

trated, first conductive layer 2 comprises the first electrodes 8. First electrodes 8 are connected to drivers 18 for sensing currents and applying potentials to the electrodes 8 through four wires. Further, the second electrode 10 on the first conductive layer 2 is connected to a driver 20e for sensing currents and applying potentials through electrode 10.

[0069] As second electrode 10 is used for resistive touch detection, it needs to be operated in close cooperation with third electrodes 12, which are connected to drivers 20a-d for sensing currents and applying potentials through electrodes 20a-d.

[0070] Drivers 18 as well as drivers 20 are operated by a signal processor such as a microprocessor 22 for feeding currents to the electrodes 8, 10, 12 as well as for reading out the drivers of the drivers 18, 20. Drivers 18, 20 may be understood as electronic or electric circuits for applying a voltage onto electrodes and for sensing voltages and currents within the electrodes. Drivers 18, 20 may comprise voltage sources, current sources, current sensors and/or voltage sensors. Drivers 18, 20 may electrically determine voltages and currents within connected electrodes.

[0071] For capacitive touch detection, the drivers 18 apply an equal potential onto the electrodes 8. By applying an equal potential to the electrodes 8, first conductive layer 2 is electrostatically charged at a certain potential.

[0072] When approaching first conductive layer with a conductive piece, such as a finger or a conductive stylus pen, charges are drawn up by the conductive piece and thus inducing a current on first conductive layer 2. This current may be sensed by drivers 18. When touching the first conductive layer, a current flows from the electrodes 8 through the conductive piece to mass-potential. Depending on the position, where the first conductive layer is touched or a conductive piece is in the proximity of the first conductive layer 2, the current through the electrodes 8 differs. The closer the point of contact between the conductive piece and an electrode 8 is, the higher the current through this particular electrode 8. By sensing the currents through electrodes 8a-d, and differentiating between the currents within drivers 18, it is possible to evaluate by microprocessor 22, where the position of contact between the conductive piece, and the first conductive layer 2 is.

[0073] For example, when the first conductive layer 2 is touched at a position 24a, the current through electrode 8a is highest. The next lower current is the current through electrode 8c followed by the current through electrode 8b and, as electrode 8c is farthest away from the position 24a, the current through electrode 8d is lowest. By evaluating the currents through the electrodes 8 sensed by the drivers 18 in microprocessor 22, it may be deduced, where position 24a is. The first conductive layer 2 is, as illustrated above, capable of capacitive touch detection. It is possible, to detect a conductive piece in the proximity of the first conductive layer 2, as well as a position 24a of point of contact.

[0074] For resistive touch detection, it is necessary, that first conductive layer 2 and second conductive layer 6 come into contact with each other. This contact may be established by pressing the first conductive layer 2 onto the second conductive layer 6, for example using a stylus pen or a finger. By bringing the first conductive layer 2 into physical contact with second conductive layer 6, it is possible to measure a current in second electrode 10, applied by third electrodes 12 onto the second conductive layer 6, as will be explained hereinafter.

[0075] For resistive touch detection, it is necessary, to detect the coordinates of position 24b of a point of a contact between the conductive layers 2, 6, with respect to the y-direction and x-direction. For this reason, as illustrated in FIG. 4, voltages are applied to the electrodes 12, such that field lines are subsequently substantially orthogonal to each other.

[0076] As can be seen in FIG. 4a, electrodes 12a, 12b are supplied by drivers 20a, 20b with +5V potential and electrodes 12c, 12d are supplied with mass potential by drivers 20c, 20d. Field lines 26 are illustrated which are established between the third electrodes 12a, 12b and the third electrodes 12c, 12d. Along the field lines, a voltage gradient is established, moving from +5V to mass potential. Equipotential lines (not illustrated) are orthogonal to the field lines 26 defining positions of equal potential.

[0077] When measuring a position 24b, third electrodes 12 are supplied with a voltage as illustrated in FIG. 4a. At the position 24b, a voltage has a certain value defining an equipotential line along the y-direction. When sensing with the second electrode 10 and a high input resistance A/D converter, only low currents flow from the second to the first conductive layers 2, 6 through the point of contact. The voltage measured on the first conductive layer 2 using second electrode 10 may be the voltage at the point of contact. This voltage in the point of contact between the first conductive layer 2 and the second conductive layer 6 at position 24b allows determining the y-position of position 26. The voltage is higher or lower, i.e. whether the position 26 is closer or further away from third electrodes 12a, 12b in the y-direction.

[0078] Subsequent to supplying a voltage according to FIG. 4a, microprocessor 22 instructs drivers 20 to apply a voltage onto the third electrodes 12 as illustrated in FIG. 4b. The +5V potential is switched from third electrodes 12a, 12b to third electrodes 12a, 12c. The mass-potential is switched from third electrodes 12c, 12d to third electrodes 12b, 12d. Again illustrated are field lines 26, which path is from electrodes 12a, 12c to electrodes 12b, 12d. Orthogonal to the field lines 26 are equipotential lines (not illustrated), defining planes of equal potential. At the point of contact at position 24b, a well defined potential in the x-direction is established. At the point of contact at position 24b, a voltage may be sensed in second electrode 10 through driver 20e. It is possible to measure a position 24b of the point of contact in x-direction.

[0079] By subsequently switching between applying the voltage according to FIG. 4a and FIG. 4b in short intervals, for example within milliseconds, it is possible, to quickly determine the position 24b of a point of contact in both x- and y-direction. Thus, it is possible, to provide resistive touch detection.

[0080] When measuring an absolute value of a current within electrode 10, it may also be possible to determine a strength of a force pushing conductive layers 2, 6 together. It has been found, that the value of the current may be substantially proportional to the size of the area of contact. The higher the pressure, the bigger the area of contact is. A bigger area of contact results in a higher current. The driver 20e may measure the value of the current. From this value, the microprocessor may determine the force by which the layers 2, 6 are pressed together. This allows force sensing with resistive touch detection.

[0081] FIG. 5 illustrates a mobile phone 30 having a memory 32, a CPU 34, a display driver 36, as well as a communication unit 38. Further, the mobile phone 30 comprises a display 40, which may comprise a protection layer,