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(54) **PAIRING OF WIRELESS DEVICES USING A WIRED MEDIUM**

(75) Inventor: **Jeremy WYLD**, San Jose, CA (US)
(73) Assignee: **Apple Inc.**, Cupertino, CA (US)
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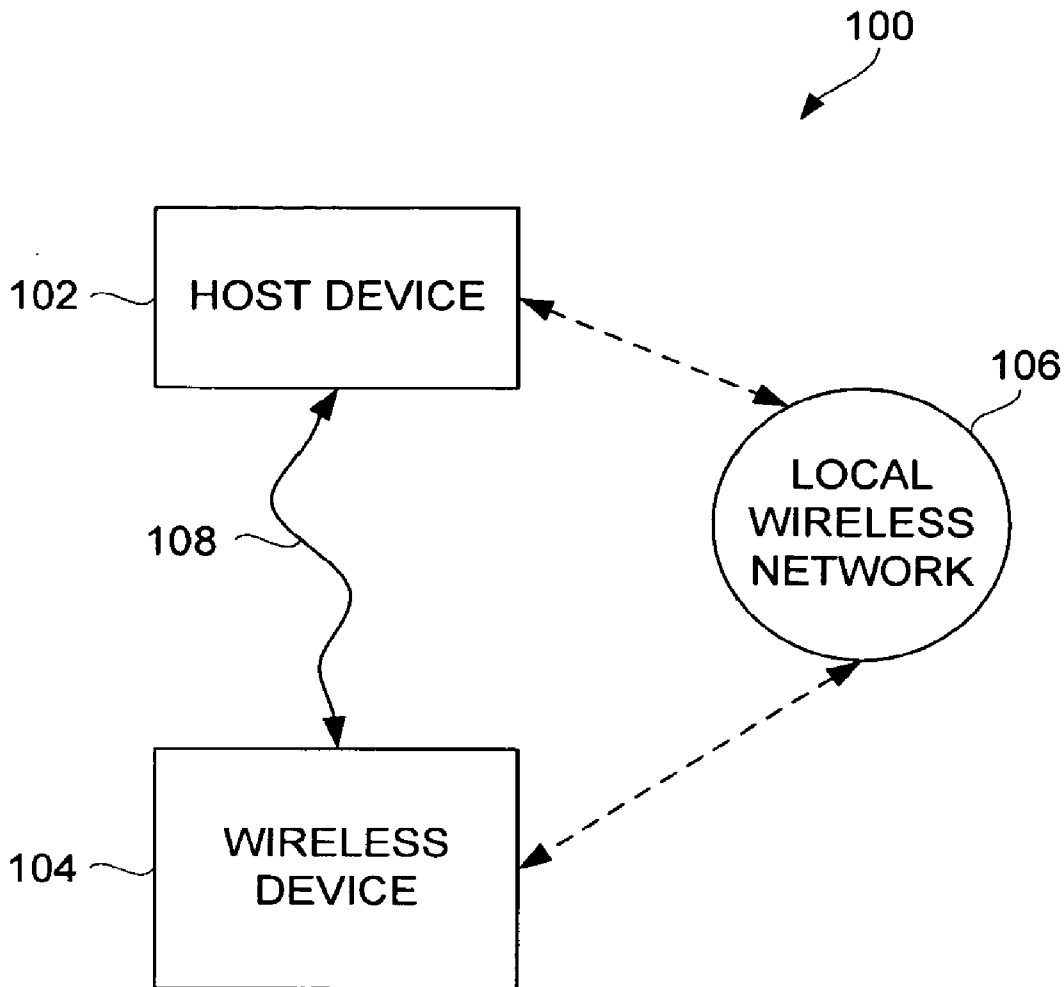
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Techniques that facilitate pairing of wireless devices with other wireless devices are disclosed. According to one aspect, a pair of wireless devices can be paired for wireless data exchange using an available wired link. Advantageously, the wired link can be used to transport a pin code from one of the wireless devices to the other. Consequently, pairing of the wireless devices can be completed without necessitating user entry of a pin code so long as the wired link is available.

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Division of application No. 13/051,747, filed on Mar. 18, 2011, which is a continuation of application No. 11/513,692, filed on Aug. 30, 2006, now Pat. No. 7,913,297.



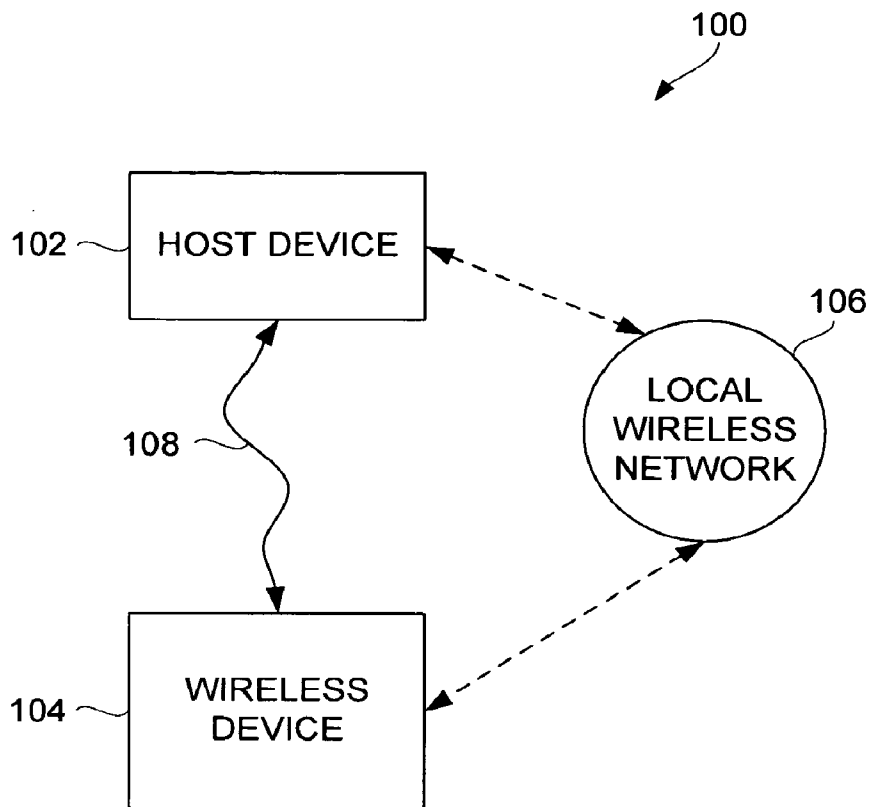


FIG. 1

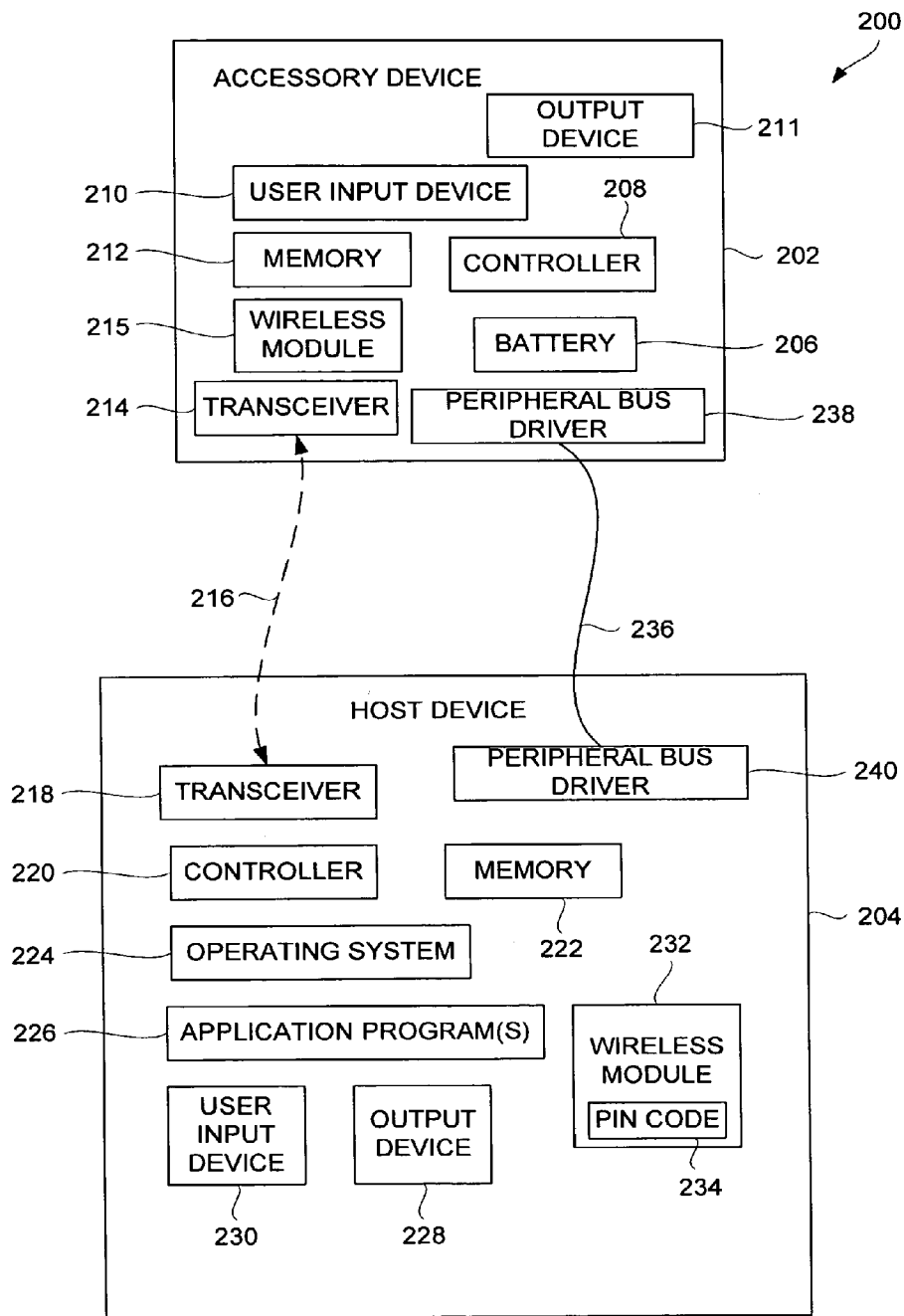


FIG. 2

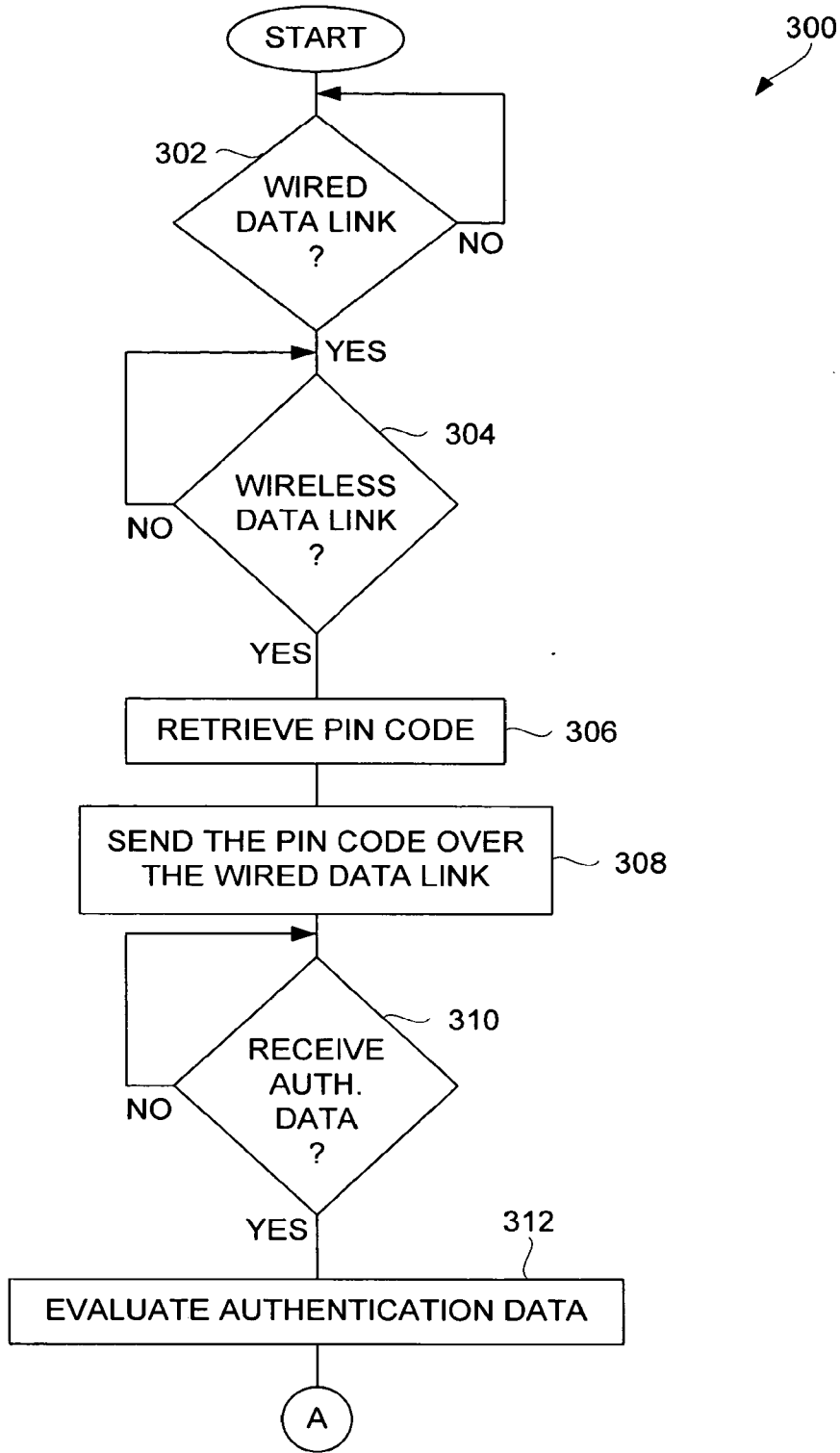


FIG. 3A

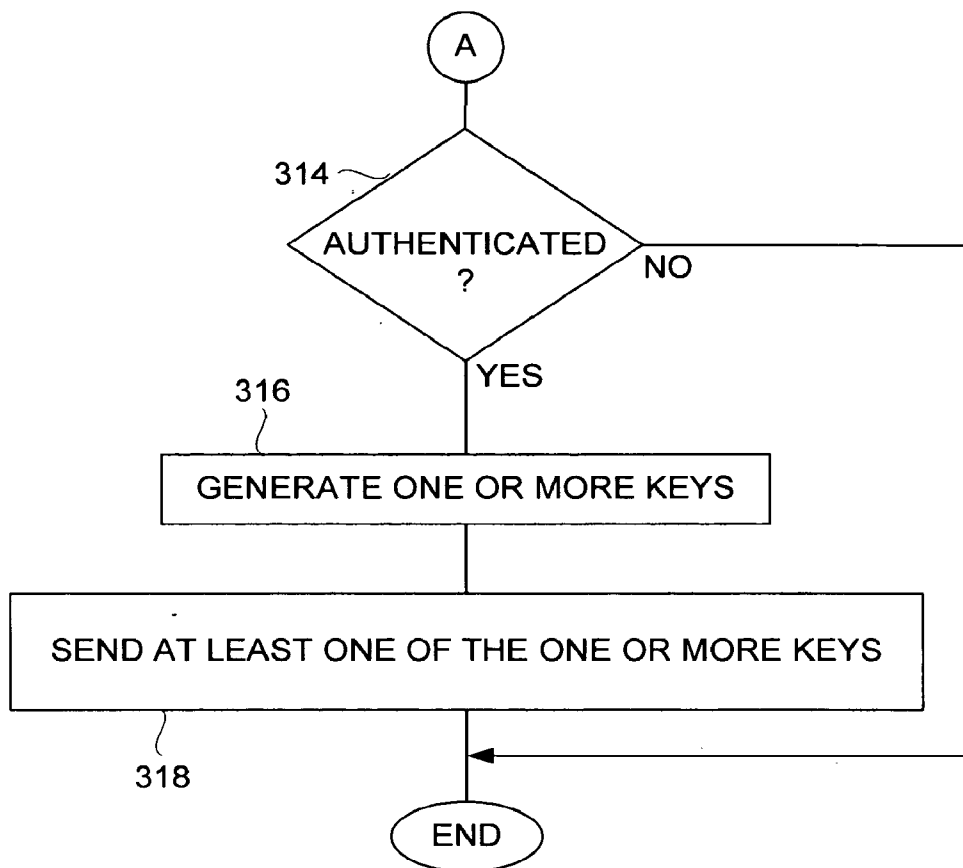


FIG. 3B

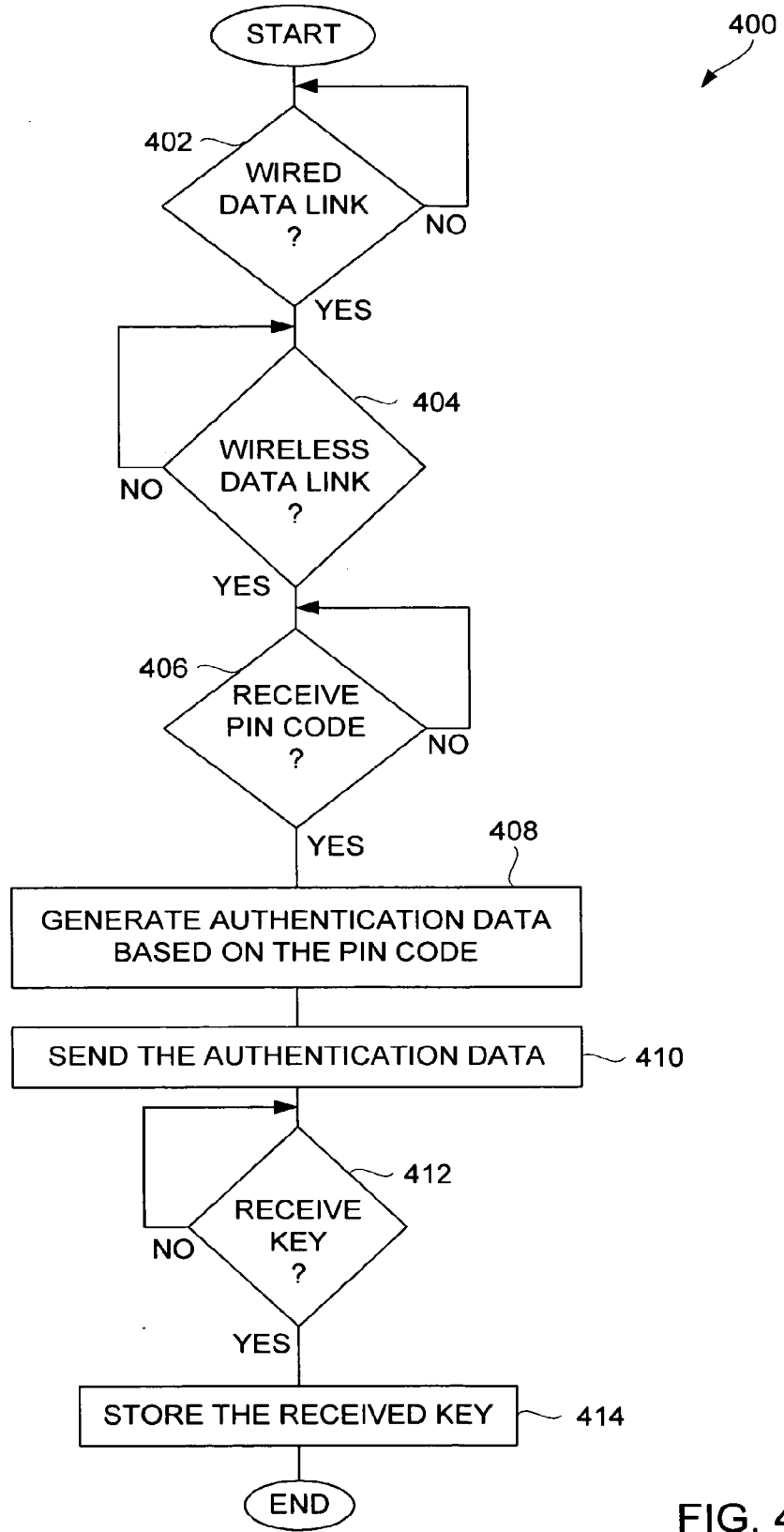


FIG. 4

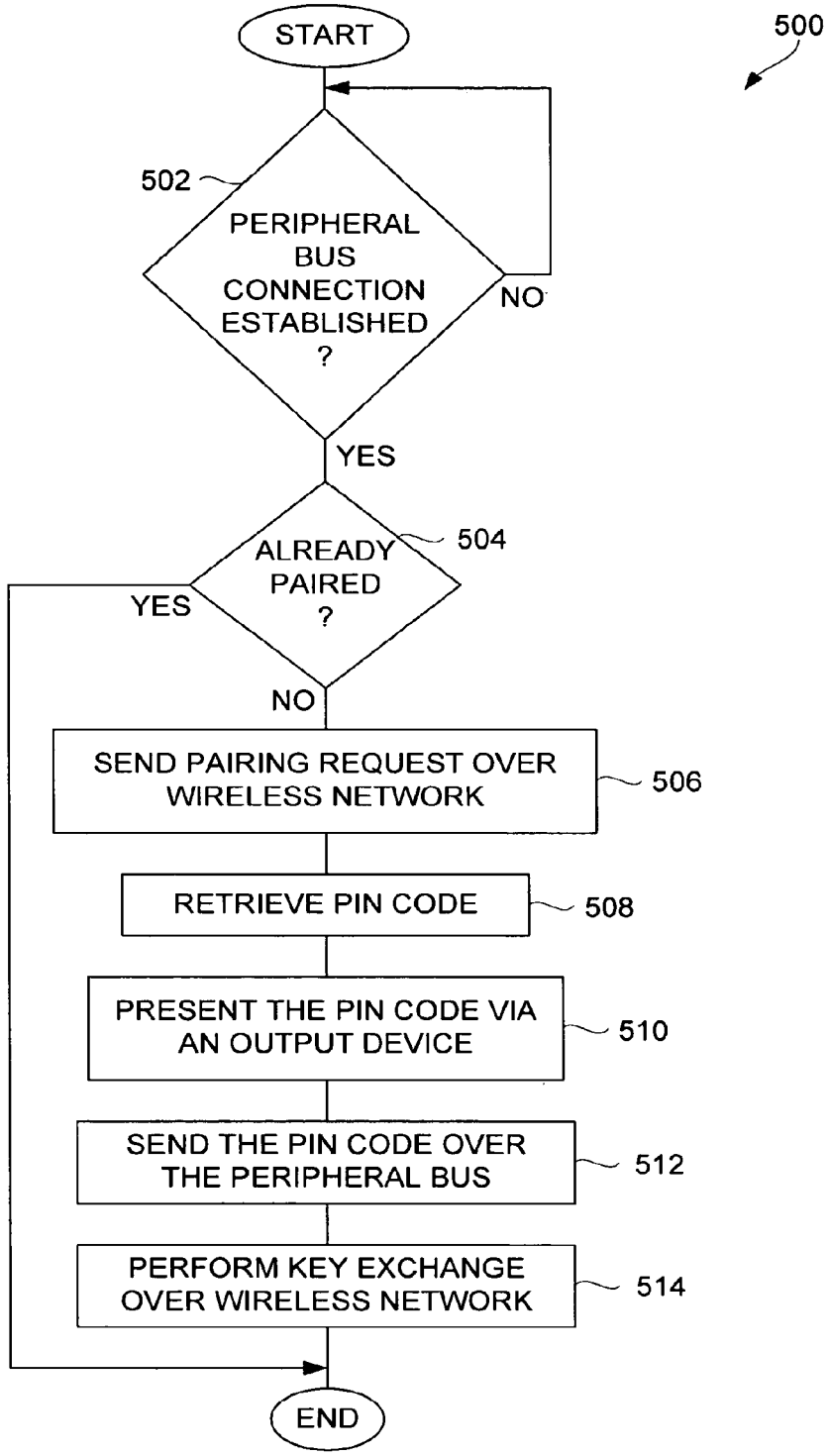


FIG. 5

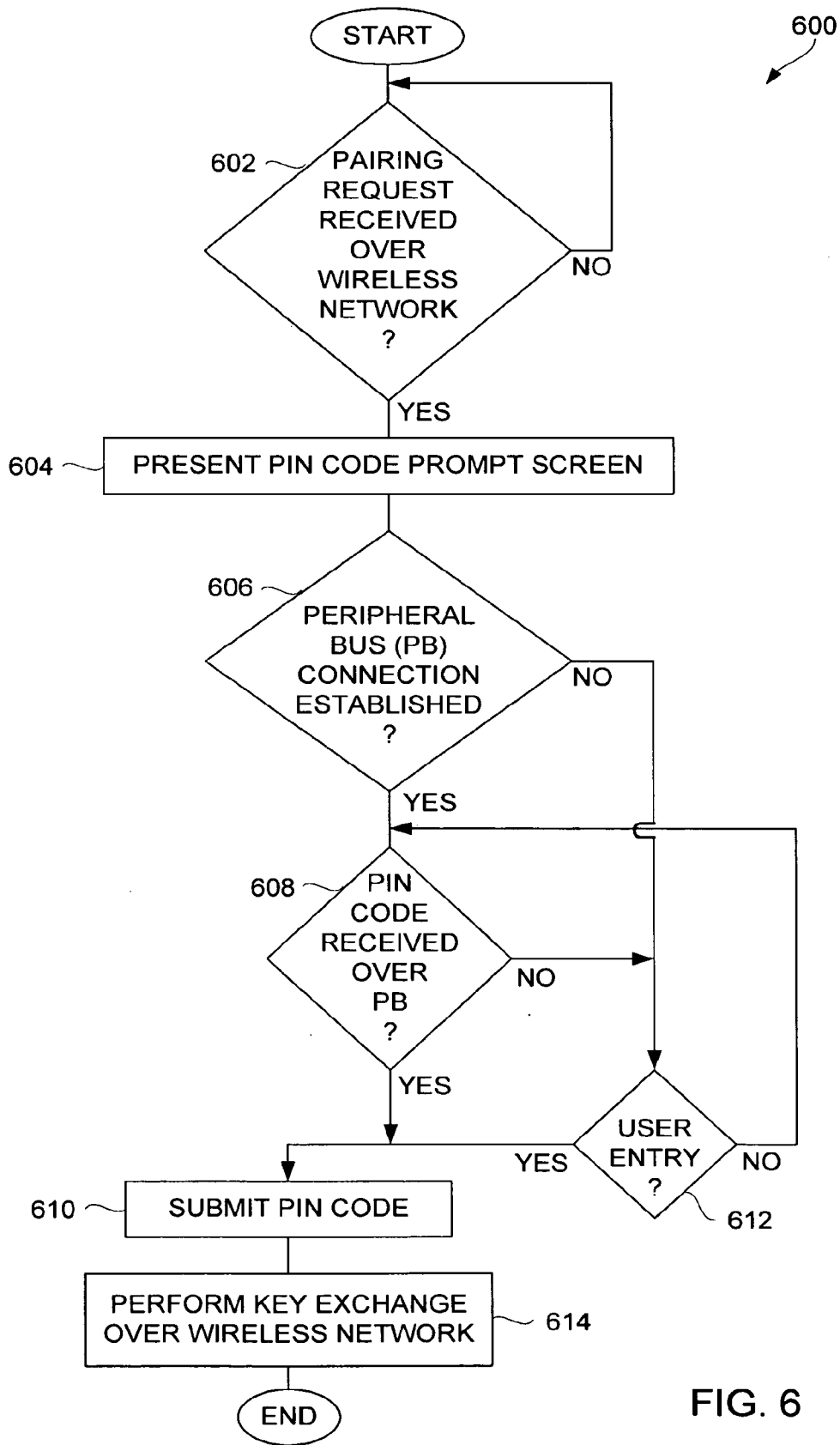


FIG. 6

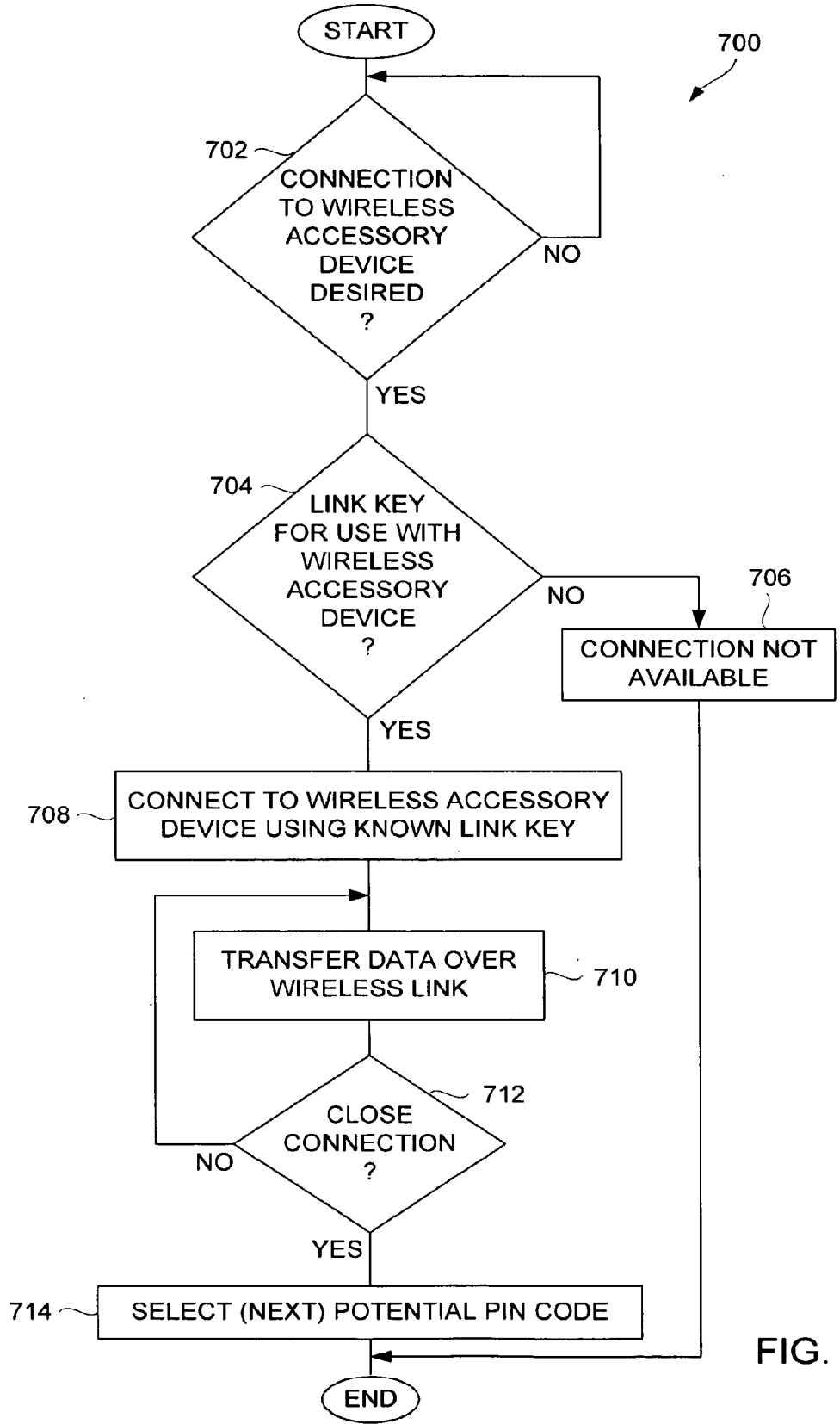


FIG. 7

PAIRING OF WIRELESS DEVICES USING A WIRED MEDIUM

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application is a divisional of and claims priority under 35 USC §120 to U.S. Application No. 13/051,747 filed Mar. 18, 2011, which is a continuation of and claims priority under 35 USC §120 to U.S. application Ser. No. 11/513,692 filed Aug. 30, 2006 and entitled “PAIRING OF WIRELESS DEVICES USING A WIRED MEDIUM”, now U.S. Pat. No. 7,913,297 issued Mar. 22, 2011, both of which are hereby incorporated by reference herein.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] 1. Field of the Invention

[0003] The present invention relates to wireless devices and, more particularly, to pairing wireless devices for authorized data exchange.

[0004] 2. Description of the Related Art

[0005] Traditionally, headphones or earphones are connected to an audio output device, such as a mobile phone, through a wired connection. The wired connection can, however, in many cases be cumbersome or annoying to the user. Hence, in recent times, wireless headsets or earphones have been developed. Typically, these wireless devices utilize Bluetooth technology in order to wirelessly transmit data between the headset or earphone and the mobile phone. As a result, there is no need for a wired connection between the headset or earphones and the media player.

[0006] Unfortunately, however, before the wireless headset or earphone can operate in a wireless manner with a mobile phone, the wireless headset or earphone must be paired with the mobile phone. Pairing is a process that is used to associate a headset or earphone with a particular mobile phone, and vice versa. The pairing provides for secure data transfer between the devices, typically through use of encryption. Thus, the pairing helps ensure that the data being transferred is not only secured but also transferred to the appropriate recipient device. Pairing, however, requires that a pin code be entered in order to pair a mobile phone with a headset or earphone. Entering of a pin code is sometimes problematic for a user. For example, often mobile audio devices are small handheld devices and the entering of a pin code can be cumbersome given the small scale of mobile audio devices (e.g., mobile phones, portable music players, etc.). The mobile audio devices may also not offer a user interface that supports ease of entry of a pin code. Still further, users often do not know the appropriate pin code to be utilized.

[0007] Moreover, similar difficulties exist for other types of wireless devices besides headsets and earphones. For example, other wireless devices that also need to undergo pairing include remote controllers, computing devices, peripheral devices, etc.

[0008] Thus, there is a need for improved techniques to facilitate pairing of wireless devices.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] The invention pertains to improved techniques that facilitate pairing of wireless devices with other wireless devices. According to one aspect of the invention, a pair of wireless devices can be paired for wireless data exchange using an available wired link. Advantageously, the wired link

can be used to transport a pin code from one of the wireless devices to the other. Consequently, pairing of the wireless devices can be completed without necessitating user entry of a pin code so long as the wired link is available.

[0010] The invention can be implemented in numerous ways, including as a method, system, device, apparatus, or computer readable medium. Several embodiments of the invention are discussed below.

[0011] As a method for pairing a host device with a wireless device, one embodiment of the invention includes at least the acts of: detecting a wired data link between the host device and the wireless device; establishing a wireless data link between the host device and the wireless device; retrieving a pin code internal to the host device; sending the pin code to the wireless device over the wired data link; receiving authentication data from the wireless device; authenticating the wireless device based on the received authentication data; and completing pairing of the host device with the wireless device when the wireless device has been authenticated.

[0012] As a host computing device with support for a wired data link and a wireless data link, one embodiment of the invention includes at least: a connection manager configured to detect a wired data link between the host computing device and a wireless device; a wireless transceiver for transferring data between the host computing device and the wireless device over a wireless data link, and a pairing manager operatively connected to the peripheral bus driver and the wireless transceiver. The pairing manager manages pairing of the host computing device and the wireless device. The pairing manager can operate to: (i) retrieve a pin code internal to the host computing device, (ii) send the pin code to the wireless device over the wired data link, (iii) receive authentication data from the wireless device, and (iv) authenticate the wireless device based on the received authentication data.

[0013] As a method for pairing a wireless device with a host device, one embodiment of the invention includes at least the acts of: detecting a wired data link between the host device and the wireless device; detecting a wireless data link between the host device and the wireless device; receiving a pin code over the wired data link from the host device; generating authentication data at the wireless device based on the pin code; sending the authentication data from the wireless device to the host device; and subsequently completing pairing of the wireless device with the host device when authentication is successful.

[0014] As a computer readable medium including at least computer program code for pairing a first wireless device with a second wireless device, one embodiment of the invention includes at least: computer program code for detecting a wired data link between the first wireless device and the second wireless device; computer program code for detecting a wireless data link between the first wireless device and the second wireless device; computer program code for receiving, at the second wireless device, a code over the wired data link from the first wireless device; and performing pairing operations to pair the first wireless device and the second wireless device based on the code received over the wired data link.

[0015] As an electronic device having wireless capabilities, another embodiment of the invention includes at least operating the electronic device such that pairing of the electronic device to another electronic device having wireless capabilities

ties includes electrically sending a code over a physical connection between the electronic device and the another electronic device.

[0016] Other aspects and advantages of the invention will become apparent from the following detailed description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings which illustrate, by way of example, the principles of the invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0017] The invention will be readily understood by the following detailed description in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein like reference numerals designate like structural elements, and in which:

[0018] FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a wireless pairing system according to one embodiment of the invention.

[0019] FIG. 2 is a diagram of a wireless system according to one embodiment of the invention.

[0020] FIGS. 3A and 3B are flow diagrams of a host device pairing process according to one embodiment of the invention.

[0021] FIG. 4 is a flow diagram of a wireless device pairing process according to one embodiment of the invention.

[0022] FIG. 5 is a flow diagram of a host pairing process according to one embodiment of the invention.

[0023] FIG. 6 is a flow diagram of an accessory pairing process according to one embodiment of the invention.

[0024] FIG. 7 is a flow diagram of wireless data transfer between a wireless host device and a wireless accessory device that have been successfully paired.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0025] The invention pertains to improved techniques that facilitate pairing of wireless devices with other wireless devices. According to one aspect of the invention, a pair of wireless devices can be paired for wireless data exchange using an available wired link. Advantageously, the wired link can be used to transport a pin code from one of the wireless devices to the other. Consequently, pairing of the wireless devices can be completed without necessitating user entry of a pin code so long as the wired link is available.

[0026] The wired link can be implemented by a wired medium that physically provides one or more electrical connections. Typically, the wired medium is used to removably connect a pair of wireless devices. As one example, the wired medium can be a peripheral bus (e.g., USB or Firewire) cable (or cord) that removably connects the pair of wireless devices together and permits a peripheral bus to be established therebetween.

[0027] Of a pair of wireless devices being paired, one of the wireless devices can be a wireless host device. As an example, the wireless host device can be a computing device (e.g., personal computer, media device, etc.). The other of the wireless devices can be a peripheral device, an accessory or another computing device. As examples, a peripheral device can be a data storage device, a printer, or an input device (e.g., mouse, keyboard). An accessory device can, for example, be a headset, earphones or remote controller. In one embodiment, a media device can be a mobile phone, a media player (e.g., portable media player), a docking station for a portable media player, or a dedicated media appliance.

[0028] Embodiments of this aspect of the invention are discussed below with reference to FIGS. 1-7. However, those skilled in the art will readily appreciate that the detailed

description given herein with respect to these figures is for explanatory purposes as the invention extends beyond these limited embodiments.

[0029] FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a wireless pairing system 100 according to one embodiment of the invention. The wireless pairing system 100 includes a host device 102 and a wireless device 104. The host device 102 is an electronic device, such as a personal computer, a mobile communication device, a portable media device, etc. The wireless device 104 is an electronic device that can be used in conjunction with the host device 102. For example, the wireless device 104 can be a peripheral device or an accessory device that augments the capabilities of the host device 102. As a specific example, the wireless device 104, for example, could pertain to a wireless headset that is used in conjunction with the host device 102 that provides media playback (e.g., audio and/or video playback). Typically, the wireless device 104 is coupled to the host device 102 in a wireless manner. That is, the wireless device 104 need not be physically connected with the host device 102. Instead, a wireless link can be facilitated by a local wireless network 106. The wireless link connects the host device 102 to the wireless device 104 via the local wireless network 106. The local wireless network 106 is often referred to as a piconet, which is a short range local wireless network. One example of the local wireless network 106 is a Bluetooth network.

[0030] In addition, according to the invention, to facilitate pairing of the host device 102 with the wireless device 104, a cable 108 is coupled between the host device 102 and the wireless device 104. Typically, the cable 108 is coupled to the host device 102 and the wireless device 104 during a pairing operation. However, the cable 108 could also couple the host device 102 and the wireless device 104 at other times if so desired. Once paired, however, the host device 102 would typically communicate with the wireless device 104 by way of the local wireless network 106.

[0031] According to the invention, the wireless device 104 is able to be paired with the host device 102 without requiring user input of a pin code. In other words, instead of the user of the wireless device 104 being required to enter a pin code, the required pin code can be delivered to the wireless device 104 over the cable 108. As such, the user does not have to remember and enter the appropriate pin code, thus the pairing can be performed in a substantially automated manner that reduces cumbersome and tedious pairing actions that a user would otherwise have to perform. Failed pairing attempts can also be reduced given that user pin code entry errors no longer contribute to failed pairing attempts.

[0032] FIG. 2 is a diagram of a wireless system 200 according to one embodiment of the invention. The wireless system 200 includes an accessory device 202 and a host device 204. As an example, the accessory device 202 can represent the wireless device 104 illustrated in FIG. 1, and the host device 204 can represent the host device 102 illustrated in FIG. 1.

[0033] The accessory device 202 is typically a portable device that is powered by a battery 206. The accessory device 202 also includes at least a controller 208, a user input device 210, a user output device 211, and a memory 212. The controller 208 controls the overall operation of the accessory device 202. The user input device 210 enables a user to interact with the accessory device 202. As an example, the user input device 210 can include a button that enables a user to place the accessory device 202 into a pairing mode. The user output device 211 displays information for the user to

view. As an example, the user output device **211** can be a display device (e.g., LCD display). The memory **212** provides persistent data storage for various elements, including program code and data. Still further, the accessory device **202** includes a transceiver **214**. In one embodiment, the transceiver **214** is a radio-frequency (RF) transceiver. The transceiver **214** can output a wireless transmission **216**. Typically, the wireless transmission **216** is directed toward the host device **204**.

[0034] The host device **204** includes a transceiver **218** for the wireless transmission medium **216** (e.g., wireless link). The host device **204** also includes at least a controller **220**, a memory **222**, an operating system **224**, application program (s) **226**, an output device **228**, and a user input device **230**. The controller **220** controls the overall operation of the host device **204**. The memory **222** can be used to store persistent data, including program code (e.g., for the operating system **224** and the application program(s) **226**) and data. The operating system **224** together with the controller **220** enables the host device **204** to not only wirelessly receive transmissions from the accessory device **202**, but to also support and operate one or more application programs **226** as well as to utilize the output device **228** and the user input device **230**.

[0035] The host device **204** can also include a wireless module **232**. The wireless module **232** can pertain to one or a set of integrated circuits that provide wireless communication functionality. The wireless module **232** is used when communicating over the wireless link **216** to the wireless module **215**. In this regard, the wireless module **232** couples to or includes the transceiver **218**. In one embodiment, the wireless module **232** can store a pin code (or key) **234** that is used to pair wireless devices.

[0036] Besides the wireless link **216**, the accessory device **202** and the host device **204** can also communicate over a wired link **236**. The wired link **236** can be provided by a cable (which contains one or more wires) connected between the accessory device **202** and the host device **204**. The accessory device **202** also includes a peripheral bus driver **238**, and the host device **204** also includes a peripheral bus driver **240**. The wired link **236** can be established over the cable that connects the peripheral bus driver **238** of the accessory device **202** to the peripheral bus driver **240** of the host device **204**.

[0037] According to one aspect of the invention, the accessory device **202** can be paired with the host device **204**. When paired, the host device **204** is responsive only to the accessory device **202**. Hence, if there are other accessory devices in the vicinity of the host device **204**, the host device **204** understands to ignore wireless communications from such other accessory devices. In contrast, when unpaired, the host device **204** is responsive to any compatible accessory devices in the vicinity.

[0038] Additional details are discussed below for the operations associated with pairing wireless devices (e.g., accessory devices) to host devices. When paired, a user of the accessory device **202** can interact with the one or more application programs **226** operating on the host device **204**. For example, one type of application program **226** is a media player program capable of playing digital media assets stored in the memory **222** or some other memory accessible by the host device **204**. Hence, the user of the accessory device **202** can interact with the user input device **210** of the accessory device **202** to manipulate media playback controls, such as volume changes, next track, previous track, and play and pause operations associated with the media player program.

For other types of application programs **226** available at the host device **204**, the particular controls or commands being provided by the accessory device **202** to the host device **204** can vary widely depending upon the application.

[0039] FIGS. 3A and 3B are flow diagrams of a host device pairing process **300** according to one embodiment of the invention. The host device pairing process **300** is, for example, performed by a host device. For example, the host device can, for example, pertain to the host device **102** illustrated in FIG. 1 or the host device **204** illustrated in FIG. 2.

[0040] The host device pairing process **300** begins with a decision **302** that determines whether a wired data link exists between a host device and a wireless accessory device. When the decision **302** determines that a wired data link is not present, the host device pairing process **300** awaits the availability of a wired data link. On the other hand, when the decision **302** determines that a wired data link is available, a decision **304** determines whether a wireless data link is available. When the decision **304** determines that a wireless data link is not available, the host device pairing process **300** awaits the availability of a wireless data link. Once the decision **304** determines that a wireless data link is available, then a pairing operation can be performed to pair together the host device and the wireless accessory device. Hence, the following processing assumes that the host device is not already paired with the wireless accessory device. In other words, the host device pairing process **300**, or at least the following processing thereof, can be skipped if the host device and the wireless accessory device have already been paired.

[0041] In any event, when the host device pairing process **300** continues, a pin code is retrieved **306**. Typically, the pin code is retrieved **306** from the host device itself. That is, the pin code is typically a pin code stored in a data storage device internal to the host device. For example, as illustrated in FIG. 2, the pin code **235** can be stored in the wireless module **232**. Once the pin code is retrieved **306**, the pin code can be sent **308** over the wired data link. Here, the pin code is sent **308** from the host device to the wireless accessory device. Given that the pin code is sent **308** over the wired data link established through physical connection, its transport is relatively secured from unauthorized interception. Optionally, the pin code could be encrypted for further security.

[0042] Next, a decision **310** determines whether authentication data has been received. When the decision **310** determines that authentication data has not been received, the host device pairing process **300** awaits such data. Alternatively, when the decision **310** determines that authentication data has been received, the authentication data is evaluated **312**. In one embodiment, the authentication data can be received at the host device as part of an authentication response being provided to the host device by the wireless accessory device. Following the evaluation **312** of the authentication data, a decision **314** then determines whether the devices have been authenticated. When the decision **314** determines that the wireless accessory device has been authenticated to the host device, the host device pairing process generates **316** one or more keys. Then, at least one of the one or more keys is sent **318** to the wireless accessory device. Additionally, the at least one of the one or more keys can be stored at the host device. In one embodiment, the one or more keys can be stored in the wireless module **232** of the host device **204**. Following the block **318**, the host device pairing process **300** ends. Also, following the decision **314** when authentication has not been

successfully verified, the host device pairing process 300 ends while bypassing the operations 316 and 318.

[0043] FIG. 4 is a flow diagram of a wireless device pairing process 400 according to one embodiment of the invention. The wireless device pairing process 400 is, for example, performed by a wireless accessory device. For example, the wireless accessory device can, for example, pertain to the wireless device 104 illustrated in FIG. 1 or the accessory device 202 illustrated in FIG. 2. The wireless device pairing process 400 is complementary process to the host device pairing process 300 illustrated in FIGS. 3A and 3B.

[0044] The wireless device pairing process 400 begins with a decision 402 that determines whether a wired data link exists between a host device and a wireless accessory device. When the decision 402 determines that a wired data link is not present, the wireless device pairing process 400 awaits the availability of a wired data link. When the decision 402 determines that a wired data link is present, a decision 404 determines whether a wireless data link is present. When the decision 404 determines that the wireless data link is not present, the wireless device pairing process 400 can await its availability.

[0045] Once the decision 404 determines that a wireless data link is available, then a pairing operation can be performed to pair together the host device and the wireless accessory device. Hence, the following processing assumes that the host device is not already paired with the wireless accessory device. In other words, the wireless device pairing process 400, or at least the following processing thereof, can be skipped if the host device and the wireless accessory device have already been paired.

[0046] Accordingly, when the decision 404 determines that the wireless data link is available, a decision 406 determines whether a pin code has been received. The pin code is provided to the wireless accessory device over the wired data link according to one embodiment of the invention. As illustrated in FIG. 3A, the block 308 operates to send the pin code to the wireless accessory device over the wired data link. When the decision 406 determines that a pin code has not been received over the wired data link, the wireless device pairing process 400 can await the pin code. After a period of time, the waiting could cease and a user could enter the required pin code or the wireless pairing process 400 could end.

[0047] In any case, once the decision 406 determines that a pin code has been received over the wired data link, authentication data is generated 408 at the wireless accessory device based on the pin code. The authentication data is then sent 410 to the host device. In one embodiment, the authentication data is sent to the host device over the wireless data link. However, in an alternative embodiment, the authentication data could be sent over the wired data link. In any case, after the authentication data has been sent 410, a decision 412 determines whether a key has been received from the host device. Here, assuming that the host device determines that the wireless accessory device is indeed authenticated, pairing can be completed by storing keys at the wireless device as well as at the host device. In one embodiment, these keys can be referred to as link keys, in accordance with Bluetooth protocol. Hence, the decision 412 determines whether a key has been received. When the decision 412 determines that a key has not yet been received, the wireless device pairing process 400 awaits receipt of a key. Once the decision 412 determines that a key has been received, the received key is stored 414 at the wireless device. The received key is then subsequently used to

authenticate the wireless device to the host device prior to the transfer of data between the wireless device and the host device. The wireless device and the host device have thus been successfully paired and are able to exchange data over the wireless data link. Following the block 414, the wireless device pairing process 400 ends.

[0048] FIG. 5 is a flow diagram of a host pairing process 500 according to one embodiment of the invention. The host pairing process 500 is, for example, performed by a host device, such as the host device 102 illustrated in FIG. 1 or the host device 204 illustrated in FIG. 2.

[0049] The host pairing process 500 begins with a decision 502 that determines whether a peripheral bus connection has been established between the host device and the wireless accessory device. The peripheral bus connection is a wired connection and examples of which are Universal Serial Bus (USB) and Firewire. When the decision 502 determines that a peripheral bus connection has not been established, the host pairing process 500 can await the presence of a peripheral bus connection. In one implementation, the host pairing process 500 could be initiated automatically when a peripheral bus connection is established between the host device and a wireless accessory device.

[0050] In any event, once the decision 502 determines that a peripheral bus connection has been established, a decision 504 determines whether the host device has already been paired to the wireless accessory device. When the decision 504 determines that the host device is already paired to the wireless accessory device, the host pairing process 500 ends since pairing processing is not required. On the other hand, when the decision 504 determines that the host device is not already paired with the wireless accessory device, a pairing request is sent 506 over the wireless network from the host device to the wireless accessory device. A pin code is also retrieved 508 from the host device itself. For example, the host device can include a wireless module (e.g., wireless module 232) that stores within the wireless module at least one pin code. The pin code can be presented 510 via an output device associated with the host device. Here, the pin code can be presented 510 (e.g., displayed) on the output device of the host device. The pin code is also sent 512 to the wireless accessory device over the peripheral bus. Thereafter, assuming that the host device is able to authenticate the accessory device through use of the pin code, key exchange is performed 514 over the wireless network. The key exchange means that the host device will store at least one key (e.g., link key) that will be used to exchange data with the wireless accessory device via the wireless network. However, prior to or part of the key exchange, the host device first authenticates the accessory device. The authentication is dependent on the proper pin code being available at the wireless accessory device. Following the block 514, the host pairing process 500 ends with the host device being successfully paired with the wireless device.

[0051] FIG. 6 is a flow diagram of an accessory pairing process 600 according to one embodiment of the invention. The accessory pairing process 600 is, for example, performed by a wireless accessory device, such as the wireless device 104 illustrated in FIG. 1 or the accessory device 202 illustrated in FIG. 2. The accessory pairing process 600 is complementary process to the host device pairing process 500 illustrated in FIG. 5.

[0052] The accessory pairing process 600 begins with a decision 602 that determines whether a pairing request has been received over the wireless network. When the decision 602 determines that a pairing request has not been received, the accessory pairing process 600 awaits such a request. Alternatively, when the decision 602 determines that a pairing request has been received over the wireless network, the accessory pairing process 600 continues. In other words, in this embodiment, the accessory pairing process 600 is effectively invoked upon receipt of a pairing request.

[0053] When the accessory pairing process 600 continues, a pin code prompt screen is presented 604. Typically, in a conventional fashion, a user would enter a pin code into the prompt screen. However, the pin code is able to be provided automatically (i.e., without user input) according to the invention. In this regard, a decision 606 determines whether a peripheral bus (PB) connection has been established between the wireless accessory device and the host device. When the decision 606 determines that a peripheral bus connection has been established, a decision 608 determines whether a pin code has been received from the host device over the peripheral bus. When the decision 608 determines that the pin code has been received over the peripheral bus, then the pin code can be submitted 610. For example, the pin code can be automatically entered into the pin code prompt screen and then submitted. In this manner, instead of the user being burdened to enter the unknown pin code, the pin code can be automatically delivered to the wireless accessory device and submitted without the user having to enter it. However, when the decision 606 determines that the peripheral bus connection is not established, or when the decision 608 determines that the pin code has not been received over the peripheral bus, a decision 612 can determine whether a user has entered the pin code. For example, the user can be permitted to enter the pin code using the pin code prompt screen. When the decision 612 determines that the user has not entered a pin code, the accessory pairing process 600 returns to repeat the decision 608 so that the pin code can potentially still be delivered to the wireless accessory device by way of the peripheral bus.

[0054] Alternatively, when the decision 612 determines that the user has entered a pin code, the pin code can be submitted 610. Accordingly, although the improvement offered by the invention is the delivery of the pin code to the wireless accessory device over a data link, namely, a wired data link, one embodiment can still permit a user to enter the pin code in the event that the pin code is not delivered over a data link. In any event, after the pin code has been submitted 610, key exchange can be performed 614 between the host device and the wireless accessory device over the wireless network. In this regard, the pairing operation has been successfully performed and the key exchange permits the paired devices to thereafter be authenticated so that data transfer can be performed between the paired devices. Following the block 614, the accessory pairing process 600 ends.

[0055] According to one embodiment, when a wireless device connects with a host device by way of a wireless network and a wired medium, pairing can be performed. When the connection via the wired medium is made, not only can a pin code be transferred but other data or energy (e.g., for power and/or charging a battery) can also be transferred via the wired medium. In other words, the wired medium can serve various purposes, only one of which is assisting with pairing operations.

[0056] Assuming that pairing has been successful between a wireless host device and a wireless accessory device, thereafter, data transfer can be performed between the wireless host device and the wireless accessory device in a secured and controlled manner through use of a key (e.g., link key) that was established during the pairing operation.

[0057] FIG. 7 is a flow diagram of wireless data transfer between a wireless host device and a wireless accessory device that have been successfully paired.

[0058] The wireless data transfer process 700 begins with a decision 702 that determines whether a connection to the wireless accessory device is desired. When the decision 702 determines that a connection from the wireless host device to the wireless accessory device is not desired, then the wireless data transfer process 700 is effectively not invoked. Alternatively, when the decision 702 determines that a connection between the wireless host device and the wireless accessory device is desired, the wireless data transfer process 700 is effectively invoked. In such case, a decision 702 determines whether the wireless host device has a link key for use with the wireless accessory device. When the wireless host device does not have such a link key, the desired connection is not available 706. Typically, in this case, the wireless host device has not been successfully paired with the wireless accessory device and thus does not have a link key that facilitates data transfer with the wireless accessory device.

[0059] On the other hand, when the decision 704 determines that the wireless host device does have an appropriate link key for use with the wireless accessory device, the wireless host device connects 708 to the wireless accessory device using the known link key. With the connection being established, data can then be transmitted over a wireless link provided by the connection between the wireless host device and the wireless accessory device. Next, a decision 712 determines whether the connection is to be closed. When the decision 712 determines that the connection is not to be closed, data transfer over the wireless link can continue to be transferred 710. As an example, the wireless accessory device can be a headset and the wireless host device can be a media player or mobile phone. In either case, the user can use the headset to exchange data with the media player or mobile phone in a wireless manner. Alternatively, when the decision 712 determines that the connection should be closed, the connection is then closed 714. Following the block 714, as well as following the block 706, the wireless data transfer process 700 ends.

[0060] Although various embodiments discussed above use a wireless accessory device as one of the wireless devices being paired, the invention is not limited to wireless accessory devices. A wireless accessory device is a wireless device that can be used in conjunction with a host device through wireless means. The invention is, however, applicable to pairing wireless devices in general. Hence, neither of a pair of wireless devices being paired is necessarily an accessory device.

[0061] The various aspects, embodiments, implementations or features of the invention can be used separately or in any combination.

[0062] The invention can be implemented by software, hardware or a combination of hardware and software. The invention can also be embodied as computer readable code on a computer readable medium. The computer readable medium is any data storage device that can store data which can thereafter be read by a computer system. Examples of the computer readable medium include read-only memory, ran-

dom-access memory, CD-ROMs, DVDs, magnetic tape, optical data storage devices, and carrier waves. The computer readable medium can also be distributed over network-coupled computer systems so that the computer readable code is stored and executed in a distributed fashion.

[0063] The advantages of the invention are numerous. Different aspects, embodiments or implementations may yield one or more of the following advantages. One advantage of the invention is that wireless devices can be paired without any need for a user enter a pin code that is often not readily available to the user. In other words, pairing of wireless devices can be achieved in a substantially automated manner. Another advantage of the invention is that a required pin code for pairing a pair of wireless devices can be transferred between the wireless devices over a wired medium that offers physical security for the pin code being transferred.

[0064] The many features and advantages of the present invention are apparent from the written description. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, the invention should not be limited to the exact construction and operation as illustrated and described. Hence, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to as falling within the scope of the invention.

What is claimed is:

- 1. A method for pairing a wireless device with a host device, the method comprising:
 - at the wireless device;
 - receiving a pairing request from the host device over a wireless network;
 - after detecting a wired connection between the wireless device and the host device,
 - waiting at least a pre-determined time period or until receiving a pin code from the host device over the wired connection;
 - when not receiving the pin code during the pre-determined time period,

- presenting a pin code prompt screen to a user of the wireless device, and
 - receiving a pin code through a user input device of the wireless device;
- after receiving the pin code,
- generating authentication data based on the received pin code;
- sending the authentication data from the wireless device to the host device; and
- subsequently completing pairing of the wireless device with the host device when the wireless device has been authenticated.
- 2. The method as recited in claim 1, completing pairing comprises at least:
 - at the wireless device;
 - receiving one or more keys generated by the host device based on the authentication data from the wireless device when the pairing is successful.
- 3. The method as recited in claim 1, completing pairing comprises at least:
 - at the wireless device;
 - generating one or more keys; and
 - sending at least one of the one or more keys from the wireless device to the host device when the pairing is successful.
- 4. The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the one or more keys are received over the wireless network.
- 5. The method as recited in claim 3, wherein the at least one of the one or more keys are sent over the wireless network.
- 6. The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the one or more keys are received over the wireless connection.
- 7. The method as recited in claim 3, wherein the at least one of the one or more keys are sent over the wireless connection.

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