight assigned to the user category; WUA is the weight assigned to the user attribute of the song, which is the user recommending the song; WG is the weight assigned to the genre category; WGA is the weight assigned to the genre attribute of the song, which is the genre of the song; WD is the weight assigned to the decade
 10 category; WDA is the weight assigned to the decade attribute of the song, which is the decade in which the song or the album associated with the song was released; WA is the weight assigned to the availability category; and WAA is the weight assigned to the availability attribute of the song, which is the availability of the song.

15 **[0056]** The NRF may, for example, be computed as:

$$NRF = \frac{MIN(10 \cdot NRFW, LASTREPEAT_INDEX)}{10 \cdot NRFW}.$$

[0057] As an example, assume that the following category weights have
 20 been assigned:

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| User Category | 1 |
| Genre Category | 7 |
| Decade Category | 7 |
| Availability Type Category | 5 |
| NRFW | 9 |

Further assume that the attributes for the categories have been assigned
 25 weights as follows:

| User | | Genre | | Decade | | Availability | |
|--------|---|--------------|---|--------|---|----------------------|---|
| User A | 5 | Alternative | 8 | 1950s | 2 | Local | 8 |
| User B | 5 | Classic Rock | 5 | 1960s | 4 | Subscription Network | 2 |
| User C | 5 | Arena Rock | 5 | 1970s | 7 | Buy/Download | 1 |
| | | Jazz | 5 | 1980s | 9 | Find | 1 |
| | | New Wave | 2 | 1990s | 5 | | |
| | | Punk | 4 | 2000s | 5 | | |
| | | Dance | 2 | | | | |
| | | Country | 2 | | | | |

Thus, if a particular song to be scored is recommended by the user "User C," is from the "Alternative Genre," is from the "1980s" decade, and is available from the subscription music service 18, the score of the song may be
 5 computed as:

$$Score = NRF \cdot \left(\frac{1}{20} \cdot \frac{5}{10} + \frac{7}{20} \cdot \frac{8}{10} + \frac{7}{20} \cdot \frac{9}{10} + \frac{5}{20} \cdot \frac{2}{10} \right) \cdot 100$$

where if the song was last played 88 songs ago,
 10

$$NRF = \frac{MIN(10 \cdot 9, 88)}{10 \cdot 9} = \frac{88}{90}$$

Thus, the score for the song is

15

$$Score = \frac{88}{90} \cdot \left(\frac{1}{20} \cdot \frac{5}{10} + \frac{7}{20} \cdot \frac{8}{10} + \frac{7}{20} \cdot \frac{9}{10} + \frac{5}{20} \cdot \frac{2}{10} \right) \cdot 100 = 65.5.$$

[0058] Figure 13 is an exemplary GUI 142 showing a playlist for the peer device 12' including both local and recommended songs according to the present invention. However, note that a similar list may be maintained
 20 internally by the peer device 12 of Figure 1 and potentially optimized to display at least a portion of the GUI 142 on the display of the peer device 12. In this example, both the local and recommended songs are scored, as described above, and sorted according to their scores. In addition, as illustrated in Figure 14, the songs may be sorted based on another criterion,
 25 which in the illustrated example is genre, and score.

[0059] The GUI 142 may optionally allow the user to block songs having particular identified fields. In the examples of Figures 13 and 14, the user has identified the genre "country" and the artist "iron maiden" as fields to be blocked, as illustrated by the underlining. The user may select fields to block
5 by, for example, clicking on or otherwise selecting the desired fields. Songs having the blocked fields are still scored but are not obtained or played by the peer device 12'.

[0060] In one embodiment, the recommendation engine 24' of the peer device 12' may provide a download queue containing all songs to be
10 downloaded, and optionally purchased, from an external source such as the subscription music service 18, an e-commerce service, or another peer device 14'-16'. Songs in the download queue having scores above a first predetermined or user defined threshold and previews of other songs in the download queue having scores above a second predetermined or user
15 defined threshold but below the first threshold may be automatically downloaded to the peer device 12'.

[0061] Figure 15 is a block diagram of an exemplary embodiment of the peer device 12 of Figure 1. However, the following discussion is equally applicable to the other peer devices 14, 16. In general, the peer device 12
20 includes a control system 144 having associated memory 146. In this example, the music player 22 and the recommendation engine 24 are at least partially implemented in software and stored in the memory 146. The peer device 12 also includes a storage unit 148 operating to store the music collection 26 (Figure 1). The storage unit 148 may be any number of digital
25 storage devices such as, for example, one or more hard-disc drives, one or more memory cards, RAM, one or more external digital storage devices, or the like. The music collection 26 may alternatively be stored in the memory 146. The peer device 12 also includes a communication interface 150. The communication interface 150 includes a local wireless communication
30 interface for establishing the P2P network with the other peer devices 14, 16. The local wireless interface may operate according to, for example, one of the suite of IEEE 802.11 standards, the Bluetooth standard, or the like. The communication interface 150 may also include a network interface communicatively coupling the peer device 12 to the network 20 (Figure 1).

The peer device 12 also includes a user interface 152, which may include components such as a display, speakers, a user input device, and the like.

[0062] Figure 16 is a block diagram of an exemplary embodiment of the peer device 12' of Figure 4. However, the following discussion is equally applicable to the other peer devices 14'-16'. In general, the peer device 12' includes a control system 154 having associated memory 156. In this example, the music player 22' and the recommendation engine 24' are at least partially implemented in software and stored in the memory 156. The peer device 12' also includes a storage unit 158 operating to store the music collection 26' (Figure 4). The storage unit 158 may be any number of digital storage devices such as, for example, one or more hard-disc drives, one or more memory cards, RAM, one or more external digital storage devices, or the like. The music collection 26' may alternatively be stored in the memory 156. The peer device 12' also includes a communication interface 160. The communication interface 160 includes a network interface communicatively coupling the peer device 12' to the network 20 (Figure 4). The peer device 12' also includes a user interface 162, which may include components such as a display, speakers, a user input device, and the like.

[0063] The present invention provides substantial opportunity for variation without departing from the spirit or scope of the present invention. For example, while Figure 1 illustrates the peer devices 12-16 forming the P2P network via local wireless communication and Figure 4 illustrates the peer devices 12'-16' forming the P2P network via the network 20, the present invention is not limited to either a local wireless P2P network or a WAN P2P network in the alternative. More specifically, a particular peer device, such as the peer device 12, may form a P2P network with other peer devices using both local wireless communication and the network 20. Thus, for example, the peer device 12 may receive recommendations from both the peer devices 14, 16 (Figure 1) via local wireless communication and from the peer devices 14'-16' (Figure 4) via the network 20.

[0064] As another example, while the discussion herein focuses on song recommendations, the present invention is not limited thereto. The present invention is equally applicable to recommendations for other types of media presentations such as video presentations. Thus, the present invention may

additionally or alternatively provide movie recommendations, television program recommendations, or the like.

[0065] Those skilled in the art will recognize improvements and modifications to the preferred embodiments of the present invention. All such
5 improvements and modifications are considered within the scope of the concepts disclosed herein and the claims that follow.

Claims

What is claimed is:

1. A method of recommending music comprising:
5 receiving media recommendations from peer devices in a peer-to-peer (P2P) network identifying media presentations recently played on the peer devices; and
automatically selecting a media presentation to play based on the media presentations identified by the media recommendations.
10
2. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving the media recommendations comprises receiving the recommendations from the peer devices one-by-one as the media content is played on the peer devices.
- 15 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the media recommendations are song recommendations identifying songs recently played on the peer devices, and automatically selecting the media content to play comprises automatically selecting a song to play from a group of songs comprising the songs identified by the media recommendations.
20
4. The method of claim 1 wherein automatically selecting the media presentation to play comprises automatically selecting the media presentation to play from a group of media presentations comprising the media presentations identified by the recommendations and at least one media
25 presentation from a local media collection.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein automatically selecting the media presentation to play comprises automatically selecting the media presentation to play from a group of media presentations comprising the media
30 presentations identified by the recommendations and media presentations identified by recommendations previously received from the peer devices.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein automatically selecting the media presentation to play further comprises automatically selecting the media

presentation to play from a group of media presentations comprising the media presentations identified by the recommendations, media presentations identified by recommendations previously received from the peer devices, and at least one media presentation from a local media collection.

5

7. The method of claim 1 wherein automatically selecting the media presentation to play further comprises scoring a group of media presentations comprising the media presentations identified by the recommendations based on user preferences.

10

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the user preferences comprise weights assigned to a plurality of categories and scoring the group of media presentations comprises scoring the group of media presentations based on the weights assigned to the plurality of categories.

15

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising assigning weights to the plurality of categories, wherein the plurality of categories comprise one or more categories selected from the group consisting of user, genre, decade, and availability.

20

10. The method of claim 8 wherein the user preferences further comprise weights assigned to a plurality of possible attributes for each of the plurality of categories and scoring the group of media presentations comprises scoring the group of media presentations based on the weights assigned to the plurality of categories and the weights assigned to the plurality of possible attributes for each of the plurality of categories.

25

11. The method of claim 7 wherein the user preferences comprise a weight assigned to a no repeat factor and scoring the group of media presentations comprises scoring the group of media presentations based on the no repeat factor and the weight assigned to the no repeat factor.

30

12. The method of claim 7 further comprising obtaining the user preferences from the user.

13. The method of claim 7 further comprising automatically generating the user preferences based on an associated play history.
- 5 14. The method of claim 7 wherein automatically selecting the media presentation to play further comprises:
 sorting the group of media presentations based on at least one criteria and the scores to provide a sorted list of media presentations; and
 automatically selecting the media presentation to play from the sorted
10 list of media presentations.
15. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 obtaining the selected media presentation from a subscription service;
and
15 playing the selected media presentation.
16. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 purchasing and downloading the selected media presentation from an e-commerce service; and
20 playing the selected media presentation.
17. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 obtaining a preview of the selected media presentation from an e-commerce service; and
25 playing the preview of the selected media presentation.
18. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 obtaining the selected media presentation from one of the peer devices; and
30 playing the selected media presentation.
19. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
 obtaining a preview of the selected media presentation from one of the peer devices; and

playing the preview of the selected media presentation.

20. The method of 1 further comprising inserting information identifying the selected media presentation in a download queue, wherein media
5 presentations in the download queue having a score above a first threshold and previews of media presentations in the download queue having a score above a second threshold and below the first threshold are automatically obtained from an external source.
- 10 21. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
filtering the media recommendations based on at least one criterion;
wherein automatically selecting the media presentation to play
comprises automatically selecting the media presentation to play based on
the media presentation identified by the filtered media recommendations.
15
22. The method of claim 1 further comprising establishing the P2P network via local wireless communication.
23. The method of claim 1 further comprising establishing the P2P network
20 via a Wide Area Network (WAN).
24. The method of claim 1 further comprising inviting the peer devices to join the P2P network.
- 25 25. A peer device for a peer-to-peer (P2P) media recommendation system comprising:
a communication interface communicatively coupling the peer device to
other peer devices in a P2P network; and
a control system associated with the communication interface and
30 adapted to:
receive media recommendations from the other peer devices
identifying media presentations recently played on the other peer
devices; and

automatically select a media presentation to play based on the media presentations identified by the media recommendations.

26. The peer device of claim 25 wherein the media recommendations are provided to the peer device one-by-one as the media content is played on the other peer devices.

27. The peer device of claim 25 wherein the media recommendations identify songs recently played by the other peer devices and the control system is adapted to automatically select a song to play from a group of songs comprising the songs identified by the media recommendations.

28. The peer device of claim 25 wherein the control system is further adapted to automatically select the media presentation to play from a group of media presentations comprising the media presentations identified by the media recommendations and at least one media presentation from a local media collection.

29. The peer device of claim 25 wherein the control system is further adapted to:
score media presentations in a group of media presentations comprising the media presentations identified by the media recommendations based on user preferences; and
automatically select the media presentation to play from the group of media presentations based on the scores.

30. The peer device of claim 25 wherein if the selected media presentation is not included within a local media collection associated with the peer device, the control system is further adapted to obtain the selected media presentation from an external source and play the selected media presentation.

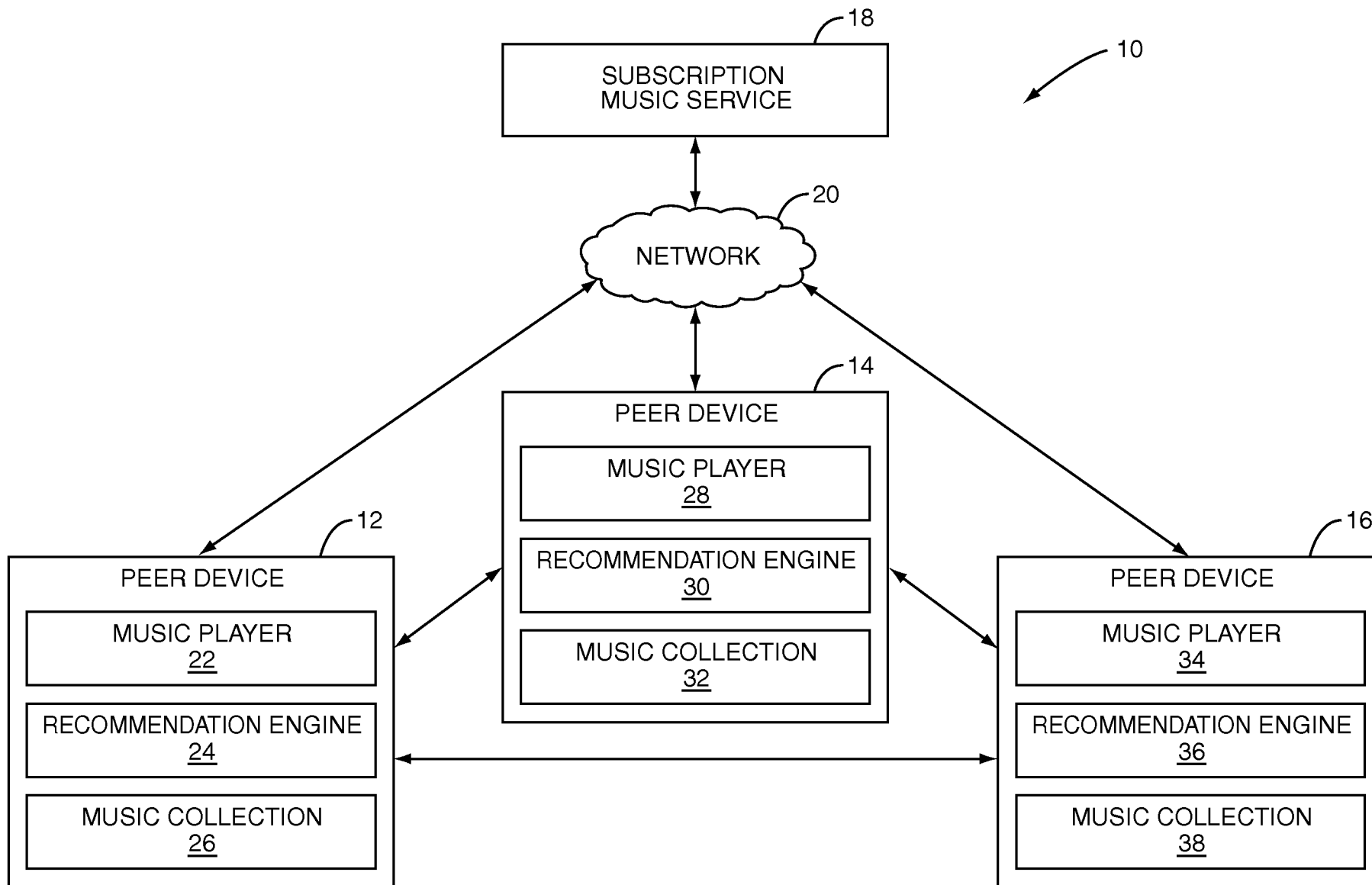


FIG. 1

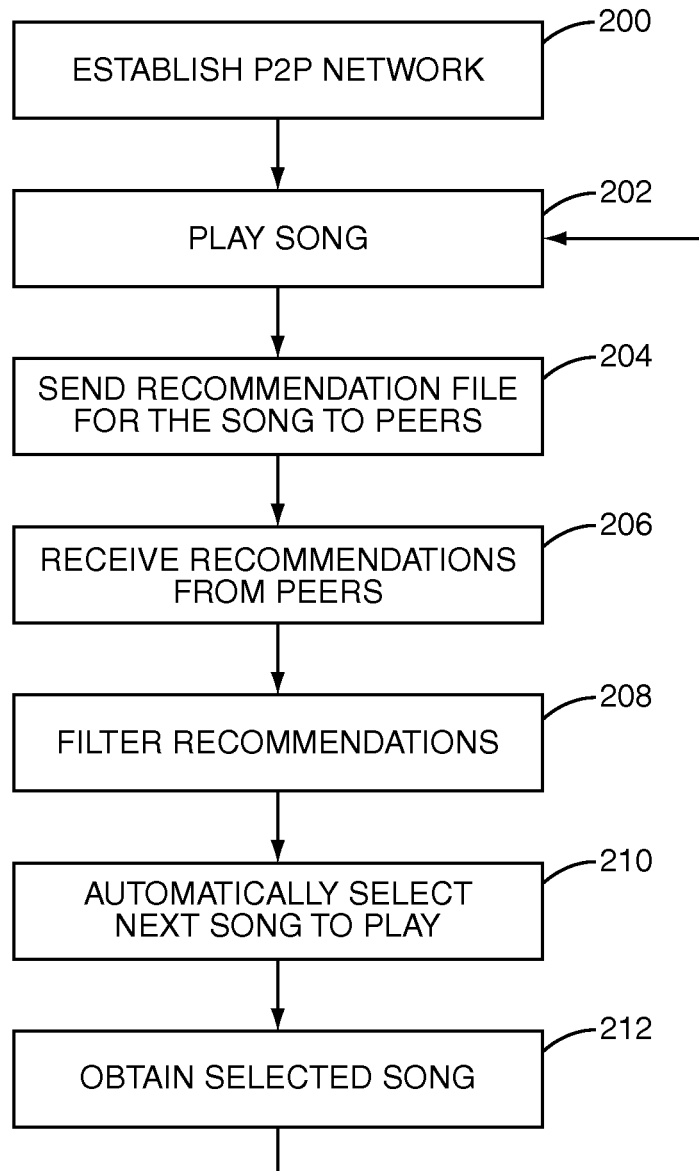


FIG. 2

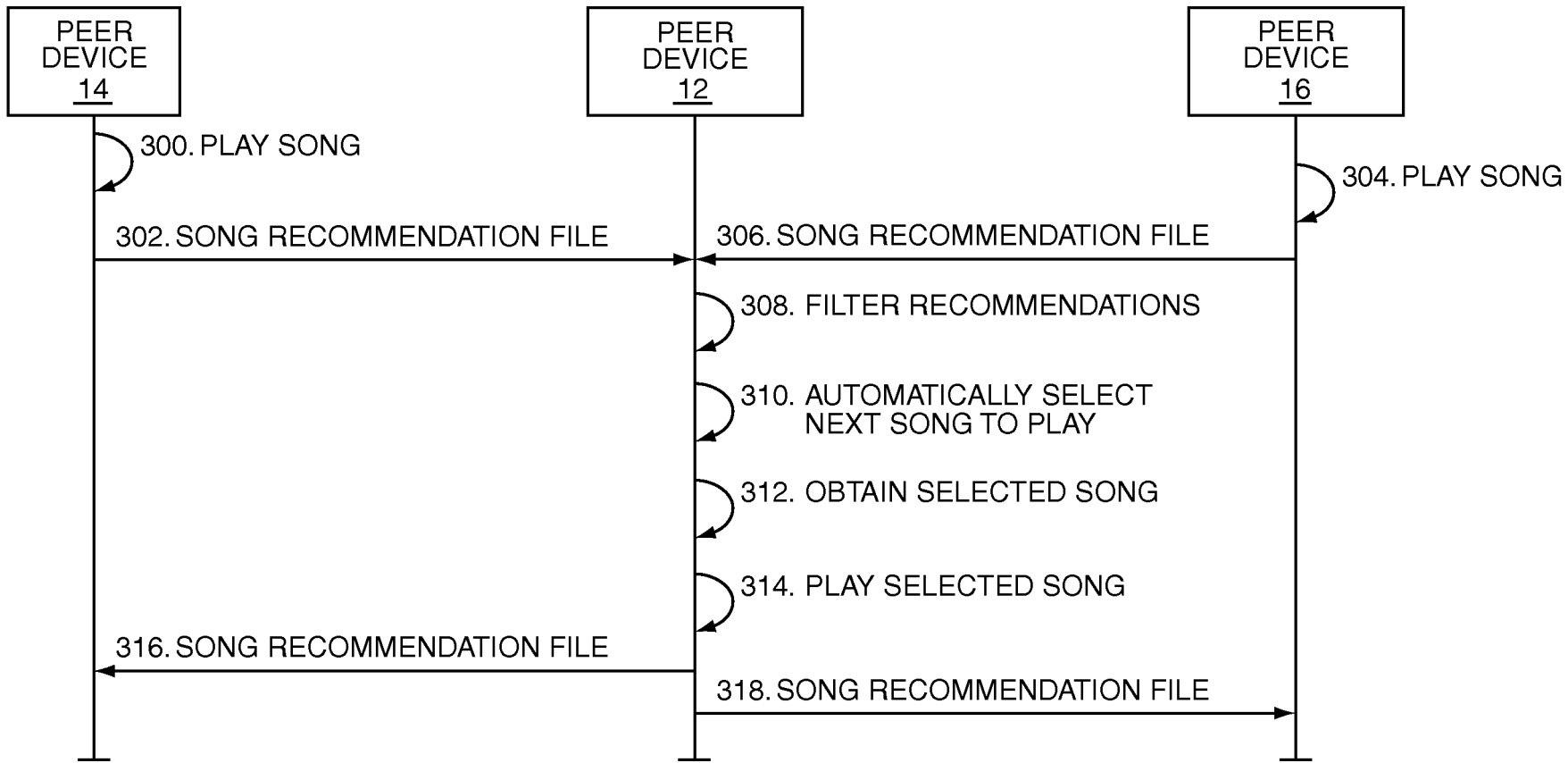


FIG. 3

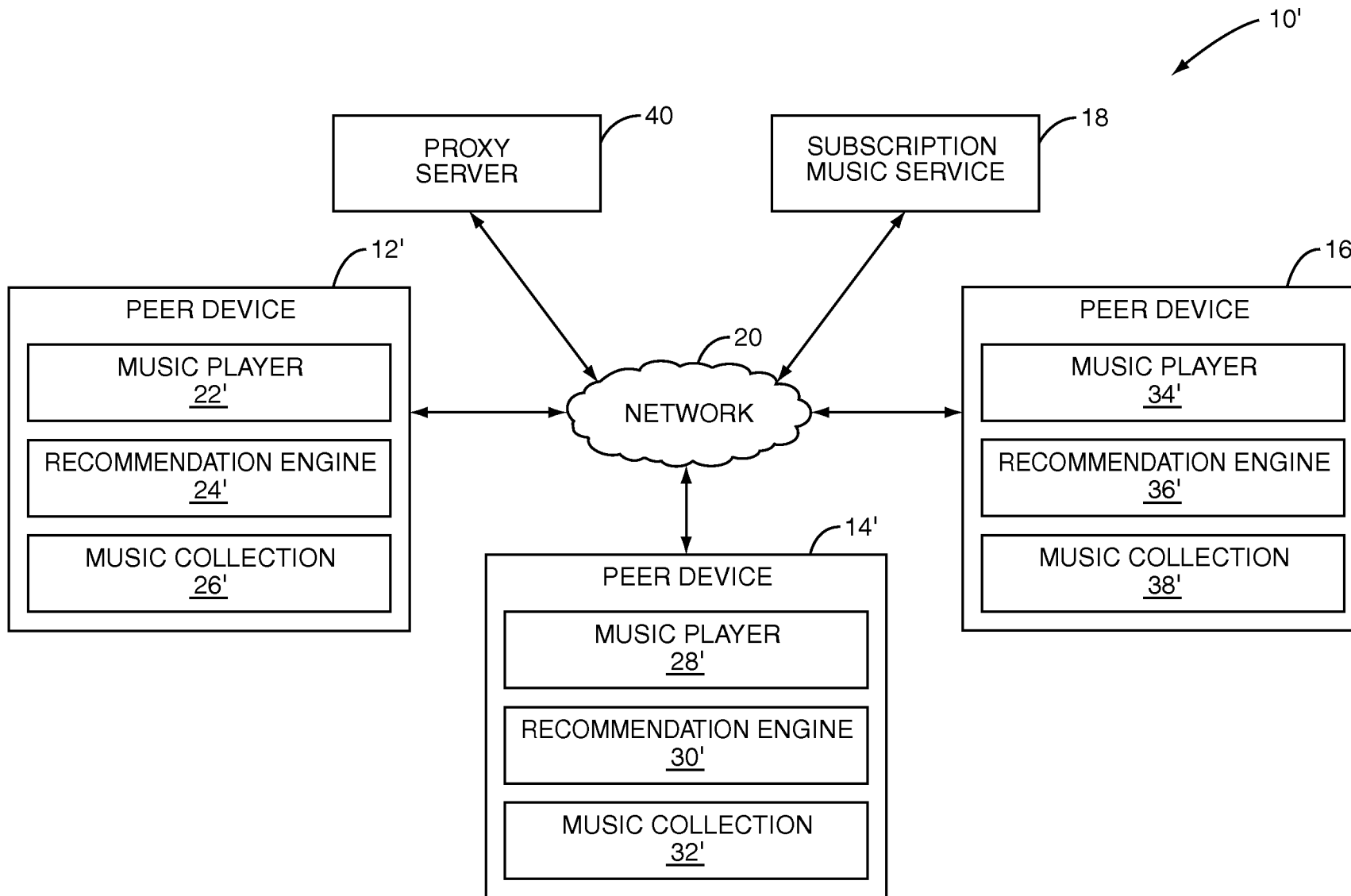


FIG. 4

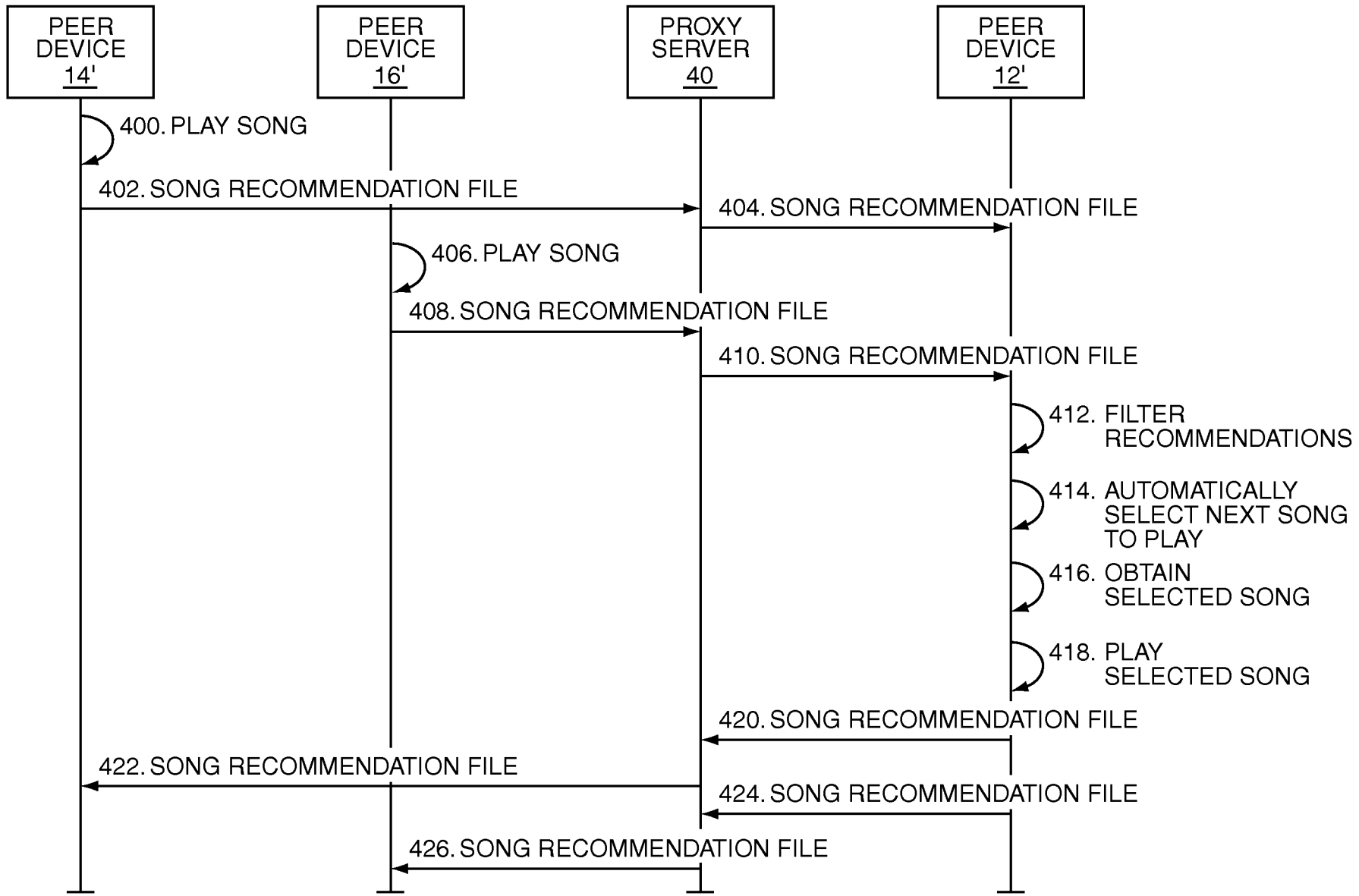


FIG. 5

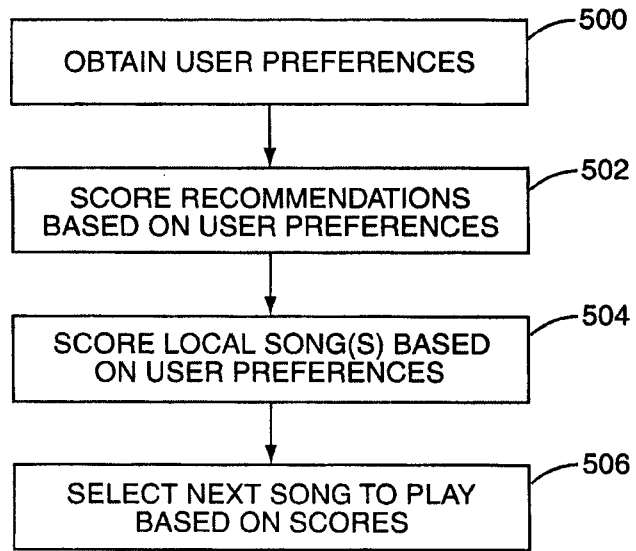


FIG. 6

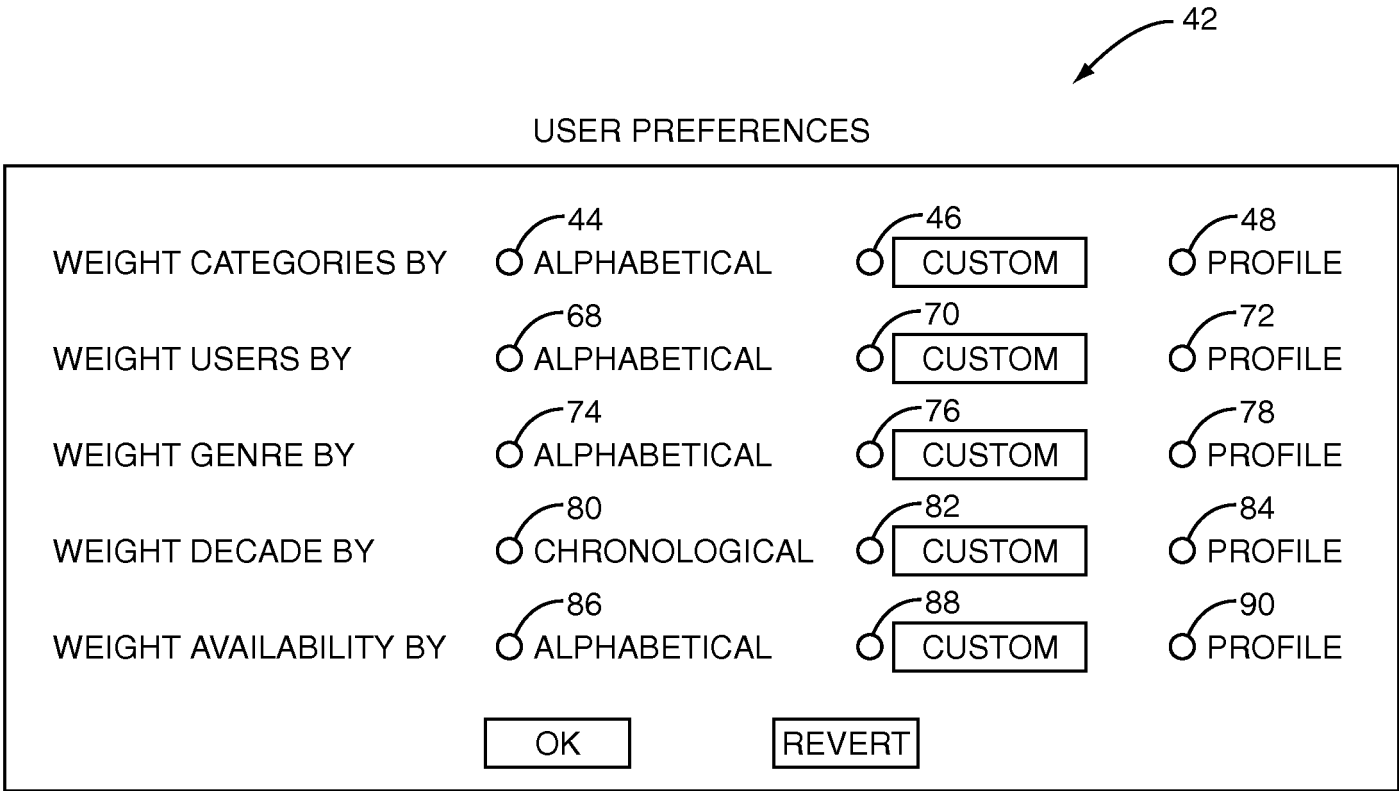


FIG. 7

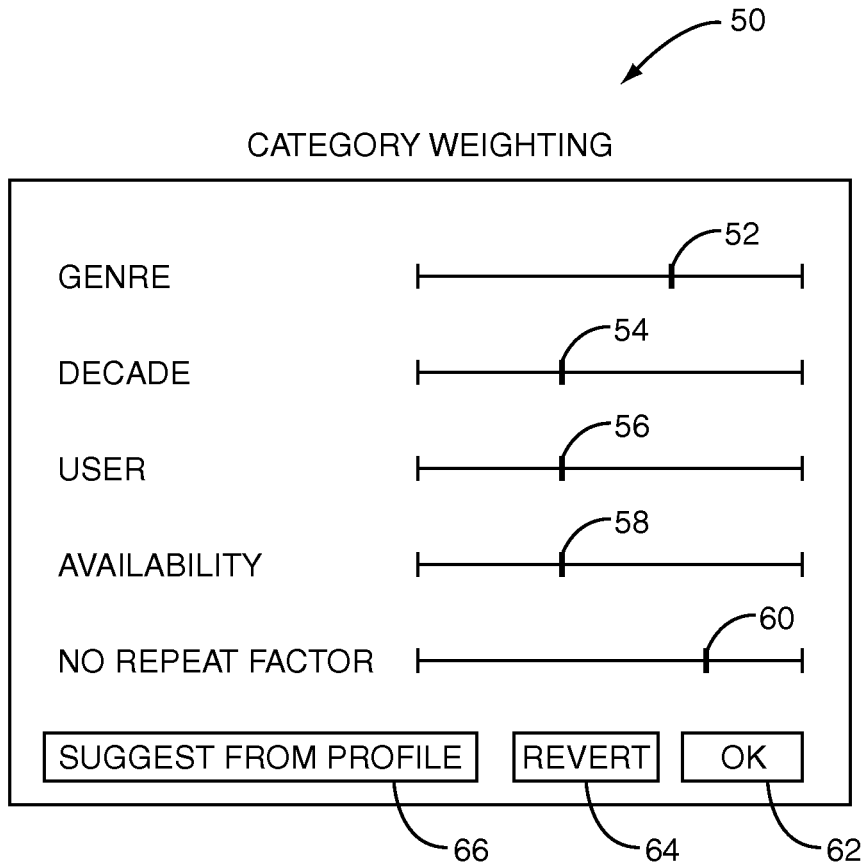


FIG. 8

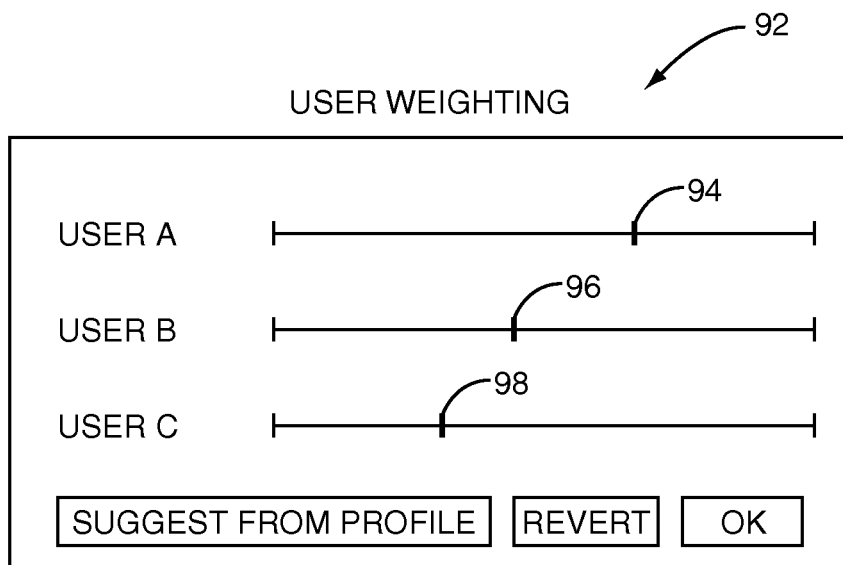


FIG. 9

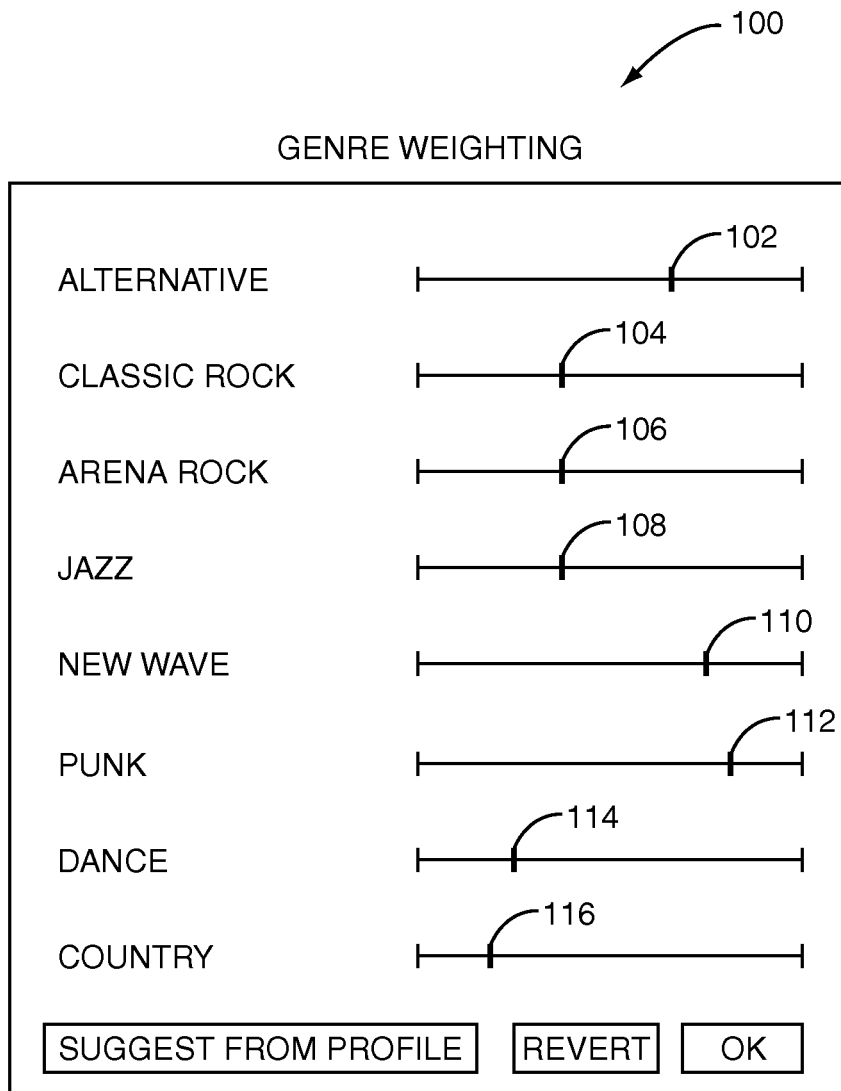


FIG. 10

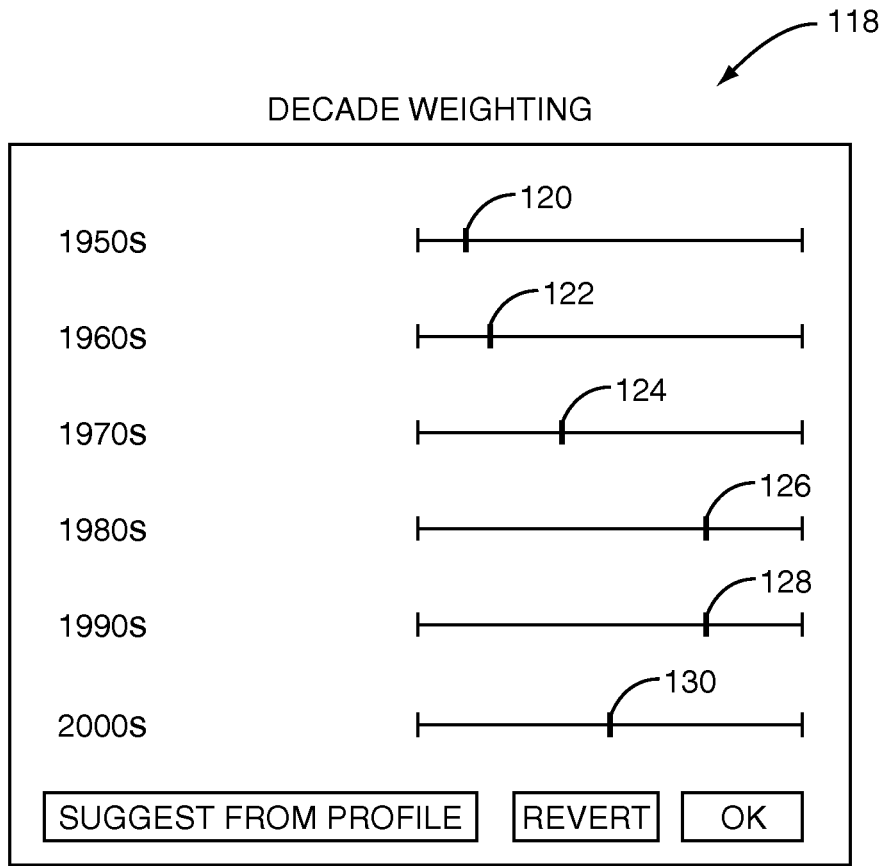


FIG. 11

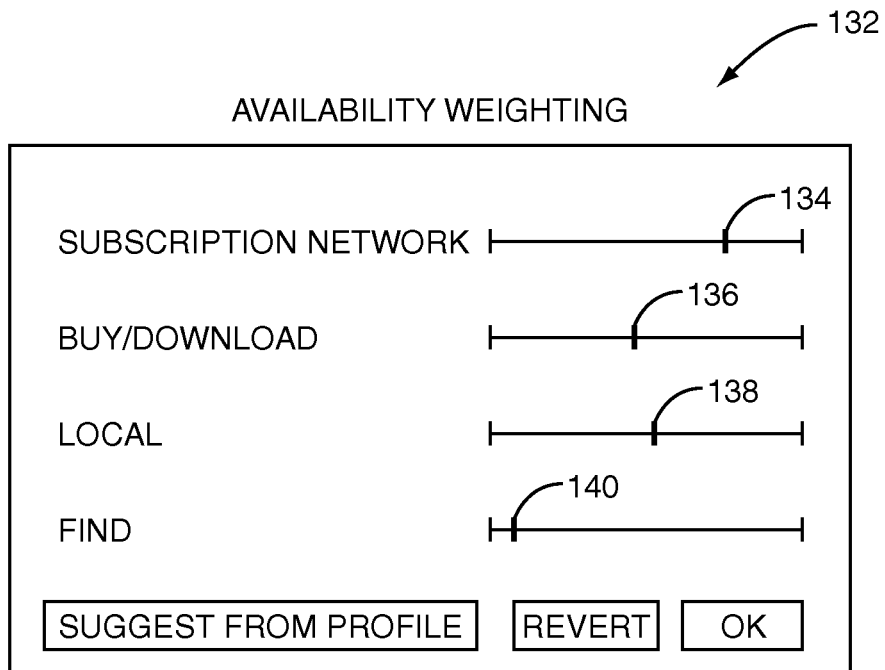


FIG. 12

142



| CURRENT SONG CURRENT ALBUM | | | | | | | USER: HUGH |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------|----------|----------------------|------------|
| user | song | artist | genre | decade | time | availability | score |
| hugh | sweet emotion | aerosmith | rock | 1970s | 45:32:21 | local | 95 |
| waymen | so what | miles davis | jazz | 1960s | 6:37 | find | 94 |
| gary | dance in my sleep | dave adams | alternative | 1980s | 4:25 | subscription network | 92 |
| waymen | come away with me | norah jones | jazz | 2000s | 4:56 | subscription network | 88 |
| mike | walk the line | johnny cash | <u>country</u> | 1970s | 5:31 | buy/download | 86 |
| hugh | say hey | the tubes | alternative | 1980s | 20:54:24 | local | 86 |
| hugh | you get what you give | new radicals | alternative | 1990s | 4:12:03 | local | 83 |
| hugh | tenderness | general public | new wave | 1980s | 25:32:21 | local | 83 |
| hugh | running with the devil | van halen | rock | 1970s | 12:35:11 | local | 82 |
| gene | rebel yell | billy idol | punk | 1980s | 0:32 | subscription network | 81 |
| gene | beautiful day | u2 | rock | 2000s | 7:54 | local | 79 |
| mike | still lovin you | scorpions | metal | 1980s | 1:03 | subscription network | 76 |
| gene | true | spandau ballet | dance | 1980s | 3:31 | subscription network | 72 |
| gary | heart of the night | poco | rock | 1970s | 0:42 | subscription network | 67 |
| gary | roundabout | yes | rock | 1970s | 6:11 | buy/download | 67 |
| gene | alison | elvis costello | alternative | 1980s | 5:51 | buy/download | 65 |
| gary | run to the hills | <u>iron maiden</u> | metal | 1970s | 7:21 | local | 64 |
| mike | hound dog | elvis presley | rock | 1980s | 6:19 | buy/download | 55 |
| waymen | something more | sugarland | <u>country</u> | 2000s | 0:37 | subscription network | 25 |

11/13

FIG. 13

142

| CURRENT SONG CURRENT ALBUM | | | | | | | USER: HUGH |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------|----------|----------------------|------------|
| user | song | artist | genre | decade | time | availability | score |
| gary | dance in my sleep | dave adams | alternative | 1980s | 4:25 | subscription network | 92 |
| hugh | say hey | the tubes | alternative | 1980s | 20:54:24 | local | 86 |
| hugh | you get what you give | new radicals | alternative | 1990s | 4:12:03 | local | 83 |
| gene | alison | elvis costello | alternative | 1980s | 5:51 | buy/download | 65 |
| hugh | sweet emotion | aerosmith | rock | 1970s | 45:32:21 | local | 95 |
| hugh | running with the devil | van halen | rock | 1970s | 12:35:11 | local | 82 |
| gene | beautiful day | u2 | rock | 2000s | 7:54 | local | 79 |
| gary | heart of the night | poco | rock | 1970s | 0:42 | subscription network | 67 |
| gary | roundabout | yes | rock | 1970s | 6:11 | buy/download | 67 |
| mike | hound dog | elvis presley | rock | 1980s | 6:19 | buy/download | 55 |
| mike | still lovin you | scorpions | metal | 1980s | 1:03 | subscription network | 76 |
| gary | run to the hills | <u>iron maiden</u> | metal | 1970s | 7:21 | local | 64 |
| waymen | so what | miles davis | jazz | 1960s | 6:37 | find | 94 |
| waymen | come away with me | norah jones | jazz | 2000s | 4:56 | subscription network | 88 |
| gene | rebel yell | billy idol | punk | 1980s | 0:32 | subscription network | 81 |
| hugh | tenderness | general public | new wave | 1980s | 5:31 | local | 83 |
| gene | true | spandau ballet | dance | 1980s | 25:32:21 | subscription network | 72 |
| mike | walk the line | johnny cash | <u>country</u> | 1970s | 3:31 | buy/download | 86 |
| waymen | something more | sugarland | <u>country</u> | 2000s | 0:37 | subscription network | 25 |

12/13

FIG. 14

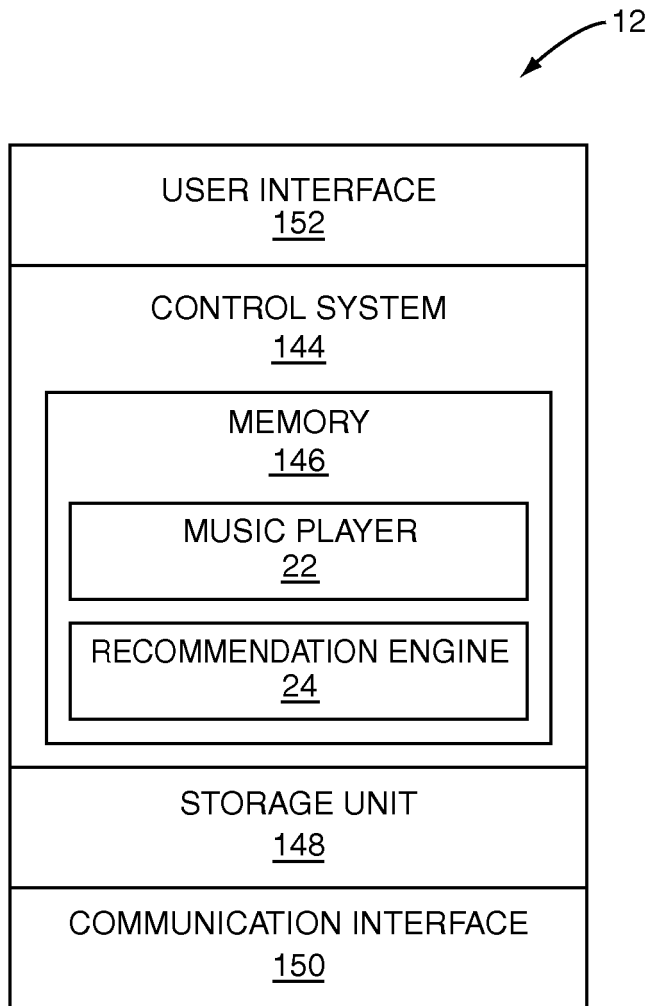


FIG. 15

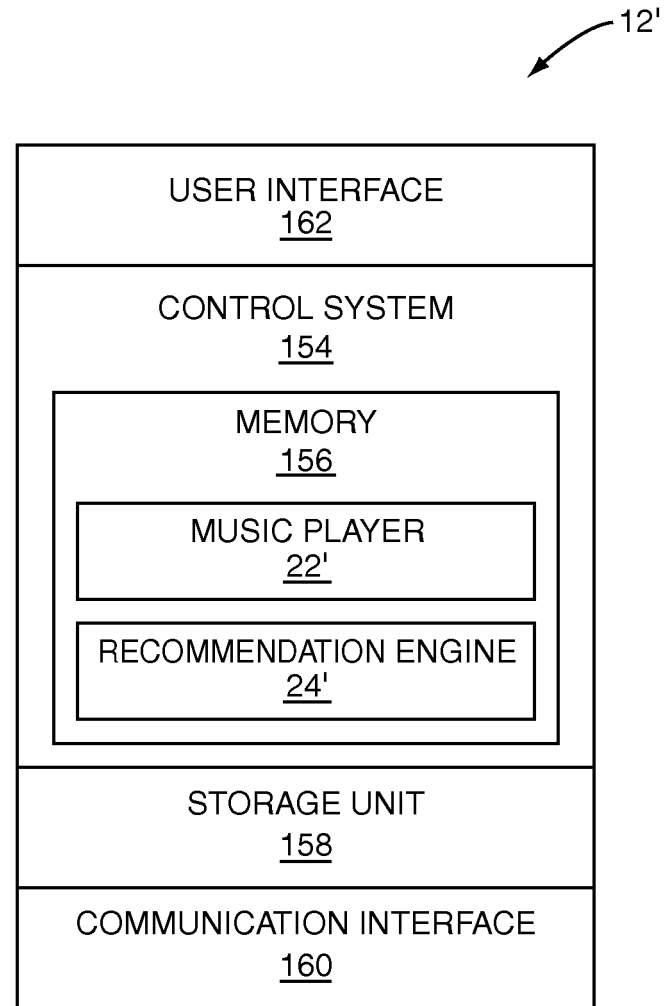


FIG. 16