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(54) Title: SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR AUTOMATIC CONFIGURATION OF A REMOTE CONTROL DEVICE

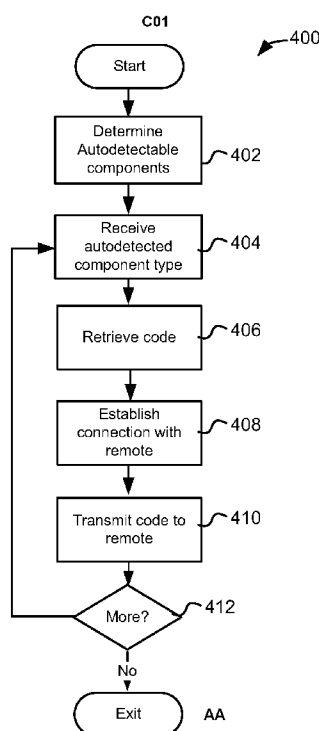


FIG. 4

(57) Abstract: A remote control device establishes a bi-directional communication with a television receiver and uploads a set of remote control codes associated with a target component selected by the user. One method includes storing, within a television receiver, a set of remote control codes associated with a corresponding set of component types; presenting a component-selection user interface; receiving a target component type selected from the set of component types presented by the component-selection user interface; determining, from the set of remote control codes, a target remote control code associated with the target component type; and transmitting the target remote control code to the remote control device.

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SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR AUTOMATIC CONFIGURATION OF A REMOTE CONTROL DEVICE

PRIORITY CLAIM

[0001] This application claims priority to United States Non-Provisional Application Serial No. 12/242,089 entitled SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR AUTOMATIC CONFIGURATION OF A REMOTE CONTROL DEVICE and filed on September 30, 2008, which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] The present invention generally relates to the control of television receiver devices, and more particularly relates to systems and methods for providing and configuring remote control device for use with such television receiver devices.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Most television viewers now receive their television signals through a content aggregator such as a cable or satellite television provider. For subscribers to a direct broadcast satellite (DBS) service, for example, television programming is received via a broadcast that is sent via a satellite to an antenna that is generally located on the exterior of a home or other structure. Other customers receive television programming through conventional television broadcasts, or through cable, wireless or other media. Programming is typically received at a receiver such as a “set top box” (STB) or other receiver that demodulates the received signals and converts the demodulated content into a format that can be presented to the viewer on a television or other display. In addition to receiving and demodulating television programming, many television receivers are able to provide additional features. Examples of features available in many modern television receivers include electronic program guides (EPGs), digital or other personal video recorders, “place-shifting” features for streaming received content over a network or other medium, providing customer service information and/or the like.

[0004] Generally speaking, viewers interact with the STB or other receiver using some sort of user interface that receives inputs from a remote control or other input device. To change a channel, for example, the viewer typically depresses a “channel up/down” button, manually enters a number of a desired channel on a numeric keypad, and/or selects the new channel using a program guide feature of the receiver. The receiver then processes received viewer input to make desired changes to the on-screen display.

[0005] It is not unusual for a viewer’s home entertainment system to include any number of different components produced by a variety of manufacturers. As a result, it is a non-trivial process to program or configure a remote control device to interact with each of the components within a system. Typically, this configuration process involves the user entering a complex series of keystrokes into the remote control device based on an often-incomplete set of codes provided in a printed manual.

[0006] Accordingly, it is therefore desirable to provide systems and methods for configuring a remote control device in a way that is simple and convenient for the user. These and other desirable features and characteristics will become apparent from the subsequent detailed description and the appended claims, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and this background section.

BRIEF SUMMARY

[0007] According to various exemplary embodiments, systems and methods are provided for automatically configuring a remote control device by determining, through an appropriate data communication channel, the identity and/or type of a particular component, then transmitting the appropriate remote control code or codes to a remote control device using bi-directional communication between the television receiver and the remote control device.

[0008] In accordance with one embodiment, a method for configuring a remote control device includes storing, within a television receiver, a set of remote control codes associated with a corresponding set of component types; determining that a target component is capable of communicating an identification signal associated with its component type; receiving the identification signal; determining a target component type based on the identification signal; determining, from the set of remote control codes, a target remote control code associated with the target

component type; and transmitting the target remote control code to the remote control device.

[0009] In accordance with further embodiments, the target remote control code is transmitted via a bi-directional data communication link (e.g., a ZigBee link) established between the remote control device and the television receiver.

[0010] Various other embodiments, aspects and other features are described in more detail below.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING FIGURES

[0011] Exemplary embodiments will hereinafter be described in conjunction with the following drawing figures, wherein like numerals denote like elements, and

[0012] FIG. 1 is a block diagram of an exemplary television receiver system;

[0013] FIG. 2 is a block diagram of an exemplary television receiver device;

[0014] FIG. 3 is a block diagram of an exemplary remote control device; and

[0015] FIG. 4 is a flowchart showing an exemplary process for configuring the remote control device of FIG. 3.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0016] The following detailed description of the invention is merely exemplary in nature and is not intended to limit the invention or the application and uses of the invention. Furthermore, there is no intention to be bound by any theory presented in the preceding background or the following detailed description.

[0017] Generally speaking, a television receiver is configured to automatically determine the brand, model number, etc. (generally, the “type”) of a component through communication with that component (e.g., via a High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) interface), determines the appropriate remote control code associated with that component type based on a look-up table or other database, then transmit the remote control code or codes to a remote control device through a wireless (e.g., ZigBee) connection.

[0018] Although the various techniques and systems described herein may be used with any sort of remote control or command equipment, various embodiments may be particularly well suited for use with a remote control that includes a touchpad, scrollbar, rocker switch, scroll ring and/or other touch-sensitive input device.

[0019] Turning now to the drawing figures and with initial reference to FIG. 1, an exemplary system 100 for presenting television signals to a viewer suitably includes a receiver 108 that receives signals 105 in any format and generates appropriate outputs 107 to generate imagery 110 on display 102. Typically, receiver 108 interacts with signals 125 received from a wireless remote control 112 to present television imagery 110 on display 102 as desired by the viewer. In the exemplary view shown in FIG. 1, imagery 110 has a superimposed program guide window 122 that provides electronic program guide (EPG) information about the currently-viewed program. To change the channel, a viewer typically uses an input feature (e.g., a touchpad, rocker switch or the like) on a remote control 112 to scroll the information displayed in window 122 until information about the desired program is presented. Receiver 108 then tunes the selected program as desired.

[0020] Receiver 108 is any component, device or logic capable of receiving and decoding video signals 105. In various embodiments, receiver 108 is a set-top box (STB) or the like capable of receiving satellite, cable, broadcast and/or other signals encoding audio/visual content. Receiver 108 may further demodulate or otherwise decode the received signals 105 to extract programming that can be locally viewed on display 102 as desired. Receiver 108 may also include a content database stored on a hard disk drive, memory, or other storage medium to support a digital or other personal video recorder (DVR/PVR) feature as appropriate. Receiver 108 may also provide place shifting, electronic program guide, multi-stream viewing and/or other features as appropriate.

[0021] In the exemplary embodiment illustrated in FIG. 1, receiver 108 is shown receiving digital broadcast satellite (DBS) signals 105 from a satellite 106 at an antenna 104. Equivalent embodiments, however, could receive programming 105 from one or more programming sources, including any sort of satellite, cable or broadcast source, as well as any Internet or other network source or the like. In embodiments that include DVR functionality, programming may be stored in any sort of database as desired (e.g., in response to user/viewer programming instructions) for subsequent viewing. Content may also be received from digital versatile disks (DVDs) or other removable media in some embodiments.

[0022] Display 102 is any device capable of presenting imagery to a viewer. In various embodiments, display 102 is a conventional television set, such as any sort of television operating in accordance with any digital or analog protocols, standards

or other formats. Display 102 may be a conventional NTSC or PAL television receiver, for example. In other embodiments, display 102 is a monitor or other device that may not include built-in receiver functionality, but that is nevertheless capable of presenting imagery in response to signal 107 received from receiver 108. In various embodiments, receiver 108 and display 102 may be physically combined or interconnected in any manner. A receiver card, for example, could be inserted into a slot or other interface in a conventional television, or the functionality of receiver 108 may be provided within a conventional television display 102. In other embodiments, signals 107 are transferred between receiver 108 and display 102 using any sort of cable or other interface (including a wireless interface). Examples of common interfaces include, without limitation, component video, S-video, High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI), Digital Visual Interface (DVI), IEEE 1394, and/or any other formats as desired.

[0023] Remote control 112 is any sort of control device capable providing signals 125 to receiver 108 that represent inputs received from one or more viewers. Typically, remote control 112 is an infrared, radio frequency (RF) or other wireless remote that includes any number of buttons or other features for receiving viewer inputs. In an exemplary embodiment, remote control 112 communicates with receiver 108 using the IEEE 802.15.4 (“ZIGBEE”) protocol for wireless personal area networks (WPANs), although other embodiments may instead communicate using IEEE 802.15.1 (“BLUETOOTH”), IEEE 802.11 (“WI-FI”), conventional infrared, and/or any other wireless techniques. As will be discussed in further detail below, Remote control 112 is preferably configured to establish a bi-directional (two-way) communication link with receiver 108 for the purposes of uploading remote control codes.

[0024] Remote control 112 generally includes various buttons, sliders, rocker switches and/or other features for receiving physical inputs from the viewer. As the user depresses or otherwise interacts with the features, remote control 112 suitably produces wireless signals 125 in response. In further embodiments, remote control 112 includes a two-dimensional input device 124 that is able to receive inputs from the user in any multi-dimensional format (e.g., “X,Y”, “r,Θ”, and/or the like). Examples of two-dimensional input devices 124 that could be used in various embodiments include, without limitation, touchpads, directional pads, joysticks, trackballs, sets of arrows or other buttons, and/or the like. In a typical

implementation, two-dimensional input device 124 provides coordinates or other signals 125 that indicate absolute (e.g., "X,Y") and/or relative (e.g., " ΔX , ΔY ") movement in two or more dimensions. Such signals 125 may be decoded at controller 108 or elsewhere to coordinate the viewer's actions with respect to input device 124 to movement of cursor 114 or other features presented on display 102.

[0025] In the exemplary embodiment shown in FIG. 1, remote control 112 is illustrated with a touchpad-type device 124 that accepts viewer inputs applied with a finger, stylus or other object. FIG. 1 also shows touchpad device 124 as having dedicated scroll regions 123 and 128 for vertical and horizontal scrolling, respectively. Viewer movements within region 122 that are more-or-less parallel to the right edge of device 124, for example, could result in vertical scrolling, whereas movements within region 128 that are more-or-less parallel to the bottom edge of device 124 could result in horizontal scrolling. Dedicated scrolling regions 122, 128 are optional features, however, that may not be present in all embodiments. Further, scrolling could be implemented in any other manner. As noted above, it may be particularly beneficial to provide a smooth scrolling image to the viewer in response to inputs received on a touch sensitive device 124, although other features may benefit from improved scrolling as well.

[0026] In operation, then, receiver 108 suitably receives television signals 105 from a satellite, cable, broadcast or other source. In a satellite based embodiment, for example, one or more channels can be extracted from a conventional satellite feed; the video content on the selected channel can be demodulated, extracted and otherwise processed as appropriate to display the desired content to the viewer. One or more cable or broadcast channels may be similarly obtained in any manner. In some embodiments, receiver 108 may obtain multiple channel signals from different sources (e.g., one channel from a cable or satellite source and another channel from a terrestrial broadcast, DVD or other source).

[0027] Receiver 108 suitably obtains the desired content from the channel(s) indicated by the viewer, and presents the content on display 102. In various embodiments, channel changing is facilitated by presenting program guide window 122 superimposed upon (e.g., presented in a smaller window within) the imagery 110 obtained from the primary channel.

[0028] The viewer is able to interact with program guide window 122 in any manner. In various embodiments, the viewer is able to scroll the information

contained within window 122 using remote control 112. The scrolling provided may be relatively smooth (e.g., providing a gradual progression of information across the window 122, as opposed to simply jumping through program guide entries) so that the viewer is able to better appreciate the “feel” and level of control provided by a scrolling input on remote 112. In some embodiments, program guide window 122 could be presented with a scroll bar or other feature that would graphically represent the location of the information presented in window 122 within the overall program guide. Other embodiments may contain additional features or enhancements of any sort.

[0029] FIG. 2 provides additional detail regarding an exemplary receiver 108 that includes a receiver interface 208, a decoder 214 and a display processor 218, as appropriate. FIG. 2 also shows a disk controller interface 206 to a disk or other storage device 220, an interface 210 to a local or wide area network, a transport select module 212, a display interface 228, an RF receiver module and control logic 205. Other embodiments may incorporate additional or alternate processing modules from those shown in FIG. 2, may omit one or more modules shown in FIG. 2, and/or may differently organize the various modules in any other manner different from the exemplary arrangement shown in FIG. 2.

[0030] Receiver 108 may be physically and logically implemented in any manner. FIG. 2 shows various logical and functional features that may be present in an exemplary device; each module shown in the figure may be implemented with any sort of hardware, software, firmware and/or the like. Any of the various modules may be implemented with any sort of general or special purpose integrated circuitry, for example, such as any sort of microprocessor, microcontroller, digital signal processor, programmed array and/or the like. Any number of the modules shown in FIG. 2, for example, may be implemented as a “system on a chip” (SoC) using any suitable processing circuitry under control of any appropriate control logic 205. In various embodiments, control logic 205 executes within an integrated SoC or other processor that implements receiver interface 208, transport selector 212, decoder 214, display processor 218, disk controller 206 and/or other features, as appropriate. The Broadcom Corporation of Irvine, California, for example, produces several models of processors (e.g., the model BCM 7400 family of processors) that are capable of supporting SoC implementations of satellite and/or cable receiver systems, although products from any number of other suppliers could

be equivalently used. In still other embodiments, various distinct chips, circuits or components may be inter-connected and inter-relate with each other to implement the receiving and decoding functions represented in FIG. 2.

[0031] Various embodiments of receiver 108 therefore include any number of appropriate modules for obtaining and processing media content as desired for the particular embodiment. Each of these modules may be implemented in any combination of hardware and/or software using logic executed within any number of semiconductor chips or other processing logic.

[0032] Various embodiments of control logic 205 can include any circuitry, components, hardware, software and/or firmware logic capable of controlling the various components of receiver 108. Various routines, methods and processes executed within receiver 108 are typically carried out under control of control logic 205, as described more fully below. Generally speaking, control logic 205 receives user input signals 125 (FIG. 1) via an RF receiver interface 232 that is able to communicate with the remote control 112 using a suitable antenna 234. Control logic receives user inputs from remote control 112 and/or any other source, and directs the other components of receiver 108 in response to the received inputs to present the desired imagery on display 102.

[0033] As noted above, receiver 108 suitably includes a receiver interface 208, which is any hardware, software, firmware and/or other logic capable of receiving media content via one or more content sources 105. In various embodiments, content sources 105 may include cable television, DBS, broadcast and/or other programming sources as appropriate. Receiver interface 208 appropriately selects a desired input source and provides the received content to an appropriate destination for further processing. In various embodiments, received programming may be provided in real-time (or near real-time) to a transport stream select module 212 or other component for immediate decoding and presentation to the user. Alternatively, receiver interface 208 may provide content received from any source to a disk or other storage medium in embodiments that provide DVR functionality. In such embodiments, receiver 108 may also include a disk controller module 206 that interacts with an internal or external hard disk, memory and/or other device that stores content in a database 110, as described above.

[0034] In the embodiment shown in FIG. 2, receiver 108 also includes an appropriate network interface 210, which operates using any implementation of

protocols or other features to support communication by receiver 108 on any sort of local area, wide area, telephone and/or other network. In various embodiments, network interface 210 supports conventional LAN, WAN or other protocols (e.g., the TCP/IP or UDP/IP suite of protocols widely used on the Internet) to allow receiver 108 to communicate on the Internet or any other network as desired. Network interface 210 typically interfaces with the network using any sort of LAN adapter hardware, such as a conventional network interface card (NIC) or the like provided within receiver 108. Other embodiments may provide interfaces 210 to conventional telephone lines or other communications channels, or may omit network connectivity altogether.

[0035] Storage device 220 is any sort of disk, memory or other digital storage media capable of storing programming, software instructions, data and/or other digital content as desired. In various embodiments, storage device 220 is capable of storing digitized program information as part of a PVR/DVR implementation. Storage device 220 may also include a database, look-up table, or other code file 211 comprising a set of remote control codes associated with various components. This file may be provided with the initial configuration of the receiver 108, for example, and/or may be updated in any manner. In various embodiments, file 211 is updated on any regular or irregular basis from a remote server communicating with receiver 108 via the programming signal 115 (e.g., the satellite, cable or other downlink signal), via a connection to the internet or another network, or via any other connection as desired. Although FIG. 2 shows file 211 as being stored on device 220, in practice file 211 may be stored in RAM, ROM, flash memory or other storage that is separate from DVR/PVR programming.

[0036] Transport stream select module 212 is any hardware and/or software logic capable of selecting a desired media stream from the available sources. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 2, stream select module 212 is able to generate video signals for presentation on one or more output interfaces 228. Typically, transport select module 212 responds to viewer inputs (e.g., via control logic 205) to simply switch encoded content received from a broadcast, satellite, cable or other source 105 or from storage 110 to one or more decoder modules 214.

[0037] Receiver 108 may include any number of decoder modules 214 for decoding, decompressing and/or otherwise processing received/stored content as desired. Generally speaking, decoder module 214 decompresses, decodes and/or

otherwise processes received content from stream select module 212 to extract an MPEG or other media stream encoded within the stream. The decoded content can then be processed by one or more display processor modules 218 to create a presentation on display 102 (FIG. 1) for the viewer in any appropriate format. FIG. 2 shows a single decoder module 214 operating on one television signal received from transport select module 212. In practice, any number of decoder modules 214 may be used, particularly in PIP settings where multiple signals are simultaneously decoded and displayed. The term “decoder”, then, may collectively apply to one or more decoder modules that are able to decode one or more signals for presentation on display 104.

[0038] Receiver 108 is configured to determine whether a component attached thereto is “autodetectable” – i.e., capable of communicating an identification signal associated with its product type. In one embodiment, receiver 108 is configured to communicate with one or more connected components through a High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) interface, e.g., the HDMI 1.3 standard, hereby incorporated by reference. Receiver 108 is further configured to poll, interrogate, or otherwise conform to a protocol with autodetectable components to receive the appropriate identification signal.

[0039] Display processor module 218 includes any appropriate hardware, software and/or other logic to create desired screen displays via display interface 228 as desired. Such displays may include combining signals received from one or more decoder modules 214 to facilitate viewing of one or more channels. In various embodiments, display processing module 218 is also able to produce on screen displays (OSDs) for electronic program guide, setup and control, input/output facilitation and/or other features that may vary from embodiment to embodiment. Such displays are not typically contained within the received or stored broadcast stream, but are nevertheless useful to users in interacting with receiver 108 or the like. The generated displays, including received/stored content and any other displays may then be presented to one or more output interfaces 228 in any desired format. The various interface features described herein, for example, may be generated by display processor module 218 operating alone or in conjunction with control logic 205.

[0040] Display processor 218 produces an output signal encoded in any standard format (e.g., ITU656 format for standard definition television signals or any format

for high definition television signals) that can be readily converted to standard and/or high definition television signals at interface 228. In other embodiments, the functionality of display processor 218 and interface 228 may be combined in any manner.

[0041] FIG. 3 shows a conceptual block diagram of an exemplary remote control device 112. In general, device 112 includes a controller 302, a transceiver module 308, an antenna 306, input/output (I/O) components 312, and a memory 304.

[0042] Controller 302 may include any combination of circuitry, components, hardware, software and/or firmware logic capable of controlling the various components of remote control device 112 as described below. In one embodiment, for example, controller 302 is a standard microcontroller of the type well known in the art.

[0043] Memory 304 -- e.g., any of the various fixed or removeable non-volatile memory device -- is configured to store one or more look-up tables or other such files 304 capable of storing remote control codes or other indicia necessary to control particular components (e.g., receiver 108). File 304 may or may not have the same content and format as file 211 in storage 110 of receiver 108.

[0044] Transceiver 308, which is coupled to controller 302 and antenna 306, is configured to establish a data communication channel with an external component such as receiver 108, as described in more detail below. In one embodiment, transceiver 308 and controller 302 are collectively configured to establish a wireless data communication channel of the type characterized by a mesh network -- e.g., a ZigBee communication channel or the like.

[0045] User interface 312 collectively includes all the various buttons, touch-screens, keyboards, sliders, scroll-wheels, displays, and other such hardware and software used to allow a user to interact with remote control device 112. In one embodiment, for example, user interface 312 includes, among other things, two-dimensional touchpad-type device 124 and scroll regions 123 and 128.

[0046] FIG. 4 depicts a method for configuring a remote control device in accordance with an exemplary embodiment. In this regard, the steps shown in FIG. 4 may be executed using source or object code in any format that may be stored in mass storage, firmware, memory or any other digital storage medium within receiver 108 and/or remote control device 112. Such code may be executed by any module or combination of modules within each component.

[0047] Initially, a set-up procedure or other such software module is initialized, either by the user (for example, by pressing a button or otherwise interacting with user interface 312), or by another component pursuant to a set-up or initialization procedure. That is, it may be advantageous for receiver 108 and/or remote control device 112 to initiate a set-up procedure by default upon first being activated or powered-up.

[0048] Accordingly, in step 402, controller 205 of television receiver 108 acts in conjunction with software code stored within storage 220 to determine whether and to what extent “autodetectable” components are connected or otherwise in communication therewith. Autodetectable components are those components capable of communicating an identification signal associated with its component type.

[0049] In one embodiment, for example, television receiver 108 polls and/or queries each of its HDMI connections for the existence of a connected component. In the event that a particular component connected via HDMI cannot be autodetected, display 102 may be used to present an interactive, selectable list of component types – i.e., various brands and model numbers of television monitors, AV receivers, and the like – from which the user may select a target component.

[0050] In step 404, the system suitably receives the component type of one or more of the autodetected components. This may be accomplished via a query-response protocol, an open-loop transmission of an identification signal upon startup, or any other suitable method. In one embodiment, the component type is received in accordance with an HDMI standard.

[0051] Next, the system retrieves the appropriate code or codes from file 211 within storage 220 (step 406). That is, for example, if the system autodetects a “Samsung Model 550T” television set, controller 205 suitably interrogates file 211 for entries matching this particular component type.

[0052] Next, in step 408, a bi-directional data communication connection is established between remote control device 112 and receiver 108. This connection may take a variety of forms. In one embodiment, for example, the system establishes a wireless connection of the type configured to form a mesh network with other similarly situated devices. More particularly, in one embodiment a connection in accordance with the IEEE 802.15.4 (ZigBee) protocol is established between remote control device 112 and receiver 108. As is known, such a connection

is bi-directional and asynchronous, and thus unlike traditional remote control schemes allows data to be transferred from receiver 108 to remote control device 112.

[0053] After a suitable connection is established, the target remote control codes retrieved in step 406 are sent via the data communication channel to remote control device 112 (step 410). These codes are then stored (e.g., as file 310 within memory 304) for subsequent use by remote control device 112 when remotely operating various components of the system.

[0054] After the code for a particular component has been received, the system may present the user with the option of configuring remote control device 112 for additional components (step 412). If the user chooses to do so, the system repeats the processing beginning at step 404. If not, the system exits the wizard and then enters a standard operational mode.

[0055] In accordance with further embodiments, remote control 112 may be used to store additional data transmitted by receiver 108. Such additional data may include, for example, parental guide settings, a list of received channels, a list of favorite channels, and any other available information regarding configuration of a home entertainment system.

[0056] Accordingly, new systems and techniques for configuring a remote control device are described. Although the systems and features are often described herein as applying to changing a channel within a set top box or television, equivalent embodiments could apply the same concepts to control of audio devices or any other component of the type typically operated by remote control.

[0057] As used herein, the word “exemplary” means “serving as an example, instance, or illustration.” Any implementation described herein as exemplary is not necessarily to be construed as preferred or advantageous over other implementations.

[0058] While the foregoing detailed description will provide those skilled in the art with a convenient road map for implementing various embodiments of the invention, it should be appreciated that the particular embodiments described above are only examples, and are not intended to limit the scope, applicability, or configuration of the invention in any way. To the contrary, various changes may be made in the function and arrangement of elements described without departing from the scope of the invention.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for configuring a remote control device, the method comprising:
 - storing, within a television receiver, a set of remote control codes associated with a corresponding set of component types;
 - determining that a target component is capable of communicating an identification signal associated with its component type;
 - receiving the identification signal;
 - determining a target component type based on the identification signal;
 - determining, from the set of remote control codes, a target remote control code associated with the target component type;
 - transmitting the target remote control code to the remote control device.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of receiving the signal includes receiving a signal in accordance with a High Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI) specification.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein transmitting the target remote control code includes:
 - establishing a bi-directional data communication link between the remote control device and the television receiver;
 - transmitting the target remote control code via the bi-directional data communication link.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the bi-directional data communication link includes a wireless protocol capable of forming a mesh network.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the bi-directional data communication link is a ZigBee network connection.
6. The method of claim 1, further including storing a plurality of the target remote control codes in the remote control device.
7. The method of claim 6, wherein selecting the target component type includes operation of the remote control device.
8. The method of claim 1 further comprising receiving the set of remote control codes.
9. The method of claim 8 wherein the set of remote control codes is received via a network.
10. The method of claim 8 wherein the set of remote control codes is received via a programming channel.
11. The method of claim 8 wherein the set of remote control codes is received via a satellite channel.
12. A remote control device comprising:
 - a controller;
 - an RF transceiver coupled to the controller;
 - a memory coupled to the controller;
 - the controller and RF transceiver collectively configured to determine that a target component is capable of sending an identification signal indicative of its component type, to receive the identification signal, to establish a bi-directional connection with a television receiver, to send a target remote control associated with the component type over the bi-directional connection, and to store the target remote control code in the memory.

13. The remote control device of claim 12, wherein the controller and RF transceiver are configured to establish a ZigBee connection with the television receiver.

14. The remote control device of claim 12 wherein the controller and RF transceiver are further configured to receive the identification signal via a High-Definition Multimedia Interface.

15. A television receiver configured to provide imagery to a television monitor, the television receiver comprising:
a processor;
a storage unit coupled to the processor and configured to store a set of remote control codes associated with a plurality of component types; and
a RF transceiver coupled to the processor;
wherein the processor, storage unit, and RF transceiver are collectively configured to automatically determine the target component type of a target component attached thereto, to determine a target remote control code corresponding to the target component type based on the set of remote control codes; and to transmit the target remote control code to a remote control device via a bi-directional data communication link.

16. The television receiver of claim 15, wherein the bi-directional data communication link comprises a wireless mesh network connection.

17. The television receiver of claim 16, wherein the bi-directional data communication link comprises a ZigBee connection.

18. The television receiver of claim 15 further comprising a receiver interface configured to receive television programming signals and a decoder configured to decode the received television programming signals.

19. The television receiver of claim 18 wherein the processor is further configured to automatically determine the target component type via

communication with the target component in accordance with a High-Definition Multimedia Interface protocol.

20. The television receiver of claim 19 wherein the receiver interface is a satellite interface.

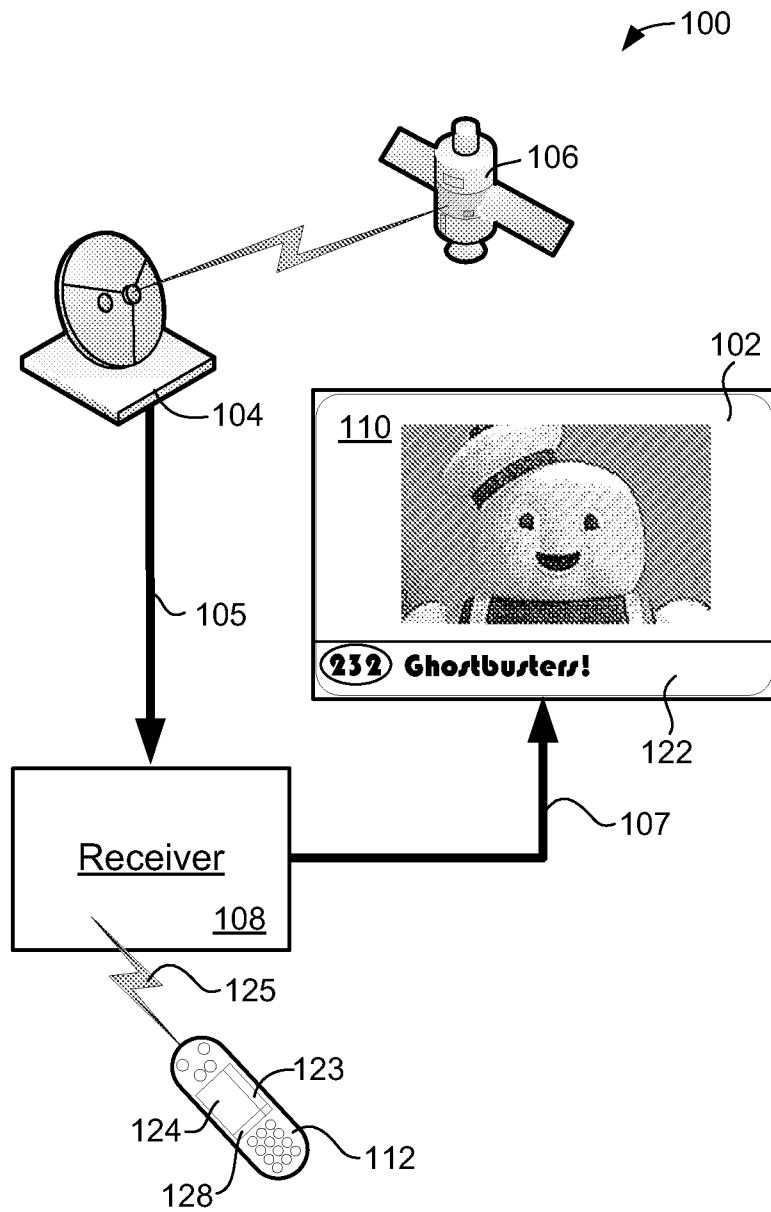


FIG. 1

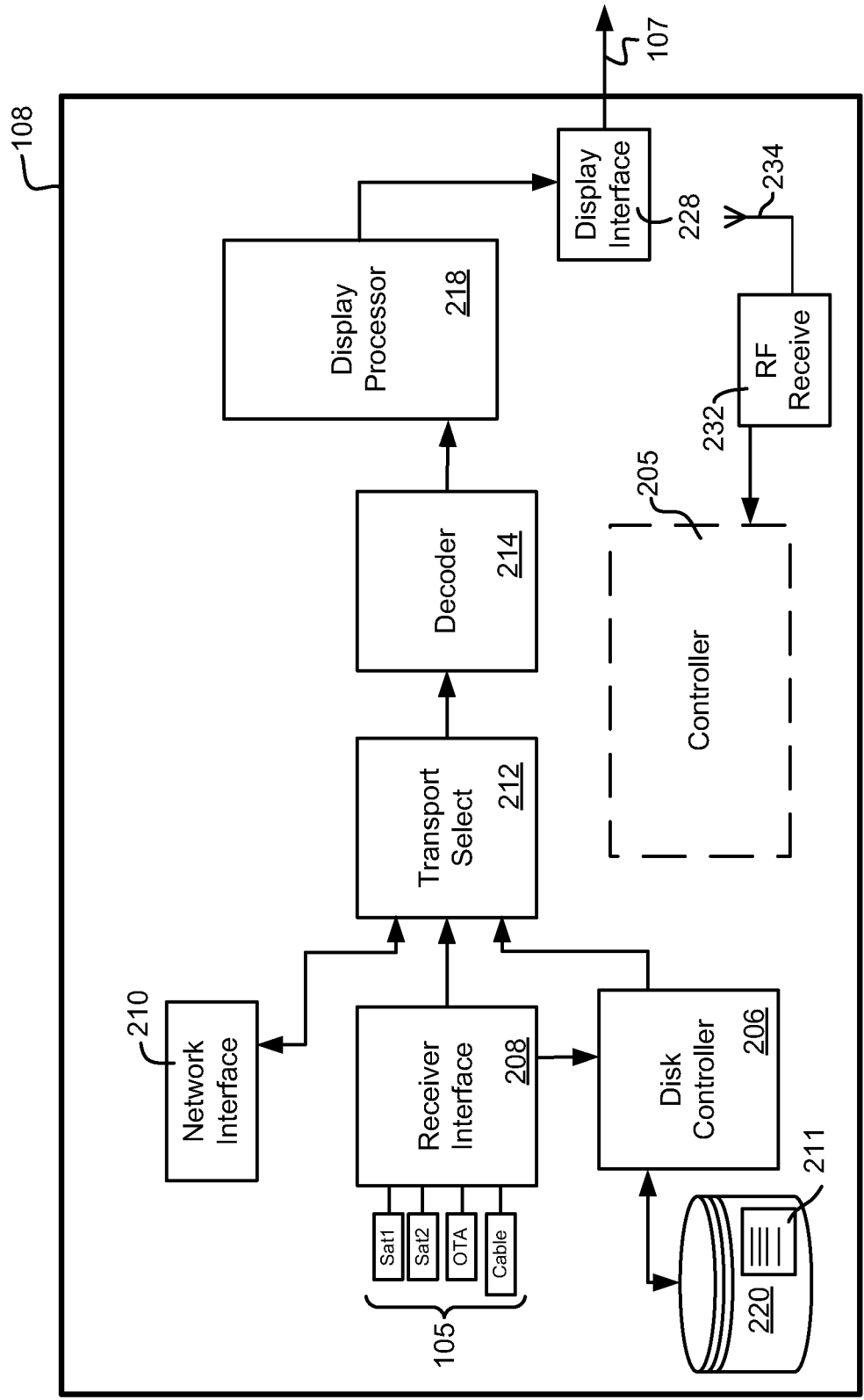


FIG. 2

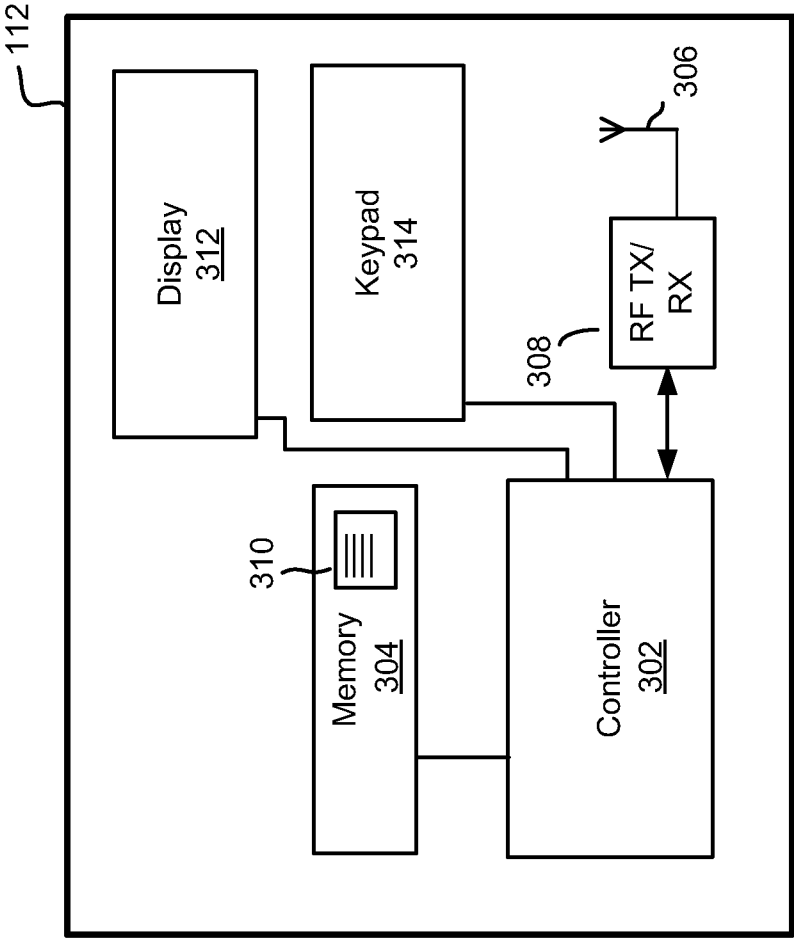


FIG. 3

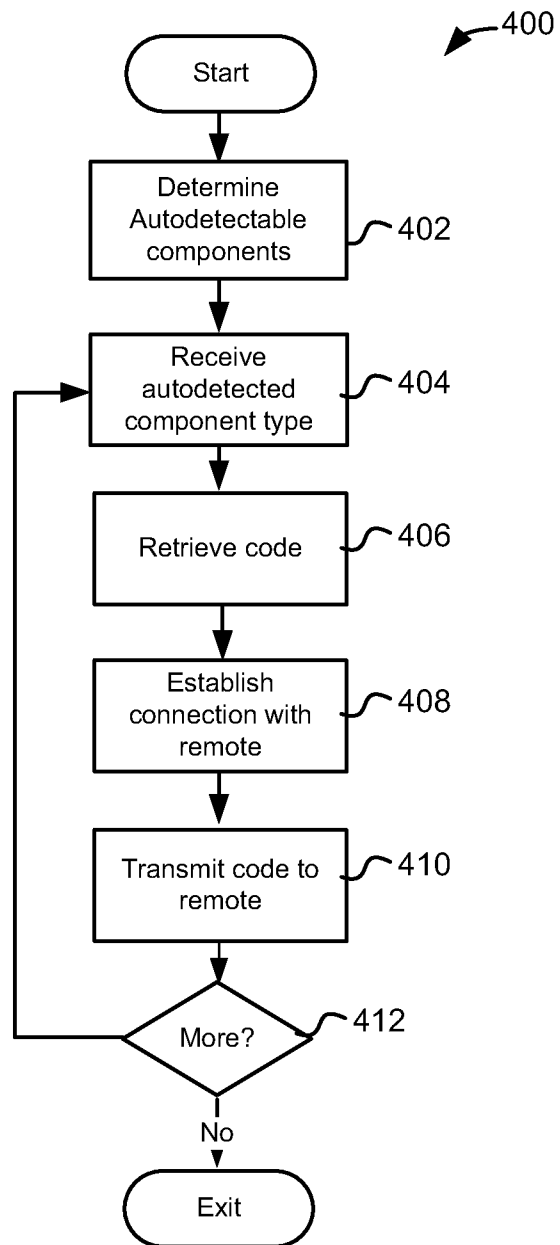


FIG. 4

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/US2009/058456

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

INV. H04N5/44

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)

H04N

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

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

EPO-Internal, WPI Data

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 2008/231762 A1 (HARDACKER ROBERT [US] ET AL) 25 September 2008 (2008-09-25)	1-3, 6-12, 14-15, 18-20
Y	abstract paragraph [0010] - paragraph [0012] paragraph [0020] paragraph [0040] - paragraph [0048] figures 2,4,5	4-5,13, 16-17
X	US 2008/088495 A1 (KAWAKITA MITSURI [JP]) 17 April 2008 (2008-04-17)	1-3,8, 12,15,19
A	abstract paragraph [0002] paragraph [0010] - paragraph [0011] paragraph [0018] - paragraph [0030] figures 1-5	4-7, 9-11, 13-14, 16-18,20
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Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

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"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

4 December 2009

Date of mailing of the international search report

18/12/2009

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

PCT/US2009/058456

C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	"ZigBee" WIKIPEDIA INTERNET CITATION 26 September 2008 (2008-09-26), XP002558439 Retrieved from the Internet: URL: http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=ZigBee&oldid=241085798 [retrieved on 2009-12-02] the whole document -----	4-5, 13, 16-17
A	US 2003/193426 A1 (VIDAL ALBERTO [US]) 16 October 2003 (2003-10-16) paragraph [0009] - paragraph [0022] paragraph [0037] - paragraph [0060] figures 1-7 -----	1-20
A	US 2006/084409 A1 (GHADIALI MUFFADDAL [US]) 20 April 2006 (2006-04-20) paragraph [0001] - paragraph [0003] paragraph [0007] - paragraph [0018] figures 1-3 -----	1-20

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

PCT/US2009/058456

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