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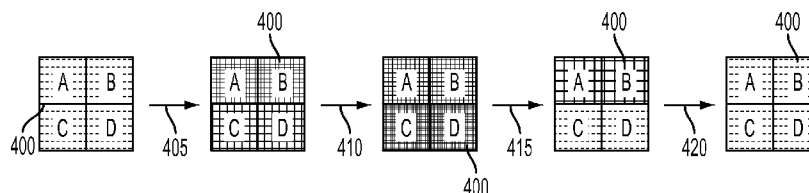


FIG. 4

(57) Abstract: Symbolologies for encoding data, as well as methods of encoding and decoding thereof are described. The symbolologies may have a plurality of pixels arranged in a plurality of patterns on or in a substrate. Furthermore, each of the plurality of pixels may have one or more optical properties that each provides one or more types of non-interacting data.

ORTHOGONAL ENCODING FOR TAGS

BACKGROUND

[0001] Symbolologies, such as matrix codes and the like, are becoming increasingly common for use in tagging and tracking solutions. Reading devices, such as barcode scanners and smartphone apps that use a camera to view and decode the symbology are common and easy to obtain. Most reading devices are capable of viewing and decoding a wide variety of symbolologies, such as, for example, one-dimensional barcodes and many two-dimensional matrix code technologies. However, the symbolologies are currently limited in the amount of data they are capable of encoding (e.g., a v.40 QR code with error correction level L can encode 4,296 alphanumeric characters).

[0002] Because of an increasingly common need to encode more data on a symbology, several new technologies have modified the symbolologies in ways that allow for additional data to be encoded. However, some of these technologies still fail to encode enough data, and some of these technologies also require proprietary reading devices that may be expensive and/or difficult to obtain.

SUMMARY

[0003] In an embodiment, a symbology for encoding data is disclosed. The symbology may have a plurality of pixels arranged in a plurality of patterns on a substrate, wherein each of the plurality of pixels has one or more optical properties that each provides one or more types of non-interacting data.

[0004] In an embodiment, a method of encoding a symbology is disclosed. The method may include arranging a plurality of pixels on a substrate in a plurality of patterns to form a machine-readable code, wherein each of the plurality of pixels has one or more optical properties that each provide one or more types of non-interacting data.

[0005] In an embodiment, a method of decoding a symbology, made up of a plurality of pixels, is disclosed. This may include reading a shape of the plurality of pixels by an optical reading apparatus to obtain a first type of non-interacting data, reading a size of the plurality of pixels by the optical reading apparatus to obtain a second type of non-interacting data, reading a one or more optical properties of each of the plurality of pixels by the optical reading apparatus to obtain a third type of non-interacting data, combining the first type of non-interacting data, the second type of non-interacting data and the third type of non-interacting data by a processing device, and decoding the combination by the processing device.

[0006] In an embodiment, a method of decoding a symbology, made up of a plurality of pixels, is disclosed. This may include reading a shape and a size of the plurality of pixels by an optical reading apparatus to obtain a first type of non-interacting data, reading a one or more optical properties of each of the plurality of pixels by the optical reading apparatus to obtain a second type of non-interacting data, combining the first type of non-interacting data and the second type of non-interacting data by a processing device, and decoding the combination by the processing device.

[0007] In an embodiment, an article of manufacture comprising a symbology for encoding data is disclosed, wherein the symbology may have a plurality of pixels arranged in a plurality of patterns on a substrate, and wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more optical properties that each provides one or more types of non-interacting data.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0008] FIG. 1 depicts a front face of an optical reading apparatus according to an embodiment.

[0009] FIG. 2 depicts a rear face of the optical reading apparatus of FIG. 1.

[0010] FIGS. 3A-3C depict examples of symbologies according to various embodiments.

[0011] FIG. 4 depicts an example of decay properties of a plurality of pixels according to an embodiment.

[0012] FIG. 5 depicts an example of decay properties of a plurality of pixels according to another embodiment.

[0013] FIG. 6 depicts several examples of gradient properties exhibited by pixels according to various embodiments.

[0014] FIG. 7 depicts other examples of gradient properties exhibited by pixels according to various embodiments.

[0015] FIG. 8 depicts other examples of gradient properties exhibited by pixels according to various embodiments.

[0016] FIG. 9 depicts a pixel exhibiting multiple properties according to various embodiments.

[0017] FIG. 10 depicts a reference table for encoding 22 different types of data according to an embodiment.

[0018] FIG. 11 depicts a diagram and a table for identifying 10 of the 22 different types of data from FIG. 10 to be encoded in a pixel according to an embodiment.

[0019] FIG. 12 depicts a diagram and a table for identifying 4 of the 22 different types of data from FIG. 10 to be encoded in a pixel according to an embodiment.

[0020] FIG. 13 depicts a diagram and a table for identifying 4 of the 22 different types of data from FIG. 10 to be encoded in a pixel according to an embodiment.

[0021] FIG. 14 depicts a diagram and a table for identifying 4 of the 22 different types of data from FIG. 10 to be encoded in a pixel according to an embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0022] This disclosure is not limited to the particular systems, devices and methods described, as these may vary. The terminology used in the description is for the purpose of describing the particular versions or embodiments only, and is not intended to limit the scope.

[0023] As used in this document, the singular forms “a,” “an,” and “the” include plural references unless the context clearly dictates otherwise. Unless defined otherwise, all technical and scientific terms used herein have the same meanings as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art. Nothing in this disclosure is to be construed as an admission that the embodiments described in this disclosure are not entitled to antedate such disclosure by virtue of prior invention. As used in this document, the term “comprising” means “including, but not limited to.”

[0024] The following terms shall have, for the purposes of this application, the respective meanings set forth below.

[0025] An “optical reading apparatus” refers to a device that can generally be used to read and decode a symbology as disclosed herein. The optical reading apparatus may have an imaging device such as a camera, as well as an illumination device such as a flash. The optical reading apparatus may further have a computing device, which may be a processor, a memory, and/or the like. The computing device may be integrated as a component of the optical reading apparatus or may be in operable communication with the optical reading apparatus via communications ports. The optical reading apparatus may further have a display capable of displaying information decoded from the symbology. The display may be integrated as a component of the optical reading apparatus or may be in operable communication with the optical reading apparatus via communications ports. Examples of optical reading apparatuses may include, but are not limited to, personal

computers, gaming systems, televisions, and portable electronic devices such as a smartphones, personal digital assistants, cameras, tablet computers, laptop computers, GPS navigation devices, media players, handheld scanners, fixed scanners, and the like. One such example of an optical reading apparatus is depicted in FIGS. 1 and 2.

[0026] A “symbology” is a pattern, a symbol, an image or the like, as well as portions and combinations thereof, that is displayed on or in a substrate and provides an optical, machine-readable encoded representation of data. The symbology may be made up of a plurality of pixels arranged in any manner to create varying shapes, patterns, layers and the like without limitation. Symbologies may include, without limitation, one-dimensional barcodes, two-dimensional (2D) barcodes, or three-dimensional barcodes. Examples of two-dimensional barcodes include data matrix codes, quick response codes, Aztec codes, Maxi codes and the like. Symbologies may also include letters, numbers, punctuation and other symbols. The symbologies may be displayed on a display and may be of any geometric shape or size. In this document, the terms “barcode” or “matrix code” may be used in the examples, but the term is intended to include any type of symbology.

[0027] Furthermore, a “luminescent symbology” refers to a symbology that exhibits or has the potential to exhibit luminescent properties. The luminescent properties may be exhibited on a portion of the symbology, may be exhibited on the entire symbology, may be layered over other elements of the symbology or may be exhibited in a location proximate to the symbology.

[0028] A “pixel” is a single element of a symbology that is capable of being read by the optical reading apparatus. For example, in instances where the symbology is a one-dimensional barcode, such as in FIG. 3B, each horizontal line of the barcode may be referred to as a pixel. Alternatively, as shown in FIG. 3C, portions of each horizontal line may be referred to as a pixel, wherein each portion of the line is different from other portions, as

described in greater detail herein. Similarly, in an example of a two-dimensional barcode, such as the QR code depicted in FIG. 3A, each individual square unit within the QR code may be referred to as a pixel.

[0029] “Non-interacting data” is a type of data that is generally orthogonal to another type of data. Thus, each type of data may be obtained through the use of different detection modalities that may each be non-interacting or otherwise independent of each other so that they do not interfere with each other or the ability to read each type of data independently of the other types of data. Each type of data may be encoded into various dimensions of each pixel, as described in greater detail in Example 1.

[0030] FIG. 1 depicts a first surface **105** of an optical reading apparatus, generally designated **100**, according to an embodiment. The first surface **105** may have a display **110**. The display **110** may generally be any device that is capable of displaying a digital image, video, text and/or the like. Examples of such devices include, but are not limited to, electroluminescent displays, electronic paper displays, vacuum fluorescent displays, light emitting diode (LED) displays, cathode ray tube (CRT) displays, liquid crystal (LCD) displays, plasma display panels, digital light processing (DLP) displays, and organic light-emitting diode (OLED) displays.

[0031] The optical reading apparatus **100** and/or the display **110** may further include a user interface such as a keypad, one or more switches or buttons, and/or a touch sensitive screen including, but not limited to, a resistive touchscreen, a capacitive touchscreen, or an infrared touchscreen.

[0032] FIG. 2 depicts a second surface **115** of the optical reading apparatus **100**. The second surface **115** may have an imaging device **120** and an illumination device **125**. The imaging device **120** may be any suitable component capable of receiving an optical image and transmitting the image information to other components of the optical reading

apparatus **100** for processing. The imaging device **120** may further have a plurality of filters that may block certain wavelengths of light from entering the imaging device. The imaging device **120** may further have an ability to adjust its focal length and aperture in such a manner that would allow it to zoom and properly focus upon an intended object to be imaged. Such ability may be through mechanical components (such as an optical zoom) or programming (such as a digital zoom). This adjustment may define an “optimal focal distance,” or a range of distances in which the optical reading apparatus **100** may be properly positioned from the intended object to be imaged to achieve a clear image.

[0033] While the imaging device **120** is depicted on the second surface **115** of the optical reading apparatus **100** in FIG. 2, persons skilled in the art will appreciate that the imaging device **120** may be positioned at any location upon any face of the optical reading apparatus **100**, or may even be external to the optical reading apparatus **100** and connected by any means of electronic communication, including, but not limited to, physical cable communication such as universal serial bus (USB), wireless radio communication, wireless light communication, or near field communication technology.

[0034] The illumination device **125** may be used in any light conditions to complete any of the tasks described herein. Additionally, the illumination device **125** may be independently activated to turn on or off at specific points in time, such as when additional lighting is necessary to capture an ideal image or when illumination is necessary to change the properties of the symbology. Other features of the illumination device **125** may include dimming/brightening, strobe, constant on, illumination at certain wavelengths, illumination at a range of wavelengths and/or the like.

[0035] The illumination device **125** may contain any suitable light source capable of providing illumination including, but not limited to, magnesium-based flashes, xenon-based flashes, fulminate-containing flashes, light-emitting diode (LED) flashes, and the like.

While the present figure depicts the illumination device **125** as being integrated with the optical reading apparatus **100**, it may be appreciated that the illumination device **125** may be a separate component in operable communication with the optical reading apparatus **100**, such as USB based flashes, hot shoe based flashes, remote slave flash units or other similar devices.

[0036] FIGS. 3A, 3B and 3C each depict a symbology, generally designated **300**, in accordance with one or more embodiments. The symbology **300** may be, for example, a luminescent symbology, and may include a plurality of shaded pixels **305**, a plurality of voided pixels **310**, and a plurality of positioning elements **320**. While the symbology **300** depicted in FIG. 3A is square, those skilled in the art will recognize that a variety of shapes and sizes may be used for the symbology **300** without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. For example, a rectangular shaped symbology as shown in FIGS. 3B and 3C may be used. Furthermore, the symbology **300** may incorporate additional elements, such as, for example, text, images and/or the like. The text, images and/or the like may be present as individual pixels or may be a neutral portion of the symbology. Furthermore, the symbology itself may be incorporated within the additional elements (i.e., part of a picture, text and/or the like).

[0037] As shown in the symbology **300''** of FIG. 3C, each shaded pixel **310''** and each voided pixel **315''** may, for example, be read in a horizontal direction to obtain first data and in a vertical direction to obtain second data. Furthermore, pixels may be voided and/or shaded for encoding additional data with the use of phosphors, luminescent inks, fluorescent inks and/or the like. Thus, the symbology **300''** in FIG. 3C may actually appear more like the symbology **300'** in FIG. 3B when marked with a non-luminescent marking material, and then may evolve into the symbology **300''** of FIG. 3C when the luminescent ink applied on top of

or beneath the non-luminescent marking material is activated to produce additional levels of encoded data, as provided in greater detail herein.

[0038] Referring to FIG 3A, the symbology **300** may be deposited on a surface of a substrate with one or more marking materials. Examples of marking materials may include, but are not limited to toner, graphite-based marking materials, alcohol-based marking materials, wax-based marking materials, inks such as carbon-based inks, soy-based inks, metallic inks and the like. The marking materials may further contain any number of solvents, dyes, pigments, resins, lubricants, solubilizers, surfactants, particulate matter, doping agents, activators, fluorescent materials, phosphors and the like, as well as combinations thereof.

[0039] Deposition of the marking materials onto the substrate may be achieved by any method now known or later developed. Examples of deposition methods include printing, laser etching, selective bleaching, physical interaction, stamping, and/or the like. Furthermore, in instances where a plurality of marking materials may be used, a marking material may be positioned alongside another marking material or may be layered over at least a portion of another marking material.

[0040] The substrate may be any substrate including, but not limited to, paper products, metals, polymers, consumer goods, apparel, computer components, storage devices, sanitation components or automobiles. The substrate may further be integrated with materials having distinct degradation or quenching properties, such as, but not limited to, oxidation properties, reduction properties, electron bombardment properties, reaction properties with water molecules or thermal effects properties.

[0041] In an embodiment, one such marking material for use in depositing the symbology on a substrate may be a phosphorescent ink containing a phosphor that is derived from zinc sulfide, strontium aluminate, or combinations thereof. In other embodiments, only

a portion of the marking materials used for depositing the symbology may be phosphorescent ink. Accordingly, another portion of the marking materials used for depositing the symbology may be one or more non-phosphorescent inks. In certain embodiments, the symbology **300** may be deposited on a surface of a substrate with a zinc sulfide-derived phosphorescent ink. In other embodiments, the phosphorescent ink may be capable of emitting a plurality of frequencies of light, wherein each frequency is correlated with a particular crystal structure. The crystal structure may be altered via photonic means, thermal means or an electron beam. The phosphorescent ink may further have a plurality of additives. Examples of such additives may include, but are not limited to doping agents, activators, fluorescent materials, and/or the like. The additives may provide the phosphorescent ink with a capability to produce light having various color properties, decay properties, photobleaching properties, degradation properties, luminance properties, intensity properties, fluorescence resonance energy transfer properties, gradient properties and/or the like.

[0042] The phosphorescent ink may further be combined with a fluorescent material that is excited at the same wavelength as a wavelength that is emitted by the phosphor. In these embodiments, the resulting combination may contain fluorescence resonance energy transfer (FRET) properties. Furthermore, the frequencies and intensities of ambient light may not change the response of the combination. Thus, a symbology incorporating a phosphorescent ink with a fluorescent material may be read and decoded an infinite number of times, with or without a flash, and the encoded data contained therein will not change. However, the same symbology may contain filters to provide an emission of only specific wavelengths of either excitation or emission in only certain portions or elements of the symbology.

[0043] The phosphorescent ink may further be excitable, thus causing the phosphorescent ink to exhibit luminescent properties. Excitation of the phosphorescent ink may be achieved by exposure of the ink to an illuminant, such as, for example, the illumination device **125** (FIG. 2). Repeated excitation of the phosphorescent ink may cause a decay in the luminescent properties of the phosphorescent ink over a period of time or a number of excitations. In embodiments where the symbology **300** comprises a plurality of different phosphorescent inks, each of the plurality of phosphorescent inks may have a different rate of decay. Thus, repeated excitation of the plurality of phosphorescent inks may cause a portion of the phosphorescent inks to decay faster than others. This may allow for an even greater amount of data to be encoded, such as additional types of data, as described in more detail herein.

[0044] In certain embodiments, the phosphorescent ink may exhibit a luminance upon excitation by exposure to the illuminant. Repeated excitation of the phosphorescent ink may cause a decay in the exhibited luminance over a period of time or a number of excitations. In embodiments where the symbology **300** comprises a plurality of different phosphorescent inks, each of the plurality of phosphorescent inks may exhibit a different rate of decay. Thus, repeated excitation of the plurality of phosphorescent inks may cause a portion of the phosphorescent inks to decay faster than others, illuminate at differing wavelengths and/or photobleach. This may allow for an even greater amount of data to be encoded, such as additional types of data, as described in more detail herein.

[0045] In an embodiment, another marking material may be a fluorescent ink, such as inks that contain organic substances that may fluoresce upon exposure to ultraviolet light. One example of a fluorescent ink may be an ink containing a fluorophore or other fluorescent chemical compound that can re-emit light upon excitation. The fluorescent ink may further contain a photobleaching property, thus allowing for photochemical destruction

of the fluorophore after an excitation, such as exposure to the illumination device, as described in more detail herein.

[0046] The symbology **300** may generally be encoded by encoding methods now known or later developed. More specifically, data in the symbology **300** may be encoded via the relative positions of the shaded pixels **305** and the voided pixels **310**. Furthermore, the symbology **300** may incorporate one or more encoding schemes now known or later developed to use error detection and correction techniques. Use of the error detection and correction techniques may improve reading reliability and may further enable reading of partially damaged symbologies.

[0047] Each shaded pixel **305** and each voided pixel **310** may, independently of other pixels, have one or more optical properties, such as, for example, a color property, a shape property, a dimensional property, a relational property, a luminance property, a decay property, an intensity property, a photobleaching property, a degradation property, a fluorescence resonance energy transfer property, a gradient property and/or the like, as discussed in greater detail herein.

[0048] Each shaded pixel **305** and each voided pixel **310** may be any shape and/or size, may be deposited with any type of marking material and may have one or more layers, which may optionally be irrespective of other shaded and/or voided pixels in the symbology. The shape of each pixel is not limited by this disclosure, and may be any geometric shape. Furthermore, each pixel may be composed of a plurality of different shapes. In instances where different shapes are used, the shapes may overlap each other, may interlock with each other, or may not intersect with each other. Shapes may overlap based upon colors, gradients, use of phosphorescent inks, and/or the like. Examples of shapes that may be used may include a polygon, an annulus, an arbelos, a circle, a circular segment, an ellipse, a lemniscate, a lune, an oval, a salinon, a semicircle, a tomoe, a magatama, a triquetra, an

asteroid, a deltoid, an Archimedean spiral and/or the like. Polygons may be simple or complex, and simple polygons may include convex polygons, concave polygons, equilateral polygons, rectangular convex polygons, cyclic polygons and equiangular polygons. Each shape may encode a type of data. Furthermore, the size and/or the dimensions of each shape may encode another type of data. Also, the positioning of each shape within each pixel may also be used to encode a type of data.

[0049] Each shaded pixel **305** and each voided pixel **310** may further have a length, a width and/or other dimensions. The dimensions of each pixel may vary, and thus may be independent of dimensions of other pixels. The varying dimensions of each pixel may provide additional types of encoded data, where the data corresponds to the specific dimensions of each pixel.

[0050] The symbology **300** and/or each pixel within the symbology may further have a plurality of optical properties, wherein each optical property may provide encoding information for a distinct type of data. Examples of optical properties may include, but are not limited to, the shape, size, horizontal dimensions, vertical dimensions, luminance, photobleaching properties, decay rate, and/or use of gradients, as well as combinations thereof. The symbology **300** and/or each pixel may include additional or alternate optical properties for encoding additional types of data not specifically recited herein without departing from the scope of this disclosure.

[0051] As previously described herein, the symbology **300** may be deposited on a substrate with a plurality of inks, such as, for example, luminescent inks, non-luminescent inks and/or the like. Each of the luminescent inks may have a corresponding decay rate, and the decay rates between luminescent inks may vary. FIG. 4 depicts an example of a symbology **400** having 4 shaded pixels **A, B, C, D**. One or more of the shaded pixels may be marked with a luminescent ink having a differing decay rate. In the present example, shaded

pixels **A** and **B** may be shaded with a first luminescent ink, and shaded pixels **C** and **D** may be shaded with a second luminescent ink. Initially, all 4 shaded pixels **A**, **B**, **C**, **D** may exhibit an identical luminance. However, upon the occurrence of a first excitation event **405**, such as exposure to the illumination device, the luminance of each of the 4 shaded pixels **A**, **B**, **C**, **D** may begin to decay at a different rate. For example, as shown in FIG. 4, the luminance of shaded pixels **A** and **B** does not decay as quickly as the luminance of shaded pixels **C** and **D**. As such, shaded pixels **A** and **B** exhibit a greater luminance than shaded pixels **C** and **D**. As a result, the symbology **400** has been altered and may be encoded with additional information, such as, for example, additional types of data, at this altered state, as well as at future altered states, such as, for example, altered states that are derivatives of previous altered states. The symbology **400** may then undergo additional excitation events **410**, **415**, **420**, such as additional exposure to the illumination device or the passage of time, to change the luminance of the 4 shaded pixels again. Each time, the symbology **400** is altered and the alteration may be encoded with additional information, such as additional types of data. Each type of data may be a derivative of the previous type of data from the previous alteration.

[0052] Similar to the above example, FIG. 5 depicts an example of a symbology **500** having 4 shaded pixels **A**, **B**, **C**, **D**, wherein each of the shaded pixels **A**, **B**, **C**, **D** may have a luminescent ink with a differing decay rate. In the present example, shaded pixel **A** may be shaded with a first luminescent ink, shaded pixel **B** may be shaded with a second luminescent ink, shaded pixel **C** may be shaded with a third luminescent ink, and shaded pixel **D** may be shaded with a fourth luminescent ink. Initially, all 4 shaded pixels **A**, **B**, **C**, **D** may exhibit an identical luminance. However, upon the occurrence of a first excitation event **505**, such as, for example, exposure to the illumination device, each of the 4 shaded pixels **A**, **B**, **C**, **D** may begin to decay at a different rate. Thus, the luminances of shaded pixels **A**, **B**,

C, D exhibit differing intensities after the first excitation event. As a result, the symbology **500** has been altered and may be encoded with additional information, such as additional types of data, at this altered state. The symbology **500** may then undergo additional excitation events **510, 515, 520**, such as additional exposure to the illumination device or the passage of time, to change the luminance of the 4 shaded pixels again. Each time, the symbology **500** is altered and may be encoded with additional information, such as additional types of data.

[0053] While the examples presented herein with respect to FIGS. 4 and 5 discuss a change in luminance, those skilled in the art will recognize that other properties of each pixel or a portion thereof may also be altered in a similar manner, such as, for example, intensity, phosphor decay, photobleaching properties and/or the like.

[0054] In each of the examples presented above in FIGS. 4 and 5, the ink used to encode each shaded pixel **A, B, C, D** may have shading that is solid and uniformly dispersed throughout each shaded pixel **A, B, C, D**. However, as depicted in FIG. 6, an alternative to a solid and uniformly dispersed shading **605**, gradients may also be used for each shaded pixel. Examples of possible gradients may include, but are not limited to, horizontal two-color gradients **610**, vertical two-color gradients **615**, horizontal three-color gradients **620**, circular two-color gradients **625**, square two-color gradients **630**, and diagonal two-color gradients **635**. Furthermore, in addition to color gradients, gradients may be used for differing phosphor decay rates, differing luminescent inks, differing intensities, differing photobleaching and/or the like for each pixel. Gradients may further exist with more than two colors, luminances, decay rates, intensities, photobleaching properties and/or the like without departing from the scope of this disclosure.

[0055] While the gradients depicted in FIG. 6 are evenly dispersed across the shaded pixel, uneven dispersions may also be possible, as depicted in FIG. 7. For example, a

horizontal two-color gradient may be dispersed at a 10:90 ratio **705**, wherein a first color comprises 10% of the shaded pixel and a second color comprises the remaining 90% of the shaded pixel. Other examples may include a solid 50:50 gradient **710**, where the two colors, phosphors, intensities and/or the like are evenly distributed at 50% of the pixel. In addition to the solid 50:50 gradient **710**, other 50:50 gradients may vary the slope of the gradient, as shown in **715**, **720** and **725**, but still disperse each of the two colors, phosphors, intensities and/or the like at 50% of the pixel. In each variation of the slope, an additional type of data may be encoded. Each type of data may be a derivative of the previous type of data from the previous variation of the slope.

[0056] In another example, as shown in FIG. 8, a diagonal gradient may be dispersed at a 60 degree angle **805**, but may still remain a 50:50 gradient where the first color, intensity, luminance, decay, photobleaching property and/or the like comprises 50% of the pixel, similar to that of the second color, intensity, luminance, decay, photobleaching property and/or the like. The examples depicted in FIGS. 6-8 are merely illustrative, and thus additional or alternate gradients not specifically shown are intended to be encompassed by this disclosure. The angle may be varied while the 50:50 gradient remains, as shown in **810**, **815**, **820** and **825**. In each variation of the angle of the gradient, an additional type of data may be encoded.

[0057] By further providing each shaded pixel with a gradient instead of a uniformly solid color, additional types of data may be encoded, based upon the gradient of each pixel. The gradient of each pixel may be recorded either similarly or differently for each type of marking material used, as well as a gradient for each property displayed by a marking material. For example, a marking material having a luminance, a decay rate and a photobleaching property may use a different gradient for each property, such as the luminance having a horizontal two-color gradient, the decay rate having a circular two-color

gradient and the photobleaching property having a vertical two-color gradient. Those skilled in the art will recognize other combinations of gradients that may be used for each marking material and/or property displayed.

[0058] Gradients may be encoded with additional types of data in a number of different ways. For example, data may be encoded into each color present in a gradient of a particular pixel, as well as the relative amounts of each color present in the gradient of the particular pixel. Data may also be encoded into each pixel based on the direction of the gradient and the like.

[0059] While two colors, phosphors, intensities, photobleaching properties and/or the like are generally used in each pixel as shown the figures presented above, those skilled in the art will recognize that more than two colors, phosphors, intensities, photobleaching properties and/or the like can be used in each pixel without departing from the scope of this disclosure. Thus, for example, a pixel may contain 4 colors, phosphors, intensities, photobleaching properties and/or the like, as depicted in FIG. 9.

[0060] Thus, each of the plurality of optical properties may be used to encode a corresponding plurality of types of data. The plurality of types of data encoded by each of the plurality of optical properties may each be orthogonal. Thus, each type of data may be obtained through the use of different detection modalities that may each be non-interacting, or otherwise independent of each other so that they do not interfere with each other. For example, a QR code may be written to encode a first type of data via methods known in the art, thereby appearing as a plurality of black, white and/or colored pixels that are readable by a common optical reading apparatus. Within each of the plurality of pixels, additional information may be encoded through the use of one or more of the plurality of optical properties. For example, each of the plurality of pixels may include different fluorescent materials and/or phosphorescent inks, wherein each may have different emission intensities

and/or decay rates. The optical properties and the data encoded therein may be revealed through an excitation, such as by use of the illumination device. Thus, each of the varying types of encoded data may be read independently of each other, and without one interfering with an ability to read another.

EXAMPLES

Example 1: Encoding pixels with information based on shape, size and color

[0061] FIG. 10 depicts an example of a reference table for each of 22 unique dimensions of a pixel, as well as a corresponding encoding for 9 bits of information in each dimension (A,B,C,D,1,2,3,4, and .). Each dimension is encoded into the pixel so as to be completely independent of another. Thus, a different type of data may be encoded into each dimension. Some of the information in each dimension may be readable through the use of shape and color recognition under normal lighting conditions (see FIG. 11). Some of the dimensions may require the pixel to be illuminated, such as with a strong flash, and then the intensity of the phosphor is measured at different time points, as depicted in FIGS. 12 and 13. Some of the information is encoded such that the pixel needs to be illuminated multiple times, and the intensity of the phosphor is read subsequent to each illumination and thus compared to measure the amount of photobleaching, as depicted in FIG. 14.

[0062] FIG. 11 depicts three individual pixels that contain coding for ten (10) unique dimensions of information that can be deciphered by image processing under normal light conditions. This deciphering can be accomplished with standard digital imaging and image processing algorithms for edge detection, distance measurement, shape recognition, color recognition and light intensity. FIG. 11 also provides an orientation guide **1105** that shows four (4) edges of a pixel, wherein the left side edge is the first edge, the right side edge is the second edge, the upper edge is the third edge and the bottom edge is the fourth edge. Thus, in Pixel 1, the first edge is a triangle. The reference table provided in FIG. 10 indicates

that when the first edge is a triangle, it corresponds to encoding for the number “3”. Referring back to FIG. 11, Pixel 2 has a first edge that is straight, which corresponds to encoding for the letter “A” in the reference table shown in FIG. 10. Pixel 3 has a first edge that is an inverted semicircle, which corresponds to encoding for the number “4”. Thus, the code for a first dimension that encompasses the first edge of all three pixels is “3A4”.

[0063] Moving on to the second (i.e., right side) edge for each of the three pixels, it is evident that Pixel 1 has a straight edge, Pixel 2 has a semicircle and Pixel 3 has an angled straight edge. Referring to the reference table in FIG. 10, the encoded characters that correspond to the three edges are “.4D”. This process may then be repeated for the third (i.e., upper) and fourth (i.e., lower) edges to obtain the respective encoding, which is shown in the first four rows of the table depicted in FIG. 11.

[0064] The respective lengths L_1 , L_2 and L_3 of Pixel 1, Pixel 2 and Pixel 3 may be measured from the first edge to the second edge without factoring the shapes of either edge to provide encoding for a fifth dimension. Thus, as shown in the table in FIG. 11, the code “2D4” corresponds to the respective lengths of L_1 , L_2 and L_3 .

[0065] Similarly, the respective heights H_1 , H_2 and H_3 of Pixel 1, Pixel 2 and Pixel 3 may be measured from the third edge to the fourth edge without factoring the shapes of either edge to provide encoding for a sixth dimension. Thus, as shown in the table in FIG. 11, the code “8.D” corresponds to the respective heights of H_1 , H_2 and H_3 .

[0066] Encoding for a seventh and eighth dimension may be obtained via the color of the first and second edges, respectively, of each of Pixel 1, Pixel 2 and Pixel 3. The color may be determined by software and compared to a color chart, such as the one provided in FIG. 10 to obtain the encoding for each color. For example, the encoding for the first edges provides the code “ABC” and the encoding for the second edges provides the code “C3A”.

[0067] A ninth dimension may be encoded from a relative portion of the pixel that is colored by the first edge color compared to a relative portion of the pixel that is colored by the second edge color, such as, for example, the color gradient. As shown in FIG. 11, 60 percent of Pixel 1 is colored with the first edge color and 40 percent of Pixel 1 is colored with the second edge color, which corresponds to an encoding of “D” in the reference table of FIG. 10. Pixel 2 is evenly colored at 50% of the first edge color and 50% of the second edge color, which corresponds to an encoding of “1” in the reference table of FIG. 10. Pixel 3 is 20% colored by the first edge color and 80% colored by the second edge color, which corresponds to an encoding of “4” in the reference table of FIG. 10. Thus, the ninth dimension of encoding contains the code “D14”.

[0068] A tenth dimension may be encoded from a shape created by the intersection of each of the two colors in each pixel. Thus, Pixel 1 contains an intersection in the shape of a semicircle, which, as shown in the table in FIG. 10, corresponds to the number “4”. Accordingly, Pixel 2 contains an intersection in the shape of a step, which, as shown in the table in FIG. 10, corresponds to the letter “B”. Finally, Pixel 3 contains an intersection in the shape of a triangle, which, as shown in the table in FIG. 10, corresponds to the letter “C”. Thus, the tenth dimension of encoding contains the code “4BC”.

[0069] FIG. 12 depicts the use of a luminescent ink over Pixel 1, Pixel 2 and Pixel 3. When each of the three pixels are illuminated (i.e., with a light, a smartphone flash, etc.) and then measured for intensity at a particular point in time thereafter ($t=1$), encoding for additional dimensions is possible. In this example, the intensity of the luminescent ink at the first edge and second edge are used to encode the 11th and 12th dimensions, respectively. The intensity can be varied by changing the amount or the type of luminescent ink, or by including different dopants. The intensity may be determined as an absolute or a relative, such as by use of reference points. While intensity is shown in FIG. 12 as ranging from black

to white, it is to be understood that the intensity is separate and distinct from the colors previously discussed. In some instances, software may be used to correct the color in order to correctly determine each luminescence property.

[0070] Similar to the color, the two edge phosphors can be arranged in combinations such as shown here. The code for the 13th dimension is determined by the relative amounts of the first and second phosphor intensity across each pixel. Also, a shape included at the interface between the two phosphors.

[0071] As depicted in FIG. 13, the rate of phosphorescence decay over time after a single exposure may be controlled using dopants or different compositions of the phosphor. Thus, additional dimensions may be encoded by measuring the intensity of light emitted from each pixel after the first illumination at different time points (e.g., $t=1, 2, 3$ and 4). The measurements may then be used to determine the decay rates of each pixel. In this example, the decay rate of the first edge of Pixel 1 is 20 (i.e., 20% of the intensity of the phosphor is diminished after each time point). This decay rate corresponds to “B” in the reference table of FIG. 10. The decay rate for the first edge of Pixels 2 and 3 are 10 and 50, respectively, which correspond to “A” and “1” in the reference table of FIG. 10.

[0072] The gradient of the decay rate (i.e., the percentage of the phosphor with the decay rate at the first edge compared to that at the second edge), may provide a seventeenth dimension for the pixels. This may be similar in the manner in which the ninth dimension is obtained for color. Thus, Pixel 1 exhibits a 40% first decay rate and a 60% second decay rate, which corresponds to a code of “2”.

[0073] Similar to the encoding of the tenth dimension, a shape that is defined by the intersection of each phosphor on each pixel decaying at different rates may be encoded as an eighteenth dimension. Thus, the semicircular shape defined by the phosphors on Pixel 1 corresponds to a code of “B”.

[0074] FIG. 14 depicts another group of dimensions that may be encoded from the same Pixel 1, Pixel 2 and Pixel 3. These dimensions may generally be determined from multiple exposures. Phosphors are known to photobleach, and the photobleaching may be manipulated to vary. Thus, by exposing the pixels to multiple illuminations (e.g., flashes) and measuring intensities at the same time point ($t=1$) after each exposure, the photobleaching can be determined. In the present example, Pixel 1, Pixel 2 and Pixel 3 are exposed to 4 exposures, and the intensities are determined after each exposure to encode the remaining dimensions. For example, the first edge of Pixel 1 photobleaches at a rate of 80% (i.e., the intensity of the phosphor is diminished by 80% after each exposure), which corresponds to “B” in the reference table presented in FIG. 10. The intensity of the first edge of the Pixel 2 diminishes by 30% with each exposure, which corresponds to “3” in the reference table presented in FIG. 10.

[0075] The photobleaching gradients of each pixel may be used to encode the 21st dimension in a manner similar to the ninth dimension. Likewise, the shape created by the intersection of the two photobleaching gradients may be used to encode the 22nd dimension in a manner similar to the tenth dimension.

[0076] While only 22 dimensions are depicted in the previous example, those skilled in the art will recognize that additional dimensions may be possible without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. Furthermore, each dimension may code more than 9 bits of information by including additional shapes, locations of shapes, dimensions, colors, gradients, luminescent properties, photobleaching properties and the like.

[0077] In the above detailed description, reference is made to the accompanying drawings, which form a part hereof. In the drawings, similar symbols typically identify similar components, unless context dictates otherwise. The illustrative embodiments described in the detailed description, drawings, and claims are not meant to be limiting.

Other embodiments may be used, and other changes may be made, without departing from the spirit or scope of the subject matter presented herein. It will be readily understood that the aspects of the present disclosure, as generally described herein, and illustrated in the Figures, can be arranged, substituted, combined, separated, and designed in a wide variety of different configurations, all of which are explicitly contemplated herein.

[0078] The present disclosure is not to be limited in terms of the particular embodiments described in this application, which are intended as illustrations of various aspects. Many modifications and variations can be made without departing from its spirit and scope, as will be apparent to those skilled in the art. Functionally equivalent methods and apparatuses within the scope of the disclosure, in addition to those enumerated herein, will be apparent to those skilled in the art from the foregoing descriptions. Such modifications and variations are intended to fall within the scope of the appended claims. The present disclosure is to be limited only by the terms of the appended claims, along with the full scope of equivalents to which such claims are entitled. It is to be understood that this disclosure is not limited to particular methods, reagents, compounds, compositions or biological systems, which can, of course, vary. It is also to be understood that the terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only, and is not intended to be limiting.

[0079] With respect to the use of substantially any plural and/or singular terms herein, those having skill in the art can translate from the plural to the singular and/or from the singular to the plural as is appropriate to the context and/or application. The various singular/plural permutations may be expressly set forth herein for sake of clarity.

[0080] It will be understood by those within the art that, in general, terms used herein, and especially in the appended claims (e.g., bodies of the appended claims) are generally intended as “open” terms (e.g., the term “including” should be interpreted as “including but not limited to,” the term “having” should be interpreted as “having at least,”

the term “includes” should be interpreted as “includes but is not limited to,” etc.). While various compositions, methods, and devices are described in terms of “comprising” various components or steps (interpreted as meaning “including, but not limited to”), the compositions, methods, and devices can also “consist essentially of” or “consist of” the various components and steps, and such terminology should be interpreted as defining essentially closed-member groups. It will be further understood by those within the art that if a specific number of an introduced claim recitation is intended, such an intent will be explicitly recited in the claim, and in the absence of such recitation no such intent is present. For example, as an aid to understanding, the following appended claims may contain usage of the introductory phrases “at least one” and “one or more” to introduce claim recitations. However, the use of such phrases should not be construed to imply that the introduction of a claim recitation by the indefinite articles “a” or “an” limits any particular claim containing such introduced claim recitation to embodiments containing only one such recitation, even when the same claim includes the introductory phrases “one or more” or “at least one” and indefinite articles such as “a” or “an” (*e.g.*, “a” and/or “an” should be interpreted to mean “at least one” or “one or more”); the same holds true for the use of definite articles used to introduce claim recitations. In addition, even if a specific number of an introduced claim recitation is explicitly recited, those skilled in the art will recognize that such recitation should be interpreted to mean at least the recited number (*e.g.*, the bare recitation of “two recitations,” without other modifiers, means at least two recitations, or two or more recitations). Furthermore, in those instances where a convention analogous to “at least one of A, B, and C, etc.” is used, in general such a construction is intended in the sense one having skill in the art would understand the convention (*e.g.*, “a system having at least one of A, B, and C” would include but not be limited to systems that have A alone, B alone, C alone, A and B together, A and C together, B and C together, and/or A, B, and C together, etc.). In

those instances where a convention analogous to “at least one of A, B, or C, etc.” is used, in general such a construction is intended in the sense one having skill in the art would understand the convention (*e.g.*, “a system having at least one of A, B, or C” would include but not be limited to systems that have A alone, B alone, C alone, A and B together, A and C together, B and C together, and/or A, B, and C together, etc.). It will be further understood by those within the art that virtually any disjunctive word and/or phrase presenting two or more alternative terms, whether in the description, claims, or drawings, should be understood to contemplate the possibilities of including one of the terms, either of the terms, or both terms. For example, the phrase “A or B” will be understood to include the possibilities of “A” or “B” or “A and B.”

[0081] In addition, where features or aspects of the disclosure are described in terms of Markush groups, those skilled in the art will recognize that the disclosure is also thereby described in terms of any individual member or subgroup of members of the Markush group.

[0082] As will be understood by one skilled in the art, for any and all purposes, such as in terms of providing a written description, all ranges disclosed herein also encompass any and all possible subranges and combinations of subranges thereof. Any listed range can be easily recognized as sufficiently describing and enabling the same range being broken down into at least equal halves, thirds, quarters, fifths, tenths, etc. As a non-limiting example, each range discussed herein can be readily broken down into a lower third, middle third and upper third, etc. As will also be understood by one skilled in the art all language such as “up to,” “at least,” and the like include the number recited and refer to ranges which can be subsequently broken down into subranges as discussed above. Finally, as will be understood by one skilled in the art, a range includes each individual member. Thus, for

example, a group having 1-3 cells refers to groups having 1, 2, or 3 cells. Similarly, a group having 1-5 cells refers to groups having 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 cells, and so forth.

[0083] Various of the above-disclosed and other features and functions, or alternatives thereof, may be combined into many other different systems or applications. Various presently unforeseen or unanticipated alternatives, modifications, variations or improvements therein may be subsequently made by those skilled in the art, each of which is also intended to be encompassed by the disclosed embodiments.

CLAIMS*What Is Claimed Is:*

1. A symbology for encoding data, wherein the symbology comprises a plurality of pixels arranged in a plurality of patterns on a substrate, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more optical properties that each provides one or more types of non-interacting data.
2. The symbology of claim 1, wherein each of the one or more optical properties is selected from a group comprising a color property, a shape property, a dimensional property, a relational property, a luminance property, a decay property, an intensity property, a photobleaching property, a degradation property, a fluorescence property, a fluorescence resonance energy transfer property and a gradient property.
3. The symbology of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more color properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.
4. The symbology of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more luminance properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.
5. The symbology of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more decay properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.
6. The symbology of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more photobleaching properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.
7. The symbology of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more degradation properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.

8. The symbology of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more fluorescence resonance energy transfer properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.

9. The symbology of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more gradient properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.

10. The symbology of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises a shape that provides a first type of non-interacting data and a plurality of dimensions that provides a second type of non-interacting data.

11. The symbology of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of pixels is further comprised of one or more luminescent colorants.

12. The symbology of claim 11, wherein each of the one or more luminescent colorants provides a type of non-interacting data.

13. The symbology of claim 12, wherein an intersection of one luminescent colorant with another luminescent colorant provides a type of non-interacting data.

14. The symbology of claim 13, wherein the intersection comprises a gradient.

15. The symbology of claim 13, wherein the intersection comprises a shape.

16. The symbology of claim 11, wherein each of the one or more luminescent colorants is selected from one or more of a group consisting of a fluorescent colorant and a phosphorescent colorant.

17. The symbology of claim 16, wherein a phosphorescence of the phosphorescent colorant diminishes over a period of time.

18. The symbology of claim 16, wherein a phosphorescence of the phosphorescent colorant diminishes after repeated illumination.

19. The symbology of claims 17 or 18, wherein the phosphorescence provides an additional type of non-interacting data.

20. The symbology of any of claims 1-19, wherein the type of data provides positioning information for the symbology.

21. A method of encoding a symbology, comprising arranging a plurality of pixels on a substrate in a plurality of patterns to form a machine-readable code, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more optical properties that each provide one or more types of non-interacting data.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein each of the one or more optical properties is selected from a group comprising a color property, a shape property, a dimensional property, a relational property, a luminance property, a decay property, an intensity property, a photobleaching property, a degradation property, a fluorescence property, a fluorescence resonance energy transfer property and a gradient property.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more color properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.

24. The method of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more luminance properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.

25. The method of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more decay properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.

26. The method of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more photobleaching properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.

27. The method of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more degradation properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.

28. The method of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more fluorescence resonance energy transfer properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.

29. The method of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more gradient properties, each providing a type of non-interacting data.

30. The method of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises a shape that provides a first type of non-interacting data and a plurality of dimensions that provides a second type of non-interacting data.

31. The method of claim 21, wherein each of the plurality of pixels is further comprised of one or more luminescent colorants.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein each of the one or more luminescent colorants provides a type of non-interacting data.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein the intersection of one luminescent colorant with another luminescent colorant provides a type of non-interacting data.

34. The method of claim 33, wherein the intersection comprises a gradient.

35. The method of claim 33, wherein the intersection comprises a shape.

36. The method of claim 31, wherein each of the one or more luminescent colorants is selected from one or more of a group consisting of a fluorescent colorant and a phosphorescent colorant.

37. The method of claim 36, wherein a phosphorescence of the phosphorescent colorant diminishes over a period of time.

38. The method of claim 36, wherein a phosphorescence of the phosphorescent colorant diminishes after repeated illumination.

39. The method of claims 37 or 38, wherein the phosphorescence provides an additional type of non-interacting data.

40. The method of any of claims 21-39, wherein the type of data provides positioning information for the symbology.

41. A method of decoding a symbology, comprising a plurality of pixels, the method comprising:

reading a shape of each of the plurality of pixels by an optical reading apparatus to obtain a first type of non-interacting data;

reading a size of each of the plurality of pixels by the optical reading apparatus to obtain a second type of non-interacting data;

reading one or more optical properties of each of the plurality of pixels by the optical reading apparatus to obtain a third type of non-interacting data;

combining the first type of non-interacting data, the second type of non-interacting data and the third type of non-interacting data by a processing device; and

decoding the combination by the processing device.

42. A method of decoding a symbology, comprising a plurality of pixels, the method comprising:

reading a shape and a size of each of the plurality of pixels by an optical reading apparatus to obtain a first type of non-interacting data;

reading one or more optical properties of each of the plurality of pixels by the optical reading apparatus to obtain a second type of non-interacting data;

combining the first type of non-interacting data and the second type of non-interacting data by a processing device; and

decoding the combination by the processing device.

43. An article of manufacture comprising a symbology for encoding data, wherein the symbology comprises a plurality of pixels arranged in a plurality of patterns on a substrate, wherein each of the plurality of pixels comprises one or more optical properties that each provides one or more types of non-interacting data.

44. The article of manufacture of claim 43, wherein the article of manufacture is selected from a group comprising apparel, computer components, storage devices, sanitation components, automobiles, chemicals, foods, beverages and paper products.

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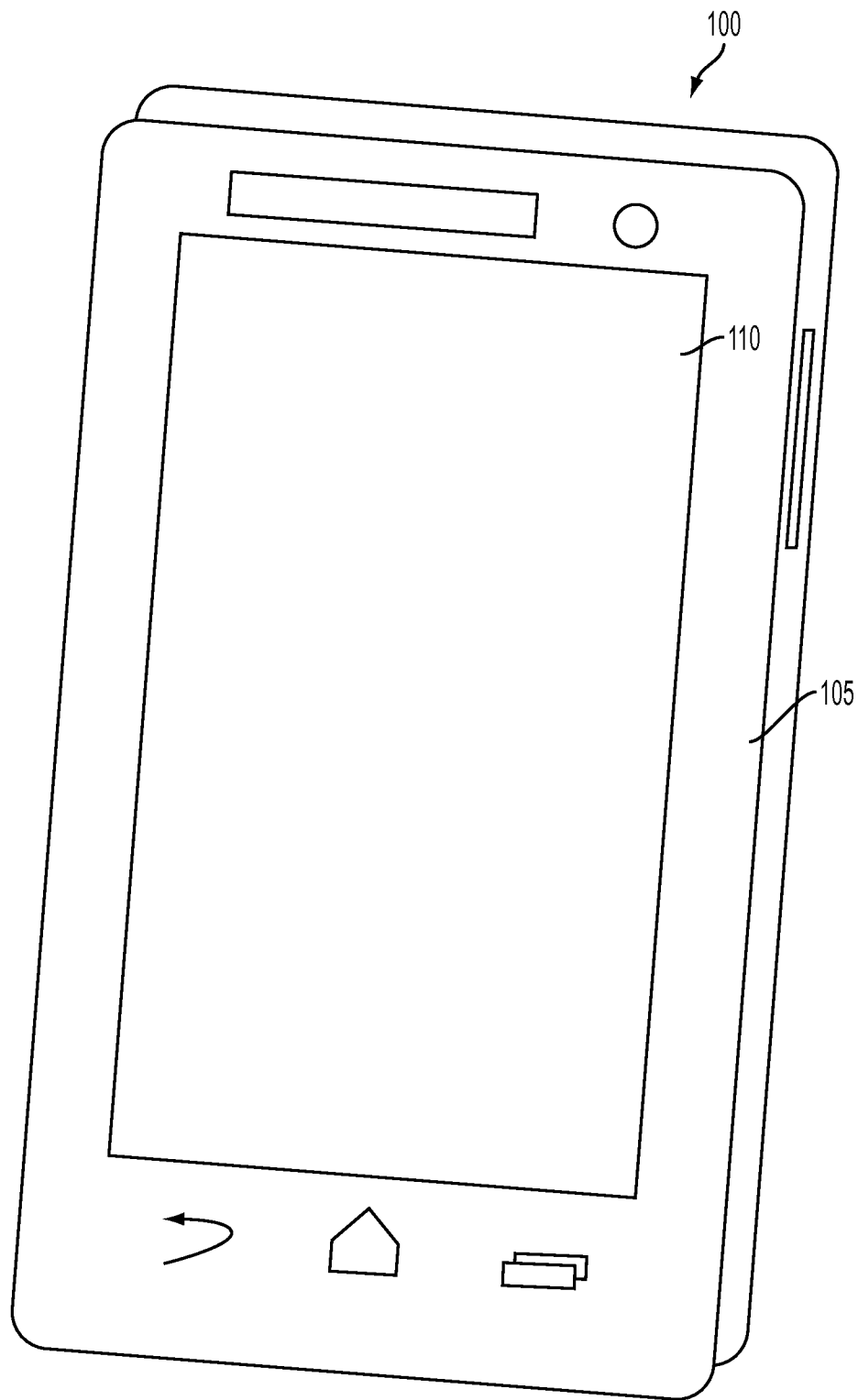


FIG. 1

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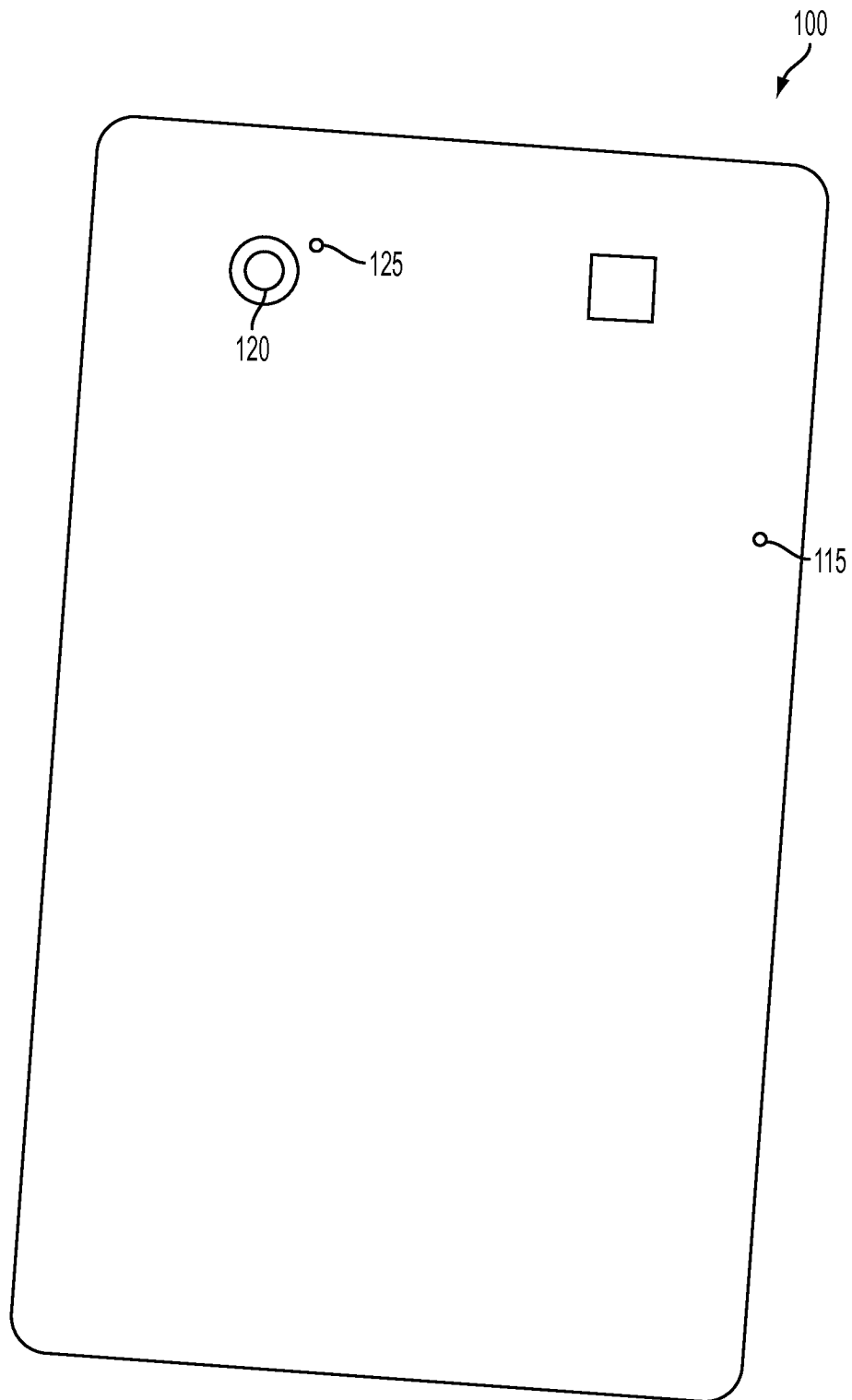


FIG. 2

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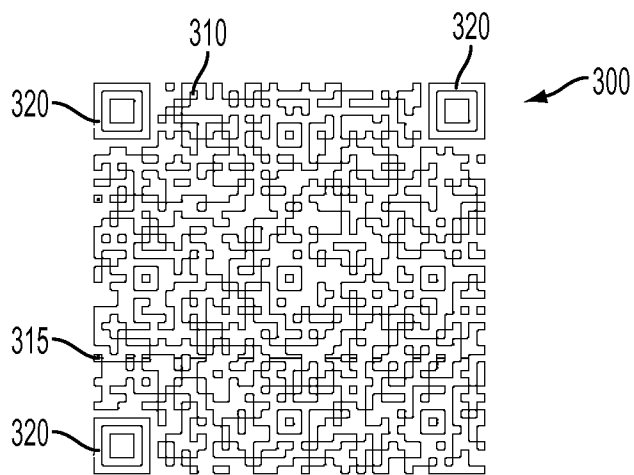


FIG. 3A

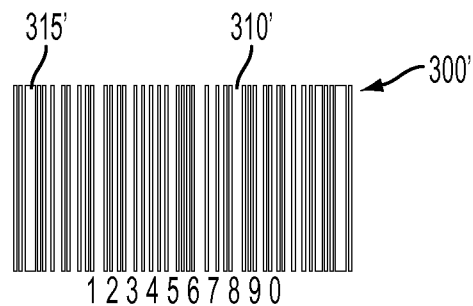


FIG. 3B

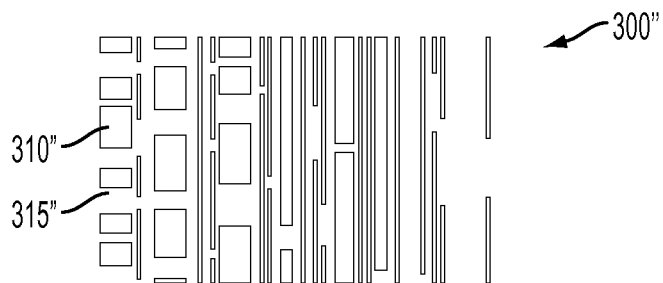


FIG. 3C

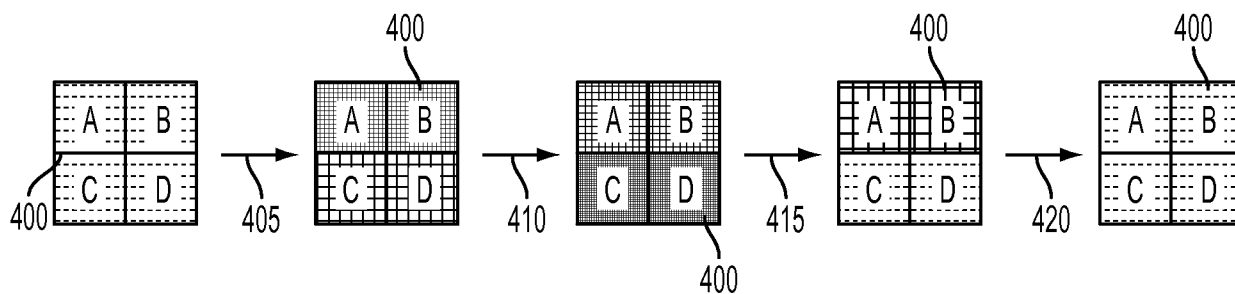


FIG. 4

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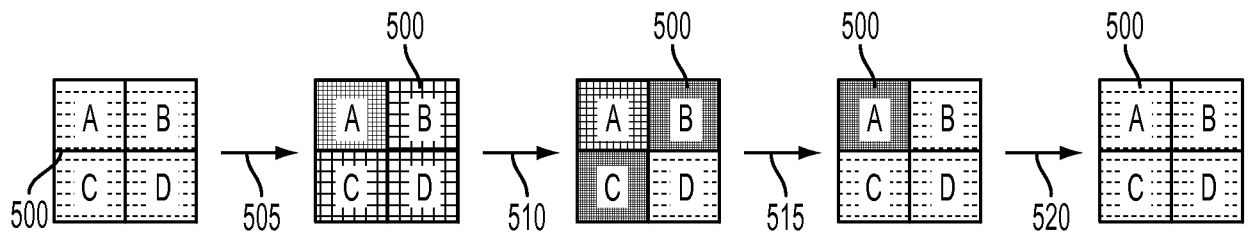


FIG. 5

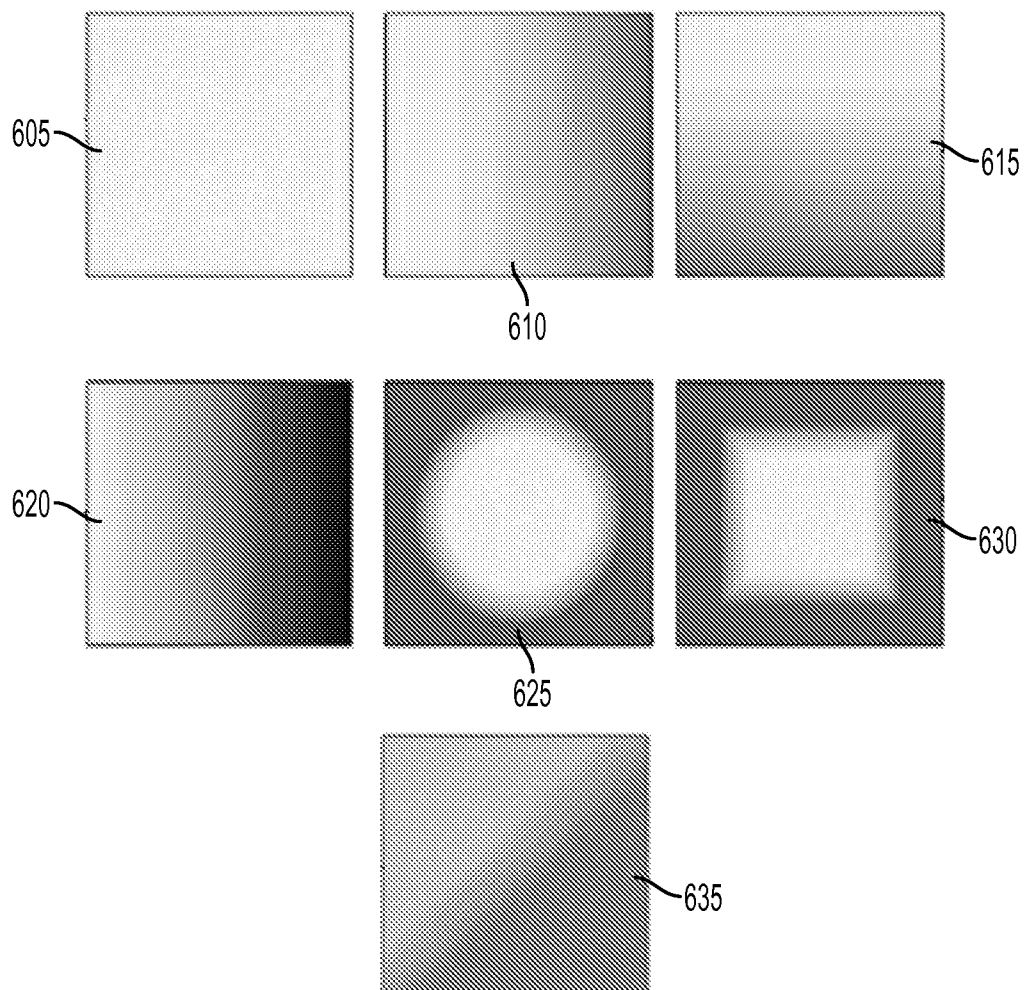


FIG. 6

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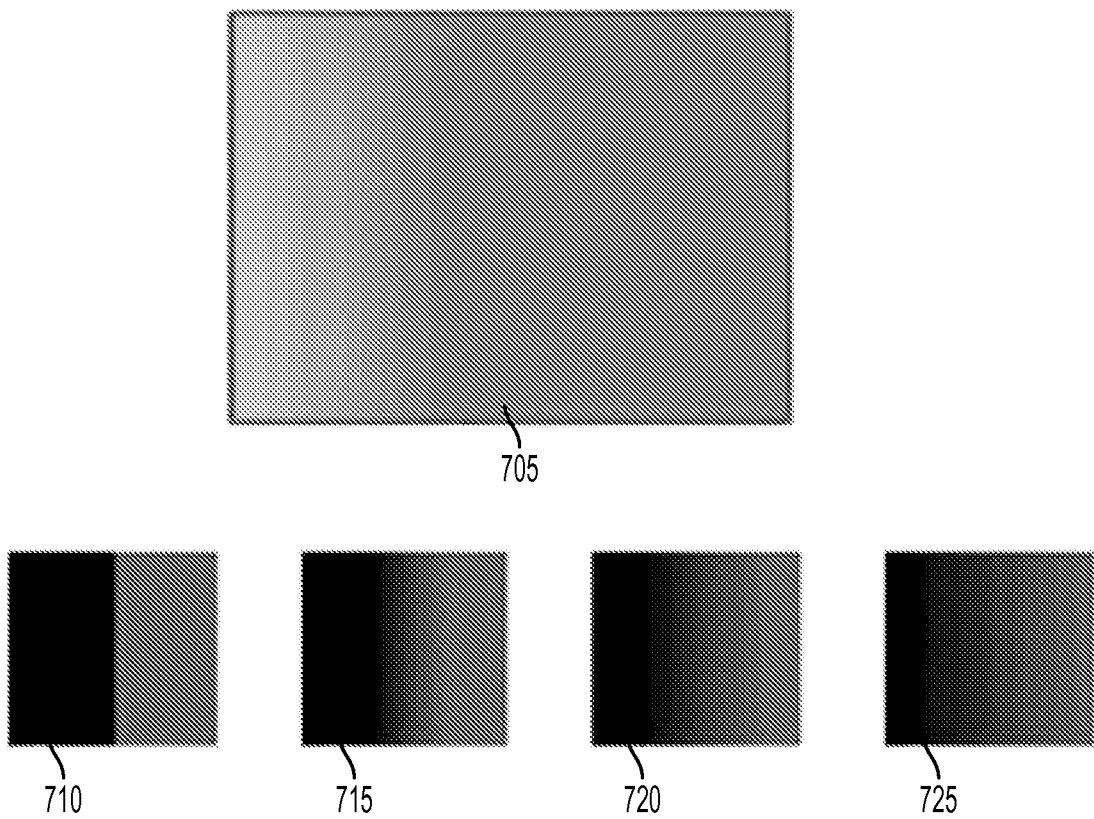


FIG. 7

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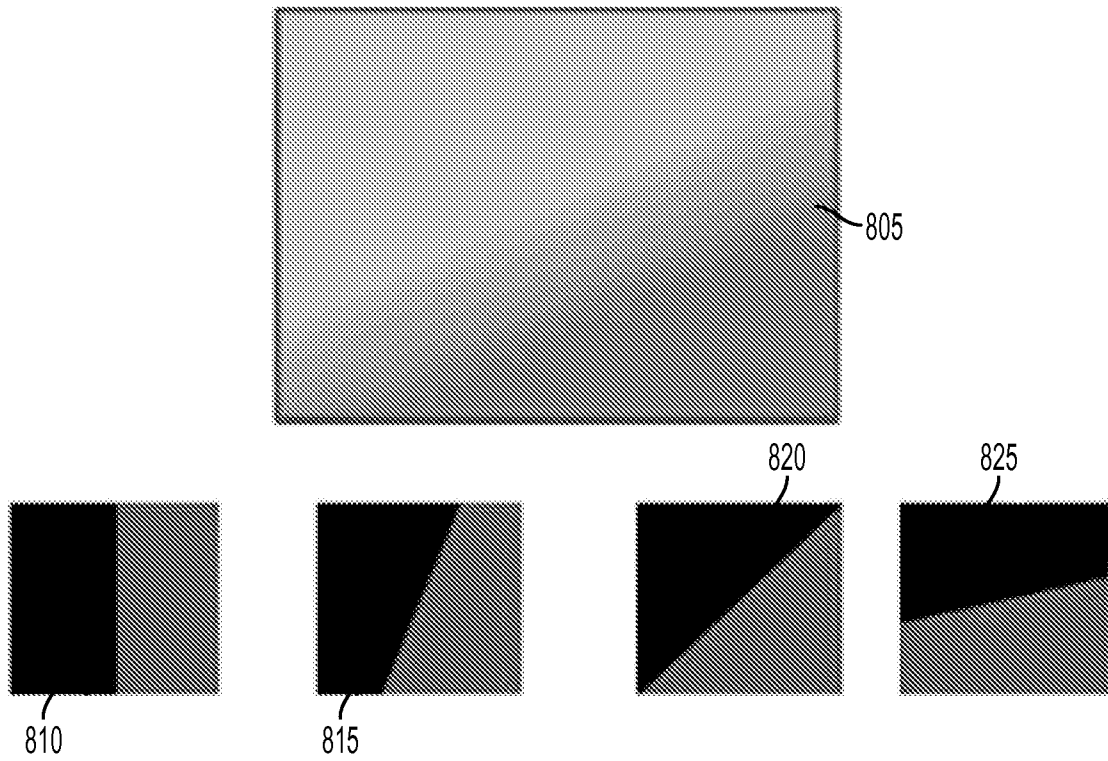


FIG. 8

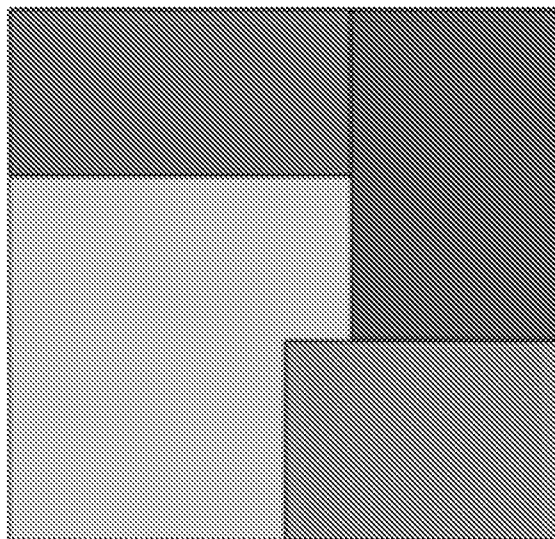
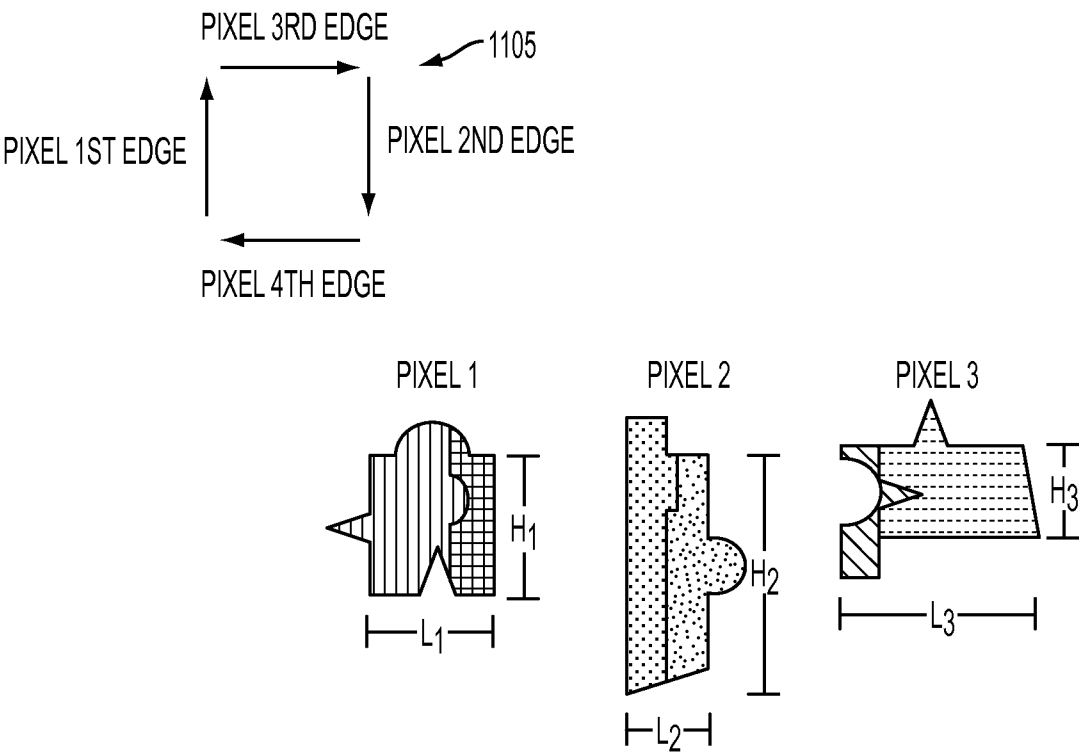


FIG. 9

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LEVEL	DIMENSION	A=	B=	C=	D=	1=	2=	3=	4=	5=
1	PIXEL 1ST EDGE									
2	PIXEL 2ND EDGE									
3	PIXEL 3RD EDGE									
4	PIXEL 4TH EDGE									
5	PIXEL LENGTH (mm)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6	PIXEL HEIGHT (mm)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7	PIXEL 1ST EDGE COLOR									
8	PIXEL 2ND EDGE COLOR									
9	COLOR GRADIENT	90:10	80:20	70:30	60:40	50:50	40:60	30:70	20:80	10:90
10	COLOR GRADIENT SHAPE									
11	PIXEL 1ST EDGE PHOSPHORESCENCE INTENSITY (RELATIVE UNITS)	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20
12	PIXEL 2ND EDGE PHOSPHORESCENCE INTENSITY (RELATIVE UNITS)	95	85	75	65	55	45	35	25	15
13	PHOSPHORESCENCE INTENSITY GRADIENT	90:10	80:20	70:30	60:40	50:50	40:60	30:70	20:80	10:90
14	PHOSPHORESCENCE INTENSITY GRADIENT SHAPE									
15	PHOSPHORESCENCE DECAY RATE 1ST EDGE	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90
16	PHOSPHORESCENCE DECAY RATE 2ND EDGE	15	25	35	45	55	65	75	85	95
17	PHOSPHORESCENCE DECAY RATE GRADIENT	90:10	80:20	70:30	60:40	50:50	40:60	30:70	20:80	10:90
18	PHOSPHORESCENCE DECAY RATE SHAPE									
19	PHOSPHORESCENCE PHOTOBLEACHING RATE 1ST	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	10
20	PHOSPHORESCENCE PHOTOBLEACHING RATE 2ND EDGE	95	85	75	65	55	45	35	25	15
21	PHOSPHORESCENCE PHOTOBLEACHING RATE GRADIENT	90:10	80:20	70:30	60:40	50:50	40:60	30:70	20:80	10:90
22	PHOSPHORESCENCE PHOTOBLEACHING RATE SHAPE									

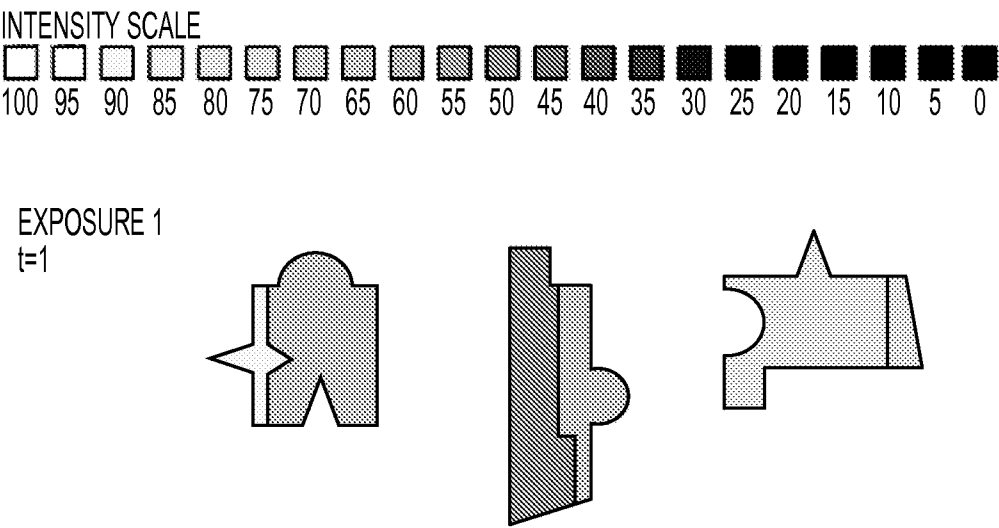
FIG. 10



LEVEL	DIMENSION	PIXEL 1 CODE	PIXEL 2 CODE	PIXEL 3 CODE
1	PIXEL 1ST EDGE	3	A	4
2	PIXEL 2ND EDGE	-	4	D
3	PIXEL 3RD EDGE	4	-	2
4	PIXEL 4TH EDGE	C	3	2
5	PIXEL LENGTH(mm)	2	D	4
6	PIXEL HEIGHT(mm)	8	-	D
7	PIXEL 1ST EDGE COLOR	A	B	C
8	PIXEL 2ND EDGE COLOR	C	3	A
9	COLOR GRADIENT	D	1	4
10	COLOR GRADIENT SHAPE	4	B	C

FIG. 11

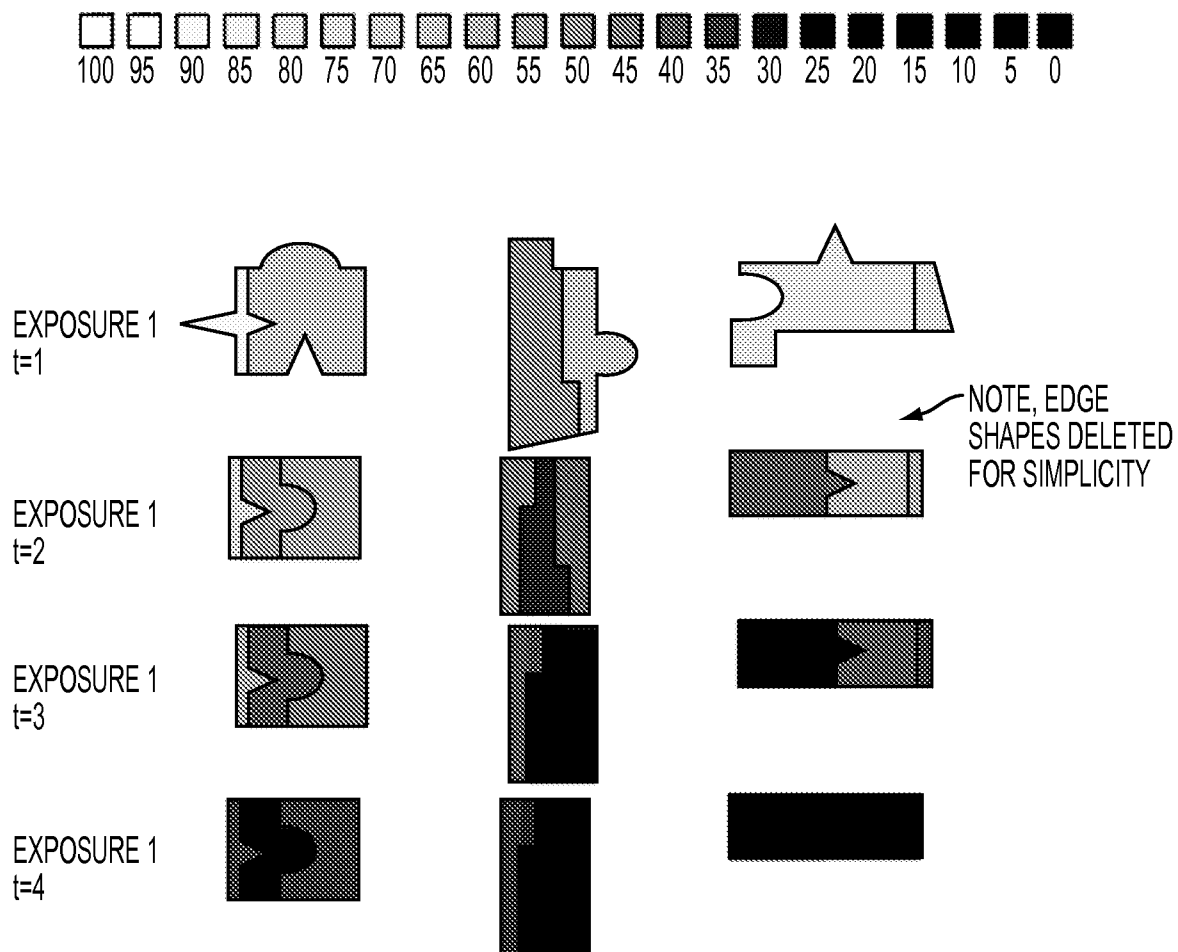
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LEVEL	DIMENSION	PIXEL 1 CODE	PIXEL 2 CODE	PIXEL 3 CODE
11	PIXEL 1ST EDGE PHOSPHORESCENCE INTENSITY	B	2	C
12	PIXEL 2ND EDGE PHOSPHORESCENCE INTENSITY	D	D	C
13	PHOSPHORESCENCE INTENSITY GRADIENT	-	D	A
14	PHOSPHORESCENCE INTENSITY GRADIENT SHAPE	2	B	C

FIG. 12

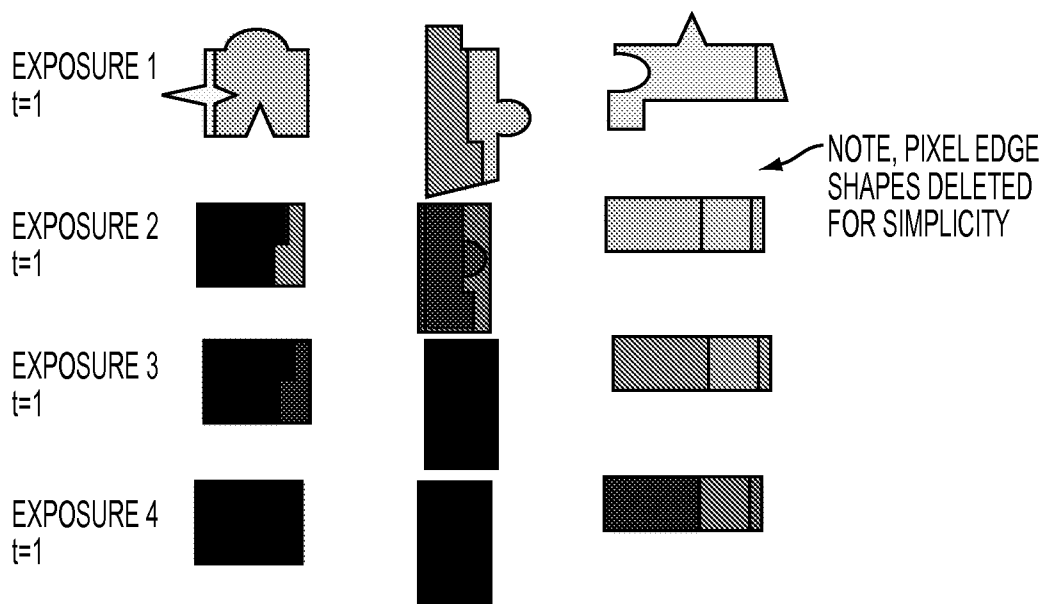
10/11



LEVEL	DIMENSION	PIXEL 1 CODE	PIXEL 2 CODE	PIXEL 3 CODE
15	PHOSPHORESCENCE DECAY RATE 1ST EDGE	B	A	1
16	PHOSPHORESCENCE DECAY RATE 2ND EDGE	A	C	B
17	PHOSPHORESCENCE DECAY RATE GRADIENT	2	4	1
18	PHOSPHORESCENCE DECAY RATE SHAPE	B	A	-

FIG. 13

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LEVEL	DIMENSION	PIXEL 1 CODE	PIXEL 2 CODE	PIXEL 3 CODE
19	PHOSPHORESCENCE PHOTOBLEACHING RATE 1ST EDGE	B	3	4
20	PHOSPHORESCENCE PHOTOBLEACHING RATE 2ND EDGE	4	3	-
21	PHOSPHORESCENCE PHOTOBLEACHING RATE GRADIENT	B	-	D
22	PHOSPHORESCENCE PHOTOBLEACHING RATE SHAPE	C	D	A

FIG. 14

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US12/51741

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC(8) - G06K 7/10 (2012.01)

USPC - 235/462.01, 462.1

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC(8) - G06K 7/10, 7/12, 7/14, 19/04, 19/06 (2012.01)

USPC - 235/462.01, 462.1, 494, 439, 456, 491

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

IPC(8) - G06K 7/10, 7/12, 7/14, 19/04, 19/06 (2012.01)

USPC - 235/462.01, 462.1, 494, 439, 456, 491

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

MicroPatent (US Granted, US Applications, EP-A, EP-B, WO, JP, DE-G, DE-A, DE-T, DE-U, GB-A, FR-A); Google Patents; Google Scholar; IP.COM; IEEE Xplore; Search Terms Used: pixel*, dot*, encod*, decod*, barcode*, pattern*, optical properties, color*, shape*, dimension*, size*, luminance*, decay*, relax*, intensit*, photobleach*, fluores*, photolumines*, gradient*, degradation*, colorant*, dye*

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X ----- Y	US 7,510,125 B2 (LOOK, T) March 31, 2009, abstract; figures 1 and 2; column 4, lines 30-32; column 4, lines 49-61; column 4, lines 53-55; column 7, lines 35-41; column 7, lines 56-59; column 8, lines 31-38; column 8, lines 65-67; column 9, lines 1-2; column 10, lines 43-48	1-4, 9, 21-24, 29, 43, 44 ----- 5-8, 10-19, 25-28, 30-39
X ----- Y	US 2011/0205384 A1 (ZARNOWSKI, J et al.) August 25, 2011, abstract; figure 5; paragraphs [0002], [0026], [0027], [0029], [0030], [0046], [0049], [0053], [0053], [0110], [0115], [0116]	41, 42 ----- 10, 30
Y	US 8,181,884 B2 (RODRIGUEZ, T) May 22, 2012, abstract; figures 2a and 2b; column 2, lines 61-67 to column 3, lines 1-5; column 3, lines 8-16; column 3, lines 59-66	5, 13-15, 25, 33-35
Y	US 8,171,567 B1 (FRASER, J et al.) May 1, 2012, abstract; column 34, lines 4-5; column 34, lines 20-24; column 34, lines 45-57; column 34, lines 58-61; column 37, lines 1-5; column 37, lines 12-21; column 38, lines 14-21; column 38, lines 17-18	6-8, 11-19, 26-28, 31-39
Y	US 6,881,000 B2 (PERLMAN, D et al.) April 19, 2005, abstract; column 3, lines 15-20; column 7, lines 27-32	17-19, 37-39

☐ Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

* Special categories of cited documents:

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

09 October 2012

Date of mailing of the international search report

28 NOV 2012

Name and mailing address of the ISA/US

Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US, Commissioner for Patents
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PCT OSP: 571-272-7774

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US12/51741

Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:

3. ☒ Claims Nos.: 20, 40
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying additional fees, this Authority did not invite payment of additional fees.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. ☐ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest and, where applicable, the payment of a protest fee.
- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest but the applicable protest fee was not paid within the time limit specified in the invitation.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.