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COIL FOR MOBILE DEVICE CONTEXT-DRIVEN SWITCHING AND WIRELESS CHARGING

Abstract

Apparatus, system and method to provide switchable coils in a computing device, comprising: a plurality of electrically conductive coils to transfer electromagnetic energy; a sensor coupled to a processor, to select a coil from among the plurality of electrically conductive coils; a switch to energize the selected coil; and a switch controller coupled to the switch and to the processor. In some embodiments, the plurality of coils may comprise an inductive charging interface. Some embodiments may further include a communication interface between the processor to the plurality of electrically conductive coils, the plurality of coils comprising an interface for near-field communications (NFC). The antenna coils may be arranged to provide improved NFC coverage when the computing device is in a respective predetermined physical configuration. Sensors may be used to detect the configuration and switch NFC communications to use a preferred antenna coil for the detected configuration.

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Background/Summary

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS [0001] This application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 18/375,445, filed Sep. 29, 2023, which is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 16/385,088, filed on Apr. 16, 2019, and issued on Apr. 2, 2024 as U.S. Pat. No. 11,949,170, which is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 14/911,244, filed on Feb. 9, 2016, and issued on Apr. 16, 2019 as U.S. Pat. No. 10,263,451, which is a National Stage Entry of PCT Application Ser. No. PCT/US2013/075594 filed on Dec. 17, 2013, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 61/864,430, filed on Aug. 9, 2013, and the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 61/864,433, filed on Aug. 9, 2013, which are hereby incorporated by reference in their entireties.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] Embodiments are generally related to inductive energy transfer, e.g., by portable devices for communication or for recharging.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Devices within close proximity may wirelessly transfer energy for various reasons. For instance, a device may wirelessly charge another device's battery. Also, two devices may engage in near field communications ("NFC").

[0004] NFC and wireless charging are emerging technologies that are integrated into mobile platforms such as tablets, smartphones, notebooks and other small computing devices (e.g., Ultrabook™ device-Ultrabook is a trademark of Intel Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries). Both are forms of wireless energy transfer, one for the purpose of communications, and the other for the purpose of charging a rechargeable energy store such as a battery. Such wireless energy transfer may involve an electromagnetic coupling between proximate coils that may act as antennas. For example, a first device may have a transmitting coil and a second device may have a

receiving coil. The coils are made of an electrically-conductive material. An electrical current flowing through the transmitting coil generates a magnetic field. In turn, the magnetic field may induce an electrical current in the receiving coil. The electrical current may be modulated, producing a modulated magnetic signal and thus transmitting information.

[0005] NFC is an emerging technology and desirable feature that is integrated into mobile platforms such as small computing devices, (e.g., clamshell, slider and convertible configured systems), tablets, smartphones and handhelds. They are expected to lead to new touch based communication usages. These usages can be broadly classified into: a) Device owner tapping two of her own devices together, e.g. to pay on a personal point-of-sale (POS) with a handheld or credit card; and b) peer to peer (P2P) tap, where two people each with their own device tap to enable pairing, transfer etc.

[0006] As touch screens and/or sensors take increasingly more real estate on a mobile device, NFC and/or wireless charging coils have been placed under touch sensor/touch screens. However due to the blockage of touch sensor and system power constraints, the user experience of reading a NFC-enabled device (e.g., a credit card) through the touch sensor/screen is not sufficiently satisfying. It is especially unsatisfying when cards or tags of different form factors (i.e., shapes) are presented at various orientations to the NFC coil underneath the touch sensor/screen.

[0007] The performance and effectiveness of NFC and wireless charging is very sensitive to size, relative location and orientation of the two coils involved. For instance, when a misalignment exists between transmitting and receiving coils, a smaller electrical current is induced in the receiving coil. As a result, a reduced energy transfer occurs. This may unfortunately reduce the efficacy of wireless charging and NFC applications.

[0008] Some conventional solutions to improving NFC performance involve adding an external amplifier between the NFC modules and coil to boost the signal. However, doing so consumes more power and sometimes causes co-existence problems with the touch sensor/screen. Other conventional solutions for both NFC and wireless charging involve providing switchable coils to create larger charging or card reading area. However, switching between multiple coils alone will cause a slow response to the user and thus produce an unsatisfying user experience.

[0009] Because NFC-enabled devices may be reconfigured during use into a variety of lid modes, a single NFC antenna is unable to provide adequate coverage for all modes. Therefore, there exists a need to provide improved NFC performance for an NFC-enabled device that may be reconfigured into more than one physical configuration.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0010] FIGS. 1A-1B illustrate exemplary tapping surface placements depending upon usage.

[0011] FIGS. 2A-2B illustrate exemplary tapping surface placements depending upon physical configuration.

[0012] FIG. 3 illustrates a deficiency of one NFC coil servicing a plurality of physical configurations.

[0013] FIGS. 4A-4D illustrate a convertible system with multiple coils for each of a respective physical configuration.

[0014] FIG. 5 illustrates exemplary form factors of cards designed for inductive coupling.

[0015] FIGS. 6 illustrates a schematic view of a touch screen in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0016] FIG. 7 illustrates capacitive changes when a finger touches a touchscreen.

[0017] FIG. 8 illustrates operation of a touchscreen in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0018] FIG. **9A** illustrates a block diagram of a touchscreen in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0019] FIG. **9B** illustrates a cross-sectional view of a touchscreen in accordance with the present disclosure.

[0020] FIG. **10** illustrates a method of operating a touchscreen in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure.

[0021] FIGS. **11A-11B** illustrates a block diagram and flow chart of implementation of sensor based NFC coil switching.

[0022] FIGS. **12A-12B** illustrates a block diagram and flow chart of implementation of sensor based NFC coil switching.

[0023] FIGS. **13A-13B** illustrates a block diagram and flow chart of implementation of sensor based NFC coil switching in tablet mode.

[0024] FIG. **14** illustrates an embodiment of a device.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0025] Apparatus, system and method to support wireless inductive power charging using a touch-sensitive screen, pad, or the like are described. Apparatus, system and method to support wireless NFC communication using a touch-sensitive screen, pad, or the like are described. Other embodiments are described and claimed.

[0026] Exemplary embodiments of the present disclosure are directed to providing a plurality of NFC coils for an NFC-enabled device, such that a specific NFC coil is selected and utilized depending upon a physical configuration of the NFC-enabled device.

[0027] Exemplary embodiments of the present disclosure are further directed to using a profile detection capability of modern capacitive touch sensors (e.g., a touch screen) on a mobile device in order to detect the size and shape of a metallic coil inside an NFC-enabled device, or that of wireless charging enabled devices, when such NFC-enabled devices or wireless charging enabled devices are placed next to the touch sensor. Based on the information detected by the touch sensor, a system controller may then select one of a plurality of transmitter coils embedded under the touch sensor (for NFC or wireless charging) in order to provide improved performance.

[0028] Touchscreens may be incorporated into a wide range of devices, such as (and without limitation) an ultra-mobile device, a mobile device, a fixed device, a personal digital assistant (PDA), a mobile computing device, a smart phone, a telephone, a digital telephone, a cellular telephone, user equipment, eBook readers, a handset, a one-way pager, a two-way pager, a messaging device, a computer, a personal computer (PC), a desktop computer, a laptop computer, a notebook computer, a netbook computer, a handheld computer, a tablet computer, a server, consumer electronics, programmable consumer electronics, game devices, television, digital television, set top box, and so forth.

[0029] Various embodiments are generally directed to advanced near-field wireless communications systems. Some embodiments are particularly directed to wireless networks implementing one or more Wi-Fi Alliance (WFA) standards. In some embodiments, for example, a wireless network may operate according to the WFA Wi-Fi Direct standard, 2010 Release. In various embodiments, such a Wi-Fi Direct network may also operate using interfaces, protocols, and/or standards developed by the WFA Wi-Fi Direct Services (WFDS) Task Group. The embodiments, however, are not limited to these examples.

[0030] With general reference to notations and nomenclature used herein, the detailed descriptions which follow may be presented in terms of program procedures executed on a computer or network of computers. These procedural descriptions and representations are used by those skilled in the art to most effectively convey the substance of their work to others skilled in the art.

[0031] A procedure is here, and generally, conceived to be a self-consistent sequence of operations leading to a desired result. These operations are those requiring physical manipulations of physical quantities. Usually, though not necessarily, these quantities take the form of electrical, magnetic or

optical signals capable of being stored, transferred, combined, compared, and otherwise manipulated. It proves convenient at times, principally for reasons of common usage, to refer to these signals as bits, values, elements, symbols, characters, terms, numbers, or the like. It should be noted, however, that all of these and similar terms are to be associated with the appropriate physical quantities and are merely convenient labels applied to those quantities.

[0032] Further, the manipulations performed are often referred to in terms, such as adding or comparing, which are commonly associated with mental operations performed by a human operator. No such capability of a human operator is necessary, or desirable in most cases, in any of the operations described herein which form part of one or more embodiments. Rather, the operations are machine operations. Useful machines for performing operations of various embodiments include general purpose digital computers or similar devices.

[0033] Various embodiments also relate to apparatus or systems for performing these operations. This apparatus may be specially constructed for the required purpose or it may comprise a general purpose computer as selectively activated or reconfigured by a computer program stored in the computer. The procedures presented herein are not inherently related to a particular computer or other apparatus. Various general purpose machines may be used with programs written in accordance with the teachings herein, or it may prove convenient to construct more specialized apparatus to perform the required method steps. The required structure for a variety of these machines will appear from the description given.

[0034] NFC usage may be broadly classified into: a) Device Owner tapping two of her own devices together, e.g. to Pay on a personal POS with a handheld or credit card; and b) Peer to Peer tap, where two people each with their own device tap to enable pairing, transfer etc. When viewed from a customer ease of experience perspective, these two broad categories of usages require entirely different tapping surfaces. A “self-tap” usage, in which a user typically holds and manipulates an NFC-enabled device next to an NFC-enabled reader, ordinarily includes usage of a tapping surface with visual feedback and ease of access from a display side facing the user. A “peer-to-peer tap” usage (hereinafter “P2P”), in which a user of a first NFC-enabled device ordinarily positions the first device near to a second NFC-enabled device. In the peer-to-peer tap usage, a tapping surface may be positioned away from the display side (e.g., on bottom of the device) in order to favor communication in that direction, because users engaging in a peer-to-peer tap, and holding their devices in a typical orientation for such usage, ordinarily will be facing each other from opposite directions.

[0035] Exemplary embodiments of the present disclosure are directed to a system and method to detect, by a system controller coupled to a touch sensor/screen, geometry information related to the size and shape of a metallic coil inside an NFC-enabled device, or that of wireless charging enabled devices, when such NFC-enabled devices or wireless charging enabled devices are placed next to the touch sensor/screen. Based on the detected geometry information, one of a plurality of transmitter coils embedded under the touch sensor/screen (for NFC or wireless charging), is selected in order to provide improved performance. With the geometry information of the receiver coil, the transmitter device can make much better decision on which is the best coil to use to deliver best user experience (“UX”).

[0036] In contrast to simply adding more amplifiers, embodiments will avoid the additional power the amplifier may consume while provide better and more uniform NFC coverage.

[0037] In contrast to blindly switching in a fixed pattern between multiple coils behind the touch sensor/screen, embodiments are able to quickly identify a coil to use based on the sensor profile detection inputs, and provide a fast response to a user. Even if a switchable coil method uses either feedback from device under charge or load impedance change to determine which coil is best, the method does not provide enough information such as multiple devices being charged by one device or size mismatch between NFC reader coil and tag coil.

[0038] Reference is now made to the drawings. In the following description, for purposes of

explanation, numerous specific details are set forth in order to provide a thorough understanding thereof. It may be evident, however, that the novel embodiments can be practiced without these specific details. In other instances, well known structures and devices are shown in block diagram form in order to facilitate a description thereof. The intention is to cover all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives consistent with the claimed subject matter.

[0039] FIGS. 1A-1B illustrate the difference between self-tap and peer-to-peer tap. FIG. 1A illustrates a self-tap usage between a computing device **101** (e.g., an NFC-enabled clamshell laptop as illustrated) and a device **103** (e.g., an NFC-enabled handheld device as illustrated). Computing device **101** and device **103** are ordinarily controlled by a single user. The self-tap usage is not limited to the illustrated types of devices, and may include other types of devices. For example, device **103** may include a credit card with an embedded NFC coil. FIG. 1B illustrates a peer-to-peer tap between two computing devices **151**, **153** controlled by respective users as supported by an operating system such as Windows™ 8. In the configuration of FIG. 1B, a single surface antenna placement is sufficient.

[0040] The differing requirements for self-tap and peer-to-peer tap is reflected in the different placement requirements put forth by credit card service providers and laptop operating system vendors, both of which have to be met by PC OEMs and NFC module suppliers. While it is possible to meet either one of the usage requirements above, there are no known scalable solutions to provide with high assurance the independent placement of two NFC tapping surfaces driven by the same module while optimally and selectably supporting both self-tap and peer-to-peer tap. Present approaches rely on the use of two independent modules to drive separate NFC coils, one coil on each surface of interest. This leads to a doubling of cost for the modules.

[0041] Convertible devices that can be operated in different lid modes (e.g., clamshell, tablet, and/or closed lid) are increasing popular. However, such convertible devices add additional complexity in the location of the NFC coil so that it is accessible in all lid modes. FIGS. 2A-2B illustrate usage of NFC with a convertible device in various configurations.

[0042] When a single slider/convertible device need to support both self tap and P2P tap, there is a need for dual surface coverage. In convertible form factor devices, certain screen positions can block primary NFC tapping area, requiring a secondary tapping area to be provided. In the figure above, a tapping surface is required next to the palm rest or in the track pad for “clamshell mode” and another tapping surface is required on the bottom of the device for use in “tablet mode” when the palm rest area is blocked.

[0043] Specifically, FIG. 2A illustrates transfer via NFC communication between a conventional laptop **201** in an open position and a device **203** enabled for NFC and/or wireless charging, such as a smartphone. A tapping surface **205** of the laptop **201** is unblocked when laptop **201** is in an open position, but will be blocked when laptop **201** is in a closed position. FIG. 2B illustrate a top surface **251** of device **201** in a tablet configuration, device **201** having a first tapping surface **253** that is conveniently accessible to a user of tablet **201**. FIG. 2B further illustrates a bottom surface **261**, and a second tapping surface **263** that is conveniently accessible to support a separate NFC-enabled device **265** that may be operated by a different user.

[0044] FIG. 3 illustrates a convertible device **300** in which no single location of a tapping device provides adequate NFC coverage and/or wireless charging. Placing coil **301** on the palm rest or touchpad (configuration (a)) is convenient for all modes unless closed or in tablet mode. When device **300** is configured as a tablet (configuration (b)), then coil **303** is more conveniently placed. When device **300** is otherwise closed (configuration (c)) and the display or cover shields the palm rest area, then coil **305** is more conveniently placed. Additionally, for small tablets it may be important to provide a tapping surface on the back cover in order to support P2P taps between individuals.

[0045] Embodiments of the present disclosure address the above shortcomings through the use of context based switching between two or more separate coils, driven one at a time by a single NFC

module. The coils may be referred to herein as NFC coils, but it will be understood that such NFC coils may also be able to support wireless charging unless the context of usage clearly indicates that wireless charging is not supported. The NFC module is further able to support wireless charging. [0046] Embodiments of the present disclosure address a problem of coil placement for multi-mode devices by using a context base switch between multiple coils, the coils all being driven by a single NFC module. For example, FIGS. 4A-4D illustrates a laptop device having three different coils with placements optimized for clam shell, tablet modes, for both “me to me” and “me to you” applications. One of the coils may be selected and “switched to” based on the context of the system configuration and usage. FIG. 4A illustrates coil **401** located under a bezel surrounding the display screen. Coil **402** may be located on the back of the laptop device and may be adapted for NFC “me to you” type applications. Coil **403** may be located at an accessible location when the laptop device is open, such as a palm-rest area. In some embodiments, coil **403** may be coupled to the laptop device back cover or the cover bottom of the back cover, but is adapted for all NFC applications. FIGS. 4B-4D further illustrate coils **401**, **402** and **403** with the multi-mode device in various position modes. Coils **401-403** may also be referred to herein as antennas **1-3**, respectively. In general, such embodiments position a plurality of coils on at least two different major surfaces of multi-mode devices. At least some major surfaces of multi-mode devices may contain no coils, one coil, or more than one coil.

[0047] FIGS. 2A-2B and 4A-4D illustrate coils coupled to a major surface of a convertible device, thus providing approximately hemispherical coverage. However, embodiments are not limited to coupling coils to a major surface. In some embodiments, coils may be coupled to a minor surface such as an edge or corner, this providing greater than hemispherical coverage.

[0048] Data used to select a preferred coil for NFC communication and/or wireless charging includes determination of a context for each coil. Context may be determined at least in part by using physical sensors. While a variety of sensors may be used for switching between the two or more coils, the sensors used by some embodiments may include one or more of: an accelerometer; a Hall Effect sensor; a pressure sensor; and/or a gyroscope. The sensors may be used to determine one or more of: a state of the lid angle; open/closed sensor; latched/unlatched sensor; device orientation; placement of the device on a surface; and so forth. An operating system may receive a message when there is a significant change in one or more of the sensor inputs, sufficient to indicate a meaningful change in physical status or physical state of laptop device, e.g., between a closed lid and clamshell mode or between clamshell and tablet modes. A change in physical state that may not be meaningful may be a physical change that does not result in a significant change in usage of the coils or the convertible device, e.g., a slight change in lid angle for the purpose of lessening reflection glare.

[0049] FIG. 5 illustrates various form factors (i.e., sizes and shapes) of available NFC tags/cards or devices capable of wireless charging. A credit-card size device may be about 2"×3", and a smartphone size device may be about 4"×6". Even for cards having the same form factor, a coil embedded in the card may be different (e.g., different location, shape, number of turns, thickness, etc.). These variations causes significantly challenge to NFC reader integration into mobile devices and/or small computing devices such as notebooks, smartphones, and tablets. On one hand, there is no one geometry of reader coil that provide an optimum magnetic coupling with all different sizes and shapes of receiver coil in cards/tags, especially when taking into account the different orientation and location that the tags could be presented to the embedded reader. A single large reader coil that covers substantially the entire screen would have drawbacks that include poor coupling to a small receiver coil if the receiver coil is placed near the center of the reader coil. Another drawback is that coils couple more efficiently to other coils of similar size, and receiver coils are limited to the size of the card or tag. On the other hand, a system power limit for a mobile device does not usually allow an additional amplifier to be added to boost the signal. Multiple reader coils may be used to couple with cards with different geometry, however it is difficult to

determine which one of the multitude of reader coils should be selected.

[0050] FIG. 6 illustrates at a high level of abstraction a schematic view of a device **600** capable of NFC communications and/or wireless charging. Device **600** may include a processor **603** coupled to a memory **605**. CPU **603** is further coupled to an interface circuit **607**, which interfaces with coil **601**. Additional coils (not shown) also interface with CPU **603**. For example, device **600** may be incorporated into a touch-sensitive screen display, touch pad, or the like. Such designs, with coils under a touch-sensitive area, may allow devices to use a profile sensing capability of a touch sensor, to which the coil is coupled, to provide more useful information regarding the tag/card that the system is trying to read, in order to improve the NFC reader performance.

[0051] FIG. 7A is a cross-sectional view of a capacitive touch sensor/screen **700** that illustrates a principle of operation of the touch sensor. Embodiments of sensors/screens use a capacitive touch sensor array to detect mutual capacitance variation introduced by high dielectric constant material (e.g., a finger) or conductive objects (e.g., a stylus or other metal object) in proximity to the sensor array. The capacitance variation is interpreted as a “touch” event.

[0052] Touch sensor **700** includes a driver terminal **701** and a receiver terminal **703**. Terminals **701**, **703** connect touch sensor **700** to an external circuit (not illustrated). Terminals **701**, **703** furthermore are electromagnetically coupled to each other, as indicated by field lines running through the body of screen **700**. An equivalent capacitance C_x is formed between terminals **701**, **703**. In a quiescent state, once C_x is charged, little or no current flows through terminals **701** or **703**.

[0053] As shown in FIG. 7B, when a finger **710** comes in between the touch sensor's driver and receiver terminals **701**, **703**, the presence of finger **710** diverts part of the electric field. Finger **710** causes a parasitic capacitance C_y . The change in the electric field produces a variation in the mutual capacitance and/or current drawn by terminal **701**, which may be interpreted by touch sensor **700** as a touch event.

[0054] Similarly, FIG. 7C illustrates when a conductive object **720** comes close to the touch sensor array. Object **720** also creates a change in the electric field in sensor **700** and/or mutual capacitance that can be detected by the sensor.

[0055] FIG. 8 illustrates usage of an embodiment in accordance with this disclosure. As shown in FIG. 8A, the touch of a finger **801** is registered by the touch sensor as a dot **803** in FIG. 8B. In FIG. 8C, when a card **805** that is compatible with NFC and/or wireless charging is placed on top of the touch sensor, the sensor is able to detect the conductive coil traces **807** embedded in card **805**. It is the coil **807** being detected rather than the profile or outline of card **805**. Based on the response from the touch sensor, the geometry and location of coil **807** may be calculated by a process carried out by a processor or firmware, which perform instructions stored in a memory.

[0056] FIG. 9A illustrates a block diagram of an embodiment **900** that may be implemented in a laptop device. Embodiment **900** includes a host controller **901** and associated circuit board **903**. Circuit board **903** includes support circuitry (e.g., circuit drivers, power distribution, memory, etc.) not illustrated but which will be known to persons of skill in the art. Circuit board **903** may be coupled via communication path **930** with touch panel **905**. Touch panel **905** includes a plurality of coils, illustrated as coils **921**, **922**, **923**, **924** and **925**. The coils are placed in a predetermined pattern underneath or within touch panel **905**. Some of coils **921**, **922**, **923**, **924** and **925** may overlap in the plane of FIG. 9A, but will be separated along an axis perpendicular to the plane of FIG. 9A. Coils **921**, **922**, **923**, **924** and **925** may be configured as receiving coils if reading information from an NFC-compatible card, or may be configured as transmitting coils if writing information to an NFC-compatible card or if being used for wireless charging.

[0057] If embodiment **900** is configured for NFC, then circuit board **903** and/or host controller **901** may be configured to transmit and receive communication signals, via communication path **930**, for or from the NFC channel.

[0058] Circuit board **903** may be further coupled, via communication path **932**, with NFC module

909. Path **932** supplies command signals and power energizing and detecting signals. NFC module **909** is communicatively coupled to a switch **907**, and uses the command signals received from path **932** to control switch **907**. Switch **907** selects one of the plurality of coils (e.g., one of coils **921**, **922**, **923**, **924** and **925**), allowing power energizing and detecting signals to be delivered to or read from the selected coil and associated circuitry.

[0059] FIG. **9B** illustrates a cross-sectional view **950** of a portion of a laptop device incorporating an embodiment in accordance with the present disclosure. Cross-sectional view **950** illustrates touch screen **911**, a plurality of NFC coils **913**, and a battery **915** that powers the laptop device including touch screen **911** and NFC coils **913**.

[0060] Knowledge of coil geometry and location may be used to determine a best available coil geometry, and switch to the best available coil underneath the touch screen **911**, e.g., one of coils **921**, **922**, **923**, **924** and **925**. Determination of the best available coil geometry may include relationships such as measuring signal strengths, calculating ratios, comparison of responses from the plurality of coils, recognizing patterns from among such data, and so forth. Calibrations and pre-calculations involving such relationships may be performed on a one-time basis during device design to formulate a set of relationships (e.g., tabular or algorithmic) stored in system memory, which can be used to select a coil to energize based upon the status or values of the measured relationships. Calibrations and pre-calculations may proceed by, e.g., successively switching between each transmit coil (e.g., reader coil) for a predetermined NFC tag (e.g., receiver coil) placed at a preselected set of locations on touch screen **911**.

[0061] During an NFC transaction, if the touch sensor detects an NFC coil from a card during its normal scanning routine (e.g., card **805** and coil **807**), coils **921**, **922**, **923**, **924** and **925** provide sufficient information (e.g., geometry and location information) to the host **901** to enable pattern recognition processing. Processing by the host **901** may include selecting which coil of the plurality of coils would provide the best magnetic coupling performance with the detected coil **807** in card **805** (e.g., by accessing a lookup table stored in memory), and commanding switch **907** to connect NFC module **909** with the selected reader coil to complete the NFC transaction.

[0062] FIG. **10** illustrates a flow chart in accordance with the present disclosure. At block **1001**, NFC card detection is initiated. Next, at block **1003**, a decision is made whether the touch sensor has detected a presence of a coil, e.g., a coil within a card or tag. If the outcome of block **1003** is negative, the process flow reverts to block **1001**. If the outcome of block **1003** is positive, the process flow continues to block **1005**.

[0063] At block **1005**, information related to the tag and/or coil geometry and location information is sent to host **901** in order to determine the best reader coil to use, e.g., which of coils **921**, **922**, **923**, **924** and **925** to read from.

[0064] Finally, at block **1007**, a command is issued to switch **903** in the NFC module in order to switch to the coil selected at block **1005**.

[0065] Although FIG. **10** illustrates a process related to NFC communication, a similar process may be used for wireless charging, in which touch sensor inputs can be used to determine a best transmit coil selection, and dynamically switching the transmit coil to achieve improved power transfer efficiency.

[0066] FIG. **11A** illustrates a system block diagram of an embodiment **1100** using sensor inputs to determine which coil to use in small computing devices (e.g., as shown in FIGS. **4B** and **4C**, between clam shell and tablet modes). Embodiment **1100** includes a circuit board **1101** (e.g., a motherboard) that includes a host processor **1103** that interfaces with sensors such as a hall effect sensor **1105**, accelerometer **1107** and other sensors **1109** that may provide information about the usage, physical state or orientation of a device that incorporates embodiment **1100**. Embodiment **1100** further includes a first coil **1117** and another coil **1119**, including respective associated interface circuitry.

[0067] Circuit board **1101** is communicatively coupled via communication path **1132**, with NFC

module **1111**. Path **1132** supplies command signals and power energizing and detecting signals. NFC module **1111** may include an NFC processor **1113** that is communicatively coupled to a switch **1115**, and may use the command signals received from path **1132** to control switch **1115**. Switch **1115** selects one of the plurality of coils and its interface circuitry (e.g., one of coils **1117** and **1119**), allowing power energizing and detecting signals to be delivered to or read from the selected coil and associated circuitry. Switch **1115** may be further communicatively coupled to host processor **1103** via communication path **1133**. Coils **1117** and **1119** may be selectively switched to support “me to me” usage (e.g., coil **401** and coil **403**).

[0068] Communication path **1132** and/or **1133** may be used so that various input data from sensors **1105**, **1107**, **1109** may be processed by host processor **1103**, and only the information pertaining to the state or change in state of NFC module **1111** is sent to NFC module **1111**. An advantage is that future changes or updates to switching logic may be implemented without modifications to NFC module **1111**. For example, if a particular switching feature becomes very successful, then future versions of NFC module **1111** maybe able to directly process the data from sensors **1105**, **1107**, **1109**. Furthermore, embodiments are expandable via use of other sensors **1109** since NFC module **1111** is not aware of specific sensors and does not need to support all of them directly.

[0069] FIG. **11B** illustrates a flow chart of process **1150** to select a coil, in accordance with an embodiment of the present disclosure. At block **1151**, for a system in clam shell mode, the NFC initially may be connected to coil **1119**.

[0070] Next, at block **1153**, a decision is made whether sensor inputs indicate conversion to a different physical configuration, e.g., to tablet mode. If the result of block **1153** is negative, then control returns to block **1151**. If the result of block **1153** is affirmative, then control passes to block **1155**.

[0071] At block **1155**, the host issues a command to switch the NFC module output to coil **1117**. Control then passes to block **1157**.

[0072] At block **1157**, a decision is made whether sensor inputs indicate conversion to a different physical configuration, e.g., to clam shell mode. If the result of block **1157** is negative, then control returns to block **1157**. If the result of block **1157** is affirmative, then control passes to block **1159**.

[0073] Finally, at block **1159**, the host issues a command to switch the NFC module to coil **1119**. Control of the process then reverts to block **1153**.

[0074] Embodiments may use additional sensors or triggers, either individually or together with the sensors described to this point. For example, embodiments may use a change in the received signal level at the NFC receiver to infer a physical change of the laptop device that may cause a different coil to be a preferred coil. NFC communications have a property such that the receiver is always on, even while the transmitter is operational. This provides a natural way to measure large changes in a received signal level when the lid mode changes. Signal level changes may be caused by drastic change in the matching between pairs of NFC coils, and hence power transfer efficiency between the NFC coil and an NFC controller. Refer to FIGS. **12A-12B**.

[0075] FIG. **12A** shows a system diagram of embodiment **1200** to sense environment change, for the purpose of determining which coil to use in a convertible small computing system (e.g., between clam shell and tablet modes of FIG. **4**). Embodiment **1200** includes a host controller **1207**, which may be mounted on a circuit board **1201** (e.g., a motherboard). Circuit board **1201** includes support circuitry (e.g., circuit drivers, power distribution, memory, etc.) not illustrated but which will be known to persons of skill in the art. Circuit board **1201** is communicatively coupled to NFC module **1211** via communication path **1232**. Path **1232** supplies command signals and power energizing and detecting signals. NFC module **1211** may include a controller (such as NFC controller **1213**) and switch **1215**. NFC module **1211** controls switch **1215** in order to selectively connect host controller **1207** with either coil **1217** or coil **1219**. Path **1221** communicatively couples NFC controller **1213** with host controller **1207**. NFC module **1211** may be switched between coil **1217** and coil **1219** upon detection of which coil would provide the best coverage

depending upon the current usage.

[0076] FIG. 12B illustrates a flow chart of embodiment of a process **1250** to sense environment change in order to determine which coil to use in a convertible small computing system (e.g., between clam shell and tablet modes as shown in FIG. 4). Process **1250** begins at block **1251** at which a convertible system initially may be in clam shell mode and NFC module **1211** may be connected to coil **1219**.

[0077] Process **1250** may then transition to decision block **1253**, at which NFC module **1211** senses whether there exists a characteristic or environmental change related to coil **1219**. Some embodiments may involve whether coil **1219** has worsened in relation to coil **1217**, e.g., whether performance using coil **1219** has deteriorated to be worse than performance using coil **1217**, and/or whether performance using coil **1217** has improved to be better than performance using coil **1219**. If no such characteristic or environmental change is sensed, then process **1250** may revert to block **1251**. If a characteristic or environmental change is sensed, then control of process **1250** may proceed to block **1255**.

[0078] At block **1255**, if the response to decision block **1253** is affirmative, then host controller **1207** may issue a command to switch the output of NFC module **1211** to coil **1217**. Control of process **1250** then transitions to decision block **1257**.

[0079] At decision block **1257**, NFC module **1211** senses whether there exists a characteristic or environmental change related to coil **1217**. Some embodiments may involve whether coil **1217** has worsened in relation to coil **1219**, e.g., whether performance using coil **1217** has deteriorated to be worse than performance using coil **1219**, and/or whether performance using coil **1219** has improved to be better than performance using coil **1217**. If no such characteristic or environmental change is sensed, then process **1250** may revert to block **1257**. If a characteristic or environmental change is sensed, then control of process **1250** may proceed to block **1259**.

[0080] At block **1259**, if the response to decision block **1257** is affirmative, then host controller **1207** may issue a command to switch the output of NFC module **1211** to coil **1219**. Control of process **1250** may then revert to decision block **1253**.

[0081] Embodiments may additionally use as triggers, either individually or together with other triggers described herein, the nature or purpose of an application accessing the NFC module. In some embodiments, the usage (as indicated by usage of an application program that is actively trying to control the NFC radio) determines the choice of coil to be used. For example, in a clamshell device when a payment application is active, a preferred coil to energize may be a coil mounted on or near the palm rest or touchpad. In contrast, if the active application were a P2P application, then a coil on the back of the display may be a preferred coil to energize. Activating a predetermined coil responsively to usage of an application program may be accomplished by a command from the application program or an operating system service that the application program uses. Alternatively, an operating system process (e.g., a background process) may monitor usage of the computing device by application programs, and activate a predetermined coil when a predetermined usage is detected. Refer to FIGS. 13A-13B.

[0082] FIG. 13A shows a system diagram of embodiment **1300** that is responsive to a nature or purpose of an application accessing the NFC module. Embodiment **1300** includes a host controller **1307**, which may be mounted on a circuit board **1301** (e.g., a motherboard). Circuit board **1301** includes support circuitry (e.g., circuit drivers, power distribution, memory, etc.) not illustrated but which will be known to persons of skill in the art. Circuit board **1301** is communicatively coupled to NFC module **1311** via communication path **1332**. Path **1332** supplies command signals and power energizing and detecting signals. NFC module **1311** may include a controller (such as NFC controller **1313**) and switch **1315**. NFC module **1311** controls switch **1315** in order to selectively connect host controller **1307** with either coil **1317** or coil **1319**. Path **1321** communicatively couples NFC controller **1313** with host controller **1307**. NFC module **1311** may be switched between coil **1317** and coil **1319** upon detection of the nature or purpose of an application

accessing the NFC module.

[0083] Embodiment **1300** may include a software or firmware payment module **1321** to switch the output of NFC module **1311** between coil **1317** (e.g., tablet mode as shown in FIG. 4) and coil **1319** (e.g., open mode as shown in FIG. 4). NFC module **1311** may switch between coil **1317** and coil **1319** upon a system trigger to activate “tap-and-pay” mode to best support the current usage of the convertible computing device.

[0084] FIG. **13B** illustrates a flow chart of one possible implementation using a payment software application module to configure a system to switch the output of NFC module **1311** between coils in tablet mode and open mode (as shown in FIG. 4). Process **1350** begins at block **1351** at which a convertible system initially may be in tablet mode and NFC module **1311** may be connected to coil **1319**.

[0085] Process **1350** may then transition to decision block **1353**, at which a query or notification is made whether an e-commerce transaction needs to be conducted using the NFC interface. If no made known, then process **1350** may revert to block **1351**. If a need for an e-commerce transaction through the NFC interface is sensed, then control of process **1350** may proceed to block **1355**.

[0086] At block **1355**, if the response to decision block **1353** is affirmative, then host controller **1307** may issue a command to switch the output of NFC module **1311** to coil **1317**. Control of process **1350** then transitions to decision block **1357**.

[0087] At decision block **1357**, a query may be made whether the e-commerce transaction using the NFC communication link has completed. If the e-commerce transaction has not yet completed, control of process **1350** transitions to block **1361**. If the e-commerce transaction has completed, then control of process **1350** transitions to block **1359**.

[0088] A block **1359**, host controller **1307** may issue a command to NFC module **1311** in order to change switch **1315** to connect to coil **1319** rather than to coil **1317**. At the completion of block **1359**, control of process **1350** reverts to decision block **1353**.

[0089] At block **1361**, a decision is made whether a time-out has occurred while waiting for the e-commerce transaction of block **1357** to finish. If the outcome of decision block is negative, then control of process **1350** reverts to block **1357**. If the outcome of decision block is positive, then control of process **1350** transitions to block **1359**.

[0090] FIG. **14** illustrates an embodiment of a device **1400** for use in a wireless communications system, such as an NFC system. Device **1400** may be suitable to implement various embodiments as described in FIGS. **1-13**. Device **1400** may be implemented, for example, in mobile platforms such as tablets and smartphones. The logic circuit **1430** may include physical circuits to perform operations described for an NFC-enabled mobile platform. As shown in FIG. **14**, device **1400** may include a radio interface **1410**, baseband circuitry **1420**, and computing platform **1430**, although embodiments are not limited to this configuration.

[0091] The device **1400** may implement some or all of the structure and/or operations for an NFC-enabled mobile platform, the storage medium **1444**, **1454** and/or logic circuit **1442** in a single computing entity, such as entirely within a single device. Alternatively, the device **1400** may distribute portions of the structure and/or operations for an NFC-enabled mobile platform, the storage medium **1444**, **1454** and/or logic circuit **1442** across multiple computing entities using a distributed system architecture, such as a client-server architecture, a 3-tier architecture, an N-tier architecture, a tightly-coupled or clustered architecture, a peer-to-peer architecture, a master-slave architecture, a shared database architecture, and other types of distributed systems. The embodiments are not limited in this context.

[0092] In one embodiment, radio interface **1410** may include a component or combination of components adapted for transmitting and/or receiving NFC signals, single carrier or multi-carrier modulated signals (e.g., including complementary code keying (CCK) and/or orthogonal frequency division multiplexing (OFDM) symbols) although the embodiments are not limited to any specific over-the-air interface or modulation scheme. Radio interface **1410** may include, for example, a

receiver **1412**, a transmitter **1416** and/or a frequency synthesizer **1414**. Radio interface **1410** may include bias controls, a crystal oscillator and/or one or more antennas **1418-p**. In another embodiment, radio interface **1410** may use external voltage-controlled oscillators (VCOs), surface acoustic wave filters, intermediate frequency (IF) filters and/or RF filters, as desired. Due to the variety of potential RF interface designs an expansive description thereof is omitted.

[0093] Baseband circuitry **1420** may communicate with radio interface **1410** to process receive and/or transmit signals and may include, for example, an analog-to-digital converter **1422** for down converting received signals, a digital-to-analog converter **1424** for up converting signals for transmission. Further, baseband circuitry **1420** may include a baseband or physical layer (PHY) processing circuit **1456** for PHY link layer processing of respective receive/transmit signals. Baseband circuitry **1420** may include, for example, a processing circuit **1428** for medium access control (MAC)/data link layer processing. Baseband circuitry **1420** may include a memory controller **1432** for communicating with processing circuit **1428** and/or a computing platform **1430**, for example, via one or more interfaces **1434**.

[0094] In some embodiments, PHY processing circuit **1426** may include a frame construction and/or detection module, in combination with additional circuitry such as a buffer memory, to construct and/or deconstruct communication frames. Alternatively or in addition, MAC processing circuit **1428** may share processing for certain of these functions or perform these processes independent of PHY processing circuit **1426**. In some embodiments, MAC and PHY processing may be integrated into a single circuit.

[0095] The computing platform **1430** may provide computing functionality for the device **1400**. As shown, the computing platform **1430** may include a processing component **1440**. In addition to, or alternatively of, the baseband circuitry **1420**, the device **1400** may execute processing operations or logic for a UE, a base station, the storage medium **1444** and/or logic circuit **1442** using the processing component **1430**. The processing component **1430** (and/or PHY **1426** and/or MAC **1428**) may comprise various hardware elements, software elements, or a combination of both. Examples of hardware elements may include devices, logic devices, components, processors, microprocessors, circuits, processor circuits, circuit elements (e.g., transistors, resistors, capacitors, inductors, and so forth), integrated circuits, application specific integrated circuits (ASIC), programmable logic devices (PLD), digital signal processors (DSP), field programmable gate array (FPGA), memory units, logic gates, registers, semiconductor device, chips, microchips, chip sets, and so forth. Examples of software elements may include software components, programs, applications, computer programs, application programs, system programs, software development programs, machine programs, operating system software, middleware, firmware, software modules, routines, subroutines, functions, methods, procedures, software interfaces, application program interfaces (API), instruction sets, computing code, computer code, code segments, computer code segments, words, values, symbols, or any combination thereof. Determining whether an embodiment is implemented using hardware elements and/or software elements may vary in accordance with any number of factors, such as desired computational rate, power levels, heat tolerances, processing cycle budget, input data rates, output data rates, memory resources, data bus speeds and other design or performance constraints, as desired for a given implementation.

[0096] The computing platform **1430** may further include other platform components **1450**. Other platform components **1450** include common computing elements, such as one or more processors, multi-core processors, co-processors, memory units, chipsets, controllers, peripherals, interfaces, oscillators, timing devices, video cards, audio cards, multimedia input/output (I/O) components (e.g., digital displays), power supplies, and so forth. Examples of memory units may include without limitation various types of computer readable and machine readable storage media in the form of one or more higher speed memory units, such as read-only memory (ROM), random-access memory (RAM), dynamic RAM (DRAM), Double-Data-Rate DRAM (DDRAM), synchronous DRAM (SDRAM), static RAM (SRAM), programmable ROM (PROM), erasable programmable

ROM (EPROM), electrically erasable programmable ROM (EEPROM), flash memory, polymer memory such as ferroelectric polymer memory, ovonic memory, phase change or ferroelectric memory, silicon-oxide-nitride-oxide-silicon (SONOS) memory, magnetic or optical cards, an array of devices such as Redundant Array of Independent Disks (RAID) drives, solid state memory devices (e.g., USB memory, solid state drives (SSD) and any other type of storage media suitable for storing information.

[0097] Device **1400** may be, for example, an ultra-mobile device, a mobile device, a fixed device, a machine-to-machine (M2M) device, a personal digital assistant (PDA), a mobile computing device, a smart phone, a telephone, a digital telephone, a cellular telephone, user equipment, eBook readers, a handset, a one-way pager, a two-way pager, a messaging device, a computer, a personal computer (PC), a desktop computer, a laptop computer, a notebook computer, a netbook computer, a handheld computer, a tablet computer, a server, a server array or server farm, a web server, a network server, an Internet server, a work station, a mini-computer, a main frame computer, a supercomputer, a network appliance, a web appliance, a distributed computing system, multiprocessor systems, processor-based systems, consumer electronics, programmable consumer electronics, game devices, television, digital television, set top box, wireless access point, base station, node B, evolved node B (eNB), subscriber station, mobile subscriber center, radio network controller, router, hub, gateway, bridge, switch, machine, or combination thereof. Accordingly, functions and/or specific configurations of device **1400** described herein, may be included or omitted in various embodiments of device **1400**, as suitably desired. In some embodiments, device **1400** may be configured to be compatible with protocols and frequencies associated one or more of the 3GPP LTE Specifications and/or IEEE 702.16 Standards for WMANs, and/or other broadband wireless networks, cited herein, although the embodiments are not limited in this respect.

[0098] Embodiments of device **1400** may be implemented using single input single output (SISO) architectures. However, certain implementations may include multiple antennas (e.g., antennas **1418-p**) for transmission and/or reception using adaptive antenna techniques for beamforming or spatial division multiple access (SDMA) and/or using MIMO communication techniques.

[0099] The components and features of device **1400** may be implemented using any combination of discrete circuitry, application specific integrated circuits (ASICs), logic gates and/or single chip architectures. Further, the features of device **1400** may be implemented using microcontrollers, programmable logic arrays and/or microprocessors or any combination of the foregoing where suitably appropriate. It is noted that hardware, firmware and/or software elements may be collectively or individually referred to herein as “logic” or “circuit.”

[0100] It should be appreciated that the exemplary device **1400** shown in the block diagram of FIG. **14** may represent one functionally descriptive example of many potential implementations. Accordingly, division, omission or inclusion of block functions depicted in the accompanying figures does not infer that the hardware components, circuits, software and/or elements for implementing these functions would be necessarily be divided, omitted, or included in embodiments.

[0101] One or more aspects of at least one embodiment may be implemented by representative instructions stored on a machine-readable medium which represents various logic within the processor, which when read by a machine causes the machine to fabricate logic to perform the techniques described herein. Such representations, known as “IP cores” may be stored on a tangible, machine readable medium and supplied to various customers or manufacturing facilities to load into the fabrication machines that actually make the logic or processor. Some embodiments may be implemented, for example, using a machine-readable medium or article which may store an instruction or a set of instructions that, if executed by a machine, may cause the machine to perform a method and/or operations in accordance with the embodiments. Such a machine may include, for example, any suitable processing platform, computing platform, computing device, processing device, computing system, processing system, computer, processor, or the like, and may

be implemented using any suitable combination of hardware and/or software. The machine-readable medium or article may include, for example, any suitable type of memory unit, memory device, memory article, memory medium, storage device, storage article, storage medium and/or storage unit, for example, memory, removable or non-removable media, erasable or non-erasable media, writeable or re-writeable media, digital or analog media, hard disk, floppy disk, Compact Disk Read Only Memory (CD-ROM), Compact Disk Recordable (CD-R), Compact Disk Rewriteable (CD-RW), optical disk, magnetic media, magneto-optical media, removable memory cards or disks, various types of Digital Versatile Disk (DVD), a tape, a cassette, or the like. The instructions may include any suitable type of code, such as source code, compiled code, interpreted code, executable code, static code, dynamic code, encrypted code, and the like, implemented using any suitable high-level, low-level, object-oriented, visual, compiled and/or interpreted programming language.

[0102] The following examples pertain to further embodiments:

[0103] An apparatus to provide switchable coils in a computing device may comprise a plurality of electrically conductive coils to transfer electromagnetic energy, a sensor coupled to a processor, the processor to select a coil from among the plurality of electrically conductive coils by use of the sensor, a switch to energize the selected coil, and a switch controller coupled to the switch and to the processor to control the switch.

[0104] With respect to such an apparatus, the plurality of coils comprising an inductive charging interface.

[0105] Such an apparatus may further comprise a communication interface between the processor to the plurality of electrically conductive coils, the plurality of coils comprising an interface for near-field communications (NFC).

[0106] With respect to such an apparatus, the plurality of coils arranged under a touch-screen user interface.

[0107] With respect to such an apparatus, the plurality of coils arranged along at least two major surfaces of the computing device.

[0108] With respect to such an apparatus, the sensor to sense a physical configuration of the computing device.

[0109] With respect to such an apparatus, the sensor to sense an operating state of the computing device.

[0110] With respect to such an apparatus, the sensor to sense a physical configuration of the computing device that is related to a change in operating state of the computing device.

[0111] With respect to such an apparatus, the sensor to sense a pattern of responses from the plurality of electrically conductive coils.

[0112] Such an apparatus may further comprise an application program monitor, to activate a predetermined coil upon detection of predetermined application program activity.

[0113] A system to provide switchable coils in a computing device may comprise a processor coupled to a memory, a plurality of electrically conductive coils to transfer electromagnetic energy, a sensor coupled to the processor, the processor to select a coil from among the plurality of electrically conductive coils by use of the sensor, a switch to energize the selected coil, and a switch controller coupled to the switch and to the processor to control the switch.

[0114] With respect to such a system, the plurality of coils may comprise an inductive charging interface.

[0115] Such a system may further comprise a communication interface between the processor to the plurality of electrically conductive coils, the plurality of coils comprising an interface for near-field communications (NFC).

[0116] With respect to such a system, the plurality of coils may be arranged under a touch-screen user interface.

[0117] With respect to such a system, the plurality of coils may be arranged along at least two

major surfaces of the computing device.

[0118] With respect to such a system, the sensor may sense a physical configuration of the computing device.

[0119] With respect to such a system, the sensor may sense an operating state of the computing device.

[0120] With respect to such a system, the sensor may sense a physical configuration of the computing device that is related to a change in operating state of the computing device.

[0121] With respect to such a system, the sensor may sense a pattern of responses from the plurality of electrically conductive coils.

[0122] Such a system may further comprise an application program monitor, to activate a predetermined coil upon detection of predetermined application program activity.

[0123] At least one machine-readable medium may comprise a plurality of instructions that, in response to being executed on a computing device, may cause a controller to cause a plurality of electrically conductive coils to transfer electromagnetic energy, to receive data from a sensor coupled to the controller, to select a coil from among the plurality of electrically conductive coils by use of the data, to control a switch to energize the selected coil, and to communicate with a switch controller coupled to the switch and to the processor.

[0124] With respect to such a computer-readable storage medium, the plurality of coils may comprise an inductive charging interface.

[0125] Such a computer-readable storage medium may further comprise instructions that, when executed, cause a controller to communicate on a communication interface between the processor to the plurality of electrically conductive coils, the plurality of coils comprising an interface for near-field communications (NFC).

[0126] With respect to such a computer-readable storage medium, the plurality of coils arranged under a touch-screen user interface.

[0127] With respect to such a computer-readable storage medium, the plurality of coils arranged along at least two major surfaces of the computing device.

[0128] With respect to such a computer-readable storage medium, the sensor to sense a physical configuration of the computing device.

[0129] With respect to such a computer-readable storage medium, the sensor to sense an operating state of the computing device.

[0130] With respect to such a computer-readable storage medium, the sensor to sense a physical configuration of the computing device that is related to a change in operating state of the computing device.

[0131] With respect to such a computer-readable storage medium, the sensor to sense a pattern of responses from the plurality of electrically conductive coils.

[0132] Such a computer-readable storage medium may further comprise an application program monitor, to activate a predetermined coil upon detection of predetermined application program activity.

[0133] A method to provide switchable coils in a computing device may comprise providing a plurality of electrically conductive coils to transfer electromagnetic energy, selecting a coil from among the plurality of electrically conductive coils, by use of a sensor coupled to a processor, energizing the selected coil by use of a switch, and controlling the switch by use of a switch controller coupled to the switch and to the processor.

[0134] With respect to such a method, the plurality of coils may comprise an inductive charging interface.

[0135] Such a method may further comprise communicating between the processor and the plurality of electrically conductive coils, the plurality of coils comprising an interface for near-field communications (NFC).

[0136] With respect to such a method, the plurality of coils may be arranged under a touch-screen

user interface.

[0137] With respect to such a method, the plurality of coils may be arranged along at least two major surfaces of the computing device.

[0138] With respect to such a method, the sensor sensing a physical configuration of the computing device.

[0139] With respect to such a method, the sensor sensing an operating state of the computing device.

[0140] With respect to such a method, the sensor sensing a physical configuration of the computing device that is related to a change in operating state of the computing device.

[0141] Such a method may further comprise the sensor sensing a pattern of responses from the plurality of electrically conductive coils.

[0142] Such a method may further comprise activating a predetermined coil upon detection of predetermined application program activity.

[0143] An apparatus to provide switchable coils in a computing device may comprise a means for providing a plurality of electrically conductive coils to transfer electromagnetic energy, a means for selecting a coil from among the plurality of electrically conductive coils, by use of a sensor coupled to a processor, a means for energizing the selected coil by use of a switch, and a means for controlling the switch by use of a switch controller coupled to the switch and to the processor.

[0144] With respect to such an apparatus, the plurality of coils may comprise an inductive charging interface.

[0145] Such an apparatus may further comprise a means for communicating between the processor and the plurality of electrically conductive coils, the plurality of coils comprising an interface for near-field communications (NFC).

[0146] With respect to such an apparatus, the plurality of coils arranged under a touch-screen user interface.

[0147] With respect to such an apparatus, the plurality of coils arranged along at least two major surfaces of the computing device.

[0148] With respect to such an apparatus, the sensor sensing a physical configuration of the computing device.

[0149] With respect to such an apparatus, the sensor sensing an operating state of the computing device.

[0150] With respect to such an apparatus, the sensor sensing a physical configuration of the computing device that is related to a change in operating state of the computing device.

[0151] With respect to such an apparatus, the sensor sensing a pattern of responses from the plurality of electrically conductive coils.

[0152] Such an apparatus may further comprise a means for activating a predetermined coil upon detection of predetermined application program activity.

[0153] Some embodiments may be described using the expression “one embodiment” or “an embodiment” along with their derivatives. These terms mean that a particular feature, structure, or characteristic described in connection with the embodiment is included in at least one embodiment. The appearances of the phrase “in one embodiment” in various places in the specification are not necessarily all referring to the same embodiment.

[0154] Furthermore, in the following description and/or claims, the terms coupled and/or connected, along with their derivatives, may be used. In particular embodiments, connected may be used to indicate that two or more elements are in direct physical and/or electrical contact with each other. Coupled may mean that two or more elements are in direct physical and/or electrical contact. However, coupled may also mean that two or more elements may not be in direct contact with each other, but yet may still cooperate and/or interact with each other. For example, “coupled” may mean that two or more elements do not contact each other but are indirectly joined together via another element or intermediate elements.

[0155] In addition, the term “and/or” may mean “and,” it may mean “or,” it may mean “exclusive-or,” it may mean “one,” it may mean “some, but not all,” it may mean “neither,” and/or it may mean “both,” although the scope of claimed subject matter is not limited in this respect. In the following description and/or claims, the terms “comprise” and “include,” along with their derivatives, may be used and are intended as synonyms for each other.

[0156] It is emphasized that the Abstract of the Disclosure is provided to allow a reader to quickly ascertain the nature of the technical disclosure. It is submitted with the understanding that it will not be used to interpret or limit the scope or meaning of the claims. In addition, in the foregoing Detailed Description, it can be seen that various features are grouped together in a single embodiment for the purpose of streamlining the disclosure. This method of disclosure is not to be interpreted as reflecting an intention that the claimed embodiments require more features than are expressly recited in each claim. Rather, as the following claims reflect, inventive subject matter lies in less than all features of a single disclosed embodiment. Thus the following claims are hereby incorporated into the Detailed Description, with each claim standing on its own as a separate embodiment. In the appended claims, the terms “including” and “in which” are used as the plain-English equivalents of the respective terms “comprising” and “wherein,” respectively. Moreover, the terms “first,” “second,” “third,” and so forth, are used merely as labels, and are not intended to impose numerical requirements on their objects.

[0157] What has been described above includes examples of the disclosed architecture. It is, of course, not possible to describe every conceivable combination of components and/or methodologies, but one of ordinary skill in the art may recognize that many further combinations and permutations are possible. Accordingly, the novel architecture is intended to embrace all such alterations, modifications and variations that fall within the scope of the appended claims.

Claims

1. A method, comprising: receiving, by a control circuitry coupled to one or more antennas, command signals from a host controller in response to execution of instructions by the host controller; controlling, by the control circuitry, wireless charging via a first coil of the one or more antennas in response to the command signals, to control wireless energy transfer via the first coil to perform wireless inductive power charging via a coil of a wireless charging enabled device based on the command signals from the host controller, wherein the command signals are based on input from a sensor, and performing near field communications via a second coil of the one or more antennas.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the control circuitry comprises the host controller coupled with a circuit board and the sensor to execute the instructions to generate the command signals.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the control circuitry further comprises a display coupled with the host controller, wherein the display comprises a touch screen and the touch screen comprises sensors, further comprising activating at least one of the antennas as an inductive charging interface based on the command signals from the host controller.
4. The method of claim 2, further comprising receiving at least one of the command signals from the host controller to use one of the one or more antennas.
5. The method of claim 2, further comprising, detecting, by the sensor, the coil of the wireless charging enabled device proximate to the sensor.
6. The method of claim 1, further comprising associating, by the host controller, one or more coils of the one or more antennas with modes of an apparatus, wherein the apparatus comprises surfaces housing at least the one or more antennas, the control circuitry, and the sensor.
7. A non-transitory computer-readable medium, comprising instructions, which when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform operations to: receive, by a control circuitry coupled to one or more antennas, command signals from a host controller in response to execution of

instructions by the host controller; control, by the control circuitry, wireless charging via a first coil of the one or more antennas in response to the command signals, to control wireless energy transfer via the first coil to perform wireless inductive power charging via a coil of a wireless charging enabled device based on the command signals from the host controller, wherein the command signals are based on input from a sensor, and perform near field communications via a second coil of the one or more antennas.

8. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 7, wherein the control circuitry comprises the host controller coupled with a circuit board, the host controller coupled with the sensor to execute the instructions to generate the command signals.

9. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 8, further comprising activating at least one of the antennas as an inductive charging interface based on the command signals from the host controller.

10. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 8, further comprising receiving at least one of the command signals from the host controller to use one of the one or more antennas.

11. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 7, further comprising associating, by the host controller, one or more coils of the one or more antennas with modes of an apparatus comprising the control circuitry, and further comprising detecting, by the sensor, the coil of the wireless charging enabled device proximate to the sensor.

12. A method comprising: selectively performing, by a circuitry coupled with antennas and a host controller, wireless charging and near field communications in response to command signals, wherein the antennas comprise one or more coils; performing, by the circuitry coupled with a near field communications (NFC) chip, near field communications via one of the antennas in response to the command signals; receiving, by the circuitry coupled with the host controller, the command signals from the host controller in response to execution of instructions by the host controller.

13. The method of claim 12, further comprising housing, by surfaces of an apparatus, at least the antennas, the host controller, and the circuitry, wherein the surfaces further house a touch screen coupled with the host controller, wherein the touch screen comprises a sensor, wherein at least one or the one or more coils is mounted within the surfaces behind the touch screen.

14. The method of claim 12, further comprising transferring, by an inductive charging interface of the circuitry, energy wirelessly via electromagnetic coupling with another coil, wherein at least one of the one or more coils comprises the inductive charging interface coupled with a battery.

15. The method of claim 12, further comprising associating, by the host controller, the coils with modes of an apparatus comprising the circuitry and the host controller, and further comprising passing, by the circuitry, a detection signal indicative of a coil or a magnetic field.

16. The method of claim 12, further comprising receiving, by the circuitry, a command signal from the host controller to use the coils for wireless charging or the near field communications, wherein the circuitry comprises a circuit board, wherein the NFC chip comprises a processor.

17. A non-transitory computer-readable medium, comprising instructions, which when executed by a processor, cause the processor to perform operations to: selectively perform, by a circuitry coupled with antennas and a host controller, wireless charging and near field communications in response to command signals, wherein the antennas comprise one or more coils; perform, by the circuitry coupled with a near field communications (NFC) chip, near field communications via one of the antennas in response to the command signals; receive, by the circuitry coupled with the host controller, the command signals from the host controller in response to execution of instructions by the host controller.

18. The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 17, wherein surfaces of an apparatus house at least the antennas, the host controller, and the circuitry, wherein the surfaces further house a touch screen coupled with the host controller, wherein the touch screen comprises a sensor, wherein at least one of the one or more coils is mounted within the surfaces behind the touch screen.

- 19.** The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 17, further comprising transferring, by an inductive charging interface of the circuitry, energy wirelessly via electromagnetic coupling with another coil, wherein at least one of the one or more coils comprises the inductive charging interface coupled with a battery.
- 20.** The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 17, further comprising associating, by the host controller, the coils with modes of an apparatus comprising the circuitry and the host controller.
- 21.** The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 17, further comprising receiving, by the circuitry, a command signal from the host controller to use the coils for wireless charging or the near field communications.
- 22.** The non-transitory computer-readable medium of claim 17, further comprising passing, by the circuitry, a detection signal indicative of a coil or a magnetic field.
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