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(54) **DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR VOICE AND VIDEO SESSIONS**

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
H04L 12/66 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **370/354**; 370/389

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
USPC 370/310.2, 328, 338, 493, 494, 495, 370/352–358, 389
See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

6,834,192	B1	12/2004	Watanabe et al.	
7,020,704	B1 *	3/2006	Lipscomb et al.	709/226
2008/0212649	A1	9/2008	Jougit	

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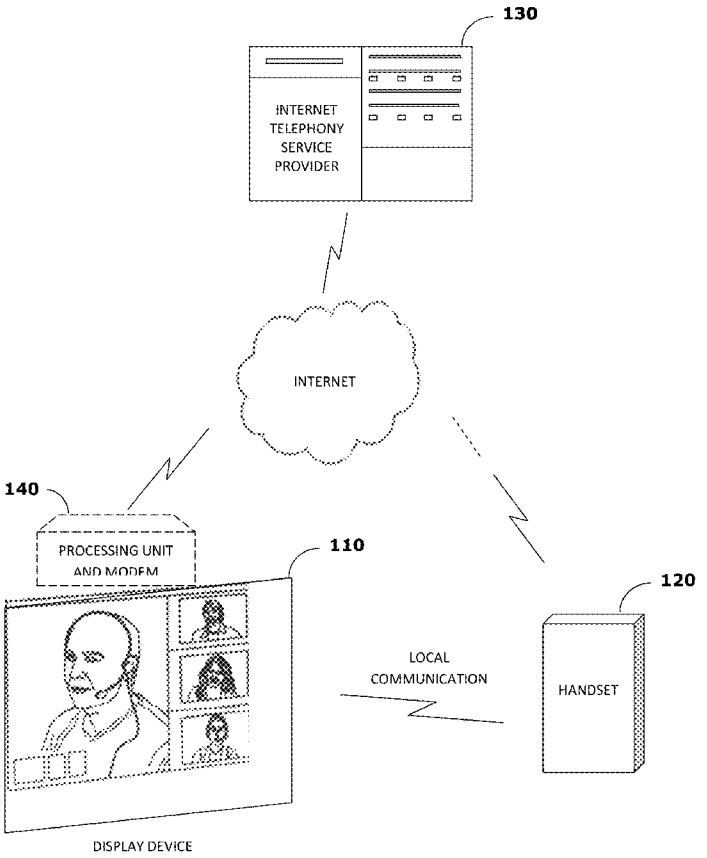
(57) **ABSTRACT**

An audio and video communication system, including a handset including a handset receiver and an audio output component, for receiving audio data via the handset receiver and for playing the received audio data on the handset audio output component, a display device, not physically connected to the handset, including a display receiver and a display screen, for receiving video data via the display receiver and for displaying the received video data on the display screen, and a telephony service, communicatively coupled with the handset and with the display, that receives audio and video data from a transmitter computer during a communication session, and transmits the audio data to the handset and the video data to the display device.

18 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



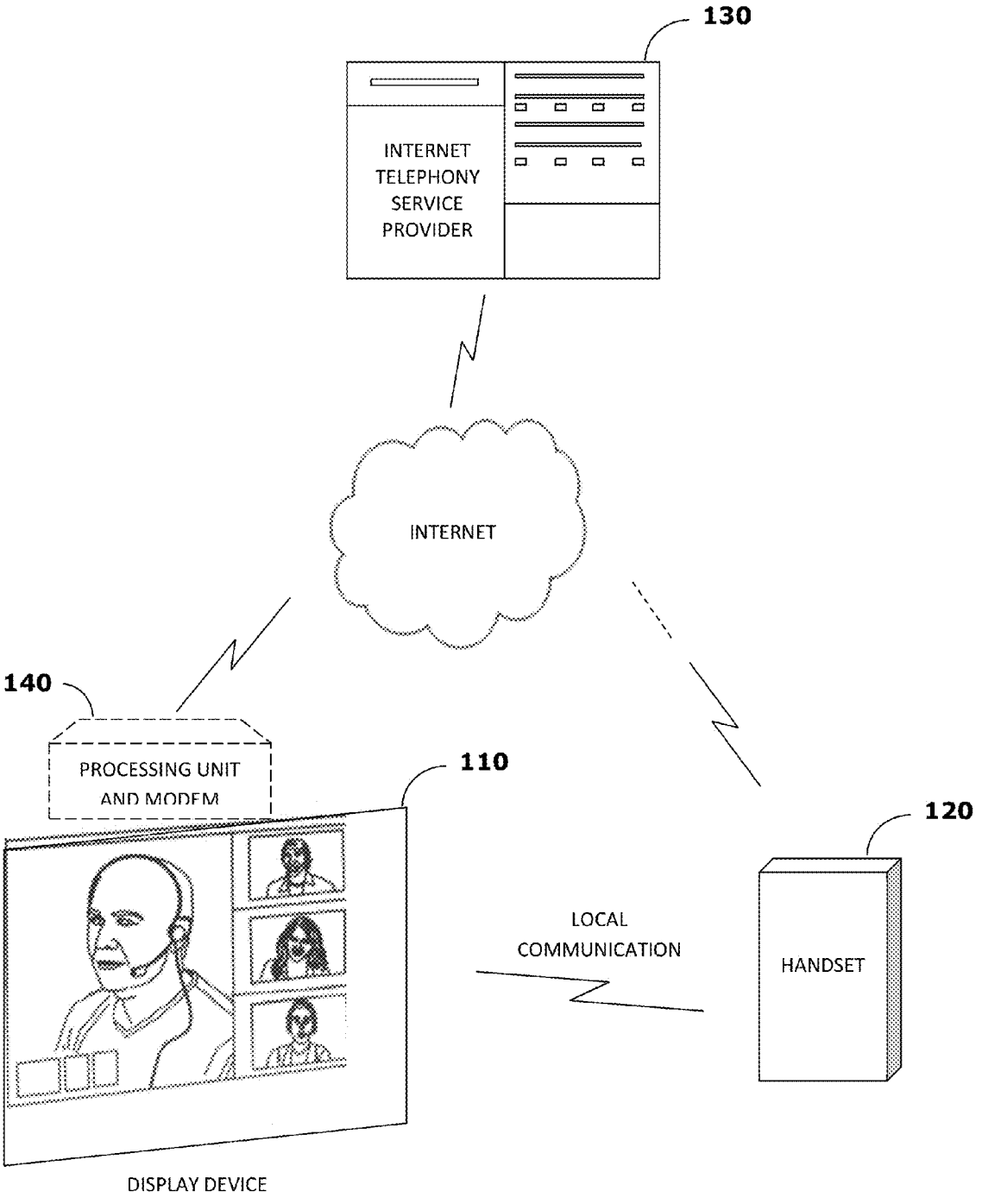

130
INTERNET TELEPHONY SERVICE PROVIDER
INTERNET
140
PROCESSING UNIT AND MODEM
110
120
LOCAL COMMUNICATION
HANDSET
DISPLAY DEVICE

FIG. 1

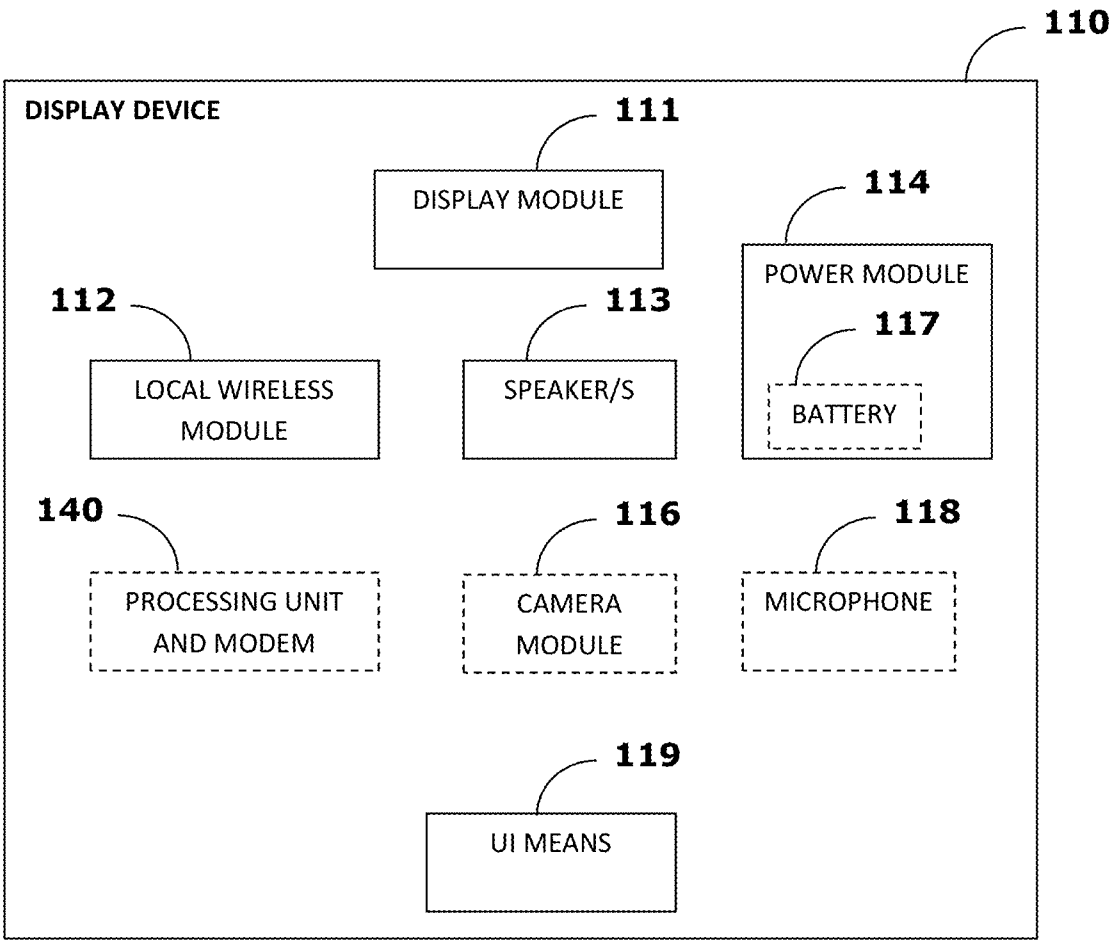

110
DISPLAY DEVICE
111
DISPLAY MODULE
114
POWER MODULE
112
LOCAL WIRELESS MODULE
113
SPEAKER/S
117
BATTERY
140
PROCESSING UNIT AND MODEM
116
CAMERA MODULE
118
MICROPHONE
119
UI MEANS

FIG. 2

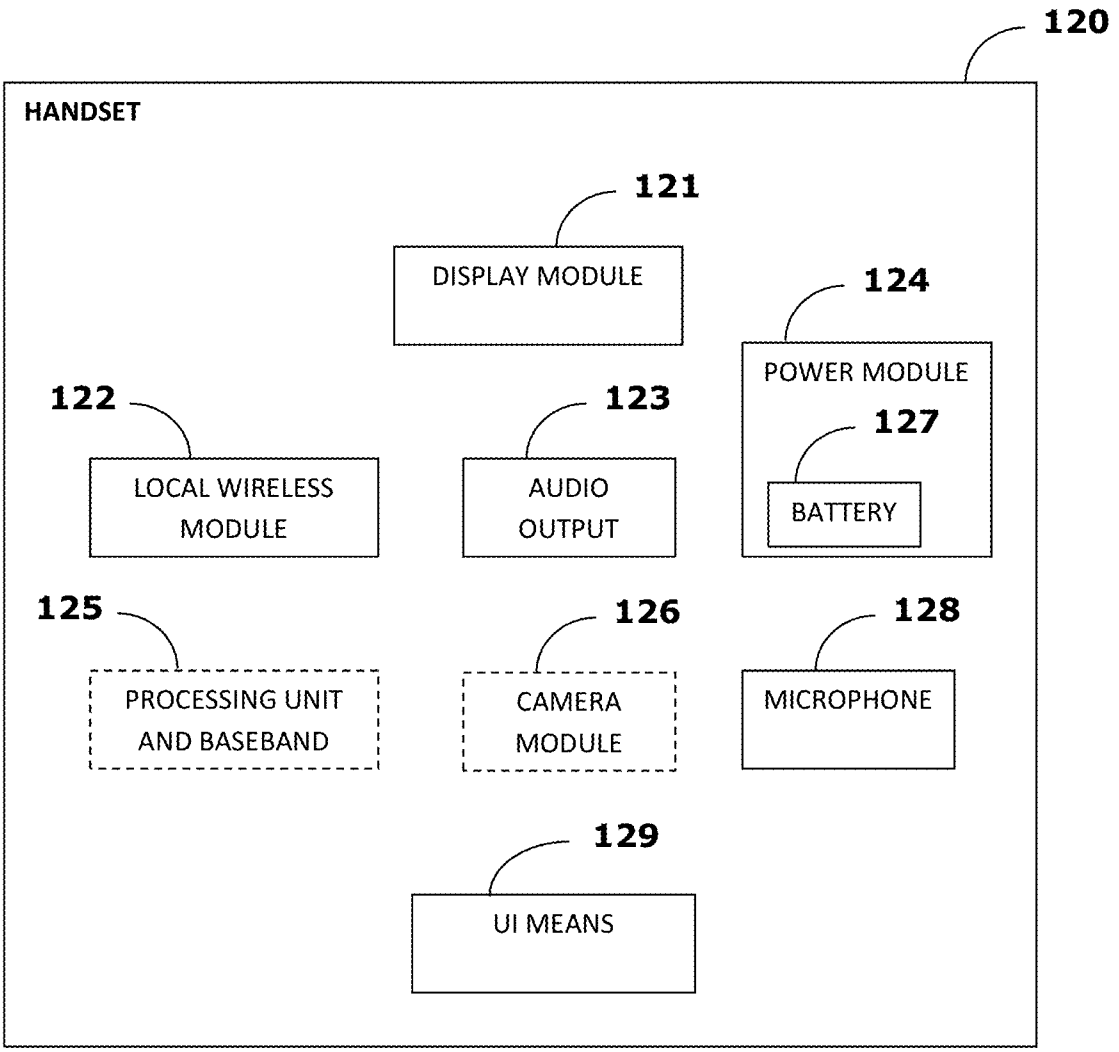

120
HANDSET
121
DISPLAY MODULE
124
POWER MODULE
127
BATTERY
122
LOCAL WIRELESS MODULE
123
AUDIO OUTPUT
125
PROCESSING UNIT AND BASEBAND
126
CAMERA MODULE
128
MICROPHONE
129
UI MEANS

FIG. 3

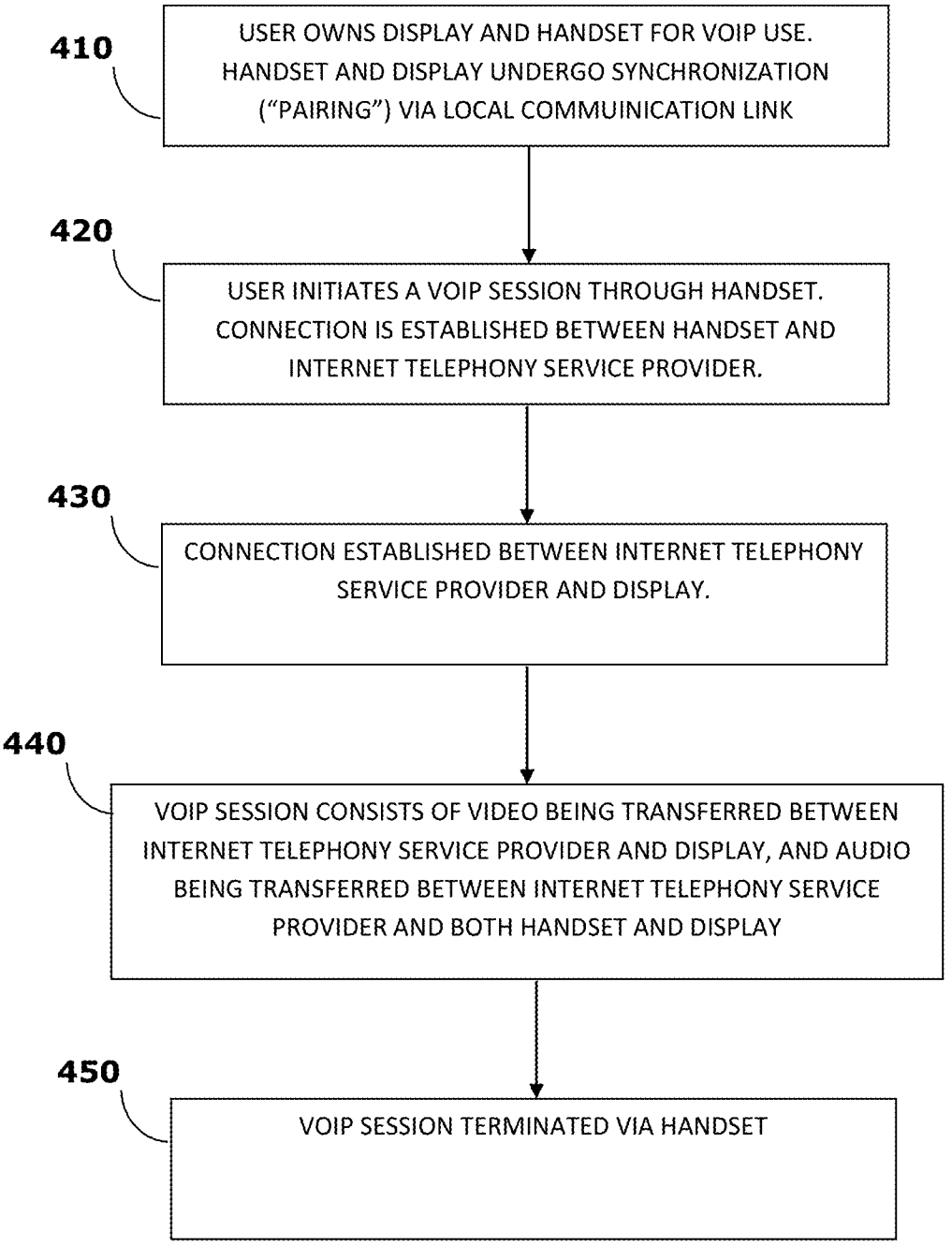

410
USER OWNS DISPLAY AND HANDSET FOR VOIP USE. HANDSET AND DISPLAY UNDERGO SYNCHRONIZATION ("PAIRING") VIA LOCAL COMMUINICATION LINK
420
USER INITIATES A VOIP SESSION THROUGH HANDSET. CONNECTION IS ESTABLISHED BETWEEN HANDSET AND INTERNET TELEPHONY SERVICE PROVIDER.
430
CONNECTION ESTABLISHED BETWEEN INTERNET TELEPHONY SERVICE PROVIDER AND DISPLAY.
440
VOIP SESSION CONSISTS OF VIDEO BEING TRANSFERRED BETWEEN INTERNET TELEPHONY SERVICE PROVIDER AND DISPLAY, AND AUDIO BEING TRANSFERRED BETWEEN INTERNET TELEPHONY SERVICE PROVIDER AND BOTH HANDSET AND DISPLAY
450
VOIP SESSION TERMINATED VIA HANDSET

FIG. 4

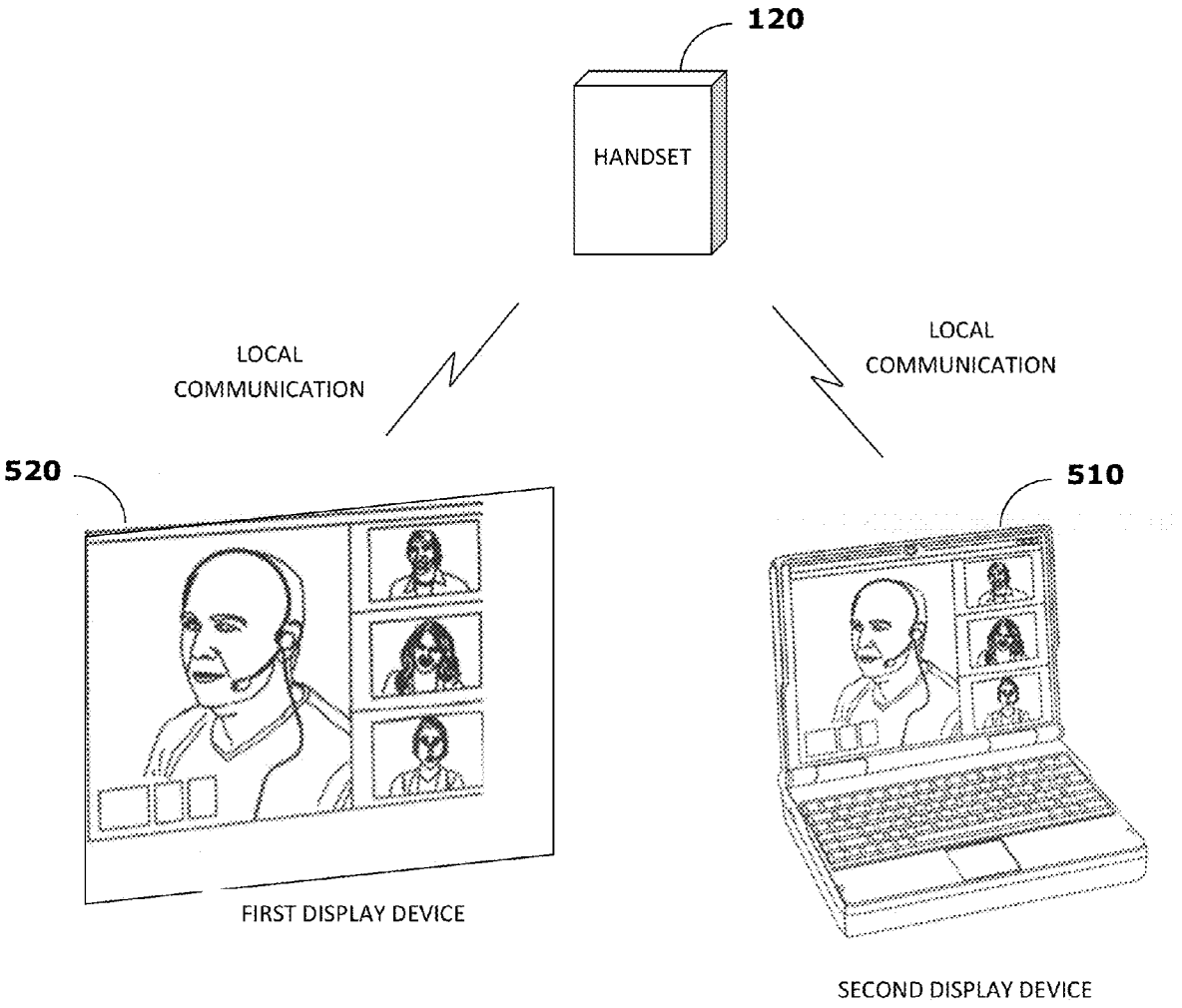

120
HANDSET
LOCAL
COMMUNICATION
LOCAL
COMMUNICATION
520
510
FIRST DISPLAY DEVICE
SECOND DISPLAY DEVICE

FIG. 5

DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR VOICE AND VIDEO SESSIONS

CROSS REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application claims benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 61/345,318, entitled DECENTRALIZED SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR VOICE AND VIDEO SESSIONS, filed on May 17, 2010 by inventor Eyal Bychkov.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is directed to Voice and Video conversations Over IP, and more particularly to a method and system for making such communications using a decentralized architecture.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

There are numerous devices and applications which are based on transferring Voice and/or Video over IP (Internet Protocol). These include having VoIP clients on a PC, or installed on any other communication device, such as a mobile phone. There are also dedicated Wi-Fi telephones which support VoIP applications; VoIP telephones can be both wired, such as the Cisco CP-7941G, or wireless, such as the Polycom SPECTRALINK® 8002 2200-37010-020 or Linksys WIP310-G1.

Client devices for making and receiving voice and video calls over the IP network with the standard functionality of most "original" telephones are also referred to as "softphones". Softphones usually allow integration with IP phones and USB phones instead of utilizing a computer's microphone and speakers (or headset). Often a softphone is designed to behave like a traditional telephone, sometimes appearing as an image of a phone, with a display panel and buttons with which the user can interact.

A typical application of a softphone is to make calls via an Internet telephony service provider to other softphones or to telephones. Popular Internet telephony service providers include SKYPE®, GOOGLE TALK™, and VONAGE®, which have their own softphones that a user may install on his computer or the like. Most service providers use a communication protocol called SIP (Session Initiation Protocol), whereas SKYPE® has a closed proprietary system. In order to make a voice call over the internet, one should have any computing device with an audio input (e.g. microphone) and output means (e.g. a speaker or headset), Internet connectivity such as DSL, Wi-Fi, cable or LAN, and an account with an Internet telephony service provider or IP PBX.

Such prior art devices establish a single connection to the Internet telephony service provider.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The present invention will be more fully understood and appreciated from the following detailed description, taken in conjunction with the drawings in which:

FIG. **1** is a simplified block diagram of the VoIP system, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **2** is a simplified block diagram of the Display, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **3** is a simplified block diagram of the Handset, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. **4** is a simplified flowchart of a method for conducting a VoIP conversation, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention; and

FIG. **5** is a simplified block diagram of the VoIP system, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Aspects of the present invention relate generally to Voice and Video over IP. In particular, aspects of the present invention relate to a system and method for communication where there is more than one terminal for conducting and controlling the VoIP sessions.

Reference is now made to FIG. **1**, which is a simplified block diagram of the system according to an embodiment of the present invention. The system includes a display **110** (referred to hereinafter as the Display) and a handset **120** (referred to hereinafter as the Handset). The Display may be inter alia a PC display, an LCD screen, a Plasma Display Panel, an LED panel, a Digital Picture Frame (DPF) device and any other display or device having a display. The Handset is typically a mobile electronic device, which communicates with the Display via local communication means. The local communication may be inter alia BLUETOOTH®, Infra-Red (IR), Wi-Fi or any other Near Field Communication means. Both Display **110** and Handset **120** are capable of communicating with Internet Telephony Service Provider **130** via the internet. Display **110** may include a modem and processing means (such as a PC or laptop computer which includes both the display and the CPU and modem) or may be connected to a separate processing unit and modem **140**. Display **110** may also include or be connected to a processing unit which in turn is connected wirelessly to a router and a modem, for connecting to the internet. Handset **120** may be connected wirelessly to a router which is connected to the internet, or may be connected to the internet via any network (3G, GPRS, etc.) using any known in the art standard (e.g. WAP). According to another embodiment of the present invention, Handset **120** may even be connected to the internet via local connection to Display **110**, which is connected to the internet in any of a few ways, as described hereinabove.

According to an embodiment of the present invention, a softphone application is installed and operates on both Display **110** and Handset **120**, which are synced so as to provide a seamless experience to the user. A typical scenario includes a user having the Handset **120** close to him, possibly in his hands, whereas Display **110** is a few meters away, such as when Display **110** is an LCD display in the living room. Therefore such a scenario or similar scenarios would benefit from a decentralized system and method for providing Voice over IP or Voice and Video over IP sessions. According to an embodiment of the present invention, the controlling of such VoIP sessions is done from Handset **120**; e.g. initiating calls to contacts, answering calls, ending calls, etc.

According to an embodiment of the present invention, both Display **110** and Handset **120** have audio and video capabilities, as shown in Table 1 below. Display **110** includes audio input means (e.g. built-in microphone, or such that is connected to the processing unit and modem **140**), audio output (speakers), video input (built-in camera or such that is connected to the processing unit and modem **140**) and video output (the display). Handset **120** includes audio input means (microphone), audio output means (earpiece and/or speakers and or headsets), and video output means (display) and according to an embodiment of the present invention may also include video input means (built-in or attachable camera).

TABLE 1

	Display 110	Handset 120
Audio input	Built-in microphone or microphone attached to processing unit and modem 140	Built-in microphone
Audio output	Speakers	earpiece and/or speakers and or headsets
Video input	Built-in camera or attached to processing unit and modem 140	Built-in or attachable camera
Video output	Display	Display

Reference is now made to FIG. **2**, which is a simplified block diagram of Display **110**, according to an embodiment of the present invention. Display **110** includes display module **111**, which includes any display technology, such as LCD, Plasma, LED, OLED, Bi-Stable or any other. for example, for an LCD module, display module **111** typically includes LCD Controller, LCD driver and LCD glass. Display **110** also includes local wireless module **112** for communicating with Handset **120**. Display **110** further includes speaker or speakers **113** and power module **114**, which may consist of a power outlet and/or optionally battery **117**. Display **110** optionally includes processing unit and modem **140**, which may alternatively be connected externally to Display **110**. Display **110** optionally includes camera module **116**, which functions as video input to Display **110**. Display **110** may optionally also include a microphone **118**, which serves as audio input. Microphone may also be an external component. Display **110** also includes UI (user-interface) means **119** for operating Display **110**. UI means **119** may be keypad, button/s, touchscreen, or any other UI method known in the art.

Reference is now made to FIG. **3**, which is a simplified block diagram of Handset **120**, according to an embodiment of the present invention. Handset **120** includes display module **121**, which includes any display technology used for small mobile devices, such as LCD, LED, OLED, Bi-Stable or any other. Handset **120** also includes local wireless module **122** for communicating with Display **110**. Said module **122** may be Bluetooth, IR, Wi-Fi, NFC or any wireless module. Handset **120** further includes AUDIO OUTPUT MEANS **123**, which may include earpiece and/or speakers and or headsets. Handset **120** also includes power module **114**, which typically consists of a power outlet and battery **127**. Handset **120** optionally includes processing unit and baseband **125**, in which case Handset **120** serves as a mobile communication device, such as a mobile cellular phone. If Handset **120** is a mobile cellular phone, it may include further components known in the art, such as Antenna. Handset **120** optionally includes camera module **126**, which functions as video input to Handset **120**. Handset **120** also includes a microphone **128**, which serves as audio input. Handset **120** also includes UI (user-interface) means **129** for operating Handset **120**. UI means **129** may be keypad, button/s, touchscreen, or any other UI method known in the art.

According to a preferred embodiment of the present invention, since Handset **120** is typically in great vicinity to the user, it is used as the audio input of a conversation. The audio out may be either the audio output means of Display **110** or that of Handset **120**; video output is preferably the display of Display **110**, and video input may be either video input means of Display **110** or Handset **120**.

According to another embodiment of the present invention, audio and video input and output means may be used concurrently. E.g., both audio output of Display **110** and that of Handset **120** may play the audio of the active conversation.

Reference is now made to FIG. **4**, which is a simplified flowchart of a method for conducting a VoIP conversation, in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. At step **410**, Display **110** and Handset **120** of user are in close proximity and are paired. Such pairing may be pairing procedure known in the art, for example Bluetooth pairing. In addition, said pairing may be initiated manually by user, via Handset **120**. At step **420**, user initiates a VoIP session through Handset **120**, which is typically carried by hand. VoIP session may be, for example, a video call. Handset **110** connects to internet telephony service provider **130**, to perform the conversation.

Step **430** occurs concurrently or immediately follows step **420**. At step **430**, a second connection is established between internet telephony service provider **130** and Display **110**. According to an embodiment of present invention, said second connection is initiated by Display **110**, which contacts internet telephony service provider **130** and signal that it should join initiated or ongoing session between internet telephony service provider **130** and Handset **110**. Display **110** may transfer any detail about Handset and/or session so that internet telephony service provider **130** identifies session and can transfer the session or parts of it (e.g. video) to Display **110**. According to another embodiment of the present invention, Handset **120** signals to internet telephony service provider **130** that it is paired to Display **120**, and therefore the initiated VoIP session should be shared with Display **110**.

Said second connection between Display **110** and internet telephony service provider **130** is typically established for video purposes, whereas according to an embodiment of the present invention, video of said VoIP session is transferred between internet telephony service provider **130** and Display **110**, and audio is transferred between internet telephony service provider **130** and both Handset **120** and Display **110**.

Display **110** typically has a larger display than Handset **120**, more convenient for user viewing, and possibly better speakers, and in addition connection between Display **110** and internet telephony service provider **130** is of higher band width, as compared to connection between Handset **120** and internet telephony service provider **130**. Therefore, at step **440**, the video part of the VoIP session, which is more bandwidth consuming, is transferred between Display **110** and internet telephony service provider **130**, and the audio part is transferred between internet telephony service provider **130** and both Display **110** and Handset **120**. Handset **110** is especially used for audio input of the VoIP session, whereas the audio output may be played through audio output means of Handset **110**, Display **120**, or both. At step **450**, user terminates VoIP session via Handset **120**.

According to an aspect of the current invention, even though the VoIP session is divided between two connections, the session is seamless and the user carries out the conversation as if it were a single connection. Accordingly, there is synchronization between Display **110** and Handset **120**. Said synchronization is used in diminishing latencies between audio and video, and between Display **110** and Handset **120**. The video received and displayed on Display **110** is synchronized with the audio received and played on either speaker/s **113** of Display **110** or audio output means **123** of Handset **120**. Synchronization between Display **110** and Handset **120** is performed either via internet telephony service provider **130** or directly. In a first embodiment of the present invention, a time stamp is sent from both Display **110** and Handset **120** to internet telephony service provider **130**. The internet telephony service provider **130** in turn alters transmission time of data, audio and/or video, to Display **110** and Handset **120**. According to a second embodiment of the present invention,

Display **110** and Handset **120** may have buffers which allow them to synchronize between Display **110** and Handset **120**, by delaying playing/sending of data to internet telephony service provider **130**.

According to an embodiment of the present invention, Handset **120** is also used to control other elements in Display **110**, using local communication channel, which is established by local wireless modules **112** and **122**. For example, Handset **120** may act as a remote control to Display **110**.

According to yet another embodiment of the present invention, the system includes multiple Displays, similar to Display **110**. Handset **120** communicates with all Displays, and may control a session which is divided between Handset **120** and a first Display **120** and upon manual selection by the user, or automatically, session may be handed-over to be divided between Handset **120** and second Display **110**. Hand-over between first Display **110** and second Display **110** is initiated manually by user, who may be able to see which other Displays are in his vicinity. In another embodiment of the present invention, the session may be handed over automatically, possibly when user moves from first location to second location, and/or when local communication between Handset **120** and said second Display **110** is typically of better quality than that between Handset **120** and said first Display **110**. Such handover mechanisms are described in the art, for example, U.S. Pat. No. 6,834,192 to Watanabe et al., which describes handover of communications in a Bluetooth, or other, radio communication system, or U.S. patent application Ser. No. 11/680,911 to Jougit, describing a method and system for a distributed Bluetooth host architecture.

Reference is now made to FIG. **5**, which is a simplified block diagram of the system according to an embodiment of the present invention. Handset **120** may be paired with first Display **510** or second Display **520**, which may be any Display **110**, as described above.

What is claimed is:

1. An audio and video communication system, comprising:

a handset comprising:

a handset receiver, for receiving audio data;

an audio output component, for playing the received audio data; and

a remote control transmitter;

a display device, not physically connected to said handset, comprising:

a display receiver, for receiving video data;

a display screen, for displaying the received video data; and

a remote control receiver, for receiving control commands for said display device from said handset remote control transmitter; and

a telephony service, communicatively coupled with said handset and with said display, that receives audio and video data from a transmitter computer during a communication session, and transmits the audio data to said handset and transmits the video data to said display device.

2. The system of claim **1** wherein said telephony service synchronizes transmission of the audio data to said handset with transmission of the video data to said display device.

3. The system of claim **1** further comprising a second display device, not physically connected to said handset, comprising a second display receiver and a second display screen, for receiving video data via said second display receiver and for displaying the received video data on said second display screen, wherein said telephony service hands over the video data to said second display during the communication session.

4. The system of claim **1** wherein said display device further comprises a display audio output component, and wherein said telephony service transmits the audio data to both said handset and said display device.

5. The system of claim **1** wherein said handset further comprises a display screen, and wherein said telephony service transmits the video data to both said handset and said display device.

6. The system of claim **1** wherein said display device further comprises a display audio input component for recording audio input, and a display transmitter for transmitting audio input recorded by said display audio input component to said telephony service.

7. The system of claim **1** wherein said display device further comprises a display video input component for capturing video, and a display transmitter for transmitting video captured by said display video input component to said telephony service.

8. The system of claim **1** wherein said display device is in communication with said handset via short range wireless communication, and wherein said handset and said display device coordinate synchronized playing of the audio data with displaying of the video data.

9. The system of claim **8** wherein the short range wireless communication is WiFi communication or near field communication.

10. An audio and video communication system, comprising:

a handset comprising a handset receiver and an audio output component, for receiving audio data via said handset receiver and for playing the received audio data on said handset audio output component;

a display device, not physically connected to said handset, comprising a display receiver and a display screen, for receiving video data via said display receiver and for displaying the received video data on said display screen; and

a telephony service, communicatively coupled with said handset and with said display, that receives audio and video data from a transmitter computer during a communication session, and transmits the audio data to said handset and transmits the video data to said display device,

wherein said display device is in communication with said handset via short range wireless communication, and wherein said handset and said display device coordinate synchronized playing of the audio data with displaying of the video data.

11. The system of claim **10** wherein said telephony service synchronizes transmission of the audio data to said handset with transmission of the video data to said display device.

12. The system of claim **10** further comprising a second display device, not physically connected to said handset, comprising a second display receiver and a second display screen, for receiving video data via said second display receiver and for displaying the received video data on said second display screen, wherein said telephony service hands over the video data to said second display during the communication session.

13. The system of claim **10** wherein said display device further comprises a display audio output component, and wherein said telephony service transmits the audio data to both said handset and said display device.

14. The system of claim **10** wherein said handset further comprises a display screen, and wherein said telephony service transmits the video data to both said handset and said display device.

15. The system of claim **10** wherein said display device further comprises a display audio input component for recording audio input, and a display transmitter for transmitting audio input recorded by said display audio input component to said telephony service.

16. The system of claim **10** wherein said display device further comprises a display video input component for capturing video, and a display transmitter for transmitting video captured by said display video input component to said telephony service.

17. The system of claim **10** wherein said display device comprises a remote control receiver, and wherein said handset comprises a remote control transmitter for controlling said display device.

18. The system of claim **10** wherein the short range wireless communication is WiFi communication or near field communication.

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