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(76) **Inventor: Chris Zegelin, San Jose, CA (US)**

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Correspondence Address:
MARK KOFFSKY
Symbol Technologies, Inc.
One Symbol Plaza
Mail Stop A-6
Holtville, NY 11742 (US)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

The division of the 802.11 MAC operation into a lower MAC and an upper MAC is described. The lower MAC functionality is provided by a combination of software commands and an RF driver. The RF driver is intended to be appliance independent and will not change based on what type of 802.11 node is being implemented: Mobile Unit (MU), Access Point (AP), Wireless AP (WLAP), phone, pager, etc. The RF driver is not hardware platform independent, due to variations in DMA capability and allotted timers. The upper MAC is intended to be hardware platform independent, but appliance dependent (i.e. it will change based on the product being implemented such as PCMCIA, USB, PCI, etc.).

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