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CONTROL DEVICE, CONTROL METHOD, AND NON-TRANSITORY COMPUTER-READABLE STORAGE MEDIUM

Abstract

A control device calculates, if a tracking target can be detected from a captured image, a direction toward the tracking target as a tracking subject direction based on a result of the detection and control, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, a control speed in a camera direction based on a tracking subject direction previously calculated.

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Background/Summary

BACKGROUND

Field

[0001] The present disclosure relates to an image capture control technology.

Description of the Related Art

[0002] In recent years, with the evolution of artificial intelligence (AI), an automatic tracking technology has been proposed that detects a subject in a video shot by a camera and controls the pan and tilt of the camera to track the subject.

[0003] There are some cases where a subject to be tracked (tracking subject) may temporarily disappear from the view of the camera when another subject crosses in front of the tracking subject or when the tracking subject moves and hides behind an obstacle such as a wall. If the tracking subject is not visible in the shot video, the tracking subject cannot be detected from the shot video.

[0004] In automatic tracking, if pan/tilt control is stopped immediately when a subject cannot temporarily be detected, the movements of the camera in the pan and tilt directions will suddenly be stopped, resulting in deterioration of the shot video.

[0005] Japanese Patent Laid-Open No. 2012-80221 discloses, for example, a technology in which, when a tracking target is shielded by a shielding object, the shielding object is set as a new tracking target.

[0006] When a tracking subject is shielded by another person moving in a direction opposite to the moving direction of the tracking subject, such as when persons pass each other, setting the person in the foreground as a new tracking target will result in a situation where the moving direction of the tracking target is suddenly reversed. As a result, a sudden change may occur in the pan/tilt control, and the tracking quality of a shot video may deteriorate.

SUMMARY

[0007] The present disclosure provides a technology for reducing occurrence of a sudden change in camera direction when a tracking target is no longer detectable in a captured image.

[0008] According to a first aspect of the present disclosure, a control device comprises a memory storing a program and a processor configured to, when executing the program, cause the control unit to calculate, if a tracking target can be detected from a captured image, a direction toward the tracking target as a tracking subject direction based on a result of the detection and control, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, a control speed in a camera direction based on a previously calculated tracking subject direction.

[0009] According to a second aspect of the present disclosure, a control method comprises calculating, if a tracking target can be detected from a captured image, a direction toward the tracking target as a tracking subject direction based on a result of the detection, and controlling, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, a control speed in a camera direction based on a previously calculated tracking subject direction.

[0010] According to a third aspect of the present disclosure, a non-transitory computer-readable storage medium storing a computer program for causing a computer to execute a method, the method comprising calculating, if a tracking target can be detected from a captured image, a direction toward the tracking target as a tracking subject direction based on a result of the detection, and controlling, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, a control speed in a camera direction based on a previously calculated tracking subject direction.

[0011] Further features of the present disclosure will become apparent from the following description of exemplary embodiments with reference to the attached drawings.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0012] FIG. 1 is a diagram illustrating an example of a configuration of a system.

[0013] FIG. 2 shows block diagrams of examples of hardware configurations of a camera and a workstation.

[0014] FIG. 3 is a flowchart of processing performed when the camera tracks a tracking subject and shoots an image thereof.

[0015] FIG. 4 is a flowchart of processing performed when the workstation causes the camera to track a tracking subject and shoot an image thereof.

[0016] FIG. 5 is a diagram illustrating a display example in step S404 of FIG. 4.

[0017] FIG. 6A is a diagram illustrating an example of a display screen made by a display unit during subject tracking.

[0018] FIG. 6B is a diagram illustrating an example of a display screen made by the display unit during subject tracking.

[0019] FIG. 7A is a graph representing the relationship between a control speed and a distance in the horizontal direction between positions.

[0020] FIG. 7B is a graph representing the relationship between the angular difference between the angle of the tracking subject in the pan direction as viewed from the camera and the current pan angle of the camera and a pan control speed.

[0021] FIG. 8A is a diagram illustrating a captured image obtained by the camera.

[0022] FIG. 8B is a diagram illustrating a sphere whose radius is the distance from the camera to a subject in a captured image.

[0023] FIG. 8C is a diagram illustrating the three-dimensional coordinates (X, Y, Z) of a tracking subject and the pan direction tracking angle and the tilt direction angle.

[0024] FIG. 9A is a diagram illustrating an example of subject detection characteristics of an inference unit.

[0025] FIG. 9B is a diagram illustrating an example of the subject detection characteristics of the inference unit.

[0026] FIG. 9C is a diagram illustrating an example of the subject detection characteristics of the inference unit.

[0027] FIG. 10 is a block diagram illustrating an example of a hardware configuration of a camera.

[0028] FIG. 11 is a flowchart performed when the camera tracks a tracking subject and shoots an image thereof.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EMBODIMENTS

[0029] Hereinafter, embodiments will be described in detail with reference to the attached drawings. Note, the following embodiments are not intended to limit the scope of the present disclosure. Multiple features are described in the embodiments, not all features are seen to be required, and multiple such features may be combined as appropriate. In the attached drawings, the same reference numerals are provided to the same or similar configurations, and redundant description thereof is omitted.

First Embodiment

[0030] First, an example of a configuration of a system according to the present embodiment is described with reference to FIG. 1. As illustrated in FIG. 1, the system according to the present embodiment includes a camera **100** serving as an image capture apparatus that tracks a person **10** who is a subject to be tracked (tracking subject) and shoots an image thereof, and a workstation **200** serving as a control device that controls operations of the camera **100**.

[0031] In the system according to the present embodiment, the camera **100** and the workstation **200** are connected to a network **300** such as a LAN or the Internet, and are configured to perform data communication with each other.

[0032] The workstation **200** can control the operation of the camera **100** by transmitting a distribution request command to request distribution of a captured image and setting commands to set various parameters to the camera **100** via the network **300**. The camera **100** distributes a captured image to the workstation **200** in response to the distribution request command received

from the workstation **200**, and stores various parameters in response to the setting command received from the workstation **200**. By transmitting commands to control the pan, tilt, and zoom (hereinafter, referred to as PTZ) to the camera **100**, the workstation **200** can also control the PTZ of the camera **100**.

[0033] Any connection format or communication protocol between the camera **100** and the workstation **200** may be used as long as it enables data communication between the camera **100** and the workstation **200**. For example, the camera **100** and the workstation **200** may be directly connected to each other using a serial communication cable instead of a network.

[0034] In the system according to the present embodiment, the camera **100** and the workstation **200** are connected to each other via a video cable **400**, and captured images shot by the camera **100** are transmitted to the workstation **200** via the video cable **400**.

[0035] The method for transmitting captured images from the camera **100** to the workstation **200** is not limited to a specific method. For example, the camera **100** may transmit captured images to the workstation **200** via the above-mentioned network **300**. In other words, the configuration for transmitting and receiving various information such as commands and captured images between the camera **100** and the workstation **200** is not limited to a specific configuration.

[0036] Next, examples of respective hardware configurations of the camera **100** and workstation **200** will be described with reference to the block diagram in FIG. **2**. The hardware configurations illustrated in FIG. **2** are only examples of hardware configurations respectively applicable to the camera **100** and the workstation **200**, and can be modified/changed as appropriate.

[0037] First, the configuration of the camera **100** is described. The camera **100** is a camera that tracks a tracking subject and shoots an image thereof. If the camera **100** is a camera that shoots a moving image, the camera **100** transmits images of frames of the moving image to the workstation **200** as captured images. If the camera **100** is a camera that shoots still images, the camera **100** transmits the still images to the workstation **200** as captured images.

[0038] A CPU **101** executes various types of processing using computer programs and data stored in a RAM **102**. The CPU **101** controls the overall operation of the camera **100**, and executes or controls various types of processing performed by the camera **100**.

[0039] The RAM **102** has an area for storing captured images shot by the image capture unit **104** and an area for storing computer programs and data loaded from a storage device **103**. The RAM **102** also has an area for storing various types of information received from the workstation **200** by a communication unit **106** and a work area for use when the CPU **101** executes various types of processing. The enables the RAM **102** to provide various types of areas as appropriate.

[0040] The storage device **103** is a non-volatile storage device such as a flash memory, an HDD, an SSD, or an SD card. The storage device **103** stores configuration data of the camera **100**, computer programs and data used when activating the camera **100**, computer programs and data relating to the basic operation of the camera **100**, and the like. The storage device **103** also stores computer programs and data for causing the CPU **101** to execute or control various types of processing performed by the camera **100**.

[0041] The image capture unit **104** includes an optical system, an image sensor that converts light formed through the optical system into electric charge (image signals), and an image processing circuit that generates a captured image based on the image signals. For example, a complementary metal oxide semiconductor (CMOS) image sensor can be used as the image sensor. A charge coupled device (CCD) image sensor may also be used as the image sensor.

[0042] A video output unit **105** is an interface for transmitting the captured image shot by the image capture unit **104** to the workstation **200** via the video cable **400**. The video output unit **105** includes, for example, a serial digital interface (SDI) and a high-definition multimedia interface (HDMI®).

[0043] The communication unit **106** is an interface for performing data communication with the workstation **200** via the network **300**. A PTZ drive unit **107** controls the image capture direction

(pan and tilt angles) of the camera **100** (image capture unit **104**) and the field angle (zoom) of the camera **100** (image capture unit **104**), based on control commands received from the workstation **200**.

[0044] The CPU **101**, the RAM **102**, the storage device **103**, the image capture unit **104**, the video output unit **105**, the communication unit **106**, and the PTZ drive unit **107** are all connected to a system bus **108**. The constituent components of the camera **100** illustrated in FIG. **2** are driven by power obtained by rectifying AC power supplied from an external source to a predetermined voltage, or by power supplied from a (not illustrated) built-in battery.

[0045] The configuration of the workstation **200** will now be described. The workstation **200** is used as an example of a computer device, such as a personal computer (PC), a smart phone, or a tablet terminal. Any computer device may be used as long as it can achieve the functions associated with the workstation **200**.

[0046] A CPU **201** executes various types of processing using computer programs and data stored in a RAM **202**. The CPU **201** controls the overall operation of the workstation **200**, and executes or controls various types of processing performed by the workstation **200**.

[0047] The RAM **202** has an area for storing computer programs and data loaded from a storage device **203** and an area for storing various types of information received from the camera **100** by a communication unit **204**. The RAM **202** also has an area for storing captured images received from the camera **100** by a video input unit **205**. The RAM **202** has a work area for use when the CPU **201** and an inference unit **206** execute various types of processing. The enables the RAM **202** to provide various types of areas as appropriate.

[0048] The storage device **203** is a non-volatile storage device such as a flash memory, an HDD, an SSD, or an SD card. The storage device **203** stores configuration data of the workstation **200**, computer programs and data used when activating the workstation **200**, computer programs and data relating to the basic operation of the workstation **200**, and the like. The storage device **203** also stores computer programs and data for causing the CPU **201** and the inference unit **206** to execute or control various types of processing described as processing that is performed by the workstation **200**.

[0049] The communication unit **204** is an interface for performing data communication with the camera **100** via the network **300**. A video input unit **205** is an interface for receiving captured images transmitted from the camera **100** via the video cable **400**, and includes an SDI or HDMI, for example.

[0050] The inference unit **206** detects an object from an input image, and outputs the position and size of the object in the image. The inference unit **206** is, for example, an arithmetic device such as a graphics processing unit (GPU) that is specialized for image processing and inference processing. Typically, a GPU is advantageous for use in inference processing, but a reconfigurable logic circuit such as a field programmable gate array (FPGA) may also be used to realize the same function. The processing of the inference unit **206** may also be executed by the CPU **201**.

[0051] A user input I/F **207** is a user interface such as a keyboard, a mouse, or a touch panel, and a user can operate the user input I/F **207** to input various types of instructions and information to the workstation **200**.

[0052] A display unit **208** includes a liquid crystal screen or a touch panel screen, and can display processing results obtained by the CPU **201** and the inference unit **206** with images, text, and the like. The display unit **208** may be a projection device such as a projector that projects images and text.

[0053] While the present embodiment describes an example in which the workstation **200** includes the display unit **208**, the present disclosure is not limited to this configuration. For example, a configuration is also possible in which the workstation **200** does not include the display unit **208** and a display monitor connected to the workstation **200** is provided.

[0054] Next, processing performed by the camera **100** to track a tracking subject and shoot an

image thereof will be described with reference to a flowchart in FIG. 3. The flowchart of FIG. 3 is a flowchart of processing that is executed in response to the camera **100** (CPU **101**) detecting a reception of a control command transmitted from the workstation **200**.

[0055] In step **S301**, the CPU **101** receives a control command transmitted from the workstation **200** via the communication unit **106**, and stores the received control command in the RAM **102**.

[0056] In step **S302**, the CPU **101** acquires PTZ control speeds of the camera **100** from the control command stored in the RAM **102** in step **S301**. The PTZ control speeds include the speed of changing the pan angle (angle in the pan direction) of the camera **100**, the speed of changing the tilt angle (angle in the tilt direction) of the camera **100**, and the speed of changing the zoom of the camera **100**.

[0057] Based on the obtained PTZ control speeds, the CPU **101** obtains drive parameters, which are parameters to change the pan angle of the camera **100** at a designated speed, to change the tilt angle of the camera **100** at a designated speed, and to change the zoom of the camera **100** at a designated speed. Specifically, the CPU **101** obtains the drive parameters for driving and controlling the respective motors in the pan/tilt directions included in the PTZ drive unit **107**, and the drive parameters for driving and controlling a motor of the zoom drive unit included in the PTZ drive unit **107**. For example, the CPU **101** may obtain the drive parameters corresponding to the PTZ control speeds obtained from the control command, from “a table in which drive parameters corresponding to various PTZ control speeds are registered in advance”. Thus, the method for acquiring drive parameters based on a control command is not limited to a specific method.

[0058] In step **S303**, the CPU **101** controls the PTZ drive unit **107** based on the drive parameters acquired in step **S302**. With this, the camera **100** can perform pan, tilt, and zoom operations (operations for changing the pan angle, tilt angle, zoom) based on the control command from the workstation **200**.

[0059] Next, processing performed by the workstation **200** to cause the camera **100** to track a tracking subject and shoot an image thereof will be described with reference to a flowchart in FIG. 4. The flowchart of FIG. 4 is a flowchart of processing that is executed in response to the CPU **201** detecting a tracking/shooting execution instruction input by a user via operation of the user input I/F **207**. The tracking/shooting execution instruction may be input by an external apparatus. In this case, the flowchart of FIG. 4 will be a flowchart of processing that is executed in response to the CPU **201** detecting that a tracking/shooting execution instruction transmitted from the external apparatus has been received via the communication unit **204**. Accordingly, the method for inputting a tracking/shooting execution instruction is not limited to a specific input method. The trigger for starting the processing according to the flowchart of FIG. 4 is also not limited to a specific trigger.

[0060] In step **S401**, the CPU **201** determines whether a command (end command) to end the processing according to the flowchart in FIG. 4 has been obtained via the communication unit **204** or the user input I/F **207**. If it is determined that the end command has been obtained, the process according to the flowchart in FIG. 4 ends. If it is determined that the end command has not been obtained, the procedure moves to step **S402**.

[0061] In step **S402**, the CPU **201** receives a captured image transmitted from the camera **100** via the video input unit **205**, and stores the received captured image in the RAM **202**. In step **S403**, the CPU **201** inputs the captured image stored in the RAM **202** in step **S402** to the inference unit **206**. The inference unit **206** performs subject detection processing on the input captured image.

[0062] The subject detection processing performed by the inference unit **206** will be described. The inference unit **206** inputs the input captured image to a learned model created using a machine learning method such as deep learning to perform arithmetic processing on the learned model, and outputs information (rectangular frame information) that defines a rectangular frame including the whole body (human body) of each subject detected in the captured image. For example, the inference unit **206** outputs information indicating the center coordinates of the rectangular frame including the whole body of each subject in the captured image, and the sizes (height and width) of

the rectangular frame, as rectangular frame information.

[0063] The rectangular frame information is not limited to this, and may be the coordinates of the upper left and lower right vertices of the rectangular frame, for example. A rectangular frame is not limited to a frame including the whole body of a subject, but may also be a rectangular frame including part of the subject, for example, a person's head or face. In this case, the learned model to be used need only be replaced by a learned model that outputs rectangular frame information that defines a rectangular frame including a desired region. The subject detection processing performed by the inference unit **206** is not limited to a method using a learned model. For example, the inference unit **206** may use a template matching method in which a template image of a subject is registered in advance in the storage device **203** or the like, and a region in a captured image with a high degree of similarity to the template image is detected as the subject's region.

[0064] In step **S404**, the CPU **201** superimposes the rectangular frame corresponding to the rectangular frame information on the captured image stored in the RAM **202** in step **S402**, and displays the resulting image on the display unit **208**. An example of the display in step **S404** is illustrated in FIG. 5.

[0065] In the display example in FIG. 5, on a captured image **500** including a subject **501** and a subject **502**, a rectangular frame **511** corresponding to rectangular frame information of the subject **501** and a rectangular frame **512** corresponding to rectangular frame information of the subject **502** are superimposed and displayed. The sizes of the rectangular frame **511** are the sizes indicated by the rectangular frame information of the subject **501**, and the center coordinates of the rectangular frame **511** are the center coordinates indicated by the rectangular frame information of the subject **501**. The sizes of the rectangular frame **512** are the sizes indicated by the rectangular frame information of the subject **502**, and the center coordinates of the rectangular frame **512** are the center coordinates indicated by the rectangular frame information of the subject **502**.

[0066] In step **S405**, the CPU **201** determines whether any tracking subject has been designated. If it is determined that any tracking subject has been designated, the procedure moves to step **S406**. If it is determined that no tracking subject has been designated, the procedure moves to step **S401**.

[0067] The method for designating a tracking subject is not limited to a specific method. For example, in the example in FIG. 5, when a user operates the mouse serving as the input I/F **207** to perform a click operation with the mouse cursor superimposed on the rectangular frame **511**, the CPU **201** may designate the subject **501** corresponding to the rectangular frame **511** as the tracking subject.

[0068] The CPU **201**, for example, may also designate, from among the subjects detected in the captured image, the subject corresponding to the rectangular frame information indicating the largest size as the tracking subject. The CPU **201** may also designate the subject corresponding to the rectangular frame information indicating the center coordinates closest to the center position of the captured image, as the tracking subject.

[0069] In step **S406**, the CPU **201** performs identification processing for identifying the tracking subject from among the subjects detected in step **S403**. Then, if the CPU **201** can identify the tracking subject from the subjects detected in step **S403**, the CPU **201** sets the value of a “presence flag indicating whether the tracking subject is present in the captured image” stored in the RAM **202** to “True” indicating that “the tracking subject is present”, and stores the rectangular frame information of this tracking subject from among the rectangular frame information output in step **S403**, in RAM **202**.

[0070] If the CPU **201** is not able to identify the tracking subject from the subjects detected in step **S403**, the CPU **201** sets the value of the presence flag stored in the RAM **202** to “False: indicating that “the tracking subject is not present”.

[0071] Since the initial step **S406** is the first instance of step **S406** after the designation of the tracking subject, the CPU **201** sets the value of the presence flag to “True”, and stores the rectangular frame information of the designated tracking subject in RAM **202**.

[0072] In the second and subsequent instances of step **S406**, the CPU **201** performs the processing described below. The CPU **201** calculates the degree of similarity of the rectangular frame information of each of the subjects detected in step **S403**, with the “rectangular frame information of the tracking subject” stored in the RAM **202** (“rectangular frame information of the tracking subject” stored in the RAM **202** in the recent step **S406**). For example, the CPU **201** calculates, as the degree of similarity, intersection over union (IoU) of the rectangular frame corresponding to the rectangular frame information of each of the subjects detected in step **S403**, with the rectangular frame corresponding to the “rectangular frame information of the tracking subject” stored in RAM **202** (“rectangular frame information of the tracking subject” stored in RAM **202** in the recent step **S406**). The greater the overlap between rectangular frames is, the higher the IoU score is.

[0073] The CPU **201** then identifies the rectangular frame information for which the highest degree of similarity has been calculated from among the rectangular frame information of the subjects detected in step **S403** as the rectangular frame of the tracking subject. That is, the CPU **201** identifies the subject for which the highest degree of similarity has been calculated from among the subjects detected in step **S403** as the tracking subject.

[0074] If the degrees of similarity calculated for the rectangular frame information of the subjects detected in step **S403** are less than a threshold, the CPU **201** determines that it was not able to identify the tracking subject.

[0075] The above-described processing for identifying the tracking subject from the captured image is an example, and the present disclosure is not limited to the above-described processing. The processing for determining whether a tracking subject is present in a captured image is also not limited to the above-described processing.

[0076] For example, the CPU **201** may employ processing for predicting the motion of the tracking subject in the similarity degree calculation. In this case, the CPU **201** need only predict the current rectangular frame of the tracking subject based on the rectangular frame information of two most previous tracking subjects, and calculate the IoU between the predicted rectangular frame and the respective rectangular frames of the subjects, as the degrees of similarity. By employing motion prediction, it is possible to improve the accuracy of identifying a tracking subject when the subject is moving.

[0077] As another example, the CPU **201** may calculate the degrees of similarity using not only rectangular frame information of subjects but also subject's features relating to the captured image. For example, the CPU **201** may acquire image-related features such as luminance histograms within the rectangular frames, and embed the similarity between the features for the similarity degree calculation.

[0078] Alternatively, with use of a machine learning method such as deep learning, the CPU **201** may use a learned model that outputs a feature vector of the human body to obtain features, and embed the features for the similarity degree calculation.

[0079] In step **S407**, the CPU **201** determines whether the value of the presence flag is “True” or “False”. As a result of this determination, if the value of the presence flag is “True”, it is determined that the tracking subject is present in the captured image, and processing moves to step **S408**. If the value of the presence flag is “False”, it is determined that no tracking subject is present in the captured image, and processing proceeds to step **S414**.

[0080] In step **S408**, the CPU **201** reads the rectangular frame information of the tracking subject (center coordinates and sizes of the rectangular frame of the tracking subject) stored in the RAM **202**. In step **S409**, the CPU **201** calculates the speed (PT control speed) at which the camera **100** changes the camera direction (pan angle and tilt angle) to track the tracking subject and shoot an image thereof. The processing in step **S409** will be explained with reference to specific examples illustrated in FIGS. **6A** and **6B**.

[0081] FIGS. **6A** and **6B** are diagrams illustrating examples of a display screen made by the display unit **208** during subject tracking. FIG. **6A** illustrates a display example of a captured image **600** that

includes a subject **601**, which is a tracking subject, and a subject **602**, which is not a tracking target. The number of pixels in the horizontal direction of the captured image **600** is W (pixel) and the number of pixels in the vertical direction is H (pixel).

[0082] A rectangular frame **611** is a rectangular frame corresponding to the rectangular frame information of the subject **601**, and a rectangular frame **612** is a rectangular frame corresponding to the rectangular frame information of the subject **602**. A position **631** indicates the “center coordinates of the subject **601**” indicated by the rectangular frame information of the subject **601**, and a position **632** indicates the “center coordinates of the subject **602**” indicated by the rectangular frame information of the subject **602**. In FIGS. **6A** and **6B**, the size of the rectangular frame indicated by each piece of rectangular frame information is assumed to indicate the length of the diagonal line of the rectangular frame. A size S (pixel) indicates the size of the rectangular frame indicated by the rectangular frame information of the subject **601**, and a size **642** indicates the size of the rectangular frame indicated by the rectangular frame information of the subject **602**. A position **650** indicates the target position of the tracking shooting. In the present embodiment, the workstation **200** controls the pan and tilt angles of the camera **100** so that the center coordinates of the tracking subject in the captured image approach the target position **650**. In the following, for discussion purposes, the target position **650** is the center position of the captured image, but the present disclosure is not limited to this and the target position **650** may be any position in the captured image.

[0083] In such a case, the CPU **201** calculates a distance Wdiff (pixel) in the horizontal direction between the position **631** and the target position **650**, and a distance Hdiff (pixel) in the vertical direction between the position **631** and the target position **650**. The CPU **201**, for example, calculates (the horizontal coordinate of the target position **650**—the horizontal coordinate of the position **631**) as Wdiff (pixel). The CPU **201**, for example, also calculates (the vertical coordinate of the target position **650**—the vertical coordinate of the position **631**) as Hdiff (pixel).

[0084] The CPU **201** then calculates the pan control speed Vp, which is the speed at which the pan angle of the camera **100** is changed, by calculating Formula 1 below, and calculates the tilt control speed Vt, which is the speed at which the tilt angle of the camera **100** is changed, by calculating Formula 2 below:

$$[00001] \quad V_p = (W_{\text{diff}} / W) \times K_{p1} \quad \text{Formula1} \quad V_t = (H_{\text{diff}} / H) \times K_{t1}. \quad \text{Formula2}$$

[0085] Kp1 in Formula 1 and Kt1 in Formula 2 are both proportionality coefficients. That is, using Formulas 1 and 2, the control speed is faster the larger the distance between the target position and the center coordinates of the tracking subject is, and the control speed is slower the smaller the distance is. When the center coordinates of the tracking subject reach the target position and the distance is zero, the control speed becomes zero. If a faster control speed is desired based on the distance between the target position and the center coordinates of the tracking subject, it is sufficient to increase the proportionality factor (Kp1 or Kt1).

[0086] A graph **701** illustrated in FIG. **7A** is a graph representing a relationship between Wdiff and Vp expressed by Formula 1. The horizontal axis indicates Wdiff and the vertical axis indicates Vp. It is also possible to set the control speed to zero when the distance between the target position and the center coordinates of the tracking subject is less than a threshold (that is, when the distance is very small). For example, the CPU **201** may calculate Vp with use of a calculation formula such that Vp is zero in a section where Wdiff is the threshold or less, as illustrated in a graph **702** in FIG. **7A**.

[0087] The above-described example has been described taking a case where a control speed is calculated using a formula in which the relationship between the distance and the control speed is linear. However, the formula for calculating the control speed is not limited to such a linear formula, and other formulas may also be used to calculate the control speed as long as the formulas have the relationship such that the larger the distance is, the higher the control speed is, and the

smaller the distance is, the lower the control speed is. This is true even if the control speed is set to zero when the distance between the target position and the center coordinates of the tracking subject is less than the threshold (i.e., when the distance is very small).

[0088] In step **S410**, the CPU **201** calculates the speed (Z control speed) at which the camera **100** changes the zoom to track the tracking subject and shoot an image thereof. In the present embodiment, the CPU **201** controls the zoom of the camera **100** so that the size of the tracking subject in the captured image is a defined size.

[0089] In the present embodiment, the “size of the rectangular frame of the tracking subject” indicated by the rectangular frame information of the tracking subject read in the initial step **S408** is used as the “defined size”. However, the present disclosure is not limited to this. For example, the defined size may be the size designated by the user through operation of the user input I/F **207**. Alternatively, the CPU **201** may dynamically change the defined size.

[0090] The processing in step **S410** will be explained with reference to the specific examples illustrated in FIGS. **6A** and **6B**. The CPU **201** calculates the zoom control speed V_z , which is the speed at which the zoom of the camera **100** is changed, by calculating Formula 3 below:

[00002] $V_z = (S_b - S) \times K_z$. Formula3

[0091] S_b is a reference subject size (pixel) (the above-described defined size), and K_z is the proportionality coefficient. In other words, the zoom control speed is higher the larger the difference between the reference subject size and the size of the tracking subject is, and the zoom control speed is lower the smaller the difference is. When the size of the tracking subject matches the reference subject size, the zoom control speed is zero. With this, it is possible to perform zoom control such that the size of the tracking subject is kept constant.

[0092] As with the pan/tilt control, if a faster zoom control speed is desired, it is sufficient to increase the proportionality coefficient K_z . The CPU **201** may also set the zoom control speed to zero if the difference between the size of the tracking subject and the reference subject size is less than a threshold, so that zoom control is prevented from being performed when the difference is less than the threshold (i.e., when the difference is very small).

[0093] In step **S411**, the CPU **201** transmits a command to inquire about a set (PTZ values) of the current pan angle, current tilt angle, current horizontal field angle, and current vertical field angle, to the camera **100** via the communication unit **204**. The CPU **201** then receives the set transmitted from the camera **100** in response to this command, via the communication unit **204**, and stores the received set in the RAM **202**.

[0094] The pan and tilt angles are angles with respect to a given orientation (hereinafter referred to as frontal orientation) of the camera **100**. In the following description, the current pan angle of the camera **100** is denoted as PANcur (degree), and the current tilt angle of the camera **100** is denoted as TILTcur (degree). Also, the current horizontal field angle of the camera **100** is denoted as FOVh (degree), the current vertical field angle of the camera **100** is denoted as FOVv (degree).

[0095] In step **S412**, the CPU **201** calculates the direction of the tracking subject (tracking subject direction) as viewed from the camera **100** with respect to the frontal orientation of the camera **100**. An example of calculation of the tracking subject direction will be described with reference to FIG. **6A**. The CPU **201** calculates the horizontal field angle FOVhp per pixel of the captured image as an approximation, by calculating Formula 4 below:

[00003] $FOV_{hp} = FOV_h / W$. Formula4

[0096] Here, it is assumed that the position **631** of the tracking subject is away from the center position (target position **650**) of the captured image **600** by W_{diff} (pixel) in the horizontal direction. At this time, the CPU **201** calculates the tracking subject direction in the pan direction, that is, the angle PANtarget (degree) of the tracking subject in the pan direction as viewed from the camera **100** with respect to the front orientation of the camera **100**, by calculating Formula 5 below:

[00004] $PAN_{target} = FOV_{hp} \times W_{diff} + PAN_{cur}$. Formula5

[0097] The CPU **201** then stores the calculated angle PAN_{target} in the RAM **202**. Similarly, the CPU **201** calculates $FOV_{vt} = FOV_v / H$ to obtain the vertical field angle FOV_{vt} per pixel of the captured image as an approximation. If it is assumed here that the position **631** of the tracking subject is away from the center position of the captured image **600** in the vertical direction by H_{diff} (pixel), the CPU **201** calculates $TILT_{target} = FOV_{vt} \times H_{diff} + TILT_{cur}$ to obtain the tracking subject direction in the tilt direction, that is, the angle $TILT_{target}$ (degree) of the tracking subject in the tilt direction as viewed from the camera **100** with respect to the front orientation of the camera **100**. The CPU **201** then stores the calculated angle $TILT_{target}$ in the RAM **202**.

[0098] The method for calculating the tracking subject direction is not limited to the above-described method. For example, the CPU **201** may calculate the tracking subject direction taking into consideration that the camera direction of the camera **100** changes spherically around the camera **100** due to the rotation of the PTZ drive unit **107**. An example calculation in this case will be described with reference to FIGS. **8A** to **8C**.

[0099] FIG. **8A** is a diagram illustrating a captured image **800** shot by the camera **100**, in which a tracking subject is located at a position P. The position P is away from the center of the captured image **800** by W_{diff} (pixel) in the horizontal direction and by H_{diff} (pixel) in the vertical direction. It is assumed that the angular differences between the center of the captured image **800** and the position P calculated by Formula 4 are defined as PAN_{diff} (degree) and $Tilt_{diff}$ (degree).

[0100] FIG. **8B** illustrates a sphere **801** whose radius is the distance from the camera **100** to the subject in the captured image, in a three-dimensional space with the position of the camera **100** being the origin O. It is assumed that the front of the camera **100** is directed in the X-axis direction in the three-dimensional space, and a captured image rotates about the Z-axis when the camera **100** is driven in the pan direction, and rotates about the Y-axis when the camera **100** is driven in the tilt direction. Therefore, if the captured image **800** is an image shot with the camera **100** facing the front, the captured image **800** is positioned orthogonally to the X axis as illustrated in FIG. **8B**.

[0101] Here, the CPU **201** first calculates the three-dimensional coordinates (x, y, z) of the position P of the tracking subject in the state illustrated in FIG. **8B** using Formulas 6, 7, and 8 below. Since it is sufficient that only the direction of the tracking subject is obtained in this processing, the radius of the sphere **801** may be any value, but for ease of calculation, the radius is assumed to be 1 in the following calculations:

[00005] $x = 1$ Formula6 $y = \tan(PAN_{diff})$ Formula7 $z = \tan(TILT_{diff})$. Formula8

[0102] Since these are the coordinates when the camera **100** is facing the X-axis direction, the CPU **201** then converts the above-described three-dimensional coordinates (x, y, z) based on the direction in which the camera **100** is facing. This calculation can be performed by rotating the coordinate axis in the three-dimensional space using a known three-dimensional rotational coordinate conversion calculation, for example. Specifically, if the current pan and tilt angles of the camera **100** are respectively PAN_{cur} and $TILT_{cur}$, the CPU **201** can calculate the three-dimensional coordinates (X, Y, Z) of the tracking subject after rotating the coordinate axis, by calculating Formula 9 below:

[00006] Formula9

$$\begin{pmatrix} X \\ Y \\ Z \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \cos(PAN_{cur}) & -\sin(PAN_{cur}) & 0 \\ \sin(PAN_{cur}) & \cos(PAN_{cur}) & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \cos(TILT_{cur}) & 0 & -\sin(TILT_{cur}) \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ \sin(TILT_{cur}) & 0 & \cos(TILT_{cur}) \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x \\ y \\ z \end{pmatrix}.$$

[0103] FIG. **8C** illustrates the three-dimensional coordinates (X, Y, Z) of the tracking subject calculated using Formula 9, and the pan angle PAN_{target} and the tilt angle $TILT_{target}$. Ultimately, the CPU **201** calculates the pan angle PAN_{target} and tilt angle $TILT_{target}$ of the tracking subject with reference to the reference direction of the camera **100**, by calculating Formulas 10 and 11 below based on the three-dimensional position (X, Y, Z) of the tracking subject:

[00007] $PAN_{target} = \arctan(Y / X)$ Formula10

$TILT_{target} = \arctan(Z / \sqrt{X^2 + Y^2})$. Formula11

[0104] Using Formulas 6 to 11 above, the CPU **201** can calculate the tracking subject direction taking into considering the rotation of the PTZ drive unit **107**. In step **S413**, the CPU **201** generates control commands to cause the PTZ drive unit **107** to change the pan angle of the camera **100** at the pan control speed V_p , change the tilt angle of the camera **100** at the tilt control speed V_t , and change the zoom of the camera **100** at the zoom control speed V_z . The CPU **201** then transmits the generated control commands to the camera **100** via the communication unit **204**.

[0105] Here, it is assumed that the captured image **600** illustrated in FIG. 6A is input from the camera **100** to the workstation **200**, and then the captured image **600** illustrated in FIG. 6B is input. The captured image **600** illustrated in FIG. 6B is an image in which the subject **601** is hidden behind the subject **602** as a result of the subject **601** in the captured image **600** illustrated in FIG. 6A moving to the right and the subject **602** in front of the camera **100** relative to the subject **601** moving to the left.

[0106] When the captured image **600** of FIG. 6A is input to the workstation **200**, the subject **601**, which is the tracking subject, can be detected in the captured image **600**, and thus the subject **601** is displayed with the rectangular frame **611**. However, if the captured image **600** of FIG. 6B is input to the workstation **200**, the subject **601** is hidden behind the subject **602** in the captured image **600**, so the subject **601** cannot be detected in the captured image **600**. Therefore, no rectangular frame is displayed on the subject **601**.

[0107] Accordingly, if the captured image **600** of FIG. 6A is input to the workstation **200**, the processing of step **S407** is followed by the processing of step **S408**. If the captured image **600** of FIG. 6B is input to the workstation **200**, the processing of step **S407** is followed by the processing of step **S414**.

[0108] In step **S414**, the CPU **201** determines whether the period of time in which the value of the presence flag is “False” (i.e., the period of time in which the tracking subject is not present in the captured image) is not shorter than a predetermined period of time.

[0109] As a result of this determination, if the period of time in which the value of the presence flag is “False” is longer than or equal to the predetermined period of time, the CPU **201** determines that the situation is such that it is difficult to redetect the tracking subject, and the processing according to the flowchart in FIG. 4 ends. At the end of the processing, control may be performed such that the camera **100** has the camera direction and the shooting field angle set in advance by the user. In this case, information on the camera direction and the shooting field angle set by the user in advance can be recorded, and the CPU **201** can communicate a control command to the camera **100** before the end of processing. If the period of time in which the value of the presence flag is “False” is shorter than the predetermined period of time, the processing moves to step **S415**.

[0110] The “predetermined period of time” may be any period of time, and may be a preset period of time, a period of time set by the user via operation of the user input I/F **207**, or a period of time dynamically changed by the CPU **201**. There is no need to set a timeout by the elapse of the predetermined period of time. The CPU **201**, for example, may perform processing in steps **S415** and the following steps upon detecting an occurrence of an event. The event is not limited to a specific event, and may be, for example, an event in which “the user has input a specific instruction by operating the user input I/F **207**”.

[0111] In step **S415**, the CPU **201** reads, from the RAM **202**, the tracking subject direction calculated in the most recently executed step **S412**. For example, it is assumed that the captured image **600** of FIG. 6A was acquired in the previous step **S402** and the captured image **600** of FIG. 6B is acquired in the current step **S402**. In this case, the CPU **201** will acquire the tracking subject direction of the tracking subject in the “captured image **600** of FIG. 6A” acquired in the previous step **S402**.

[0112] In step **S416**, the CPU **201** transmits a command to inquire about the above-described set, to the camera **100** via the communication unit **204** in the same manner as in step **S411** above. The CPU **201** then receives, via the communication unit **204**, the set transmitted from the camera **100** in response to the command, and stores the received set in the RAM **202**.

[0113] In step **S417**, the CPU **201** calculates the pan control speed V_p and the tilt control speed V_t by calculating the following Formulas 12 and 13, respectively, based on the tracking subject direction (PANtarget and TILTtarget) read in step **S415**, and the current pan angle PANcur and current tilt angle TILTcur included in the set obtained in step **S416**.

[00008] $V_p = (\text{PANtarget} - \text{PANcur}) \times Kp2$ Formula12

$V_t = (\text{TILTtarget} - \text{TILTcur}) \times Kt2$ Formula13

[0114] $Kp2$ in Formula 12 and $Kt2$ in Formula 13 are both proportionality coefficients. Using Formulas 12 and 13, the control speed is faster the larger the angular difference between the tracking subject direction immediately before the tracking subject is no longer present in the captured image and the current camera direction of the camera **100** is, and the control speed is slower the smaller the angular difference is.

[0115] Thus, if the workstation **200** can detect a tracking target in a captured image, the workstation **200** calculates the direction toward the tracking target as the tracking subject direction, based on the result of the detection. If the workstation **200** cannot detect any tracking target from a captured image, the workstation **200** controls the control speed of the camera direction based on the tracking subject direction calculated in the past.

[0116] A graph **711** illustrated in FIG. 7B is a graph representing a relationship between “the angular difference between the angle in the pan direction of the tracking subject as viewed from the camera **100** and the current pan angle of the camera **100**” expressed by Formula 12 and the “pan control speed”. The horizontal axis indicates “the angular difference between the angle in the pan direction of the tracking subject as viewed from the camera **100** and the current pan angle of the camera **100**” and the vertical axis indicates the “pan control speed”. If a faster pan control speed is desired, it can be achieved by increasing the proportionality coefficient $Kp2$. If the “angle difference between the angle in the pan direction of the tracking subject as viewed from the camera **100** and the current pan angle of the camera **100**” is less than a threshold (that is, if the angle difference is very small), it is also possible to set the pan control speed to zero so that pan control is prevented. In this case, the CPU **201** may calculate the pan control speed using a formula such that the pan control speed becomes zero in a section where the “angular difference between the angle in the pan direction of the tracking subject as viewed from the camera **100** and the current pan angle of the camera **100**” is less than the threshold, as illustrated in a graph **712** in FIG. 7B.

[0117] As described above, in step **S417**, the tracking subject direction calculated in the most recently executed step **S412** is used. Therefore, in step **S412**, the tracking subject direction may be calculated taking into consideration the difference in control cycle between step **S412** and step **S417**. For example, the CPU **201** may perform processing for predicting the motion of the tracking subject in step **S412** to predict the position of the tracking subject in the next cycle and then perform the same arithmetic operation based on the difference between the predicted position of the tracking subject and the current camera direction, thereby calculating the tracking subject direction. By performing such prediction processing, it is possible to calculate the pan/tilt speed based on the position of the tracking subject at the point in time when the pan/tilt speed is actually calculated.

[0118] As another example of calculation of the tracking subject direction, the CPU **201** may correct the tracking subject direction taking into consideration the subject detection characteristics of the inference unit **206**. FIGS. 9A to 9C are diagrams illustrating an example of the subject detection characteristics of the inference unit **206**. FIGS. 9A to 9C illustrate the state in which a subject **901** in a captured image **900** moves to the right and the subject **901** becomes shielded by a shielding object **960**.

[0119] Since the subject **901** can be detected from the captured image **900** of FIG. **9A**, a rectangular frame **911** of the subject **901**, which is the result of the detection of the subject **901** by the inference unit **206**, is superimposed on the captured image **900**. A position **931** is located at the center coordinates of the rectangular frame **911** of the subject **901** in the captured image **900** of FIG. **9A**, and a width **941** is the horizontal length (number of pixels) of the rectangular frame **911**.

[0120] If the inference unit **206** has a characteristic of not capable of detecting a subject even if the subject is slightly shielded, the subject **901** is not detected from the captured images **900** in FIGS. **9B** and **9C** because part of the subject **901** is shielded by the shielding object **960**. Therefore, the rectangular frame of the subject **901** is not superimposed on these captured images **900**.

[0121] In the above description, if the captured image **900** of FIG. **9A** was acquired in the previous step **S402** and the captured image **900** of FIG. **9B** is acquired in the current step **S402**, the CPU **201** calculates, in the current step **S417**, the control speed of the camera direction so that it approaches the direction to the position **931** (the tracking subject direction calculated based on the captured image **900** of FIG. **9A**).

[0122] Therefore, in step **S412**, the CPU **201** may also correct the calculated tracking subject direction to a direction obtained by moving the calculated tracking subject direction in the direction of the pan control speed V_p by the width **941**. The position on the captured image in the corrected direction is illustrated as a position **932** in FIG. **9C**. Similar to FIG. **9B**, the captured image **900** of FIG. **9C** is a captured image acquired in step **S402** following the captured image **900** of FIG. **9A**.

[0123] As a result, if the captured image **900** of FIG. **9C** is acquired in the current step **S402**, the camera direction of the camera **100** can be determined, in the current step **S417**, based on the difference between the tracking subject direction corresponding to the position **932** and the current pan angle of the camera **100**.

[0124] The present disclosure is not limited to determining the amount of correction for the tracking subject direction based on the size of the rectangular frame of the tracking subject, and it is also possible to use a predetermined amount determined experimentally in advance. By correcting the tracking subject direction in this manner, it is possible to orient the pan/tilt directions to directions closer to the direction in which the tracking subject is actually shielded, while suppressing the influence of the subject detection characteristics of the inference unit **206**.

[0125] The period of time used for comparison with the “predetermined period of time” in step **S414** is not limited to “the period of time in which the value of the presence flag is “False” (i.e., the period of time in which the tracking subject is not present in the captured image). For example, the timekeeping may be started at the timing at which the camera **100** faces the tracking subject direction immediately before the camera **100** can no longer identify the tracking subject due to the processing in step **S417**, and the PTZ of the camera **100** is stopped. In this case, in step **S414**, the CPU **201** may compare the period of time in which the state in which “the camera **100** faces the tracking subject direction immediately before the camera **100** can no longer identify the tracking subject and the PTZ of the camera **100** is stopped” continues, with the predetermined period of time. By performing such control, a timeout is set based on the time elapsed since the pan/tilt is stopped, and thus it is easier for the user to acknowledge that a timeout has occurred.

[0126] Thus, according to the present embodiment, even when the tracking subject can no longer be identified from the captured image, the pan/tilt control can be continued so that the camera direction of the camera **100** is oriented to the direction in which the tracking subject has been present immediately before.

[0127] If the driving of the camera is stopped immediately after the subject can no longer be detected, the pan/tilt will stop suddenly and the quality of the captured image will deteriorate. Therefore, by continuing pan/tilt control as in the present embodiment, it is possible to improve the quality of the captured image in tracking shooting.

[0128] Since in tracking shooting, a subject is detected and the camera is driven based on the detection result, the driving of the camera delays with respect to the movement of the subject in

principle. Therefore, if the driving of the camera is stopped immediately after the subject can no longer be detected, the pan/tilt operation will stop even though the tracking subject has not reached the target position. However, by performing the processing described in the present embodiment, it is possible to stop the pan/tilt operation at a timing at which the pan/tilt movement reaches the position where the tracking subject is hidden.

[0129] In cases where the tracking subject hides in the shadow of an object, it is likely that the subject will appear again from the hidden location. That is, as in the present embodiment, by stopping pan/tilt operation at the position where the tracking subject is hidden, it is possible to stop pan/tilt operation at a position where the tracking subject that will appear again is easily detected.

[0130] The processing for calculating the control speed described in the first embodiment may be performed by the camera **100**, the workstation **200**, or a device separate from these devices. In other words, the control device that executes the processing for calculating the control speed may be incorporated in the camera **100**, in the workstation **200**, or may exist as a device separate from these devices. In addition, such a control device may be configured in hardware, software, or a combination of hardware and software.

Second Embodiment

[0131] The present embodiment describes differences from the first embodiment, and other configurations are the same as those in the first embodiment unless otherwise noted below. In the present embodiment, a camera **1000** that has the functions of the camera **100** and can execute the processing (processing according to the flowchart of FIG. **4**) of the workstation **200** is described. The following describes an example of a hardware configuration of the camera **1000** according to the present embodiment with reference to FIG. **10**.

[0132] A CPU **1001**, a RAM **1002**, a storage device **1003**, an image capture unit **1004**, and a PTZ drive unit **1007** are the same as the CPU **101**, the RAM **102**, the storage device **103**, the image capture unit **104**, and the PTZ drive unit **107** illustrated in FIG. **1**, and descriptions thereof are omitted.

[0133] The communication unit **1006** performs data communication with external devices via a network such as a LAN or the Internet. The method of data communication with external devices by the communication unit **1006** is not limited to a specific data communication method.

[0134] An inference unit **1009** is similar to the inference unit **206**, except that it acquires captured images from the image capture unit **1004**. A user input I/F **1010** is a user interface, such as a button, switch, lever, or touch panel screen, and can be operated by a user to input various information and instructions to the camera **1000**.

[0135] The CPU **1001**, the RAM **1002**, the storage device **1003**, the image capture unit **1004**, the communication unit **1006**, the PTZ drive unit **1007**, the inference unit **1009**, and the user input I/F **1010** are connected to a system bus **1008**. The constituent components of the camera **1000** illustrated in FIG. **10** are driven by power obtained by rectifying AC power supplied from an external source to a predetermined voltage or by power supplied from a (not illustrated) built-in battery.

[0136] Tracking shooting of a tracking subject performed by the camera **1000** will be described with reference to the flowchart in FIG. **11**. The flowchart of FIG. **11** is a flowchart of processing that is executed in response to the CPU **1001** detecting a tracking/shooting execution instruction input by the user via operation of the user input I/F **1010**. The method for inputting a tracking/shooting execution instruction is not limited to a specific input method.

[0137] In step **S1101**, the CPU **1001** determines whether a command (end command) to end the processing according to the flowchart in FIG. **11** has been obtained via the communication unit **1006** or the user input I/F **1010**. If it is determined that the end command has been obtained, the process according to the flowchart in FIG. **11** ends. If it is determined that the end command has not been obtained, the procedure moves to step **S1102**. In step **S1102**, the CPU **1001** acquires the captured image output from the image capture unit **1004**, and stores the acquired captured image in

the RAM **1002**.

[0138] In step **S1103**, the CPU **1001** inputs the captured image stored in the RAM **1002** in step **S1102** to the inference unit **1009**. The inference unit **1009** performs subject detection processing on the input captured image by performing the same processing as the inference unit **206**, and outputs rectangular frame information that defines a rectangular frame including the whole body (human body) of each subject detected from the captured image.

[0139] In step **S1105**, the CPU **1001** determines whether any tracking subject has been designated. If it is determined that the tracking subject has been designated, the procedure moves to step **S1106**. If it is determined that no tracking subject has been designated, the procedure moves to step **S1101**. The method for designating a tracking subject is not limited to a specific method.

[0140] In step **S1106**, the CPU **1001** performs the same processing as in step **S406** above to perform identification processing for identifying the tracking subject from among the subjects detected in step **S1103**. If the CPU **1001** is able to identify the tracking subject from the subjects detected in step **S1103**, the CPU **1001** sets the value of the presence flag stored in the RAM **1002** to “True”, and stores the rectangular frame information of the tracking subject from among the rectangular frame information output in step **S1103** in RAM **1002**.

[0141] If the CPU **1001** is not able to identify the tracking subject from the subjects detected in step **S1103**, the CPU **1001** sets the value of the presence flag stored in the RAM **1002** to “False”.

[0142] Since the initial step **S1106** is the first instance of step **S1106** after the designation of the tracking subject, the CPU **1001** sets the value of the presence flag to “True” and stores the rectangular frame information of the designated tracking subject in RAM **1002**. In the second and subsequent instances of step **S1106**, the CPU **1001** performs the same processing as in the second and subsequent instances of step **S406**.

[0143] In step **S1107**, the CPU **1001** determines whether the value of the presence flag is “True” or “False”. As a result of the determination, if it is determined that the value of the presence flag is “True”, the procedure moves to step **S1108**, and if the value of the presence flag is “False”, the procedure moves to step **S1114**.

[0144] In step **S1108**, the CPU **1001** reads the rectangular frame information of the tracking subject stored in the RAM **1002**. In step **S1109**, the CPU **1001** performs the same processing as in step **S409** above to calculate the speed at which the camera **100** changes the camera direction (pan angle and tilt angle) to track the tracking subject and shoot an image thereof.

[0145] In step **S1110**, the CPU **1001** performs the same processing as in step **S410** above to calculate the speed at which the camera **100** changes the zoom to track the tracking subject and shoot an image thereof.

[0146] In step **S1111**, the CPU **1001** acquires, for example, a set of the current pan angle of the camera **100**, the current tilt angle of the camera **100**, the current horizontal field angle of the camera **100**, and the current vertical field angle of the camera **100**, from the PTZ drive unit **1007**. The CPU **1001** then stores the acquired set in the RAM **1002**.

[0147] In step **S1112**, the CPU **1001** performs the same processing as in step **S412** above to calculate the tracking subject direction. In step **S1114**, the CPU **1001** determines whether the period of time in which the value of the presence flag is “False” (i.e., the period of time in which the tracking subject is not present in the captured image) is not shorter than a predetermined period of time. As a result of the determination, if the period of time in which the value of the presence flag is “False” (i.e., the period of time in which the tracking subject is not present in the captured image) is longer than or equal to the predetermined period of time, the processing according to the flowchart of FIG. **11** ends. If the period of time in which the value of the presence flag is “False” (i.e., the period of time in which the tracking subject is not present in the captured image) is shorter than the predetermined period of time, the processing proceeds to step **S1115**.

[0148] In step **S1115**, the CPU **1001** reads, from the RAM **1002**, the tracking subject direction calculated in the most recently executed step **S1112**. In step **S1116**, the CPU **1001** performs the

same processing as in step S1111 above to acquire the above-described set, and stores the acquired set in the RAM 1002. In step S1117, the CPU 1001 performs the same processing as in step S417 above to calculate the pan control speed V_p and the tilt control speed V_t .

[0149] In step S1118, the CPU 1001 generates control commands to cause the PTZ drive unit 1007 to change the pan angle of the camera 1000 at the pan control speed V_p , change the tilt angle of the camera 1000 at the tilt control speed V_t , and change the zoom of the camera 1000 at the zoom control speed V_z . The CPU 1001 then performs the same process as in step S302 above to obtain the PTZ control speed of the camera 100 based on the generated control commands, and obtains the drive parameters based on the PTZ control speed.

[0150] In step S1119, the CPU 1001 performs the same processing as in step S303 above to control the PTZ drive unit 1007 based on the drive parameters obtained in step S1118.

[0151] In the first and second embodiments, a case where the subject to be detected is a person has been described. However, the attribute of the subject to be detected is not limited to a person, and the subject to be detected may be any attribute object.

[0152] The numeric values, processing timings, the orders of processing, processing operators, configuration/acquisition method/destination/storage place of data (information) and the like that are used in the above-described embodiments are merely examples provided for specific description, and the present disclosure is not intended to be limited to such examples.

[0153] Some or all of the above-described embodiments may be used in combination as appropriate. Some or all of the above-described embodiments may be used selectively.

OTHER EMBODIMENTS

[0154] Embodiment(s) of the present disclosure can also be realized by a computer of a system or apparatus that reads out and executes computer executable instructions (e.g., one or more programs) recorded on a storage medium (which may also be referred to more fully as a 'non-transitory computer-readable storage medium') to perform the functions of one or more of the above-described embodiment(s) and/or that includes one or more circuits (e.g., application specific integrated circuit (ASIC)) for performing the functions of one or more of the above-described embodiment(s), and by a method performed by the computer of the system or apparatus by, for example, reading out and executing the computer executable instructions from the storage medium to perform the functions of one or more of the above-described embodiment(s) and/or controlling the one or more circuits to perform the functions of one or more of the above-described embodiment(s). The computer may comprise one or more processors (e.g., central processing unit (CPU), micro processing unit (MPU)) and may include a network of separate computers or separate processors to read out and execute the computer executable instructions. The computer executable instructions may be provided to the computer, for example, from a network or the storage medium. The storage medium may include, for example, one or more of a hard disk, a random-access memory (RAM), a read only memory (ROM), a storage of distributed computing systems, an optical disk (such as a compact disc (CD), digital versatile disc (DVD), or Blu-ray Disc (BD)TM), a flash memory device, a memory card, and the like.

[0155] While the present disclosure has been described with reference to exemplary embodiments, it is to be understood that the disclosure is not limited to the disclosed exemplary embodiments. The scope of the following claims is to be accorded the broadest interpretation so as to encompass all such modifications and equivalent structures and functions.

[0156] This application claims the benefit of Japanese Patent Application No. 2024-018845, filed Feb. 9, 2024, which is hereby incorporated by reference herein in its entirety.

Claims

1. A control device comprising: a memory storing a program; and a processor configured to, when executing the program, cause the control device to: calculate, if a tracking target can be detected

from a captured image, a direction toward the tracking target as a tracking subject direction based on a result of the detection, and control, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, a control speed in a camera direction based on a previously calculated tracking subject direction.

2. The control device according to claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the control device to, if a tracking target can be detected from the captured image, calculate the tracking subject direction based on a difference between a position of the tracking target detected from the captured image and a target position, a current camera direction, and a zoom.

3. The control device according to claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the control device to, if a tracking target can be detected from the captured image, calculate the control speed in the camera direction based on a difference between a position of the tracking target detected from the captured image and a target position.

4. The control device according to claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the control device to, if a tracking target can be detected from the captured image, calculate a control speed of a zoom based on a difference between a size of the tracking target detected from the captured image and a defined size.

5. The control device according to claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the control device to, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, change the camera direction in response to a period of time in which no tracking target can be detected after the control speed in the camera direction has been zero for a predetermined period of time.

6. The control device according to claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the control device to, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, calculate the control speed in the camera direction based on a difference between a current camera direction and the previously calculated tracking subject direction.

7. The control device according to claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the control device to, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, calculate the control speed in the camera direction based on a difference between a current camera direction and a tracking subject direction predicted based on the previously calculated tracking subject direction.

8. The control device according to claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the control device to, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, calculate the control speed in the camera direction based on a difference between a current camera direction and a tracking subject direction obtained by correcting the previously calculated tracking subject direction based on a size of the tracking target.

9. The control device according to claim 1, wherein the processor is further configured to cause the control device to: acquire a captured image shot by an image capture apparatus, and generate a command to change the camera direction at the controlled control speed and to transmit the generated command to the image capture apparatus.

10. The control device according to claim 1, further comprising: an image capture unit configured to capture an image; and a drive unit configured to change the camera direction at the controlled control speed.

11. A control method comprising: calculating, if a tracking target can be detected from a captured image, a direction toward the tracking target as a tracking subject direction based on a result of the detection; and controlling, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, a control speed in a camera direction based on a previously calculated tracking subject direction.

12. A non-transitory computer-readable storage medium storing a computer program for causing a computer to execute a method, the method comprising: calculating, if a tracking target can be detected from a captured image, a direction toward the tracking target as a tracking subject direction based on a result of the detection; and controlling, if no tracking target can be detected from the captured image, a control speed in a camera direction based on a tracking subject direction previously calculated.

