distance sources, and to transmit data to recipient devices from the apparatus **200**. Communications interfaces **220** may be activated by control module **210**, or by control resources local to the sub-modules responding to received messages, environmental influences and/or other devices in communication with the apparatus **200**.

[0039] Short-range wireless networks provide communication solutions that avoid some of the problems seen in large cellular networks. Bluetooth™ is an example of a short-range wireless technology quickly gaining acceptance in the marketplace. Bluetooth™ enabled wireless communication device may transmit and receive data rates from 720 Kbps up to 2-3 Mbps within a range of 10 meters, and may transmit up to 100 meters with additional power boosting. A user does not actively instigate a Bluetooth™ network. Instead, a plurality of devices within operating range of each other will automatically form a network group called a "piconet". Any device may promote itself to the master of the piconet, allowing it to control data exchanges with up to seven "active" slaves and 255 "parked" slaves. Active slaves exchange data based on the clock timing of the master. Parked slaves monitor a beacon signal in order to stay synchronized with the master, and wait for an active slot to become available. These devices continually switch between various active communication and power saving modes in order to transmit data to other piconet members. In addition to Bluetooth™ and Bluetooth™ Low Energy, other popular short-range wireless networks include WLAN (of which "Wi-Fi" local access points communicating in accordance with the IEEE 802.11 standard, is an example), Wireless Universal Serial Bus (WUSB), ultra-wideband (UWB) and ZigBee (802.15.4, 802.15.4a) technologies. All of these wireless mediums have features and advantages that make them appropriate for various applications.

[0040] Long-range communication module **240** may comprise a long-range communications interface configured to communicate and exchange information over a long distance in a large geographic area using any of the wide-area communication technologies described earlier in connection with FIG. **1**. As a subset of long-range communications module **240**, or alternatively operating as an independent module separately coupled to processor **210**, the apparatus **200** may comprise a broadcast receiver. The broadcast receiver may be a digital audio- or video receiver, for example a digital audio broadcasting (DAB) or a digital video broadcasting (DVB) receiver, and/or the like. According to an example embodiment, the broadcast receiver comprises a Digital Video Broadcast for Handheld Apparatuses (DVB-H) receiver. The broadcasting transmissions may be encoded so that only certain apparatuses may access the transmitted content. The broadcast transmission may comprise text, audio and/or video information, and data. In an example embodiment, apparatus **200** may receive broadcasts and/or information within the broadcast signal to determine if the apparatus is permitted to view the received content.

[0041] In addition to short-range communication module **230** and long-range communication module **240**, communications interfaces may comprise a near-field communication module **250** embodied for example as a reader and/or an interrogator for exchanging information via RF transmission over short distances. According to one embodiment of the present invention, the reader and/or interrogator communicates with nearby machine-readable objects, such as tags **350** and **450** of FIG. **1** by sending out an RF signal, which may "wake up" and/or energize any RF transponder and/or a tag within coverage. In response to the RF signal, the reader and/or interrogator may receive a response signal provided by the RF transponder and/or tag located within coverage area of the near-field communication module **250**. The information may be received by the near-field communication module **250** over connectionless communication that is a connection without a logical connection between the near-field communication module **250** and the machine-readable object, such as either of tags **350** or **450** of FIG. **1**.

[0042] Example near-field communication module **250** comprises radio-frequency identification (RFID) module embodied as RFID reader/writer. Alternatively, or in addition, the near-field communication module may **250** comprise a Near Field Communication (NFC) module, or any other communication module capable of machine-reading objects substantially wirelessly over short distances using for example RF signal or electromagnetic coupling and/or induction, or like.

[0043] According to one example embodiment any of the communication interfaces **220** comprising the short-range communications module **230**, the long-range communications module **240**, and the near-field communications module **250** may be equipped with a wired interface that may be used for communicating with another device using a wired communication protocol via an interface such as Ethernet, an IEEE 1394 communication interface, a universal serial bus (USB) interface, and/or the like.

[0044] User interface **260** may include visual, audible and/or tactile elements which allow a user to receive data from, and enter data into, the apparatus. Data entered by a user is received via user input module **262** and may be interpreted by control module **210**, for example to affect the behavior of apparatus **200**. User-inputted data may also be transmitted via any of the communication modules of the communications interfaces **220** to another device. Information may also be received by other devices at the apparatus **200** via communications interfaces **220**. Control module **210** may cause this information to be transferred to user interface **260** for presentation to the user via user output module **264**. User interface **260** may comprise one or more user input and output modules, and there may also be a module operating both as a user input module **262** and user output module **264**, for example a touch screen display operating as a tactile user interface.

[0045] Apparatus **200** may further comprise a memory and/or storage **270**. Memory/storage **270** may be connected to controller **210**. Memory/storage **270** may include at least one database **280**. Memory/storage **270** may further store executable instructions that are configured to cause the apparatus **200** to perform various actions in co-operation with the control module **210**.

[0046] FIG. **3**A illustrates a modular layout for another example apparatus according to an example embodiment of the present invention. In FIG. **3**A, example apparatus **300** of FIG. **1** is broken down into modules configured to cause the apparatus to perform various functionalities. The functionalities may be provided by various combinations of the software and/or hardware components discussed below according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0047] Control module **310**, similarly to control module **210** of apparatus **200** is configured to regulate operation of the apparatus **300**. The control module may be embodied as a controlling means, for example as a controlling circuitry or a processor. Inputs for the control module **310** may be received