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(54) **Mobile wireless communication device with human interface diversity antenna and related methods**

(57) A mobile wireless communications device may include a portable handheld housing, and a wireless transceiver carried by the housing. A pair of antennas are positioned in side-by-side relation preferably in the upper portion of the portable handheld housing. A human interface diversity controller is connected to the wireless transceiver to preferentially operate with the plurality of antennas based upon a relative position of the portable handheld housing with respect to a hand of a human user. The device can select or weight the antennas based upon the position of the device when being held by a user.

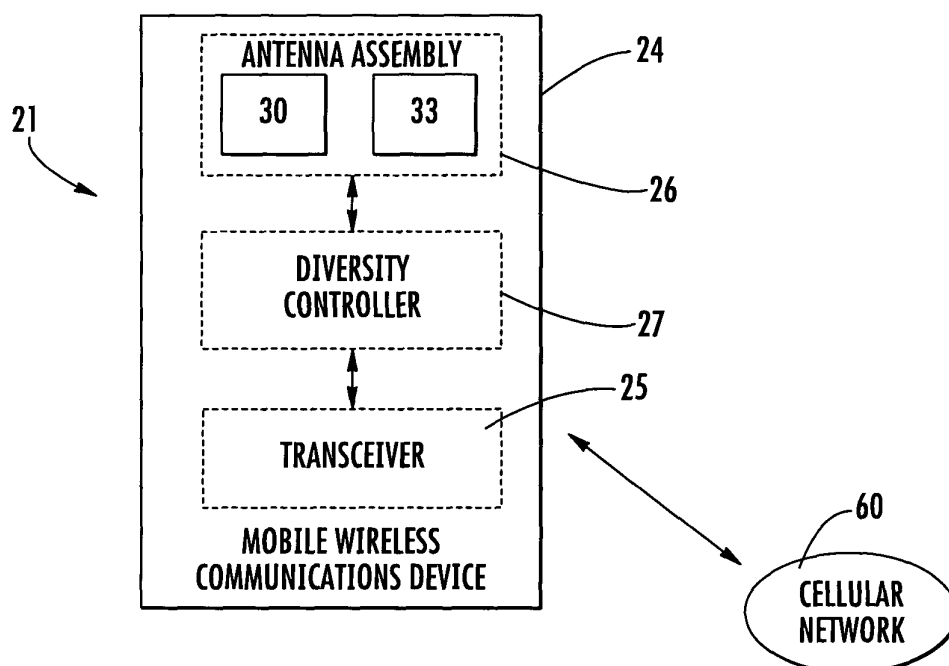
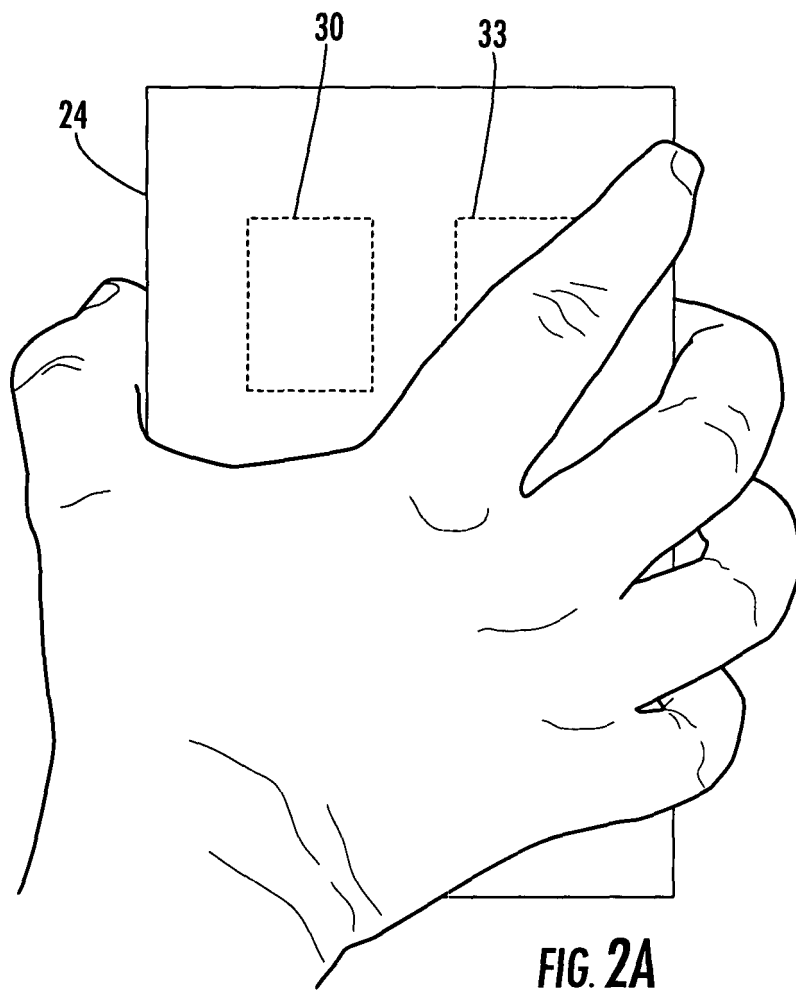


FIG. 1



Description**Field of the Invention**

5 **[0001]** The present invention relates to the field of communications systems, and, more particularly, to wireless communications systems and related methods.

Background of the Invention

10 **[0002]** One of the challenges of wireless communications is designing suitable antennas that can provide desired performance characteristics, yet are relatively small in size to fit within mobile devices. For example, with wireless devices such as mobile telephones, it is desirable to keep the overall size of the telephone as small as possible. Furthermore, internal antennas are generally preferred over external antennas, as externally mounted antennas take up more space and may be damaged while traveling, etc.

15 **[0003]** The use of an internal antenna in a handheld device, particularly those that can be held in various positions, such as by either, both or no hands, leads to the antenna environment being modified in different ways depending on how the user holds/positions the device. Accordingly, antenna designs have to be optimized for only a single position, e.g. one handheld scenario, or the antenna has to be designed to compromise between multiple scenarios.

20 **[0004]** One example of an antenna that is implemented on a PCMCIA card to be inserted in a PCMCIA slot of a laptop computer is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 6,031,503 to Preiss, II et al. The antenna assembly includes two folded, U-shaped antennas, which may be dipoles or slot radiators, that are disposed orthogonally to one another to provide polarization diversity. Polarization diversity means that signals are transmitted and received on two different polarizations to increase the likelihood that the signal is received. Signals are carried to and from the antenna by microstrip feed lines. The microstrip lines are placed off center along each antenna slot to establish an acceptable impedance match for the antenna, and the feed lines are coupled to the communications card by coaxial cables.

25 **[0005]** Accordingly, with even more restrictive space constraints for such handheld devices, there is a need for antennas which are appropriately sized for such applications yet still provide desired performance characteristics.

Summary of the Invention

30 **[0006]** In view of the foregoing background, it is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a mobile wireless communications device with an antenna and transceiver providing human interface diversity as well as other desired signal characteristics and related methods.

35 **[0007]** This and other objects, features, and advantages in accordance with the present invention are provided by a mobile wireless communication device including a portable handheld housing which may have an upper portion and a lower portion, and a wireless transceiver carried by the portable handheld housing. A plurality of antennas, preferably a pair of antennas, are positioned in side-by-side relation preferably in the upper portion of the portable handheld housing. A human interface diversity controller is connected to the wireless transceiver to preferentially operate with the plurality of antennas based upon a relative position of the portable handheld housing with respect to a hand of a human user.

40 **[0008]** The human interface diversity controller preferentially weights transmit signals, and/or switches at least one antenna on and at least one antenna off, for example, based upon received signal strength. The plurality of antennas may be operable on a same frequency, have different polarizations, have different conductive patterns and/or have different frequencies for transmit and receive.

45 **[0009]** The portable handheld housing preferably has opposing parallel front and back surfaces and the plurality of antennas are arranged in side-by-side relation extending in a plane parallel to the front and back surfaces. A display, user input device and an input/output transducer are carried by the portable handheld housing and connected to the transceiver. Furthermore, the transceiver and the plurality of antennas are operable in a LAN wireless network and/or a cellular wireless network.

50 **[0010]** A method aspect of the invention is directed to operating a mobile wireless communications device to account for different human interface, the mobile wireless communications device having a portable handheld housing and a wireless transceiver therein, and a pair of antennas side-by-side in an upper portion of the portable handheld housing and connected to the wireless transceiver. The method includes controlling the wireless transceiver to preferentially operate with the pair of antennas based upon a relative position of the portable handheld housing with respect to a hand of a human user.

55 **[0011]** Controlling the wireless transceiver may include preferentially weighting transmit signals, and/or preferentially switching one antenna on and one antenna off for transmit signals. Again, the pair of antennas may be operated on a same frequency, and each antenna of the pair of antennas may have a different conductive pattern. Preferably, the

portable handheld housing has opposing parallel front and back surfaces and the pair of antennas are arranged in side-by-side relation extending in a plane parallel to the front and back surfaces.

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0012] FIG. 1 is schematic diagram of a mobile wireless communications device in accordance with the present invention.

[0013] FIGs. 2A and 2B are schematic diagrams of the mobile wireless communications device of FIG. 1 illustrating the device being held by a user in respectively different positions.

[0014] FIG. 3 is an enlarged rear elevational view of a portion of the mobile wireless communications device of FIG. 1 with the housing removed illustrating the pair of antennas thereof in greater detail.

[0015] FIG. 4 is a schematic block diagram of an exemplary mobile wireless communications device for use with the present invention.

Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments

[0016] The present invention will now be described more fully hereinafter with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which preferred embodiments of the invention are shown. This invention may, however, 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. Like numbers refer to like elements throughout.

[0017] Referring initially to FIG. 1, a mobile wireless communications device **21** in accordance with the present invention is first described. The mobile wireless communications device **21** illustratively includes a portable, handheld housing **24**, and a wireless transceiver **25** carried by the portable, handheld housing. The device **21** also illustratively includes an antenna assembly **26** for cooperating with the wireless transceiver **25** to communicate over the wireless network, as will be discussed further below. More particularly, the device **21** may be a PDA-type device in which the wireless transceiver and antenna assembly **26** cooperate to communicate various types of data, such as voice data, video data, text (e.g., email) data, Internet data, etc. over the wireless network. More specifically, the antenna assembly **26** may be used for placing telephone calls, in which case the device **21** may generally take the form or shape of a typical cellular telephone or a cellular-enabled PDA device, for example.

[0018] The antenna assembly **26** includes a plurality of antennas, preferably a pair of antennas **30, 33** as illustrated. The pair of antennas **30, 33** are positioned in side-by-side relation preferably in the upper portion of the portable handheld housing **24**. A human interface diversity controller **27** is connected to the wireless transceiver **25** to preferentially operate with the pair of antennas **30, 33** based upon a relative position of the portable handheld housing **24** with respect to a hand of a human user.

[0019] As discussed above, the use of an internal antenna in a handheld device, particularly those that can be held in various positions, such as by either, both or no hands, leads to the antenna environment being modified in different ways depending on how the user holds/positions the device. Accordingly, conventional antenna designs are optimized for only a single position, e.g. one handheld scenario, or the antenna is designed to compromise between multiple scenarios.

[0020] Turning additionally to FIGs. 2A and 2B, an embodiment of the pair of antennas **30, 33** and associated human interface diversity controller **27** will be described. Firstly, by using multiple antennas in a human diversity arrangement, the mobile wireless communications device **21** can select the best antenna, or weighted combination, based upon how the user is holding the device. The antennas **30, 33** are designed to provide an overall high antenna system efficiency for the common user holding positions. The figures respectively illustrate a user holding the device **21** in a right hand and a left hand. As can be seen, the user's hand may be directly adjacent one of antennas **30, 33** thereby affecting the performance of the antennas. Accordingly, the associated human interface diversity controller **27** will preferentially operate the pair of antennas **30, 33** to provide the better or stronger signal transmission/reception.

[0021] The human interface diversity controller **27** preferentially weights transmit signals, and/or switches at least one antenna on and at least one antenna off, for example, based upon received signal strength. The plurality of antennas **30, 33** may be operable on a same frequency, have different polarizations, have different conductive patterns and/or have different frequencies for transmit and receive.

[0022] The portable handheld housing **24** preferably has opposing parallel front and back surfaces and the plurality of antennas **30, 33** are arranged in side-by-side relation extending in a plane parallel to the front and back surfaces. A display, user input device and an input/output transducer are carried by the portable handheld housing **24** and connected to the transceiver **25** as discussed below. Furthermore, the transceiver **25** and the plurality of antennas are operable in a cellular wireless network **60** and/or a LAN wireless network. The wireless LAN may operate in accordance with various wireless LAN standards, such as IEEE 802.11/802.11b or Bluetooth, for example, as will also be appreciated by those

skilled in the art.

[0023] Turning additionally to FIG. 3, further details of an embodiment of the antenna assembly 26 will be described and illustratively include the first antenna 30 coupled to the transceiver 25 at a feed point 31 and having a first shape. The antenna assembly 26 also illustratively includes the second antenna 33 coupled to the wireless transceiver 25 at a feed point 34. The second antenna 33 has a second shape different from the first shape of the first antenna 30.

[0024] The polarizations of the first and second antennas 30, 33 may be orthogonal to one another to provide maximum polarization diversity, as will be appreciated by those skilled in the art. Of course, other arrangements may be possible in other embodiments.

[0025] The first and second antennas 30, 33 may advantageously be implemented as planar, printed conductive elements on a circuit board 36. The circuit board may be mounted on the back side of the device 21 (i.e., the side pointing away from the user when holding the device to place a telephone call) at the top of the device (i.e., adjacent the end of the device with the ear speaker). The first and second antennas 30, 33 are shown with hatching to provide greater clarity of illustration.

[0026] The first antenna 30 illustratively includes a feed branch 37 including the first feed point 31, a second feed point 38 which is connected to ground, and a feed section 39 connected between the first and second feed points. The first antenna 30 further illustratively includes a loop branch 45 having a first end 46 coupled to the feed section 39 adjacent the first feed point 31. A second end 47 of the loop branch 45 is spaced apart from the feed section 39 by a gap 48, and the second end is adjacent the second feed point 38. A loop-back section 49 extends between the first and second ends 46, 47. More specifically, the loop-back section 49 generally loops in a clockwise direction from the first end 46 to the second end 47, as shown. The first antenna 30 thus generally defines a dual feed point, open loop configuration. This configuration advantageously provides increased space savings (i.e., reduced antenna footprint), as will be appreciated by those skilled in the art.

[0027] The second antenna 33 also illustratively includes a feed branch defined by the feed point 34 and a feed section 50. Further, a loop branch having a first end 51 coupled to the feed section 50, a second end 52 adjacent the feed branch and separated therefrom by a gap 53, and a loop-back 54 section extending between the first and second ends. The loop-back section 54 illustratively includes an arcuate portion 55. The second antenna 33 thus defines a single feed point, open loop element configuration. Again, this provides space savings, and, thus, reduced antenna footprint.

[0028] As will be appreciated by those skilled in the art, various design parameters (e.g., widths, lengths, loop shapes, notches, etc.) may be altered in the first and second antennas 30, 33 to provide different signal characteristics. By way of example, the overall dimensions of the first and second antennas 30, 33 may be 2 to 3 cm high by 2 to 3 cm wide for each element, although other dimensions may also be used. The antennas 30, 33 preferably operate over a wireless frequency range of about 2.4 to 2.5 GHz, for example, although other frequencies are also possible. Moreover, the coupling between the first and second antennas 30, 33 may also be adjusted to provide desired performance characteristics. By way of example, a preferred coupling distance or gap between the first and second antennas 30, 33 may be in a range of about 3 to 7 mm, although other gap distances may also be used as appropriate for different embodiments.

[0029] Because the first and second antennas 30, 33 have different shapes, they will also have different gain patterns, and thus advantageously provide pattern diversity, as will be appreciated by those skilled in the art. Moreover, the first and second antennas 30, 33 are preferably tuned to have substantially equal main lobe gain for enhanced performance. Of course, it will be appreciated that other antenna element shapes or types may be used in addition to those noted above. Electromagnetic shielding may be placed over one or both sides of the circuit board 36 as necessary in certain applications, as will also be appreciated by those skilled in the art.

[0030] A method aspect of the invention may include controlling the wireless transceiver 25 to preferentially operate with the pair of antennas 30, 33 based upon a relative position of the portable handheld housing 24 with respect to a hand of a human user. Again, controlling the wireless transceiver 25 may include preferentially weighting transmit signals, and/or preferentially switching one antenna on and one antenna off for transmit signals. Additional method aspects will be appreciated by those skilled in the art from the foregoing description.

[0031] Another example of a handheld mobile wireless communications device 1000 that may be used in accordance the present invention is further described with reference to FIG. 4. The device 1000 includes a housing 1200, a keyboard 1400 and an output device 1600. The output device shown is a display 1600, which is preferably a full graphic LCD. Other types of output devices may alternatively be utilized. A processing device 1800 is contained within the housing 1200 and is coupled between the keyboard 1400 and the display 1600. The processing device 1800 controls the operation of the display 1600, as well as the overall operation of the mobile device 1000, in response to actuation of keys on the keyboard 1400 by the user.

[0032] The housing 1200 may be elongated vertically, or may take on other sizes and shapes (including clamshell housing structures). The keyboard may include a mode selection key, or other hardware or software for switching between text entry and telephony entry.

[0033] In addition to the processing device 1800, other parts of the mobile device 1000 are shown schematically in FIG. 4. These include a communications subsystem 1001; a short-range communications subsystem 1020; the keyboard

1400 and the display **1600**, along with other input/output devices **1060**, **1080**, **1100** and **1120**; as well as memory devices **1160**, **1180** and various other device subsystems **1201**. The mobile device **1000** is preferably a two-way RF communications device having voice and data communications capabilities. In addition, the mobile device **1000** preferably has the capability to communicate with other computer systems via the Internet.

[0034] Operating system software executed by the processing device **1800** is preferably stored in a persistent store, such as the flash memory **1160**, but may be stored in other types of memory devices, such as a read only memory (ROM) or similar storage element. In addition, system software, specific device applications, or parts thereof, may be temporarily loaded into a volatile store, such as the random access memory (RAM) **1180**. Communications signals received by the mobile device may also be stored in the RAM **1180**.

[0035] The processing device **1800**, in addition to its operating system functions, enables execution of software applications **1300A-1300N** on the device **1000**. A predetermined set of applications that control basic device operations, such as data and voice communications **1300A** and **1300B**, may be installed on the device **1000** during manufacture. In addition, a personal information manager (PIM) application may be installed during manufacture. The PIM is preferably capable of organizing and managing data items, such as e-mail, calendar events, voice mails, appointments, and task items. The PIM application is also preferably capable of sending and receiving data items via a wireless network **1401**. Preferably, the PIM data items are seamlessly integrated, synchronized and updated via the wireless network **1401** with the device user's corresponding data items stored or associated with a host computer system.

[0036] Communication functions, including data and voice communications, are performed through the communications subsystem **1001**, and possibly through the short-range communications subsystem. The communications subsystem **1001** includes a receiver **1500**, a transmitter **1520**, and one or more antennas **1540** and **1560**. The antenna system can be designed so that when one antenna is covered by a hand, performance of one or more other antennas, including antenna gain and match, may not be degraded. In addition, the communications subsystem **1001** also includes a processing module, such as a digital signal processor (DSP) **1580**, and local oscillators (LOs) **1601**. The specific design and implementation of the communications subsystem **1001** is dependent upon the communications network in which the mobile device **1000** is intended to operate. For example, a mobile device **1000** may include a communications subsystem **1001** designed to operate with the Mobitex™, Data TAC™ or General Packet Radio Service (GPRS) mobile data communications networks, and also designed to operate with any of a variety of voice communications networks, such as AMPS, TDMA, CDMA, PCS, GSM, etc. Other types of data and voice networks, both separate and integrated, may also be utilized with the mobile device **1000**.

[0037] Network access requirements vary depending upon the type of communication system. For example, in the Mobitex and DataTAC networks, mobile devices are registered on the network using a unique personal identification number or PIN associated with each device. In GPRS networks, however, network access is associated with a subscriber or user of a device. A GPRS device therefore requires a subscriber identity module, commonly referred to as a SIM card, in order to operate on a GPRS network.

[0038] When required network registration or activation procedures have been completed, the mobile device **1000** may send and receive communications signals over the communication network **1401**. Signals received from the communications network **1401** by the antenna **1540** are routed to the receiver **1500**, which provides for signal amplification, frequency down conversion, filtering, channel selection, etc., and may also provide analog to digital conversion. Analog-to-digital conversion of the received signal allows the DSP **1580** to perform more complex communications functions, such as demodulation and decoding. In a similar manner, signals to be transmitted to the network **1401** are processed (e.g. modulated and encoded) by the DSP **1580** and are then provided to the transmitter **1520** for digital to analog conversion, frequency up conversion, filtering, amplification and transmission to the communication network **1401** (or networks) via the antenna **1560**.

[0039] In addition to processing communications signals, the DSP **1580** provides for control of the receiver **1500** and the transmitter **1520**. For example, gains applied to communications signals in the receiver **1500** and transmitter **1520** may be adaptively controlled through automatic gain control algorithms implemented in the DSP **1580**.

[0040] In a data communications mode, a received signal, such as a text message or web page download, is processed by the communications subsystem **1001** and is input to the processing device **1800**. The received signal is then further processed by the processing device **1800** for an output to the display **1600**, or alternatively to some other auxiliary I/O device **1060**. A device user may also compose data items, such as e-mail messages, using the keyboard **1400** and/or some other auxiliary I/O device **1060**, such as a touchpad, a rocker switch, a thumb-wheel, or some other type of input device. The composed data items may then be transmitted over the communications network **1401** via the communications subsystem **1001**.

[0041] In a voice communications mode, overall operation of the device is substantially similar to the data communications mode, except that received signals are output to a speaker **1100**, and signals for transmission are generated by a microphone **1120**. Alternative voice or audio I/O subsystems, such as a voice message recording subsystem, may also be implemented on the device **1000**. In addition, the display **1600** may also be utilized in voice communications mode, for example to display the identity of a calling party, the duration of a voice call, or other voice call related information.

[0042] [0031] The short-range communications subsystem enables communication between the mobile device **1000** and other proximate systems or devices, which need not necessarily be similar devices. For example, the short-range communications subsystem may include an infrared device and associated circuits and components, or a Bluetooth communications module to provide for communication with similarly-enabled systems and devices.

[0043] [0032] Many modifications and other embodiments of the invention will come to the mind of one skilled in the art having the benefit of the teachings presented in the foregoing descriptions and the associated drawings. Therefore, it is understood that the invention is not to be limited to the specific embodiments disclosed, and that modifications and embodiments are intended to be included within the scope of the appended claims.

Claims

1. A mobile wireless communication device comprising:

a portable handheld housing;
a wireless transceiver carried by said portable handheld housing;
a plurality of antennas positioned in side-by-side relation in said portable handheld housing; and
a human interface diversity controller connected to said wireless transceiver to preferentially operate with the plurality of antennas based upon a relative position of said portable handheld housing with respect to a hand of a human user.

2. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein said human interface diversity controller preferentially weights transmit signals.

3. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein said human interface diversity controller preferentially weights transmit signals based upon received signal strength.

4. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein said human interface diversity controller preferentially switches at least one antenna on and at least one antenna off for transmit signals.

5. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein said human interface diversity controller preferentially switches at least one antenna on and at least one antenna off for transmit signals based upon received signal strength.

6. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein the plurality of antennas are operable on a same frequency.

7. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein the plurality of antennas have different polarizations.

8. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein the plurality of antennas have different conductive patterns.

9. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein the plurality of antennas have different frequencies for transmit and receive.

10. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein the plurality of antennas comprises a pair of first and second antennas.

11. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein the portable handheld housing has opposing parallel front and back surfaces and wherein said plurality antennas are arranged in side-by-side relation in an upper portion of the portable handheld housing and extending in a plane parallel to the front and back surfaces.

12. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 further comprising a display carried by said portable handheld housing and connected to said transceiver.

13. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 further comprising at least one user input device carried by said portable handheld housing and connected to said transceiver.

14. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 further comprising at least one input/output transducer

carried by said portable handheld housing and connected to said transceiver.

15. The mobile wireless communications device of Claim 1 wherein said transceiver and said plurality of antennas are operable in at least one of a LAN wireless network and a cellular wireless network.

- 5 16. A method of operating a mobile wireless communications device to account for different human interface, the mobile wireless communications device having a portable handheld housing and a wireless transceiver therein, and a pair of antennas side-by-side in an upper portion of the portable handheld housing and connected to the wireless transceiver, the method comprising controlling the wireless transceiver to preferentially operate with the pair of antennas based upon a relative position of the portable handheld housing with respect to a hand of a human user.

17. The method of Claim 16 wherein controlling the wireless transceiver comprises preferentially weighting transmit signals.

- 15 18. The method of Claim 16 wherein controlling the wireless transceiver comprises preferentially switching one antenna on and one antenna off for transmit signals.

19. The method of Claim 16 wherein each antenna of the pair of antennas has a different conductive pattern.

- 20 20. The method of Claim 16 wherein the portable handheld housing has opposing parallel front and back surfaces and wherein the pair of antennas are arranged in side-by-side relation extending in a plane parallel to the front and back surfaces.

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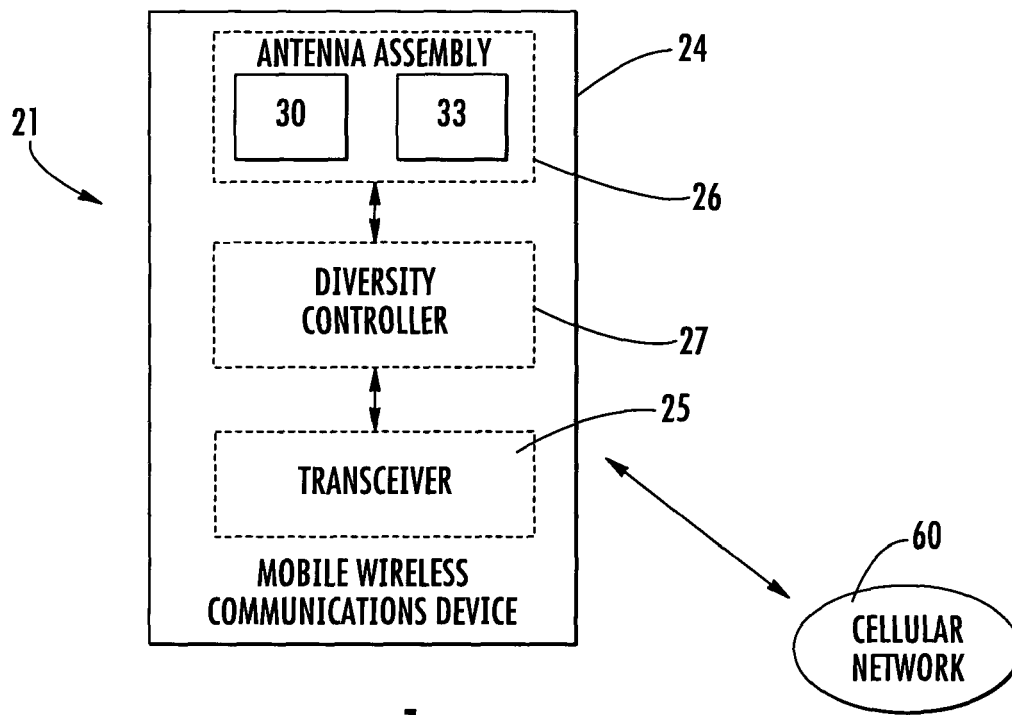
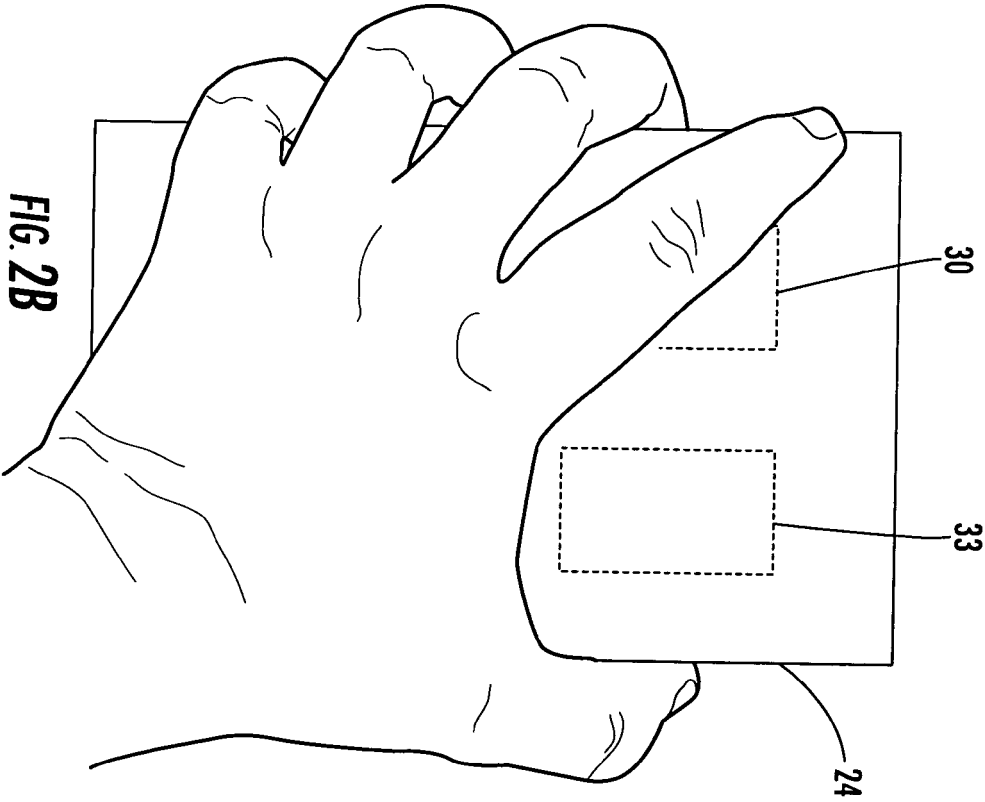
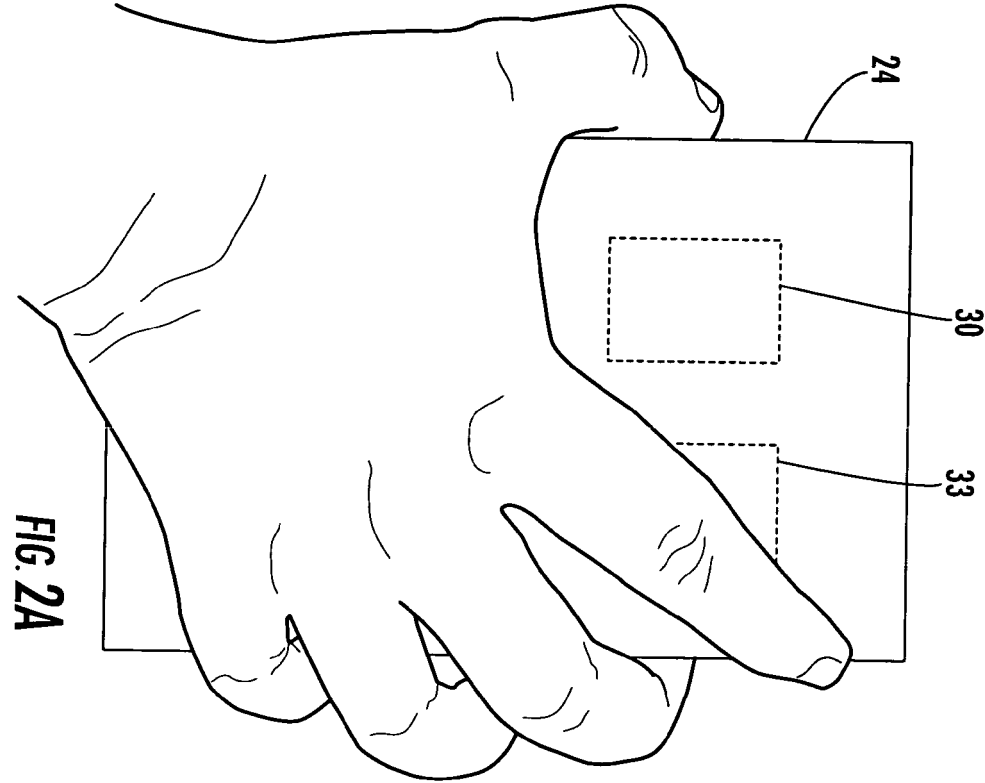


FIG. 1



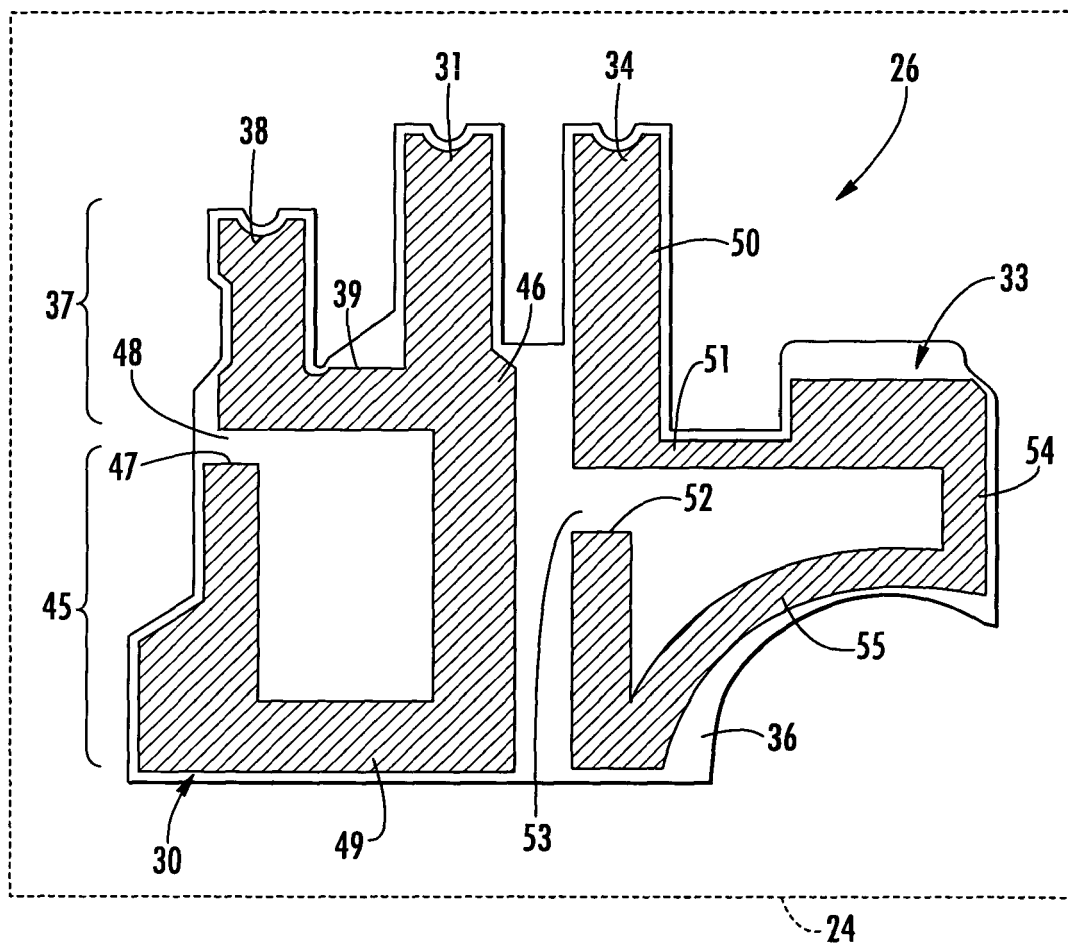


FIG. 3

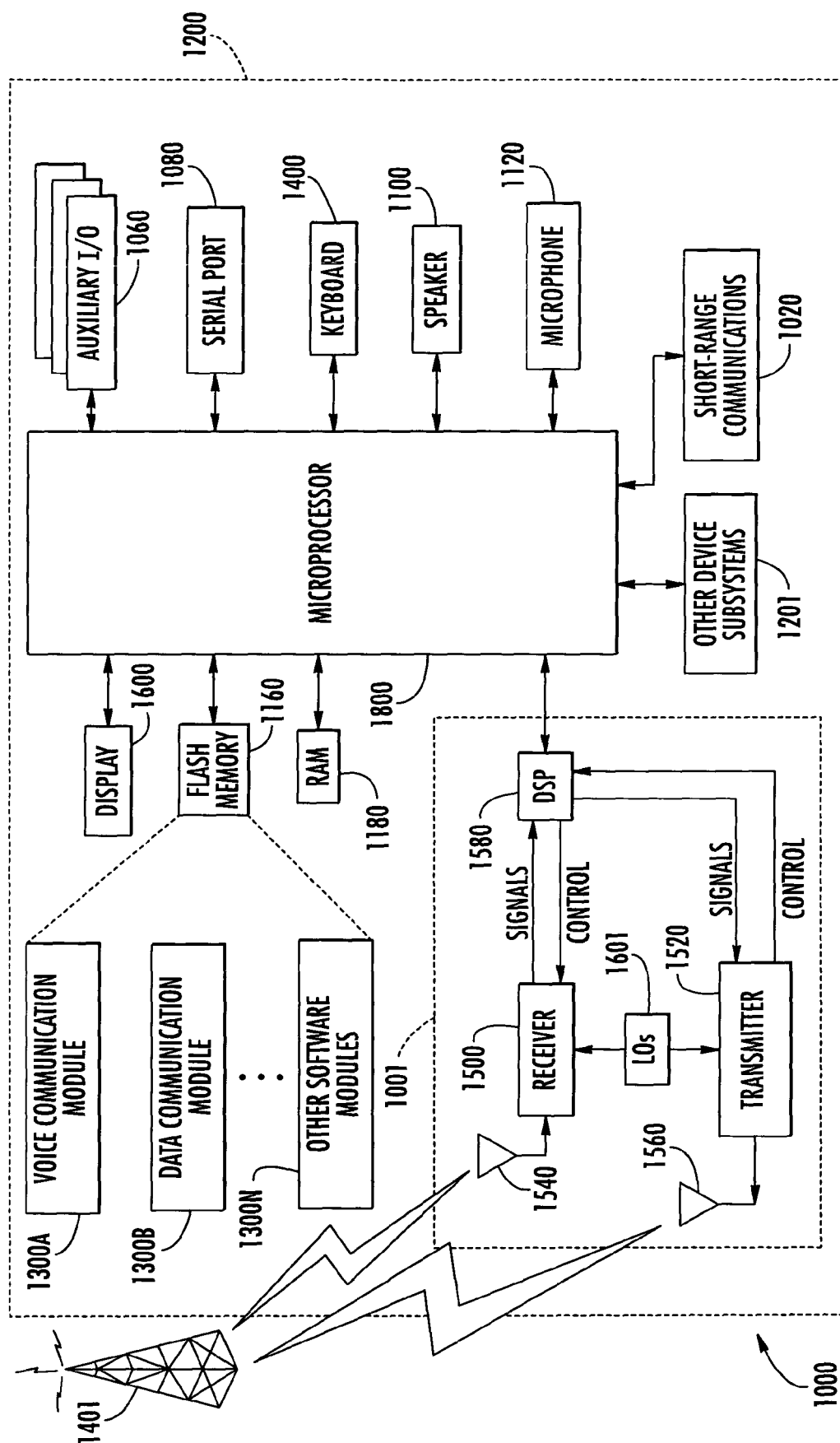


FIG. 4



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 23 May 2005	Examiner Angrabeit, F
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EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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