



US008812059B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Hayes et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 8,812,059 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** ***Aug. 19, 2014**

(54) **RADIOTELEPHONES HAVING
CONTACT-SENSITIVE USER INTERFACES
AND METHODS OF OPERATING SAME**

(71) Applicant: **Ericsson Inc.**, Research Triangle Park,
NC (US)

(72) Inventors: **John Hayes**, Wake Forest, NC (US);
Curtis Wayne Thornton, Cary, NC (US)

(73) Assignee: **Ericsson, Inc.**, Plano, TX (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

This patent is subject to a terminal dis-
claimer.

(21) Appl. No.: **13/682,566**

(22) Filed: **Nov. 20, 2012**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2013/0143626 A1 Jun. 6, 2013

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 11/078,916, filed on
Mar. 11, 2005, now Pat. No. Re. 43,931, which is an
application for the reissue of Pat. No. 6,278,888, which
is a continuation of application No. 09/001,173, filed
on Dec. 30, 1997, now Pat. No. 6,131,047.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
H04B 1/38 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **455/566**; 455/550.1; 455/575.1;
379/428.01; 345/173

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
USPC 455/566, 550.1, 575.1; 379/428.01;
345/173

See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

3,777,222 A 12/1973 Harris
3,916,099 A 10/1975 Hlady

(Continued)

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

EP 0229601 11/1986
EP 0340096 11/1989

(Continued)

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Versal Pad™ Finished DataSheet, <http://www.interlinklec.com/magic.page02g.htm>, Oct. 9, 1997, 3 pages.

(Continued)

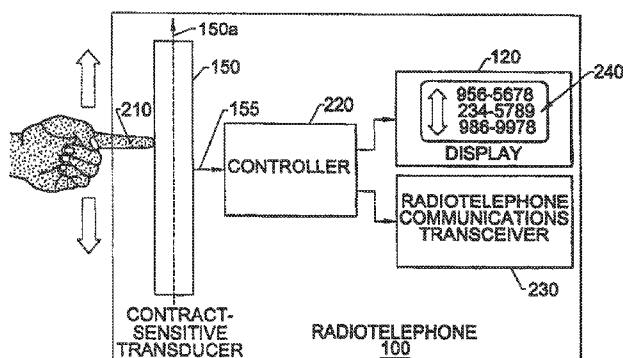
Primary Examiner — Nghi H Ly

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Boisson Hofman, PLLC

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A device includes a housing having a front surface, a rear surface and first and second side surfaces; the rear surface configured engage a user's palm. The device includes a radio-telephone communications transceiver and a contact-sensitive display, supported by the housing. The contact sensitive display is configured to display an image at the front surface of the housing, and produce an output signal in response to moving contact of an object along a contact-sensitive surface of the contact-sensitive display. The device also includes a controller configured to control at least one of the display and the radiotelephone communications transceiver and to scroll displayed rows along an axis of the display based upon the output signal of the contact-sensitive transducer. The controller has a mode that is unresponsive to contact with the contact-sensitive transducer, the second mode being entered in response to an input from a user.

20 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets



(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

4,071,691 A 1/1978 Pepper, Jr.
 4,103,252 A 7/1978 Bobick
 4,129,747 A 12/1978 Pepper, Jr.
 4,177,421 A 12/1979 Thornburg
 4,198,539 A 4/1980 Pepper, Jr.
 4,293,734 A 10/1981 Pepper, Jr.
 4,302,011 A 11/1981 Pepper, Jr.
 4,371,746 A 2/1983 Pepper, Jr.
 4,458,238 A 7/1984 Learn
 4,542,375 A 9/1985 Alles et al.
 4,566,001 A 1/1986 Moore et al.
 4,647,916 A 3/1987 Boughton
 4,680,430 A 7/1987 Yoshikawa et al.
 4,736,191 A 4/1988 Matzke et al.
 4,739,299 A 4/1988 Eventoff et al.
 4,810,992 A 3/1989 Eventoff
 4,831,566 A 5/1989 Matthews et al.
 4,870,677 A 9/1989 Di Santo et al.
 5,148,120 A 9/1992 Kano et al.
 5,184,120 A 2/1993 Schultz
 5,347,477 A 9/1994 Lee
 5,381,160 A 1/1995 Landmeier
 5,422,656 A 6/1995 Allard et al.
 5,436,954 A 7/1995 Nishiyama et al.
 5,452,240 A 9/1995 Roca et al.
 5,457,289 A 10/1995 Huang et al.
 5,459,776 A 10/1995 Di Santo et al.
 5,491,597 A 2/1996 Bennin et al.
 5,526,411 A 6/1996 Krieter
 5,543,590 A 8/1996 Gillespie et al.
 5,572,573 A 11/1996 Sylvan et al.
 5,581,681 A 12/1996 Tchao et al.
 5,584,054 A 12/1996 Tyneski et al.
 5,598,527 A 1/1997 Debrus et al.
 5,612,719 A 3/1997 Beernink et al.
 5,615,384 A 3/1997 Allard et al.
 5,621,437 A * 4/1997 Jeong 345/173
 5,710,810 A 1/1998 Tiilikainen
 5,715,524 A 2/1998 Jambhekar et al.
 5,719,936 A 2/1998 Hillenmayer
 5,729,219 A 3/1998 Armstrong et al.
 5,748,185 A 5/1998 Stephan et al.
 5,760,688 A 6/1998 Kasai
 5,786,819 A 7/1998 Weiser et al.
 5,815,142 A 9/1998 Allard et al.
 5,825,352 A 10/1998 Bisset et al.
 5,828,360 A 10/1998 Anderson et al.
 5,844,547 A 12/1998 Minakuchi et al.
 5,848,356 A * 12/1998 Jambhekar et al. 455/403
 5,856,822 A 1/1999 Du et al.
 5,859,629 A 1/1999 Tognazzini
 5,889,236 A 3/1999 Gillespie et al.
 5,889,852 A 3/1999 Rosecrans et al.
 5,915,228 A 6/1999 Kunihiro et al.
 5,920,310 A 7/1999 Faggini et al.
 5,956,020 A 9/1999 D'Amico et al.
 5,995,083 A 11/1999 Sato et al.
 5,999,827 A 12/1999 Sudo et al.
 6,002,946 A 12/1999 Reber et al.
 6,009,338 A 12/1999 Iwata et al.
 6,029,052 A 2/2000 Isberg et al.
 6,043,809 A 3/2000 Holehan
 6,052,606 A 4/2000 Bowen
 6,058,359 A 5/2000 Hagen et al.
 6,069,626 A 5/2000 Cline et al.
 6,072,475 A 6/2000 van Ketwich
 6,128,014 A 10/2000 Nakagawa et al.
 6,131,047 A * 10/2000 Hayes et al. 455/566
 6,154,194 A 11/2000 Singh
 6,163,312 A 12/2000 Furuya
 6,173,194 B1 1/2001 Vantila
 6,178,338 B1 1/2001 Yamagishi et al.
 6,201,951 B1 3/2001 Duwaer et al.
 6,278,888 B1 8/2001 Hayes, Jr. et al.
 6,301,556 B1 10/2001 Hagen et al.

6,310,610 B1 10/2001 Beaton et al.
 6,351,657 B2 2/2002 Yamada
 6,418,310 B1 7/2002 Dent
 6,424,830 B1 7/2002 O'Hagan et al.
 6,445,917 B1 9/2002 Bark et al.
 6,445,932 B1 9/2002 Soini et al.
 6,473,506 B1 10/2002 Hook et al.
 6,496,181 B1 12/2002 Bomer et al.
 6,496,182 B1 12/2002 Wong et al.
 6,519,223 B1 2/2003 Wager et al.
 6,559,833 B2 5/2003 Rowe
 6,566,001 B2 5/2003 Yosida et al.
 6,587,700 B1 7/2003 Meins et al.
 6,624,832 B1 9/2003 Thomas
 6,707,449 B2 3/2004 Hinckley et al.
 6,772,215 B1 8/2004 Rathonyi et al.
 6,873,315 B2 3/2005 Hemia et al.
 8,169,992 B2 5/2012 Parkvall et al.
 RE43,931 E * 1/2013 Hayes et al. 455/566
 2001/0026627 A1 10/2001 Tilbury et al.
 2002/0005342 A1 1/2002 Farrington
 2002/0050981 A1 5/2002 Nuovo
 2003/0017810 A1 1/2003 Janninck et al.
 2003/0080870 A1 5/2003 Marmaropoulos et al.
 2003/0119569 A1 6/2003 Reed

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

EP 0353706 2/1990
 EP 0395469 10/1990
 EP 0498540 8/1992
 EP 0499012 8/1992
 EP 0698845 2/1996
 EP 0707257 4/1996
 EP 0780865 6/1997
 EP 0813328 12/1997
 EP 1238325 B1 6/2003
 GB 2301217 11/1996
 JP 59153342 9/1987
 JP 7056685 3/1995
 JP 8030378 2/1996
 JP 8125724 5/1996
 JP 2001100289 A 4/2000
 JP 2002057771 A 2/2002
 WO WO99/34574 7/1999
 WO WO01/35204 5/2001
 WO WO01/42891 6/2001
 WO 03050665 A1 6/2003
 WO WO2004/098164 11/2004
 WO WO2004/111766 12/2004
 WO WO2005/001678 1/2005
 WO WO2005/003947 1/2005

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

International Search Report, PCT/US98/27042 dated May 11, 1999.
 The Samsung Respondents Notice of Prior Art, 77 pages, dated Apr. 12, 2013.
 Samsung's '888 Infringement Claim Chart—Samsung Galaxy S III, 9 pages, dated Apr. 12, 2013.
 RIM D1 Claim Chart—RIM Blackberry Bold 9900/9930, 9 pages, dated Apr. 12, 2013.
 Motorola D1 Claim Chart—Motorola Droid Razr M (XT907), 9 pages, dated Apr. 12, 2013.
 Complaint of Ericsson Inc. and Telefonaktiebolaget LM Ericsson under Section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930, As Amended, 45 pages (pt 1), dated Nov. 30, 2012.
 Respondents Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd, Samsung Telecommunications America, LLC and Samsung Electronics America, Inc.'s Response to the Complaint and Notice of Investigation, 95 pages, dated Jan. 31, 2013.
 Commission Investigative Staff's Notice of Prior Art, 2 pgs, Apr. 12, 2013.
 Complaint of Ericsson Inc. and Telefonaktiebolaget LM Ericsson under Section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930, As Amended, 45 pages (pt 2), dated Nov. 30, 2012.
 First Amended Complaint for Patent Infringement, Jan. 29, 2013, 28 pages.

(56)

References Cited

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Samsung's First Amended Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims to Ericsson's First Amended Complaint for Patent Infringement, Apr. 5, 2013, 74 pages.

Ericsson's Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims to Samsung's First Amended Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims, Apr. 22, 2013, 85 pages.

Defendant Samsung's Response to Ericsson's Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims to Samsung's First Amended Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims, May 16, 2013, 42 pages.

Simon Says "Here's How" —Simon Users Manual, IBM Corporation, 1994, 41 Pgs.

Defendants' Invalidity Contentions, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex.) (filed Dec. 20, 2013), 193 Pgs.

Defendant Samsung's Response to Ericsson's Answer, Affirmative Defenses, and Counterclaims to Samsung's First Amended Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. filed May 16, 2013), 42 Pgs.

Samsung's Third Amended Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims to Ericsson's First Amended Complaint for Patent Infringement, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. filed Nov. 5, 2013), 82 Pgs.

Ericsson's Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims to Samsung's Third Amended Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims to Ericsson's First Amended Complaint for Patent Infringement, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. filed Nov. 22, 2013), 96 Pgs.

Defendant Samsung's Response to Ericsson's Answer, Affirmative Defenses, and Counterclaims to Samsung's Third Amended Answer, Amended Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. filed Dec. 16, 2013), 38 Pgs.

Plaintiff Ericsson's Answer and Affirmative Defenses to Defendant Samsung's Response to Ericsson's Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims to Samsung's Third Amended Answer, Affirmative Defenses and Counterclaims, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. filed Jan. 9, 2014), 6 Pgs.

First Amended Complaint for Patent Infringement, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. filed Jan. 29, 2013), 28 pages.

Exhibit 931-01 to Defendants' Invalidity Contentions, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. served Dec. 20, 2013), 482 Pgs.

Exhibit 931-02 to Defendants' Invalidity Contentions, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. served Dec. 20, 2013), 465 Pgs.

Exhibit 931-03 to Defendants' Invalidity Contentions, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. served Dec. 20, 2013), 492 Pgs.

Exhibit 931-04 to Defendants' Invalidity Contentions, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. served Dec. 20, 2013), 689 Pgs.

Exhibit 931-05 to Defendants' Invalidity Contentions, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. served Dec. 20, 2013), 800 Pgs.

Exhibit 931-06 to Defendants' Invalidity Contentions, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. served Dec. 20, 2013), Pt I, 341 Pgs.

Exhibit 931-06 to Defendants' Invalidity Contentions, *Ericsson Inc. v. Samsung Electronics Co., Ltd.*, Civil Action No. 6:12-cv-894 (E.D. Tex. served Dec. 20, 2013), Pt II, 341 Pgs.

* cited by examiner

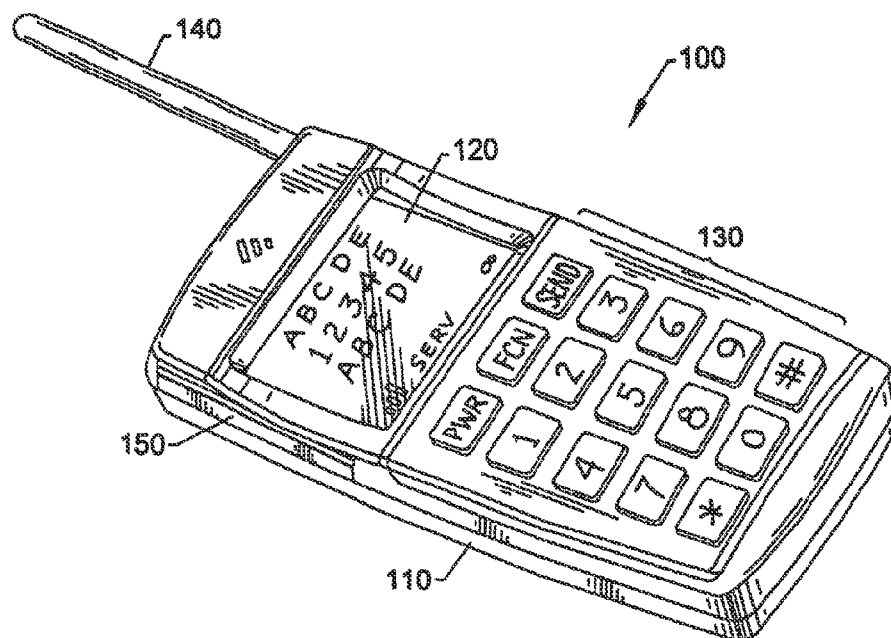


FIG. 1.

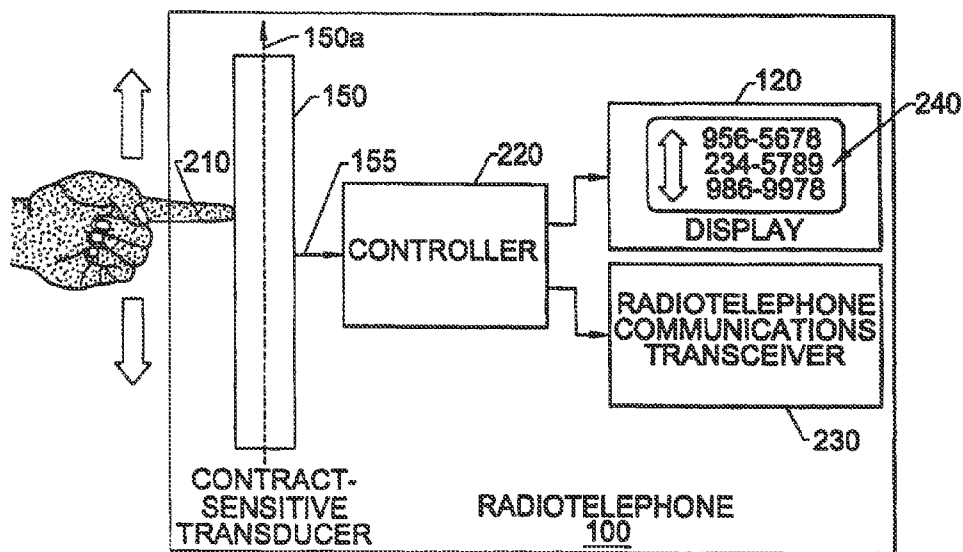
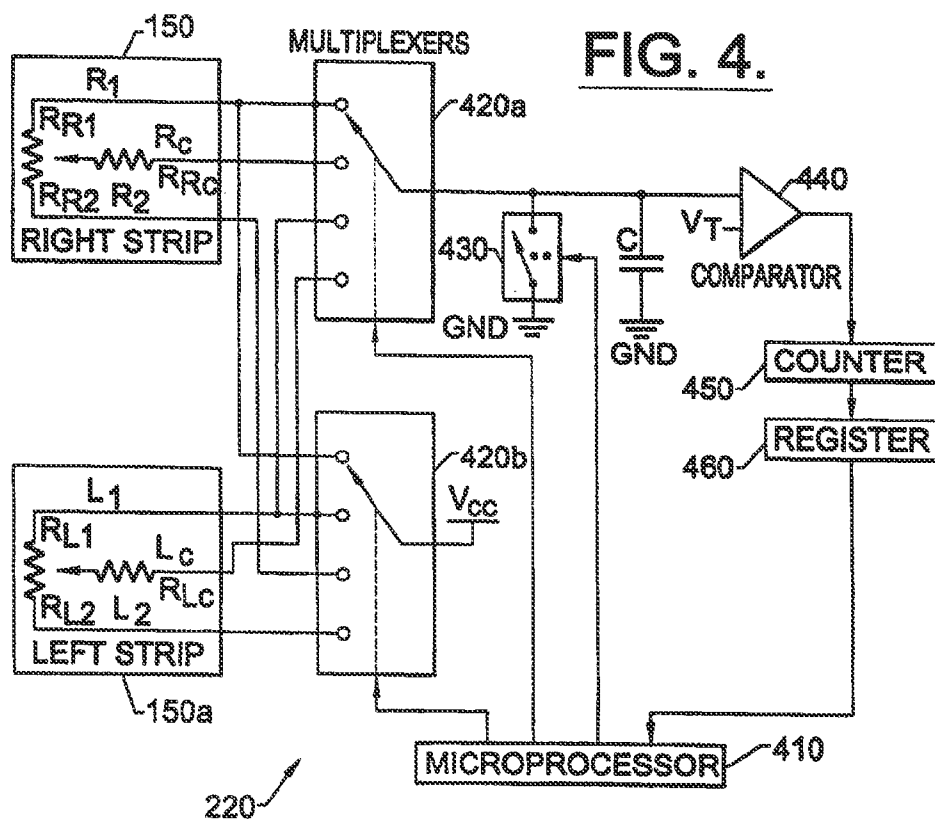
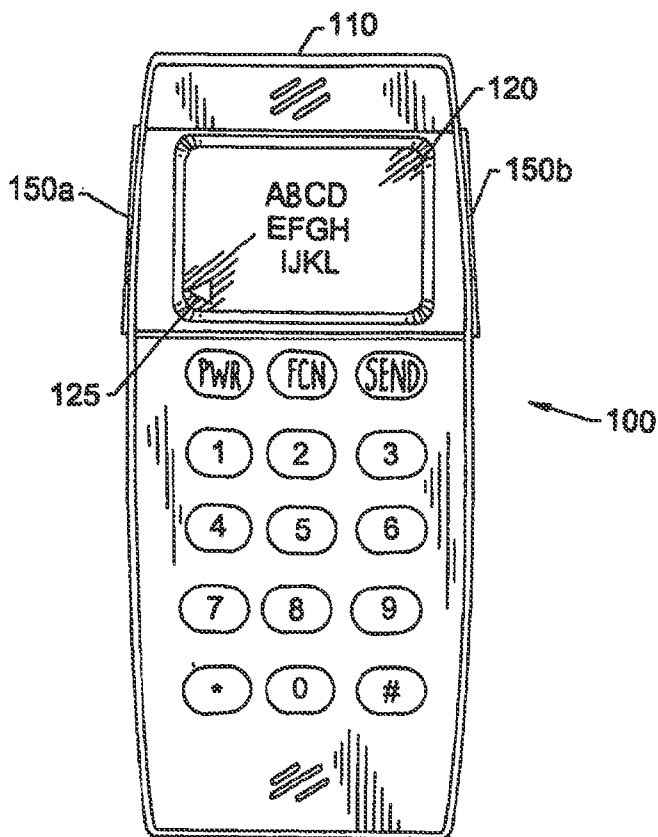
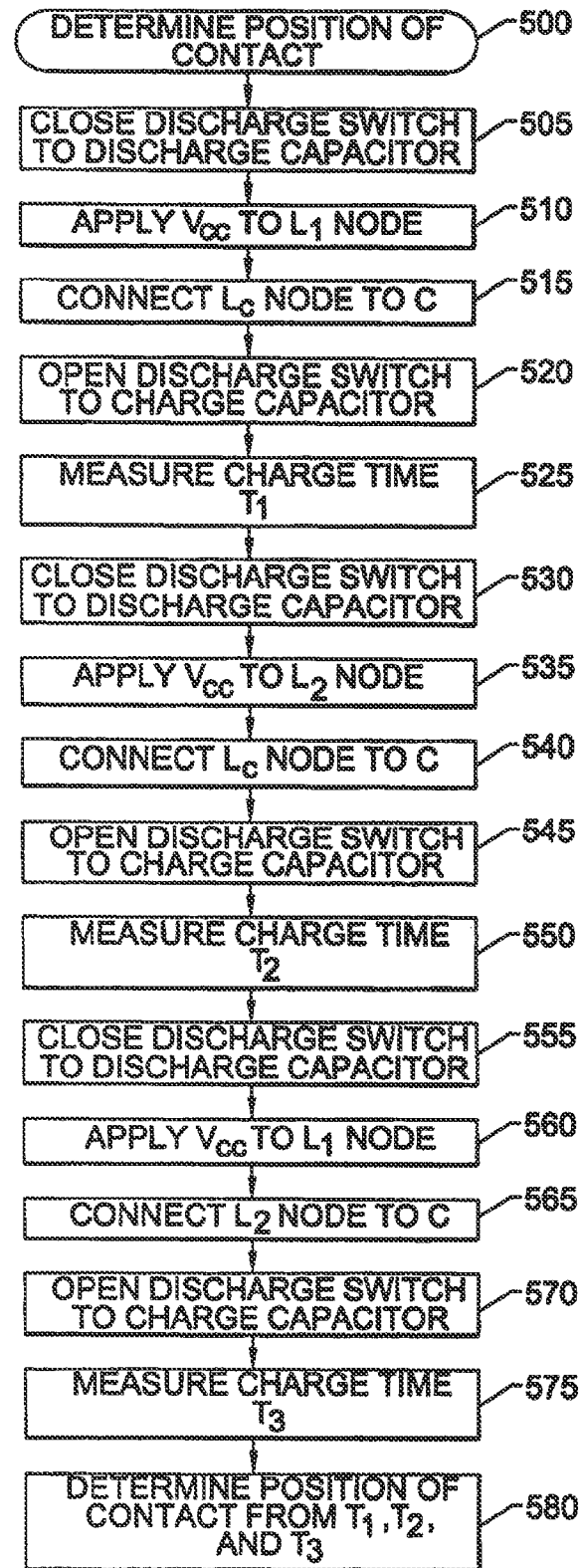


FIG. 2.

FIG. 3.



FIG. 5.

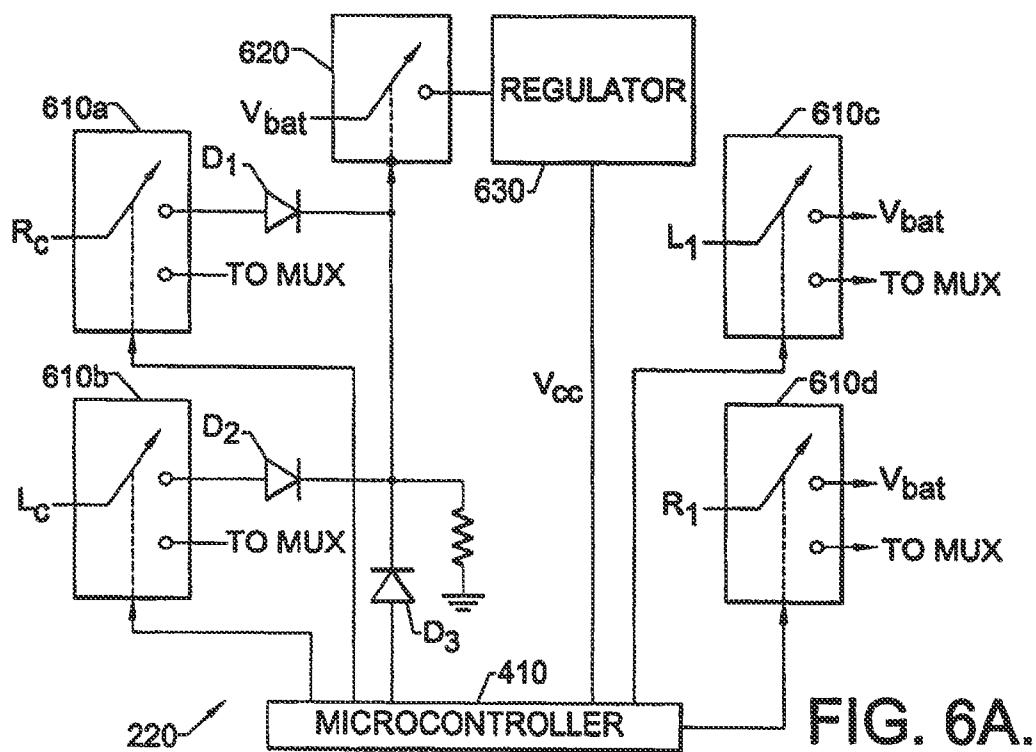


FIG. 6A.

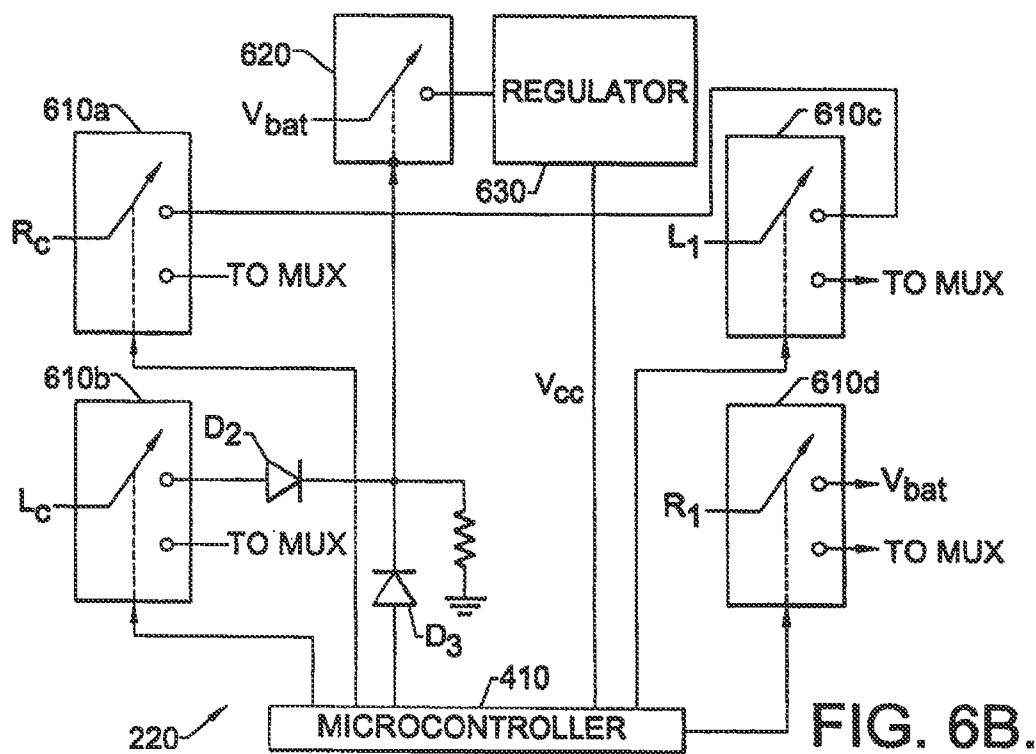
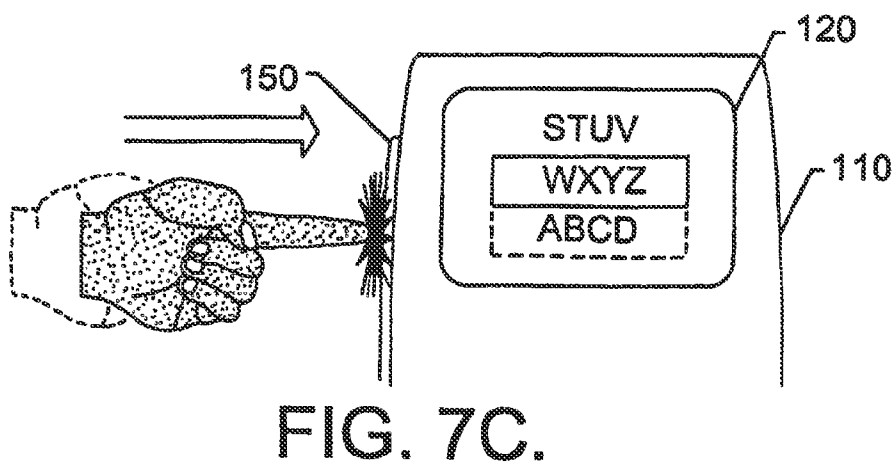
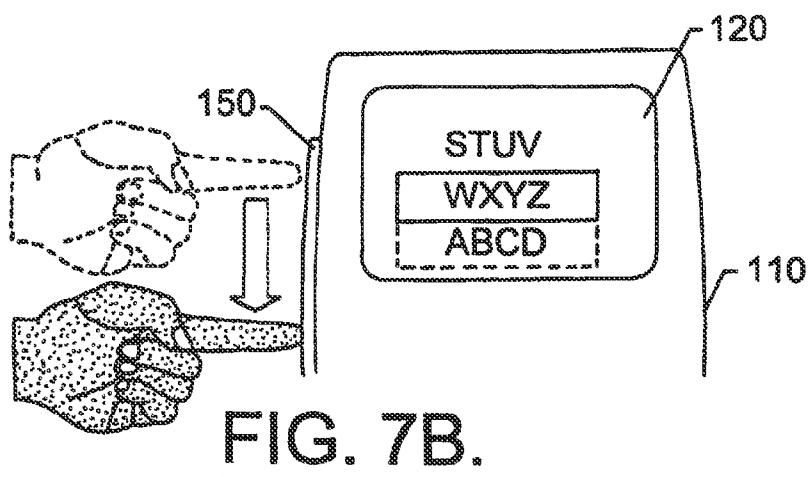
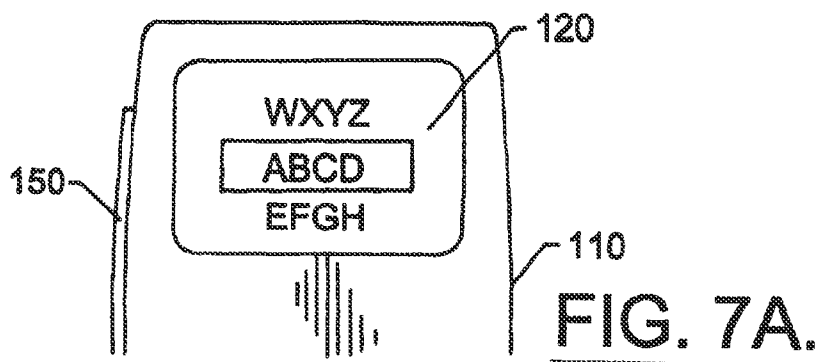
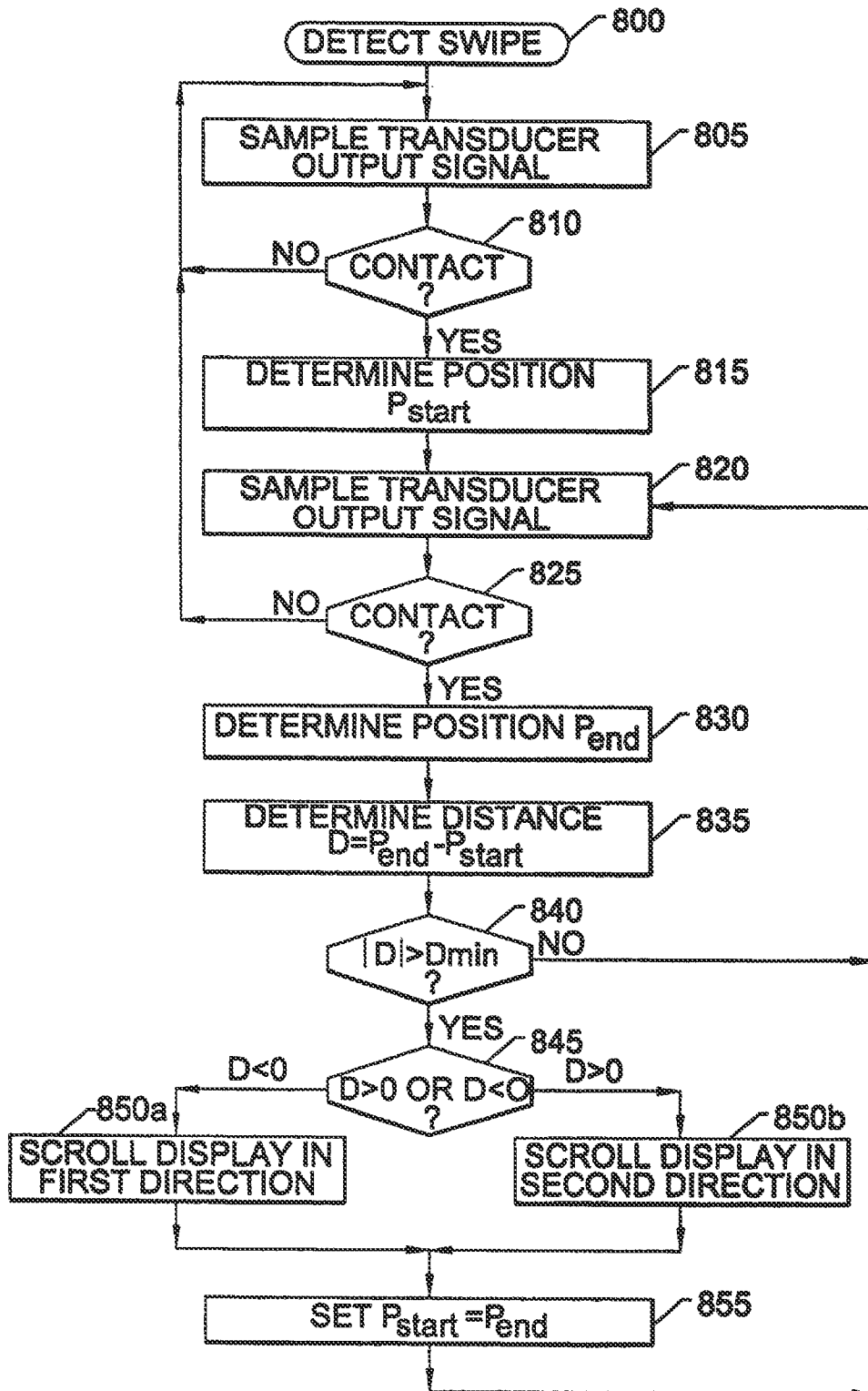
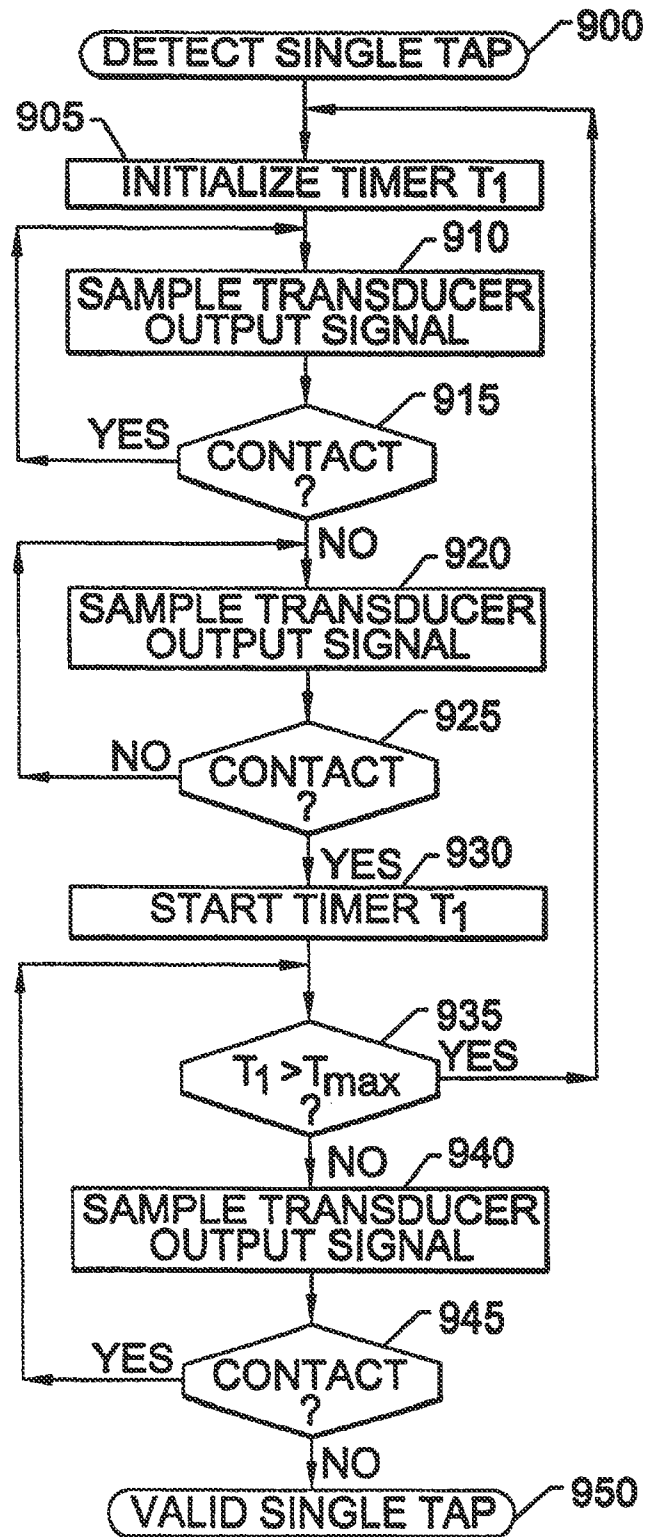
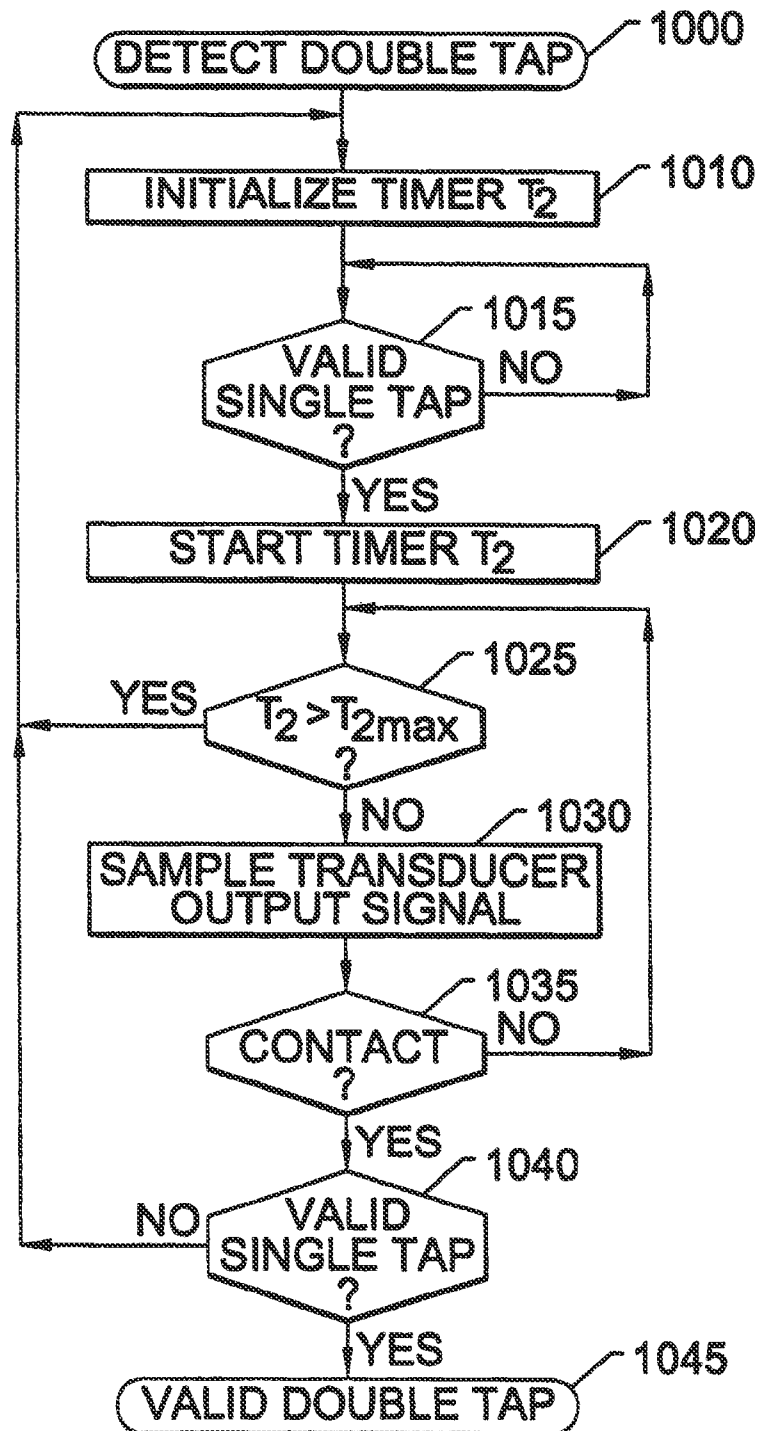


FIG. 6B.



FIG. 8.

**FIG. 9.**

**FIG. 10.**

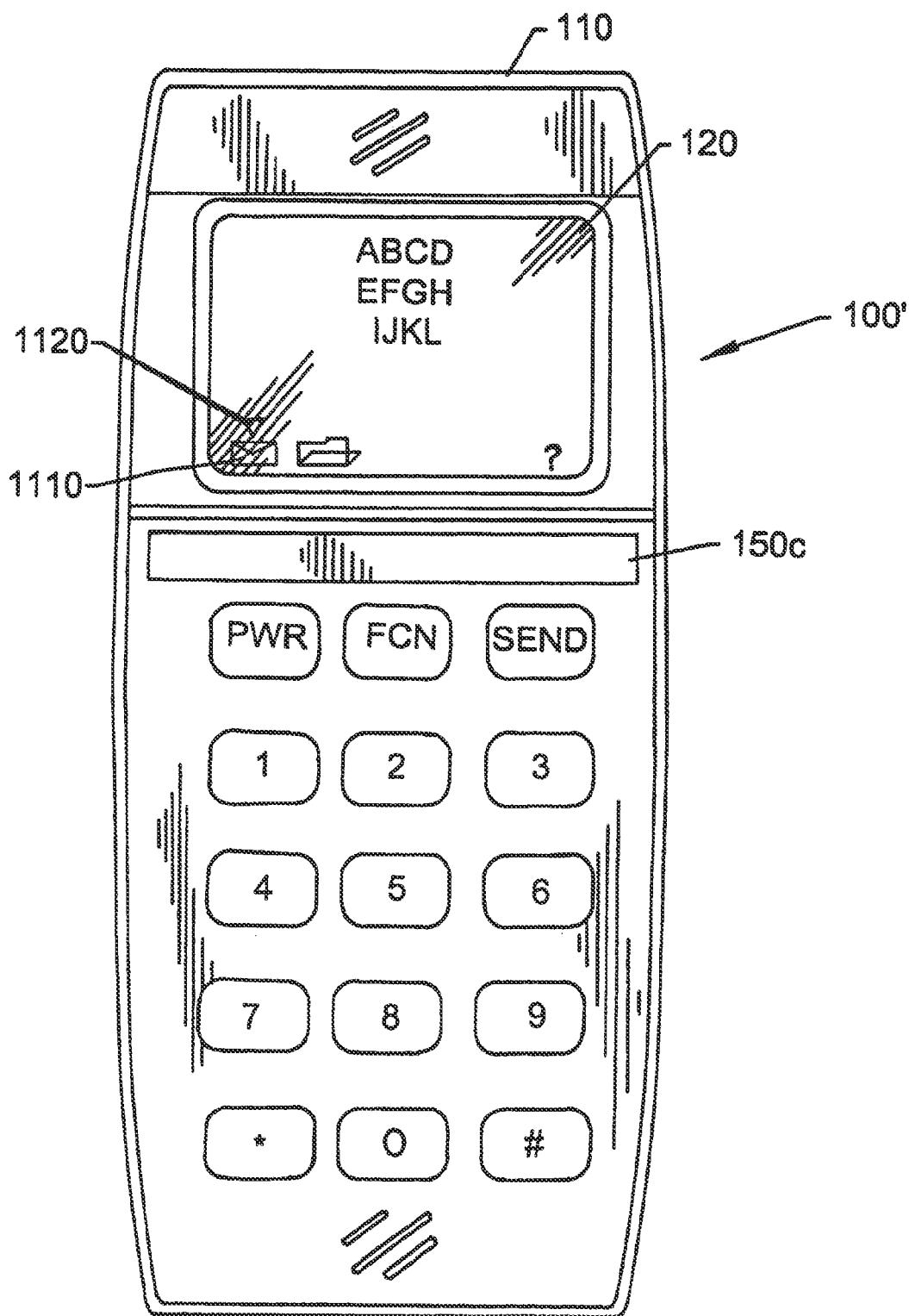


FIG. 11.

1

RADIOTELEPHONES HAVING CONTACT-SENSITIVE USER INTERFACES AND METHODS OF OPERATING SAME

This application is a continuation of patent application Ser. No. 11/078,916, entitled "RADIOTELEPHONES HAVING CONTACT-SENSITIVE USER INTERFACES AND METHODS OF OPERATING SAME," filed on Mar. 11, 2005 which is a reissue of U.S. Pat. No. 6,278,888 which is a continuation of U.S. Pat. No. 6,131,047 the contents of which are incorporated herein by reference.

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to radiotelephones and methods of operation thereof, and more particularly, to apparatus and methods for providing user input to radiotelephones.

BACKGROUND

Radiotelephone terminals typically include a radio transceiver integrated with a user interface mechanism within a handheld case. The user interface typically includes a plurality of keys similar to those provided on conventional wireline telephones, as well as additional function keys for controlling functions associated with radiotelephone operations. The keys provide a means for entering commands, telephone numbers or other data for processing by the radiotelephone. A display may be used to display information a user has entered at the keys, e.g., telephone numbers, menu selections, and the like, as well as to display messages or other information received from a radiotelephone system with which the radiotelephone is communicating. The display may also be used to display information stored in memory located in the radiotelephone.

Commonly, the display is configured to display one or more graphical objects, e.g. a list of commands in a command menu or a list of telephone numbers that are stored in the radiotelephone memory that the user may select for communication. The graphical objects may be selectively displayed, for example, by displaying a selected number of entries in a list of telephone numbers or command options. The list may be "scrolled" in response to a user input to allow a large list to be displayed on a small display.

In some conventional radiotelephones, control of the scrolling of graphical objects on the display may be controlled by one or more keys, the operation of which may be similar to the "arrow" keys provided on computer keyboard. Other keys may be provided to invoke particular selections. In other conventional radiotelephone designs, a wheel-like input device may be mounted on the radiotelephone case that may be turned by a user to effect scrolling of graphical objects on the display. The wheel device may also be configured to select items on the display in response to user application of radial pressure to the wheel.

Each of these conventional techniques for control of a radiotelephone display has its limitations. Keys for scrolling and invoking display selections may be awkward to use, and may consume valuable space on the keypad of the radiotelephone. A wheeled input device may provide faster and more intuitive scrolling control, but such a device may take up an inordinate amount of space and require moving parts which

2

may be more prone to failure. Accordingly, there is a need for improved input devices for radiotelephones.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In light of the foregoing, it is an object of the present invention to provide radiotelephones and methods of operation thereof which provide reliable, intuitive and efficient display control.

In one aspect, features of the present invention provide for a device, comprising a housing including a front surface, a rear surface and first and second side surfaces adjoining respective opposite edges of the front surface and extending from the respective opposite edges of the front surface to respective opposite edges of the rear surface. The rear surface is configured to be engaged by a user's palm during use of the device. The device includes a radiotelephone communications transceiver and a contact-sensitive display, supported by the housing. The contact sensitive display is configured to display an image at the front surface of the housing, and produce an output signal in response to moving contact of an object along a contact-sensitive surface of the contact-sensitive display. The device also includes a controller, operatively coupled to the display and the radiotelephone communications transceiver. The controller is configured to control at least one of the display and the radiotelephone communications transceiver and to scroll displayed rows along an axis of the display based upon the output signal of the contact-sensitive transducer, the controller having a first mode wherein the controller is responsive to contact with the contact-sensitive transducer and a second mode wherein the controller is unresponsive to contact with the contact-sensitive transducer, the second mode being entered in response to an input from a user.

In another aspect, the present invention may provide for a method comprising receiving a user input indicating one of a first mode and a second mode of operation. In response to receiving a user input indicating a first mode of operation, the method includes providing on a contact-sensitive surface a display including at least one of an alphanumeric character and an icon, detecting contact on the contact-sensitive surface at a location corresponding to the at least alphanumeric character or the at least one icon, generating an output signal in response to the detecting step, and taking an action in response to the output signal. In response to receiving a user input indicating a second mode of operation, the method includes detecting contact on the contact-sensitive surface, generating an output signal in response to the detecting step, and taking no action in response to the output signal.

In yet another aspect, the present invention may provide for a device comprising housing means and display means, supported by the housing means, for displaying an image at a front surface of the housing. The device further includes contact-sensitive means, supported by the housing means, for producing an output signal in response to moving contact of an object along the contact-sensitive means, and control means for, responsive to the output signal, for scrolling displayed rows along an axis of the display means based on the output signal of the contact-sensitive means. The device further includes means for receiving input from a user and for placing the control means in a first mode wherein the controller is responsive to contact with the contact-sensitive means and a second mode wherein the control means is unresponsive to contact with the contact-sensitive means, in response to the user input.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a more complete understanding of the present invention, and the advantages thereof, reference is now made to the following descriptions taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 illustrates a radiotelephone according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram illustrating a radiotelephone according to an embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 3 illustrates a radiotelephone with dual contact-sensitive strips according to another embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram illustrating a circuit for controlling a display using a contact-sensitive transducer according to another embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 5 is a flowchart illustration of operations for determining a position of contact of an object with a contact-sensitive transducer according to an aspect of the present invention;

FIGS. 6A through 6B are schematic diagrams illustrating a circuit for controlling power supply to a radiotelephone using a contact-sensitive transducer according to another embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. 7A-7C illustrate operations for scrolling displayed items and selecting functions associated with a displayed item according to another aspect of the present invention;

FIG. 8 is a flowchart illustration of operations for detecting a swiping contact with a contact-sensitive transducer according to another aspect of the present invention;

FIGS. 9-10 are flowchart illustrations of operations for detecting contacts with a contact-sensitive transducer according to aspects of the present invention; and

FIG. 11 illustrates a radiotelephone with a horizontally mounted contact-sensitive strip according to another embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

Before addressing the illustrated embodiments in detail, various aspects and advantageous features of embodiments of the invention will be discussed generally in the following paragraphs.

This and other objects, features and advantages are provided according to the present invention by radiotelephones and methods of operation thereof in which control of a radiotelephone's display and/or radiotelephone communications transceiver is effected using a contact-sensitive transducer such as a resistive or capacitive touch strip mounted on the radiotelephone. The contact-sensitive transducer produces an output signal that characterizes contact, e.g., contact of an object such as a user's finger, with a surface of the transducer. The output signal may be processed by a controller to control display of information on the display and to initiate actions associated with displayed items. For example, the contact-sensitive transducer may be used to control display of graphical objects such as rows or columns on the display, and initiation of functions associated with the graphical objects. Preferably, the contact-sensitive transducer comprises an elongate strip and produces an output signal that characterizes contact with the strip along its elongate axis. In one embodiment, two of such elongate strips are mounted on respective sides of the radiotelephone. In another embodiment, an elongate strip is mounted on a front face of the radiotelephone.

Using a contact-sensitive transducer to control a radiotelephone offers several advantages. Because a contact-sensitive transducer may be configured to have a thin profile, the transducer may be mounted at a surface of the radiotelephone without taking up an inordinate amount of valuable space. Because characteristic types of contact with the transducer can be detected, such as swiping motions or taps, the transducer may be used to perform display movements such as scrolling or cursor movement, as well as for selection of items displayed on the display. In addition, because a contact-sensitive transducer may be fabricated without moving parts, reliability may be improved.

In particular, according to an aspect of the present invention, a radiotelephone includes a frame. The frame supports a radiotelephone communications transceiver and a display. A contact-sensitive transducer such as a resistive transducer, a capacitive transducer or a semiconductive transducer, is supported by the frame, e.g., mounted at a surface of a housing, and produces an output signal that characterizes contact along a contact-sensitive surface of the contact-sensitive transducer. A controller is responsive to the output signal and operatively associated with the display and the radiotelephone communications transceiver, and controls at least one of the display and the radiotelephone communications transceiver according to the output signal of the contact-sensitive transducer.

In an embodiment of the present invention, the controller is configured to selectively display an image, e.g., a graphical object such as a row of alphanumeric characters, on the display responsive to the output signal of the contact-sensitive transducer. The controller may include means for displaying of a plurality of graphical objects on the display, and means, responsive to the contact sensitive transducer, for identifying one of the displayed plurality of graphical objects based on the output signal of the contact-sensitive transducer.

According to another embodiment, the controller comprises means, responsive to the contact-sensitive transducer, for determining a position of contact along the axis of the contact-sensitive transducer. Means are also provided, responsive to the means for determining a position of contact, for selectively displaying a graphical object based on the determined position of contact to thereby identify the graphical object, e.g., by highlighting one of a plurality of displayed graphical objects or by displaying a cursor that indicates one of a plurality of displayed graphical objects.

In yet another embodiment of the present invention, the controller is configured to cause the display or the radiotelephone communications transceiver to perform a plurality of actions. An action of the plurality of actions may be associated with an identified graphical object, and the controller may further comprise means, responsive to the contact-sensitive transducer, for initiating the action associated with the identified graphical object. The means for initiating an action may include means, responsive to the contact-sensitive transducer, for detecting a momentary contact with the transducer. Means may be provided, responsive to the means for detecting a momentary contact, for initiating the action associated with the identified graphical object. The means for initiating an action may include means for initiating the action in response to detection of a predetermined number of momentary contacts occurring within a predetermined time interval.

According to another embodiment of the present invention, the controller includes means, responsive to the contact-sensitive transducer, for scrolling displayed rows along an axis of the display based on the output signal of the contact-sensitive transducer. The means for scrolling may include means, responsive to the output signal of contact-sensitive transducer, for detecting moving contact with the contact-sensitive

5

transducer along the axis of the contact-sensitive transducer, and means, responsive to the means for detecting moving contact, for scrolling displayed rows along the axis of the display based on the detected movement.

In yet another embodiment of the present invention, the controller has a first mode wherein the controller is responsive to contact with the contact-sensitive transducer and a second mode wherein the controller is unresponsive to contact with the contact-sensitive transducer. The radiotelephone further comprises means for placing the controller in one of the first mode or the second mode in response to an input from a user.

Another embodiment according to the present invention includes a power supply electrically connected to the contact-sensitive transducer. The controller comprises a first control circuit, responsive to the contact-sensitive transducer, which controls the radiotelephone communications transceiver and the display according to the output signal of the contact-sensitive transducer, and a second control circuit, responsive to the contact-sensitive transducer, which controls power transfer from the power supply to the first control circuit according to the output signal from the contact-sensitive transducer. The first control circuit may include a microcontroller, and the second control circuit may control power transfer from the power supply to the microcontroller according to the output signal of the contact-sensitive transducer.

In another embodiment according to the present invention, the radiotelephone frame includes a housing and the contact-sensitive transducer comprises an elongate contact-sensitive strip mounted at a surface of the housing. The housing may have a front face and an adjoining first side, the display may be mounted at the front face, and the elongate contact-sensitive strip may be mounted at the first side adjoining the front face. A second contact-sensitive strip may be mounted at a second side of the radiotelephone housing, adjoining the front face and opposite the first side. According to another embodiment, a contact-sensitive transducer may be mounted at the front face of the housing.

According to method aspects of the present invention, user input is provided to a radiotelephone using a contact-sensitive transducer that produces an output signal that characterizes contact of an object on a contact-sensitive surface of the contact-sensitive transducer. At least one of a radiotelephone communications transceiver and a display of the radiotelephone may be controlled according to the output signal of the contact-sensitive transducer. An image may be selectively displayed on the radiotelephone display according to the output signal of the contact-sensitive transducer. Improved user interfaces for radiotelephones are thereby provided.

The present invention now will be described more fully hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which embodiments of the invention are shown. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that the invention may be embodied in many different forms and should not be construed as limited to the embodiments set forth herein; rather, these embodiments are provided so that this disclosure will be thorough and complete, and will fully convey the scope of the invention to those skilled in the art. In the drawings, like numbers refer to like elements throughout. It will be understood that when a first object, e.g., a contact-sensitive transducer strip, is referred to as mounted "at" a surface of a second object, e.g., a housing or the like, the first object may be mounted directly on the surface of the second object, on a structural element or frame underlying the surface of the second object which allows a surface of the first object accessible through an opening in the surface of the second object, and the like.

6

FIG. 1 illustrates a radiotelephone 100 in which the apparatus and methods according to an embodiment of the present invention may be embodied. The radiotelephone includes a frame, here shown as including a housing 110. The housing 110 supports a display 120 and a plurality of keys 130. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that also included but not illustrated are a radiotelephone communications transceiver for communicating with a radiotelephone system, e.g., transmitter, receiver and associated control circuits for communicating with a cellular system via an antenna 140. The radiotelephone communications transceiver and the display 120 are controlled by a contact-sensitive transducer 150 mounted at a side surface of the radiotelephone housing 110, adjacent the display 120. It will be appreciated that the contact-sensitive transducer 150 may be attached to the housing 110 in a variety of different ways. For example, the transducer 150 may be attached to an outer surface of the housing 110, attached to a boss or similar structure attached to an outer surface of the housing 110, attached to a circuit board or similar structure mounted within the housing 110 and extending through an opening in a surface of the housing 110, or the like.

Referring now to FIG. 2, the contact-sensitive transducer 150 produces an output signal 155 that characterizes contact of an object, such as a user's finger 210, along an axis 150a of the transducer 150. A controller 220 is responsive to the output signal 155 and operatively associated with the display 120 and a radiotelephone communications transceiver 230. The controller 220 selectively display an image, such as one or more rows 240 of alphanumeric characters, on the display 120 based on the output signal 155 produced by the contact-sensitive transducer 150. The controller also controls the radiotelephone communications transceiver 230 according to the output signal 155. The contact-sensitive transducer 150 may comprise a variety of different contact-sensitive devices, including resistive, capacitive or semiconductive strips. For example, the contact-sensitive transducer 150 may be implemented using a semiconductive pad-type transducer of the type manufactured by Interlink Corp.

FIG. 3 illustrates an embodiment of the present invention, in which dual contact sensitive strips 150a, 150b are attached on opposite sides of a radiotelephone housing 110, adjacent the display 120. By providing strips on both sides of the radiotelephone housing 110, the radiotelephone 100 may be used in either a right-handed or left-handed fashion. Preferably, only one of the strips 150a, 150b is active at any given time, i.e., one of the strips is inactivated to prevent inadvertent generation of signals to the controller caused by gripping of the radiotelephone. The active strip may be indicated by, for example, displaying an icon 125 near the edge of the display 120 closest the active strip 150a.

FIG. 4 illustrates an exemplary embodiment of the controller 220 that includes a circuit connected to nodes R_1 , R_2 , R_c , L_1 , L_2 , L_c , of the transducers 150a, 150b. Voltages between the nodes R_1 and R_c and nodes L_1 and L_c are sampled under the control of a microcontroller 410 which controls multiplexers 420a, 420b and a discharge switch 430, selectively applying the voltages at the nodes R_1 , R_2 , R_c , L_1 , L_2 , L_c to capacitor C. A comparator 440, in conjunction with a counter 450, determines the time required to charge the capacitor C to a threshold voltage V_T after a node of one of the transducers 150a, 150b is connected to the capacitor C. A trio of charge times is sampled for a given transducer, providing a measure of a position of contact of an object with the transducer, as will be described in detail below. The counts produced by the counter 150, representing contact position samples, are

7

latched into a register **460**, and in turn conveyed to the microcontroller **410** for further processing.

Those skilled in the art will appreciate that a wide variety of apparatus other than the illustrated embodiment of FIG. **4** may be used with the present invention. For example, a different type of contact-sensitive transducer may be employed which utilizes a different kind of controller circuitry to process output signals produced by the contact-sensitive transducer. In general, it will be appreciated that a controller **220** for processing output signals produced by a contact-sensitive transducer and for controlling a display **120** and a radiotelephone communications transceiver **230** according to the output signal, as described with respect to FIG. **2**, may be implemented using special purpose hardware, software or firmware running on general-purpose or special-purpose computing apparatus, or combinations thereof.

The flowchart illustration of FIG. **5** illustrates methods and apparatus for determining a position of contact with a contact-sensitive transducer according to an aspect of the present invention. It will be understood that blocks of the flowchart illustration, and combinations of blocks in the flowchart illustration, can be implemented by computer program instructions which may be loaded onto a computer or other programmable data processing apparatus to produce a machine such that the instructions which execute on the computer or other programmable data processing apparatus create means for implementing the functions specified in the flowchart block or blocks. The computer program instructions may also be loaded onto a computer or other programmable data processing apparatus to cause a series of operational steps to be performed on the computer or other programmable apparatus to produce a computer implemented process such that the instructions which execute on the computer or other programmable apparatus provide steps for implementing the functions specified in the flowchart block or blocks. Accordingly, blocks of the flowchart illustration support combinations of means for performing the specified functions and combinations of steps for performing the specified functions. It will also be understood that each block of the flowchart illustrations, and combinations of blocks in the flowchart illustration, can be implemented by special purpose hardware which performs the specified functions or steps, or combinations of special purpose hardware such as the microcontroller **410** of FIG. **4**, microprocessors, digital signal processing (DSP) chips, application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs) or the like, which execute computer instructions.

FIG. **5** illustrates exemplary detailed operations (Block **500** et seq.) for determining a position of contact of an object with the left contact strip **150a** of FIG. **3**. The discharge switch **430** is closed to discharge the capacitor **C** (Block **505**). The power supply voltage V_{cc} is then applied to the L_1 node (Block **510**), and the L_c node is connected to the capacitor **C** (Block **515**). The discharge switch **430** is then opened to charge the capacitor **C** (Block **520**), and a first capacitor charge time T_1 is measured (Block **525**). The capacitor **C** is then discharged by closing the switch **430** again (Block **530**). The power supply voltage V_{cc} is next applied to the L_2 node (Block **535**), and the L_c node is connected to the capacitor **C** (Block **540**). The discharge switch **430** is then opened (Block **545**), and a second capacitor charge time T_2 is measured (Block **550**). The capacitor **C** is discharged once again by closing the discharge switch **430** (Block **555**). The power supply voltage V_{cc} is then applied to the L_1 node (Block **560**), and the L_2 node is connected to the capacitor **C** (Block **565**). The discharge switch **430** is opened (Block **570**), and a third capacitor charge time T_3 is measured (Block **575**). The first,

8

second and third capacitor charge times T_1 , T_2 , T_3 are then used to determine a position of contact with the transducer **520b** (Block **580**).

In particular, three equations are applicable to the measurements described with respect to FIG. **5**: $T_1 = k(R_{L1} + R_{Lc})$; $T_2 = k(R_{L2} + R_{Lc})$; and $T_3 = k(R_{L1} + R_{L2})$, where $k = -\text{Cln}(1 - V_1/V_{cc})$.

These equations may be solved for R_{L1} , R_{L2} , and R_{Lc} , and the position of contact **P** can be determined as: ##EQU1##

Those skilled in the art will appreciate that similar operations may be performed to determine a position of contact with the right contact strip **150a**. It will also be understood that by application of appropriate control signals to the multiplexers **420a**, **420b**, either one of the transducers **150a**, **150b** may be disconnected from the capacitor **C**, effectively preventing input from the disconnected transducer.

FIG. **6A** illustrates another embodiment of the present invention, specifically a circuit which may be used in conjunction with the control circuit illustrated in FIG. **4** to control power transfer from a power supply, e.g., a battery supplying a battery voltage V_{bat} , to the microcontroller **410** and/or other circuits in a radiotelephone based on input signals from a contact-sensitive transducer. Additional switches **610a-610d** may be provided in the signal paths connecting the nodes R_c , L_c , R_1 , L_1 . These switches may be used to connect the associated nodes to the control input for the switch **620** via diodes D_1 , D_2 (in the case of nodes R_c , L_c) and to the battery voltage V_{bat} (in the case of nodes R_1 , L_1) in an "off" state, as shown. In the off state, a power switch **620** disconnects the battery voltage V_{bat} from a regulator **630** that provides a regulated power supply voltage V_{cc} to the microcontroller **410**.

When either of the right or the left strips **150a**, **150b** is pressed such that a voltage is produced sufficient to overcome the drop across the associated diode D_1 , D_2 and the input activation voltage of the power switch **620**, the power switch **620** closes and applies the battery voltage V_{bat} to the regulator **630**. Power is thus provided to the microcontroller **410**. The microcontroller may then latch the power switch **620** into a sustained "on" state by driving a third diode D_3 and by applying control signals to the switches **610a-610d** to connect the nodes R_c , L_c , R_1 , L_1 the appropriate multiplexers as illustrated in FIG. **4**. The microcontroller **410** may return the power switch **620** to the "off" state by inverting the logic on the line driving the third diode D_3 . Because a specific voltage is needed to activate the power switch **620**, accidental activation of the radiotelephone can be prevented. According to another embodiment illustrated in FIG. **6B**, the circuit of FIG. **6A** may be modified such pressure on both of the strips **150a**, **150b** is required to power up the regulator **630**. When the right strip **150b** is pressed, the battery voltage V_{bat} is applied from R_1 and R_c to L_1 . If the left strip **150a** is simultaneously pressed, the voltage is also applied to the control input of the power switch **620** through D_2 . Otherwise, the operation of the circuit of FIG. **6B** is similar to that described with respect to the circuit of FIG. **6A**.

The conceptual illustrations of FIGS. **7A-7B** and the flowchart illustrations of FIGS. **8-10** illustrate methods and apparatus for determining contact with a contact-sensitive transducer to identify graphical objects on a display and for initiating functions associated with the identified objects. It will be understood that blocks of the flowchart illustrations, and combinations of blocks in the flowchart illustrations, can be implemented by computer program instructions which may be loaded onto a computer or other programmable data processing apparatus to produce a machine such that the instructions which execute on the computer or other programmable data processing apparatus create means for implementing the functions specified in the flowchart block or blocks.

The computer program instructions may also be loaded onto a computer or other programmable data processing apparatus to cause a series of operational steps to be performed on the computer or other programmable apparatus to produce a computer implemented process such that the instructions which execute on the computer or other programmable apparatus provide steps for implementing the functions specified in the flowchart block or blocks. Accordingly, blocks of the flowchart illustrations support combinations of means for performing the specified functions and combinations of steps for performing the specified functions. It will also be understood that each block of the flowchart illustrations, and combinations of blocks in the flowchart illustration, can be implemented by special purpose hardware which performs the specified functions or steps, or combinations of special purpose hardware such as microcontrollers, microprocessors, digital signal processing (DSP) chips, application-specific integrated circuits (ASICs) or the like, which execute computer instructions.

FIGS. 7A-7C illustrate operations for controlling display of an image on a radiotelephone display according to another aspect of the present invention, in particular, operations for "scrolling" graphical objects, here shown as rows, on a radiotelephone display 120, and for initiating a function associated with a graphical object identified on the display 120. At least one graphical object is displayed on a radiotelephone display 120. As illustrated in FIG. 7B, a user makes a swiping or displacement motion in contact with a contact-sensitive strip 150 mounted on a side of the radiotelephone 100, causing the display rows to "scroll" along the direction of the user's movement. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that "scrolling" in a generic sense refers to selective display of a row on the display 120, and may be encompass a number of different graphical operations. For example, as depicted in FIGS. 7A-7C, a plurality of rows may be displayed on the display 120, and a selected one of displayed rows may be highlighted or otherwise identified in response to the user input. Different rows may be sequentially displayed on the display 120, giving the appearance of a scrolling movement. In addition, actions such as scrolling by sequentially highlighting rows or other graphical objects or moving a cursor to sequentially indicate rows or other graphical objects responsive to a swiping motion on the transducer 150 may also be employed.

As illustrated in FIG. 7C, a function associated with an item identified by, for example, highlighting or cursor positioning, is initiated with the user performs a predetermined number of momentary contacts or taps on the contact-sensitive transducer 150, as illustrated in FIG. 7C. These momentary contacts or taps may occur anywhere along the contact-sensitive transducer 150. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that a number of variations on the above-described operations may be performed within the scope of the present invention. For example, instead of providing multi-graphical object display, the display 120 may be configured to display only one row at a time, sequentially displaying rows stored in memory to give the appearance of scrolling.

FIG. 8 illustrates exemplary operations for detecting a swiping contact with a contact-sensitive transducer (Blocks 800 et seq.). The transducer output signal is sampled (Block 805). If the sample indicates contact of an object with the transducer, a starting position P_{start} of contact is next determined (Blocks 810-815). The transducer output signal is again sampled (Block 820), and if contact is still detected, an ending position P_{end} is determined (Blocks 825-830). A distance D is then determined from the starting and ending positions P_{start} , P_{end} (Block 835). If the magnitude of the

distance D is less than a minimum distance D_{min} , the movement is disregarded and another sample obtained (Blocks 840-820). If the distance D is sufficiently large, however, the controller determines the direction of the movement by looking at the sign of the distance D (Block 845). If the distance D is negative, the display is scrolled in a first direction (Block 850a); if the distance D is positive, however, the display is scrolled in a second direction (Block 850b). The ending position is then used as a new starting position (Block 855).

FIG. 9 illustrates exemplary operations (Blocks 900 et seq.) for detecting a momentary contact or tap on a contact-sensitive transducer according to another aspect of the present invention. Generally speaking, a momentary contact or tap is detected by satisfaction of a series of three conditions: (1) absence of contact with the contact-sensitive transducer; (2) contact with the contact-sensitive transducer; and (3) termination of contact with the contact-sensitive transducer within a predetermined time period. In the exemplary operations shown, a timer T_1 (for example, a software timer implemented in the microcontroller 410 of FIG. 4) is initialized (Block 905). The output signal from a contact-sensitive transducer is sampled (Block 910). If the sampled output signal indicates that an object is in contact with the transducer, the output signal is repeatedly sampled until contact is not detected (Blocks 910-915). Once no contact is detected, the first condition for a tap is satisfied. A second round of sampling is then initiated, with the output being sampled until contact is again detected (Blocks 920-925). Once contact is again detected, the second condition for a tap is satisfied. The timer T_1 is then started (Block 930). As long as contact continues and the time measured by the timer T_1 is less than a predetermined maximum time interval T_{max} , the output of the transducer is repeatedly sampled (Blocks 935-945). If contact ceases before the timer T_1 exceeds the maximum time T_{max} , the third condition for a tap has been satisfied, and a valid single tap has been detected (Block 550). However, if the timer T_1 exceeds the maximum time T_{max} before contact ceases, the timer T_1 is reinitialized (Block 905) and the detection process begins anew.

FIG. 10 illustrates operations (Block 1000 et seq.) for detecting a double tap on the contact-sensitive transducer. A second timer T_2 is initialized (Block 110). Once a valid single tap is detected, the second timer T_2 is started (Blocks 1015-1020). As long as the time measured by the second time T_2 remains less than a second maximum time interval T_{2max} , and no contact with the transducer is detected, the transducer is repeatedly sampled (Blocks 1025-1035). If the timer has yet to expire when contact is detected, it is next determined whether the contact constitutes a valid single tap (Block 1040). If a valid single tap is detected, a valid double tap has occurred (Block 1045). If not, the second timer T_2 is reinitialized (Block 1005), starting the detection process anew.

FIG. 11 illustrates another embodiment according to the present invention, a radiotelephone 100' which includes a horizontally-arranged contact-sensitive transducer 150c, here shown mounted on a front face of the radiotelephone housing 110, near the display 120. In a manner similar to that described with respect to the side-mounted transducers of FIG. 3, the transducer 150c may be used to selectively display column-organized graphical objects on the display 120 based on contact of an object, e.g., a finger or stylus, with the contact-sensitive transducer 150c. For example, as illustrated in FIG. 11, icons 1110 may be displayed in columns on the display 120, and may be selectively identified according to contact with the contact sensitive transducer 150c, using apparatus and operations similar to those described with respect to FIGS. 4-10. An icon may be identified by several

11

techniques, such as by highlighting or by displaying a cursor 1120 adjacent the identified icon. A function associated with the identified icon may be selected using apparatus and operations in a manner similar to those described with respect to FIGS. 7A-7C. Those skilled in the art will also appreciate that other embodiments may include side-mounted contact-sensitive strips such as those illustrated in FIG. 3 in combination with a horizontally-mounted contact-sensitive strip as illustrated in FIG. 11 to provide both row and column-oriented controls for the display 120.

In the drawings and specification, there have been disclosed typical embodiments of the invention and, although specific terms are employed, they are used in a generic and descriptive sense only and not for purposes of limitation, the scope of the invention being set forth in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A device, comprising:
 - a housing including a front surface, a rear surface and first and second side surfaces adjoining respective opposite edges of the front surface and extending from the respective opposite edges of the front surface to respective opposite edges of the rear surface, the rear surface configured to be engaged by a user's palm during use of the device;
 - a radiotelephone communications transceiver, supported by the housing;
 - a contact-sensitive display, supported by the housing, the contact sensitive display configured to:
 - display an image at the front surface of the housing, and
 - produce an output signal in response to moving contact of an object along a contact-sensitive surface of the contact-sensitive display; and
 - a controller, operatively coupled to the contact-sensitive display and the radiotelephone communications transceiver, the controller configured to control at least one of the contact-sensitive display and the radiotelephone communications transceiver and to scroll displayed rows along an axis of the contact-sensitive display based upon the output signal of the contact-sensitive display, the controller having a first mode wherein the controller is responsive to contact with the contact-sensitive surface and a second mode wherein the controller is unresponsive to contact with the contact-sensitive surface, the second mode being entered in response to an input from a user.
2. The device according to claim 1, wherein the contact-sensitive display is configured to produce the output signal in response to the user moving a finger across the contact-sensitive surface.
3. The device according to claim 1, wherein the controller is operative to selectively display an icon on the contact-sensitive display.
4. The device according to claim 3, wherein the controller is operative to detect selection by the user of a display selected by the user.
5. The device according to claim 4, wherein the controller is operative to detect selection by the user performing a single tap operation at a location of the icon.
6. The device of according to claim 4, wherein the controller is operative to detect selection by the user performing a double tap operation at a location of the icon.
7. The device according to claim 1, wherein the contact-sensitive display is configured to produce the output signal in response to detecting a single tap operation on the contact-sensitive surface.

12

8. The device according to claim 1, wherein the contact-sensitive display is configured to produce the output signal in response to detecting a double tap operation on the contact-sensitive surface.

9. The device according to claim 1, wherein the contact-sensitive display is configured to produce the output signal in response to detecting a predetermined number of multiple contacts on the contact-sensitive surface within a predetermined time interval.

10. The device according to claim 1, further comprising a plurality of contact-sensitive buttons supported by the housing.

11. A method comprising:

receiving a user input indicating one of a first mode and a second mode of operation;

in response to receiving the user input indicating the first mode of operation:

providing on a contact-sensitive surface a display including at least one of an alphanumeric character and an icon;

detecting contact on the contact-sensitive surface at a location corresponding to the alphanumeric character or the icon;

generating an output signal in response to the detecting step; and

taking an action in response to the output signal; and in response to receiving the user input indicating the second mode of operation:

detecting contact on the contact-sensitive surface;

generating an output signal in response to the detecting step; and

taking no action in response to the output signal.

12. The method according to claim 11, wherein detecting contact on the contact-sensitive surface at the location corresponding to the alphanumeric character or the icon includes detecting a swiping motion by a user across the contact-sensitive surface.

13. The method according to claim 11, wherein detecting contact on the contact-sensitive surface at the location corresponding to the alphanumeric character or the icon includes detecting a tapping motion by a user on the contact-sensitive surface.

14. The method according to claim 11, wherein taking an action in response to the output signal includes changing the display provided on the contact-sensitive surface.

15. The method according to claim 14, wherein changing the display includes scrolling rows of displayed alphanumeric characters in a direction indicated by moving contact on the contact-sensitive surface.

16. The method according to claim 14, wherein changing the display includes sequentially highlighting rows of displayed alphanumeric characters in response to a swiping motion on the contact-sensitive surface.

17. The method according to claim 11, wherein taking an action in response to the output signal includes generating a command to a telecommunications transceiver.

18. A device, comprising:

housing means;

display means, supported by the housing means, for displaying an image at a front surface of the housing means;

contact-sensitive means, supported by the housing means, for producing an output signal in response to moving contact of an object along the contact-sensitive means;

control means for, responsive to the output signal, for scrolling displayed rows along an axis of the display means based on the output signal of the contact-sensitive means; and

13

means for receiving input from a user and for placing the control means in a first mode wherein the control means is responsive to contact with the contact-sensitive means and a second mode wherein the control means is unresponsive to contact with the contact-sensitive means, the second mode being entered in response to the input from the user. 5

19. The device according to claim **18**, wherein the contact-sensitive means is embedded within the display means.

20. The device according to claim **19**, wherein the housing means includes means for engaging with a user's palm during use of the device. 10

* * * * *

14