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1 8. The method of Claim 1 wherein said first software
entity comprises an operating system of said computer
system and said second software entity comprises a
microcoded special purpose processor of said computer
5 system.

9. The method of Claim 4 wherein each said hardcoded
list comprises a plurality of said bit masks each said
bit mask being identified by a word number and wherein
10 said step of transferring from said first software
entity comprises transferring, from said first software
entity to said second software entity, a particular bit
mask with a predetermined word number from said list
associated with said first software entity, and
15 said first step of transferring from said second
software entity comprises transferring, from said second
software entity to said first software entity, a bit
mask corresponding to said particular bit mask having
said predetermined word number from said list associated
20 with said second software entity.

10. The method of Claim 9 wherein a new required
feature is introduced in said first or second software
entity and wherein said method further includes
25 setting a bit in an associated bit mask
corresponding to said new required feature.

11. The method of Claim 4 further including
maintaining, by at least one of said first and
30 second software entities, a list of indications of
features supported by both said first and second software
entities.