

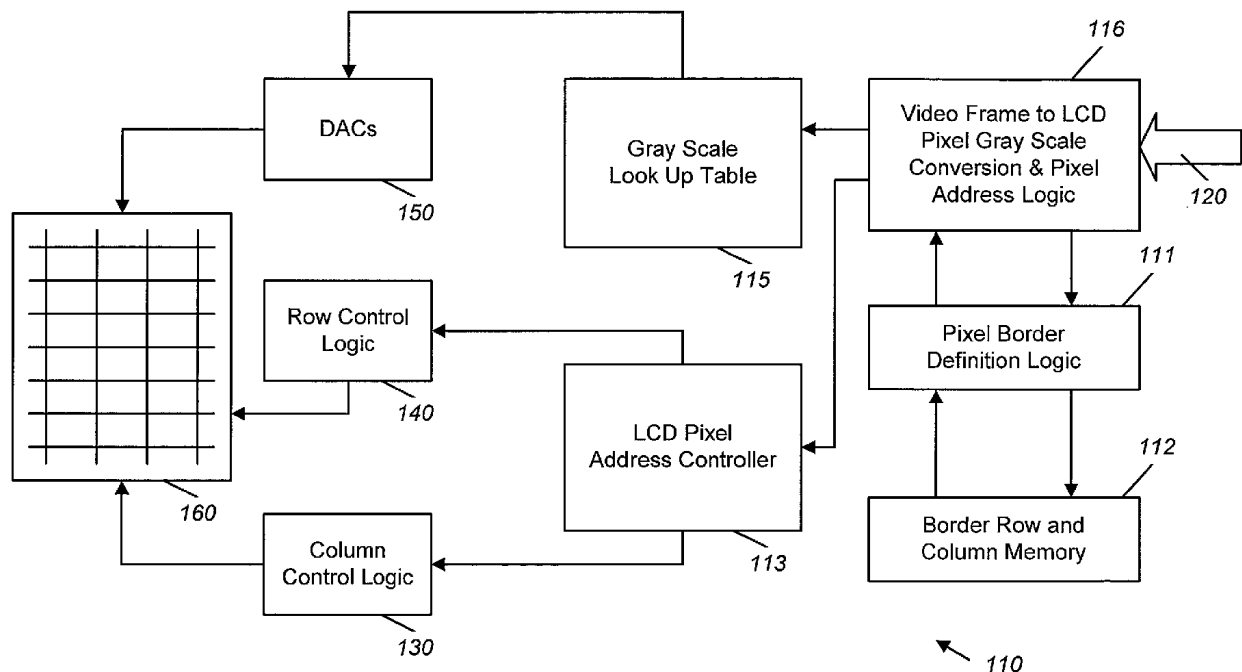


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(19) **United States**(12) **Patent Application Publication** (10) **Pub. No.: US 2003/0025663 A1**
Waterman et al. (43) **Pub. Date: Feb. 6, 2003**(54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING
VOLTAGES FOR A LIQUID CRYSTAL
DISPLAY**(22) Filed: **Jul. 25, 2001****Publication Classification**(76) Inventors: **John Karl Waterman**, Mesa, AZ (US);
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Andreas Grubert, Houston, TX (US)(51) **Int. Cl.⁷** **G09G 3/36**
(52) **U.S. Cl.** **345/89**(57) **ABSTRACT**

A matrix of liquid crystal pixels (160) is provided. A digital-to-analog converter (DAC) (150) is coupled to the matrix and produces an output voltage that can be applied to one or more pixels in the matrix. The DAC (150) receives a multi-bit digital input and generates its output voltage to correspond to the digital input. The conversion function of the DAC is adapted to have a higher resolution within a voltage range in which most grayshade changes of the LCD occur.

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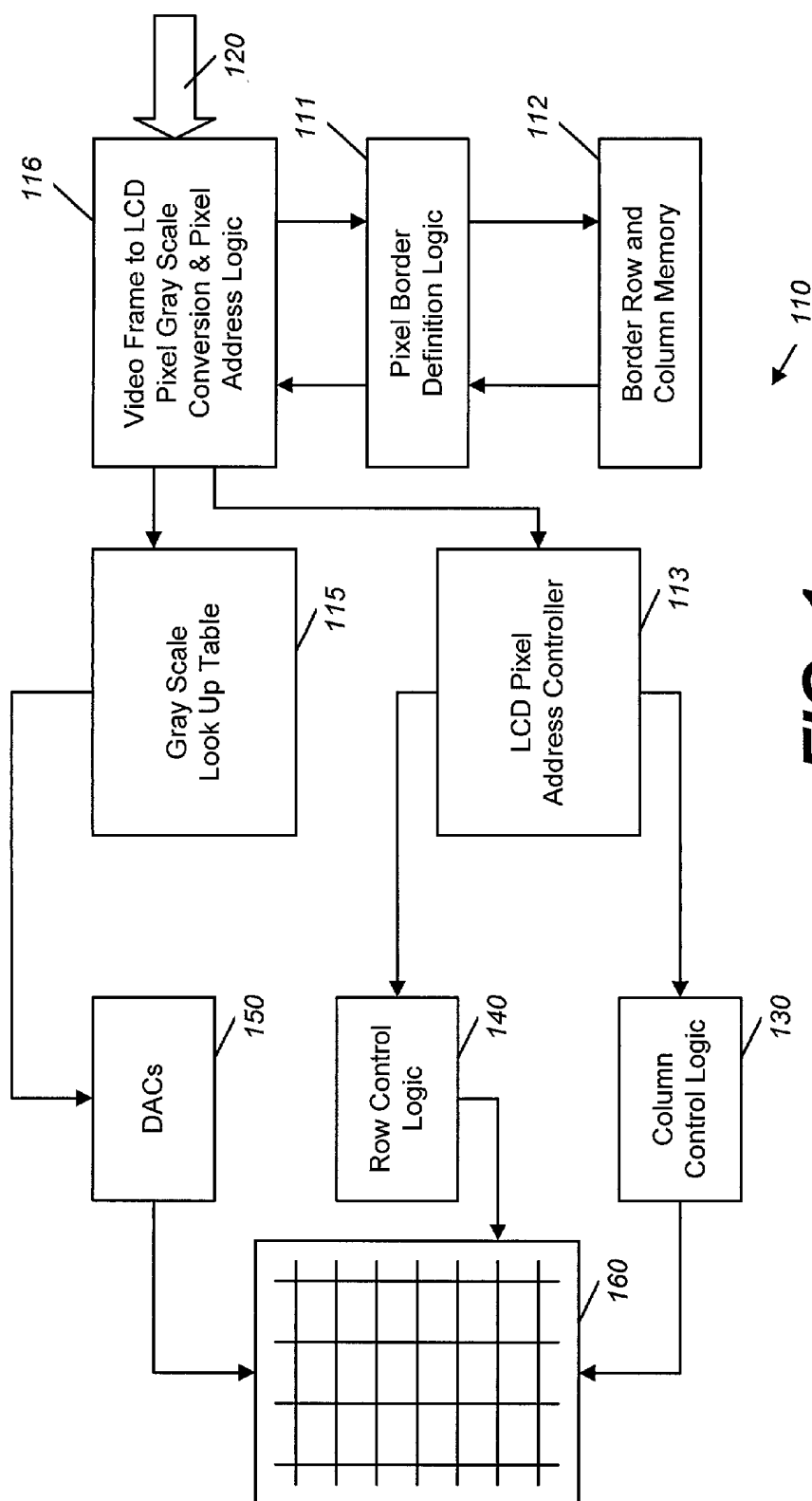


FIG. 1

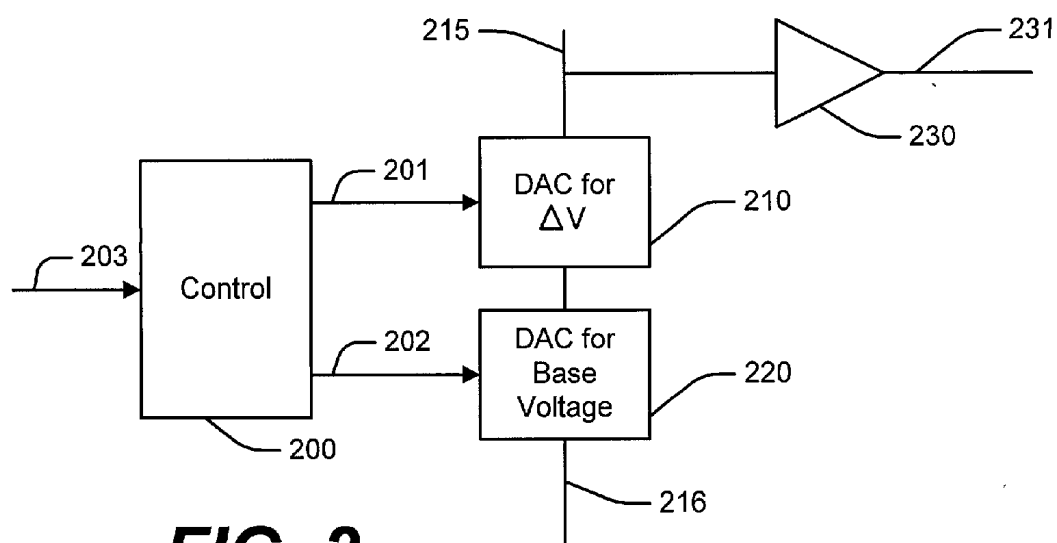


FIG. 2

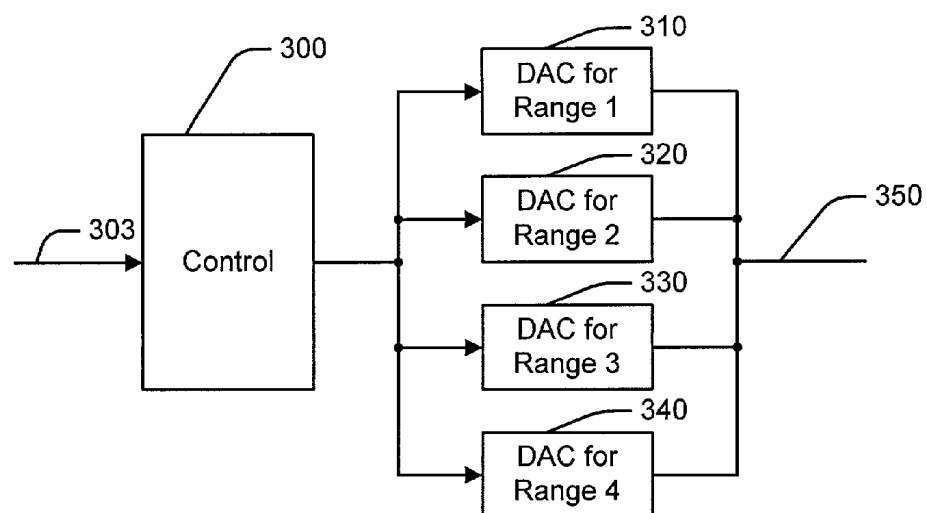


FIG. 3

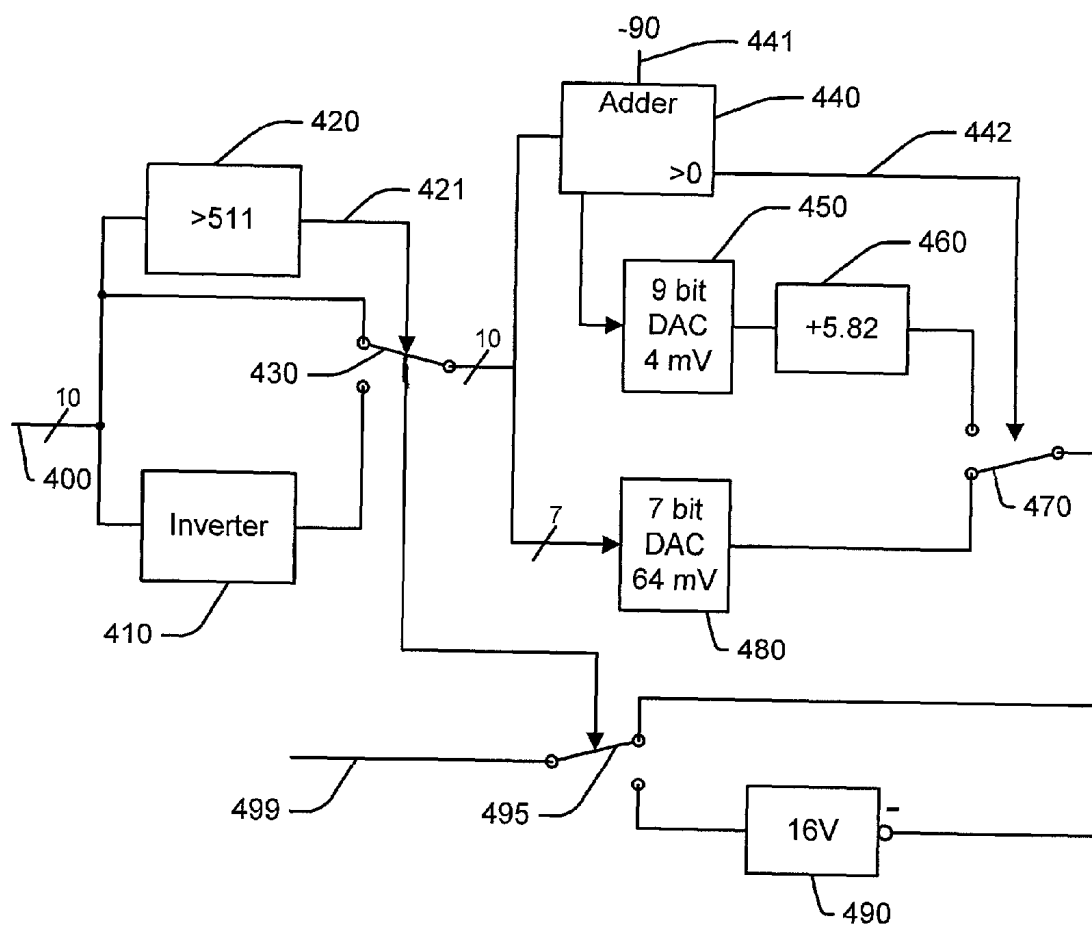


FIG. 4

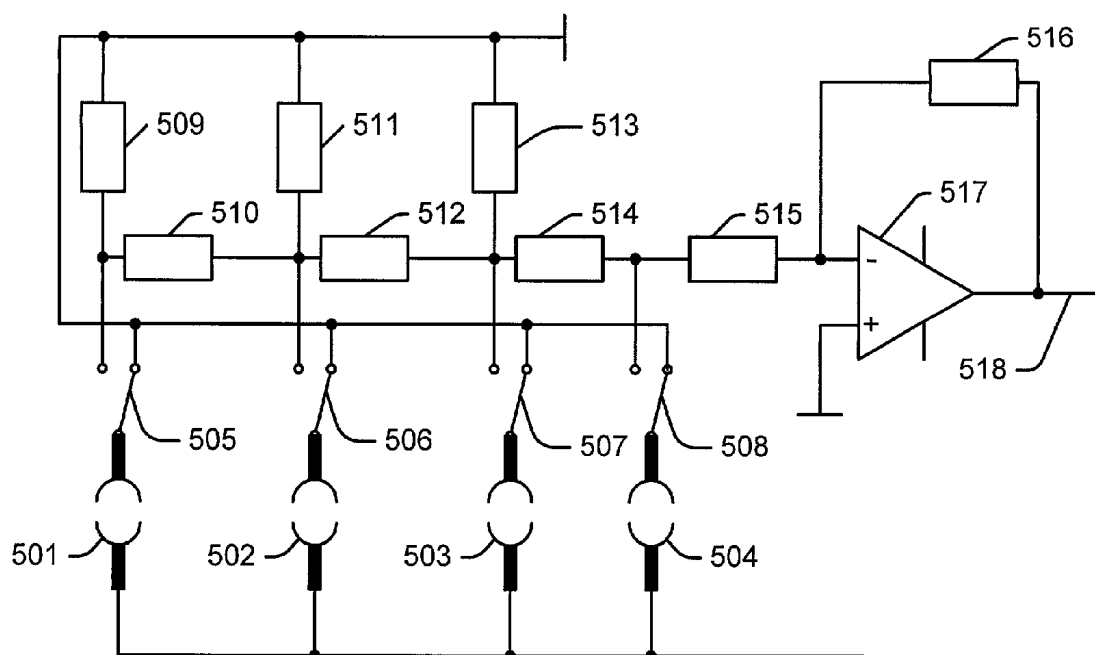


FIG. 5

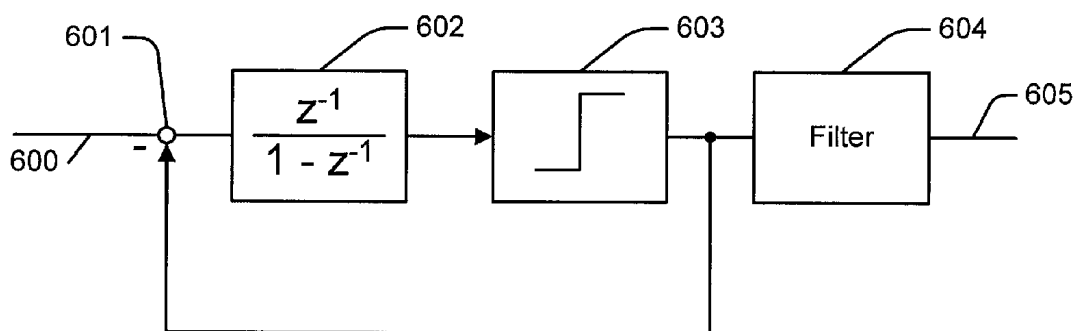


FIG. 6

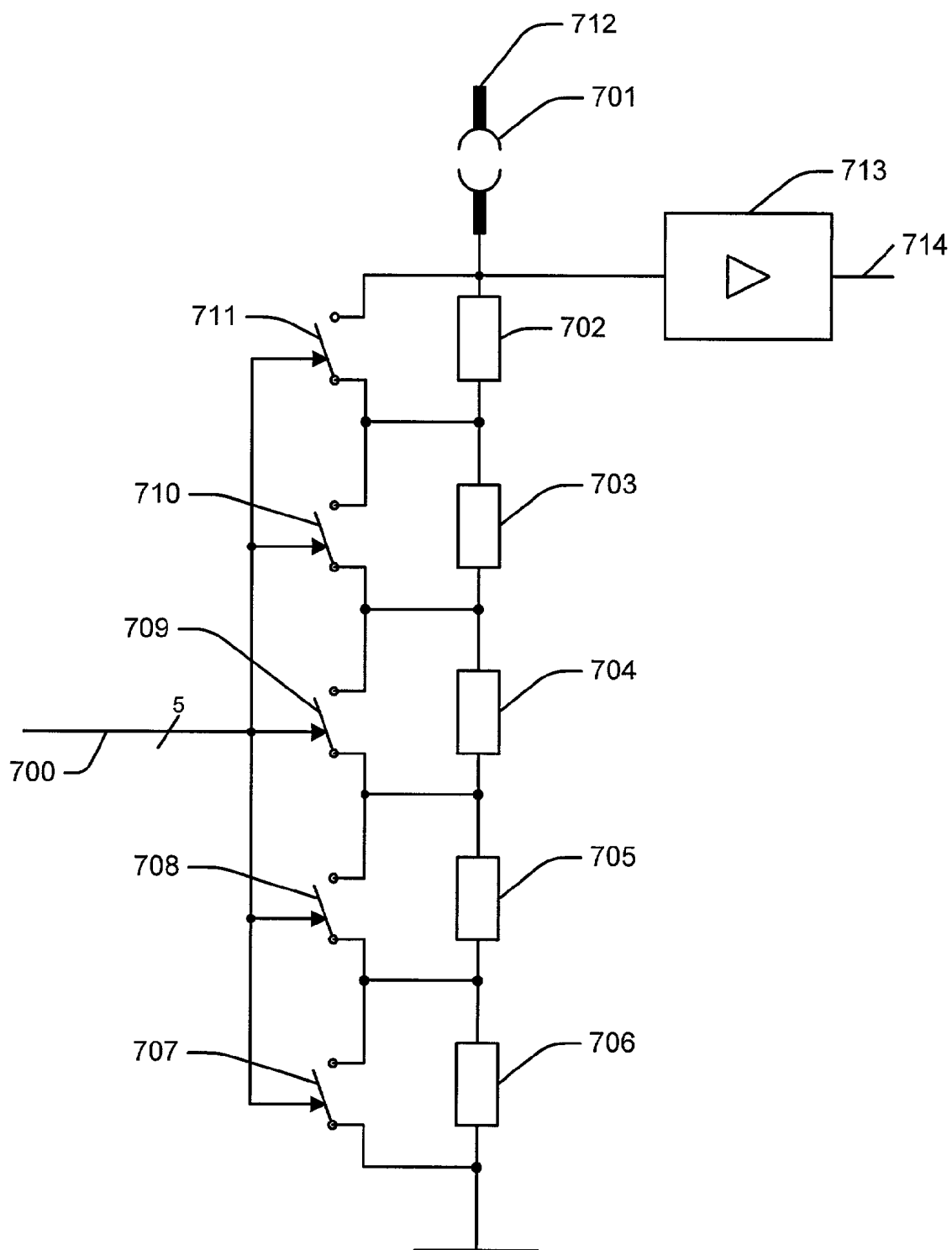
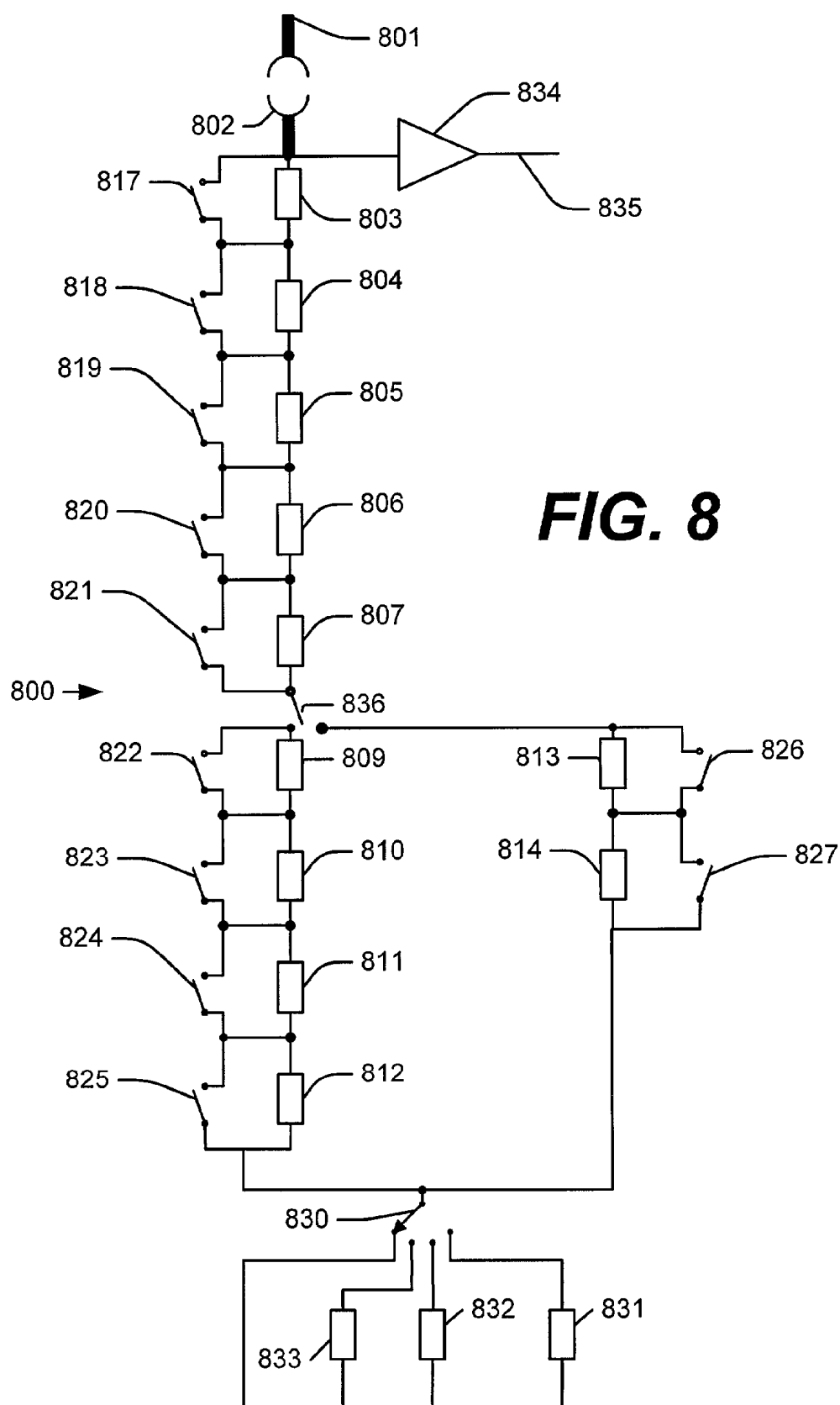


FIG. 7



SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROVIDING VOLTAGES FOR A LIQUID CRYSTAL DISPLAY

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The present invention relates generally to liquid crystal display devices, and more particularly to a digital to analog converter for providing a voltage for driving a display screen of a liquid crystal display device pixels accurately shaded in correspondence with a digital or analog video signal.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Liquid crystal displays (LCDs) are commonly used in devices such as portable televisions, portable computers, control displays, and cellular phones to display information to a user. LCDs act in effect as a light valve, i.e., they allow transmission of light in one state, block the transmission of light in a second state, and some include several intermediate stages for partial transmission. When used as a high resolution information display, as in one embodiment of the present application, LCDs are typically arranged in a matrix configuration with independently controlled pixels. Each individual pixel is signaled to selectively transmit or block light from a backlight (transmission mode), from a reflector (reflective mode), or from a combination of the two (transflective mode).

[0003] An LCD pixel can control the transference for different wavelengths of light. For example, an LCD can have pixels that control the amount of transmission of red, green, and blue light independently. In some LCDs, voltages are applied to different portions of a pixel to control light passing through several portions of dyed glass. In other LCDs, different colors are projected onto the pixel sequentially in time. If the voltage is also changed sequentially in time, different intensities of different colors of light result. By quickly changing the wavelength of light to which the pixel is exposed an observer will see the combination of colors rather than sequential discrete colors. Several monochrome LCDs can also result in a color display. For example, a monochrome red LCD can project its image onto a screen. If a monochrome green and monochrome blue LCD are projected in alignment with the red, the combination will be full color.

[0004] The monochrome resolution of an LCD can be defined by the number of different levels of light transmission that each pixel can perform in response to a control signal. A second level is different from a first level when the user can tell the difference between the two. An LCD with greater monochrome resolution will look clearer to the user.

[0005] LCDs are actuated pixel-by-pixel, either one at a time or several simultaneously. A voltage is applied to each pixel and the liquid crystal responds to the voltage by transmitting a corresponding amount of light. In some LCDs an increase in the actuation voltage decreases transmission, while in others it increases transmission. When multiple colors are involved for each pixel, multiple voltages are applied to the pixel at different positions or times depending upon the LCD. Each voltage controls the transmission of a particular color. For example, one pixel can be actuated to allow only blue light to be transmitted while another allows only green. A greater number of different light levels available for each color results in a much greater number of possible color combination.

[0006] Converting a complex digital signal that represents an image or video into voltages to be applied to the pixels of an LCD involves circuitry that can limit the monochrome resolution. The signals necessary to drive a single color of an LCD are both digital and analog. It is digital in that each pixel requires a separate selection signal, but it is analog in that an actual voltage is applied to the pixel to determine light transmission. The conversion from a bit-representation of the desired light transmission, as communicated in the image or video signal, to an actual voltage that controls the light transmission can introduce errors that reduce the monochrome resolution of the LCD. For example, if a Digital-to-Analog Converter (DAC) takes as an input a bit-representation of voltage that includes 1024 voltage levels and outputs voltages between 0 and 16 volts, the ideal output levels would differ by 16 millivolts (mV). However, the electro-optical curve (EO curve) has most of the gray shade changes occur in voltages about 1V to 2V on either side of the center voltage of the display. In other words, a linear increase of the voltage provided by the DAC does not necessarily reflect the same increase in gray shade. In the specific region mentioned above, the sensitivity preferably should be about 4 times higher, in the above mentioned example, about 4 mV.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0007] The embodiments of the present application are directed to a system and method for providing a control voltage for driving a liquid crystal display.

[0008] In one embodiment of the present application, a matrix of liquid crystal pixels is provided. A digital-to-analog (DAC) converter is coupled to the matrix and produces an output voltage that can be applied to one or more pixels in the matrix. The DAC receives multi-bit digital input and generates an output voltage according to its conversion function corresponding to the digital input. The conversion function of the DAC is specifically adapted to provide an optimum resolution within a voltage range in which most of the gray changes on the LCD occur.

[0009] In another embodiment the DAC comprises a non-linear conversion function which, for example, can be divided into a plurality of linear sub-ranges. The transition from one sub-range to an adjacent sub-range is non-linear.

[0010] The DAC, as shown in one or more embodiments, can consist of a plurality of standard DACs and a control logic which switches between the DACs to provide the different sub-ranges. Two or more DAC, can also be combined according to another embodiment of the present application.

[0011] In yet another embodiment the DAC comprises a comparator and an inverter coupled with a digital signal. Furthermore, the first switching circuit is controlled by the comparator for selecting the digital signal or the inverted digital signal are provided. An adder for adding a constant coupled with the switching circuit and a first digital-to-analog converter being coupled with the adder are also provided. For generating a second resolution a second digital-to-analog converter is coupled with the first switching circuit and second switching circuit are controlled by the adder for selecting one of the digital-to-analog converters. An offset unit is coupled with the second switching circuit and third switching circuit are controlled by the comparator for selection between the second switching circuit and the offset unit.

[0012] Other technical advantages of the present disclosure will be readily apparent to one skilled in the art from the following figures, descriptions, and claims. Various embodiments of the present application obtain only a subset of the advantages set forth. No one advantage is critical to the embodiments. For example, one embodiment of the present application may only provide the advantage of controlling the pixels of a liquid crystal display, while other embodiments may provide several of the specified and apparent advantages.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] A more complete understanding of the present disclosure and advantages thereof may be acquired by referring to the following description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like reference numbers indicate like features, and wherein:

[0014] FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a liquid crystal display driver circuitry in accordance with one embodiment of the present application;

[0015] FIG. 2 is a block diagram of a DAC in accordance with one embodiment of the present application;

[0016] FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a DAC in accordance with another embodiment of the present application;

[0017] FIG. 4 is a more detailed block diagram of a DAC in accordance with yet another embodiment of the present application;

[0018] FIG. 5 is a circuit diagram of a standard DAC which can be used with any embodiment according to the present application;

[0019] FIG. 6 is a circuit diagram of another standard DAC which can be used with any embodiment according to the present application;

[0020] FIG. 7 is a circuit diagram of yet another standard DAC which can be used with any embodiment according to the present application; and

[0021] FIG. 8 is a circuit diagram of another embodiment of a DAC according to the present application.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0022] Turning to the drawings, exemplary embodiments of the present application will now be described. FIG. 1 depicts a high-level block diagram of a LCD driver system represented by the numeral 110 for actuating pixels of a liquid crystal display screen 160 in accordance with video data. A liquid crystal display 160 is usually arranged in a matrix of rows and columns as indicated in FIG. 1. A video software program may access stored data representing an image or series of images. The video software program locates pixel-specific information in the stored data according to its protocol. For example, the data may be stored in Apple Corporation's Quicktime format, Microsoft Corporation's Media Player format, MPEG-2 standard format, and the like. The video software outputs pixel-specific digital data 120, for example, for 256 gray shades. The signal 120 can also provide color information instead of gray shade information. In another embodiment, the software program receives video data directly from an optical recording device such as a video camera.

[0023] One or more DACs 150 are adapted to receive digital amplitude information from a gray scale look up table 115. The gray scale look up table 115 receives pixel gray-scale information from the video frame to LCD pixel address and gray scale conversion logic 116 which is adapted to convert video information 120 into corresponding pixel information (grayscale and pixel address information). Pixel address information is sent to an LCD pixel address controller 113 which is adapted to control the row control logic 140 and column control logic 130. The gray scale look up table 115 determines the necessary gray scale value.

[0024] The video information 120 is received by LCD driver system 110. The driver system 110 converts the video information 120 from an analog or digital format to pixel-specific gray-scale voltages. In one embodiment, a single voltage source for each pixel drives a monochrome display. In another embodiment, a pixel has several voltages each for a different color, sequentially applied, in order to drive a full color display. A driver system 110 can be provided for each color (red, green, blue) for which there is video information 120. The driver electronics then provides those pixel charging voltages and control signals to the liquid crystal display 160. Each pixel-charging voltage corresponds to one pixel of one image.

[0025] The liquid crystal display 160 receives voltages to individual pixels and, in some embodiments, for particular colors for each pixel. The liquid crystal display 160 is adapted to select pixels of which voltages are applied in accordance with received control signals. The voltages change the light transfer characteristics of the pixels. The collective visual impact of the selectively lighted pixels portrays an image.

[0026] The driver system 110 is usually integrated into an ASIC design. Preferably, a 10-bit DAC may be used with such a design. Such a DAC typically outputs 12 mA full-scale current in 12 mA/1024=12 μ A steps. Since this current is used to create the control voltage for each pixel, 16V/1024=16 mV steps can be achieved. However, the electro-optical curve (EO curve) has most of the grayshade changes occur in voltages from about 1 V to 2V on either side of the center voltage of the display. Over that sensitive 1V region, only 1V/16 mV=60 steps can be provided by a standard DAC configuration. To get true 256 grayshade performance, or the respective color resolution in a color LCD application, a sensitivity in that specific region which is 4 times higher than the usual sensitivity is needed.

[0027] The following figures depict several embodiments which fulfill the above requirements. One way to improve the sensitivity of a DAC is to provide different voltage ranges with different accuracies. The following table shows different voltage ranges for a DAC:

TABLE 1

Output Voltage	Resolution	Steps
0-5.82 V	64 mV	91; from 0-90
5.82 V-7.5 V	4 mV	421; from 91-511
7.5 V-8.5 V	—	no steps
8.5 V-10.18 V	4 mV	421; 512-932
10.18 V-16 V	64 mV	91; 932-1023

[0028] An exemplary embodiment will be explained below using an implementation of Table 1. Of course, other

implementations are possible and the actual implementation should be adapted to the respective requirements and the EO curve of the particular LCD. For example, Table 2 illustrates other exemplary implementations for LCD's.

TABLE 2

Fine Voltage	Fine steps	Fine range	Coarse voltage	Coarse steps	Coarse range	No step range
4 mV	each 318	6.23–7.5; 8.5–9.77	32 mV	each 194	0–6.23; 9.77–16	7.5–8.5
4 mV	each 421	5.82–7.5; 8.5–10.18	64 mV	each 91	0–5.82; 10.18–16	7.5–8.5
5 mV	each 317	5.92–7.5; 8.5–10.08	30 mV	each 195	0–5.92; 10.08–16	7.5–8.5
5 mV	each 371	5.65–7.5; 8.5–10.35	40 mV	each 141	0–5.65; 8.516	7.5–8.5
6 mV	each 409	5.05–7.5; 8.5–10.95	36 mV	each 103	0–5.05; 10.95–16	7.5–8.5
6 mV	each 364	5.32–7.5; 8.5–10.68	48 mV	each 148	0–5.32; 10.68–16	7.5–8.5

[0029] FIG. 2 depicts a first exemplary embodiment of a DAC suitable for carrying out the above described characteristics. A control unit 200 receives, for example a 10-bit digital voltage signal 203. Control unit 200 has all the necessary components to control a first DAC 210 for providing a ΔV and a second DAC 220 for providing a base voltage. DAC 210 and DAC 220 are coupled in series between supply terminals 215 and 216. Both DAC 210 and 220 provide a output voltage between their output terminals which are summed and coupled to a amplifier circuit 230. Therefore, e.g., terminal 216 may be ground and terminal 215 the analog supply voltage. The generated output voltage by this arrangement is fed to terminal 231. DAC 220 comprises the necessary elements to generate four base voltages to provide the non-linear conversion rate shown in Table 1. The first base voltage is 0V, the second 5.82 V, the third 7.5, and the fourth 10.18 V. Depending on the range in which the input signal 203 lies, control unit 200 generates for example a two-bit output signal 202 which controls DAC 220 and selects the respective base voltage. DAC 210 provides in addition a ΔV which is added to the base voltage. One of the control lines 201 is used to select the resolution with which DAC 210 will generate its output voltage. In this exemplary embodiment, two resolutions are selectable, namely 4 mV and 64 mV. In this embodiment, 9 bits are used to generate the 421 fine steps and 7 bits to generate the 91 coarse steps. DAC 210 may have two separate DAC's or a combined DAC to provide these ΔV steps. Control unit 200 operates according to the input signal 203 to select the respective base voltage and the respective ΔV added to the base voltage to generate an output voltage according to Table 1.

[0030] FIG. 3 depicts a second exemplary embodiment to generate output voltages according the Tables 1 and 2. In this embodiment 4 different DAC's 310, 320, 330, and 340 are used to provide output voltages. A control unit 300 receives a digital input signal 303 and accordingly selects one of the DAC's 310, 320, 330, and 340. The DAC's 310, 320, 330, and 340 are constructed to either disconnect their output or couple it with terminal 350 so that the output signals of the four DAC's 310, 320, 330, and 340 do not interfere with each other. Whenever one of the DAC's 310, 320, 330, and 340 has been selected by control unit 300 it provides a

respective output voltage at terminal 350. To this end, DAC 310 receives 7 input bits and generates an output voltage between 0 and 5.82 V. DAC 320 receives 9 input bits and generates an output voltage between 5.82 V and 7.5V. DAC 330 receives 9 input bits and generates an output voltage between 8.5 V and 10.18 V. Finally, DAC 340 receives 7 input bits and generates an output voltage between 10.18 V and 16 V.

[0031] FIG. 4 depicts another embodiment in more detail. This embodiment, in particular, reduces elements needed to provide a DAC with a non-linear conversion function. At terminal 400 a digital input signal is fed which consists of 10 bits to provide a resolution of 1024 steps. This terminal 400 is coupled with the input of a digital inverter 410, a digital comparator 420, and a first input of a switch 430. The output of inverter 410 is connected with the second input of switch 430. Comparator 420 generates an output signal 421 which controls switch 430. The output of switch 430 is fed to the first input of an adder 440 and the input of a 7-bit DAC 480. The second input of adder 440 is coupled with a digital constant of -90. At the output of adder 440 a control signal 442 is generated which controls a switch 470 whose first input is coupled to the output of DAC 480. The output of adder 440 is connected with the input of a 9-bit DAC 450 whose output is coupled to the input of an offset unit 460. DAC 450 can be designed to incorporate offset unit 460. The output of offset unit 460 is connected with the second input of switch 470. The output of switch 470 is coupled to the first input of a third switch 495 and the negating input of another offset unit 490 whose output connects to the second input of switch 495. The output of switch 495 is coupled to terminal 499. Switch 495 is controlled by control signal 421 provided by comparator 420.

[0032] If the input signal lies between 0 and 90, comparator 420 compares this input 400 with the digital number 511. As it is less than 511 it controls the switch 430 to couple its output directly to the input signal 400. Adder 440 adds the digital constant -90 to this input. Therefore, its output will be a number between -90 and 0. The control output (>0) of adder 440 generates a two state signal depending on whether the output is greater than 0 or equal to less than 0. In this case the control signal will control switch 470 to switch to the output of DAC 480 which now generates an output signal between 0 and 5.82 V depending on the lower 7 bits of input signal 400. Switch 495 which is also controlled by signal 421 directly couples this analog output signal to terminal 499.

[0033] If the input signal lies between 91 and 511, then comparator 420 still generates a control signal which directly couples the input signal 400 with adder 440 and DAC 480 and directly couples the output of switch 470 with terminal 499 via switch 495. However, Adder 440 will now generate a different control signal which couples the output of offset unit 460 with the output of switch 470. The output of adder 440 now carries the difference of input signal 400 minus 90. This difference is fed to DAC 450 which generates an analog output voltage fed to offset unit 460. Offset unit 460 adds 5.82 volts to this output voltage. The result which lies between 5.82 and 7.5 V is fed to terminal 499.

[0034] If the input signal lies between 512 and 932, then comparator 420 will generate a control signal 421 that couples the output of switch 430 with the output inverter

410. Inverter **410** will generate in this case a output signal between 511 and 91, respectively. Adder **440**, DAC **450**, offset unit **460**, DAC **480**, and switch **470** will operate as described with respect to range 91-511, above. Therefore, the output voltage at the output of switch will lie between 7.5 and 5.82 V, respectively. However, switch **495** is controlled by signal **421** and now couples the output of offset unit **490** with terminal **499**. Therefore, the output voltage of switch **470** is fed to offset unit **490** through the negating input with an inverted algebraic sign. Thus the output voltage of switch **470** is effectively subtracted from the offset voltage of 16 V. The resulting output voltage which is fed to terminal **499** therefore lies between 8.5 and 10.18 V.

[0035] If the input signal **400** lies between 933-1023, again comparator **420** generates a signal that effectively couples the output of inverter **410** with the output of switch **430**. The inverted input signal now lies between 90 and 0, respectively. All other elements operate as described above. Again offset unit **490** will be selected by switch **495** and the resulting output voltage will lie between 10.18 and 16 V.

[0036] FIG. 5 depicts a standard DAC according to the R-2R principle which can be used, for example, as DAC **480** and/or DAC **450**. A DAC according to FIG. 5 needs $2(n-1)+1$ resistors and n switches, whereby n designates the number of bits. FIG. 5 depicts, for example, a 4-bit DAC. Resistors **509**, **510**, **512**, **514** and **515** each have a value of R and resistor **511** and **513** each have a value of $2R$. Resistor **516** has a value of $3R/2$. This kind of DAC is usually ideal integration, because the resistor network can be realized very precisely using the matching principle. The resistor network functions in a way that the potential at the respective nodes is divided by two, respectively due to the currents which are separated by the switches **505-508** and the current sources **501-504**. The operational amplifier **517** then converts the current at the negative input of operational amplifier **517** into an output voltage at terminal **518**. Another possible exemplary embodiment of a DAC is shown in FIG. 6. This DAC is a sigma-delta digital-to-analog-converter. Sigma-delta DACs are very well known in the literature and therefore will not be explained here. A sigma-delta modulator, generally consists of an integrator **602** and a comparator **603**, with a 1-bit DAC in a feedback loop and a filter **604**.

[0037] FIG. 7 depicts another simple embodiment of a DAC. The DAC according to FIG. 7 comprises a current source **701** and a plurality of resistors **702-706** connected in series. In parallel to each resistor is coupled a switch **707-711**, respectively. The switches are controlled by the input signal **700** which comprises 5 bits in this exemplary embodiment. The output signal is taken from the node between current source **701** and the first resistor **702** and fed to the input of an amplifier **713**. The output of amplifier **713** is coupled to terminal **714**. Resistors **702-706** are designed to each have the double value of its predecessor. For example, resistor **706** has a value of R , resistor **705** a value of $2R$, resistor **704** a value of $4R$, etc.

[0038] According to the principle shown in FIG. 7, FIG. 8 depicts an embodiment of a DAC. Again, this embodiment implements the non-linear conversion function of Table 1. A first network of resistors **803-807** is coupled in series between a current source **802** coupled with a supply voltage **801** and a common terminal of a first select switch **836**. In parallel to each resistor **803-807** is placed a switch **817-821**,

respectively. The first select terminal of select switch **836** is coupled with a second network of resistors **809-812**, again with switches **822-825** coupled in parallel to each resistor **809-812**. A third network of resistors **813-814** and respective switches **826-827** is coupled between the second select terminal of switch **836** and the common terminal of a second select switch **830** which is also connected to the second network through resistor **812** and associated switch **825**. Switch **830** comprises four select terminals. The first one is directly connected to the ground, the second one is coupled through resistor **833**, the third through resistor **832** and the fourth through resistor **831** with ground, respectively. The input of amplifier **834** is coupled with the node between the first resistor **803** of the first network and the current source **802**.

[0039] A control unit (not shown) provides the necessary control signals for all switches **817-827**, **830**, and **836**. The principle of this embodiment is similar to the one shown in FIG. 2. Select switch **830** selects a base voltage which is either 0 V, 5.82 V, 8.5 V, or 10.18 V. Current source provides in all scenarios always a constant current. Therefore, the voltage across the different resistors is always constant. Resistors **831-833** are designed to generate the above mentioned base voltages with the constant current generated by current source **802**. Resistors **803-812** are designed to generate multiples of 2^n of 4 mV. Therefore, resistor **812** has a value to generate 4 mV, resistor **811** has a value to generate 8 mV, resistor **810** has a value to generate 16 mV up to resistor **803** which has a value to generate 1024 mV. These 9 resistors **903-812** are used to generate the ΔV with a resolution of 4 mV. For the second DAC a resolution of 64 mV is needed. This DAC consists of elements **803-807** and **817-821** from the first DAC and additional resistors **826** and **827** and switches **813** and **814**. The second resistor network **809-812** and switches **822-825** providing the fine resolution up to 60 mV are not needed for the second DAC. Therefore, select switch **836** disconnects this network from the first network and couples the first network with the third network. The third network comprises only two resistors **826** and **827** with respective switches **813** and **814**. These resistors **826** and **827** are responsible for the voltage steps 2048 mV and 4096 mV which are needed for the second DAC. The control unit generates all the necessary signals to couple the three networks to form the two DAC's and generate the respective voltages according to Table 1.

[0040] While the present embodiments are susceptible to various modifications and alternative forms, specific embodiments thereof have been shown by way of example in the drawings and are herein described in detail. It should be understood, however, that the description herein of specific embodiments is not intended to limit the invention to the particular forms disclosed, but on the contrary, the intention is to cover all modifications, equivalents, and alternatives falling within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims. For example, more or less voltage ranges can be implemented to adapt to the respective EO curves of a LCD. Each sub-range might comprise a logarithmic conversion function instead of a linear function. A plurality of DAC's with non-linear conversion function might be provided to generate control voltages for color displays. Each color pixel might have a different EO curve. Therefore, different DAC's can be implemented.

What is claimed is:

1. A system for actuating a liquid crystal display (LCD), comprising:

(a) a matrix of liquid crystal pixels;

(b) a digital-to-analog converter adapted to apply at an output a pixel charging voltage corresponding to a digital signal received at an input and coupled to the matrix to apply the pixel charging voltage to at least one pixel, wherein said digital-to-analog converter comprises a conversion function adapted to have a higher resolution within a voltage range in which most grayshade changes of the LCD occur.

2. A system according to claim 1, wherein said digital-to-analog converter has a non-linear conversion function.

3. A system according to claim 2, wherein said non-linear conversion function of said digital-to-analog converter comprises a plurality of digital-to-analog voltage ranges having, whereby each range having a linear conversion function.

4. A system according to claim 3, wherein an analog output voltage range is excluded from conversion.

5. A system according to claim 3, wherein at least two voltage ranges comprise a different number of conversion steps.

6. A system according to claim 3, wherein at least one voltage range comprise a fine conversion function.

7. A system according to claim 3, wherein at least one voltage range comprise a coarse conversion function.

8. A system according to claim 3, wherein at least one voltage range comprise a fine conversion function and wherein at least one voltage range comprise a coarse conversion function, whereby the coarse voltage range comprises less conversion steps than the fine voltage range.

9. A system according to claim 1, wherein said digital-to-analog converter comprises two digital-to-analog converters having different resolutions.

10. A system according to claim 9, wherein said digital-to-analog converter comprises switching means for combining said two digital-to-analog converters.

11. A system according to claim 10, wherein said two digital-to-analog converters comprise a common circuitry and each comprising a circuitry specific to said one of two digital-to-analog converters.

12. A system according to claim 11, wherein said two digital-to-analog converters comprise:

a first network having a plurality of resistors coupled in series and a plurality of switches coupled in parallel with each resistor,

a second network having a plurality of resistors coupled in series and a plurality of switches coupled in parallel with each resistor,

a third network having a plurality of resistors coupled in series and a plurality of switches coupled in parallel with each resistor,

switching means to couple said first network with either said second network or said third network in series between a power supply;

a current source coupled in series with said first network;

control means for controlling said switches.

13. A system according to claim 12, further comprising select switching means coupled in series with said networks for selecting an offset voltage out of a plurality of offset voltages.

14. A system according to claim 1, wherein said digital-to-analog converter comprises:

a comparator coupled with said digital signal;

an inverter coupled with said digital signal;

first switching means being controlled by said comparator for selecting the digital signal or the inverted digital signal;

an adder for adding a constant coupled with said switching means;

a first digital-to-analog converter being coupled with said adder;

a second digital-to-analog converter being coupled with said first switching means;

second switching means being controlled by said adder for selecting one of said digital-to-analog converters;

an offset unit coupled with said second switching means;

third switching means being controlled by said comparator for selecting between said second switching means and said offset unit.

15. A system according to claim 14, wherein said first analog-to-digital-converter is coupled with a second offset unit.

16. A method for actuating a liquid crystal display, comprising the steps of:

(a) defining a plurality of sub-ranges each having an associated resolution;

(b) receiving a digital signal;

(c) determining a sub-range in which said digital signal lies;

(d) generating a voltage within said sub-range; and

(e) applying the voltage output to at least one pixel in a matrix of liquid crystal pixels.

17. A method according to claim 16, further providing sub-ranges having a fine and a coarse resolution.

18. A method according to claim 17, further providing two sub-ranges having a fine and two sub-ranges having a coarse resolution.

19. A method according to claim 16, further providing a sub-range in which no conversion steps occur.

20. A method according to claim 16, further comprising the step of providing a different number of conversion steps for at least two voltage ranges.

21. A method according to claim 16, further comprising the step of providing a fine conversion function for at least one voltage ranges.

22. A method according to claim 16, further comprising the step of providing a coarse conversion function for at least one voltage ranges.

23. A method according to claim 16, further comprising the step of providing a fine conversion function for at least one voltage ranges and a coarse conversion function for at

least another one voltage range, whereby the coarse voltage range comprises less conversion steps than the fine voltage range.

24. A method according to claim 15, further comprising the step of providing two digital-to-analog converters having different resolutions.

25. A method for determining calibration factors, comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a matrix of liquid crystal pixels;
- (b) providing a digital-to-analog converter adapted to apply at an output a pixel charging voltage corresponding to a digital signal received at an input and coupled to the matrix to apply the pixel charging voltage to at least one pixel;
- (c) applying a digital signal to said digital-to-analog converter;
- (d) converting said digital signal by said digital-to-analog converter with a conversion function adapted to have a higher resolution within a voltage range in which most grayshade changes of the LCD occur.

26. A method according to claim 25, wherein said digital-to-analog converter has a non-linear conversion function.

27. A method according to claim 26, wherein said non-linear conversion function of said digital-to-analog converter comprises a plurality of digital-to-analog voltage ranges, whereby each range having a linear conversion function.

28. A method according to claim 27, further providing sub-ranges having a fine and a coarse resolution.

29. A method according to claim 27, further providing two sub-ranges having a fine and two sub-ranges having a coarse resolution.

30. A method according to claim 27, further providing a sub-range in which no conversion steps occur.

31. A method according to claim 27, further comprising the step of providing a different number of conversion steps for at least two voltage ranges.

32. A method according to claim 27, further comprising the step of providing a fine conversion function for at least one voltage ranges.

33. A method according to claim 27, further comprising the step of providing a coarse conversion function for at least one voltage ranges.

34. A method according to claim 27, further comprising the step of providing a fine conversion function for at least one voltage ranges and a coarse conversion function for at least another one voltage range, whereby the coarse voltage range comprises less conversion steps than the fine voltage range.

35. A method according to claim 27, further comprising the step of providing two digital-to-analog converters having different resolutions.

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专利名称(译)	用于为液晶显示器提供电压的系统和方法		
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摘要(译)

提供液晶像素矩阵 (160)。数模转换器 (DAC) (150) 耦合到矩阵并产生可以施加到矩阵中的一个或多个像素的输出电压。DAC (150) 接收多位数字输入并产生其输出电压以对应于数字输入。DAC的转换功能适于在电压范围内具有更高的分辨率，在该电压范围内发生LCD的大多数灰度变化。

