



United States Patent [19]

Langhans et al.

[11] Patent Number: **5,621,201**

[45] Date of Patent: ***Apr. 15, 1997**

[54] **AUTOMATED PURCHASING CONTROL SYSTEM**

4,812,628	3/1989	Boston et al.	235/380
4,891,503	1/1990	Jewell	340/825.33
5,177,342	1/1993	Adams	340/825.33

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FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

2118341 10/1983 United Kingdom 235/380

[73] Assignee: **Visa International**, Foster City, Calif.

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[*] Notice: The term of this patent shall not extend beyond the expiration date of Pat. No. 5,500,513.

[21] Appl. No.: **597,050**

[57] ABSTRACT

[22] Filed: **Feb. 5, 1996**

An automated purchasing control system which can be customized for a corporate customer. The system receives an authorization request over the phone lines from a remote point-of-sale terminal and processes the request using unique software. The software has a database customized to a corporate user to establish that company hierarchial structure. Elements of the hierarchial structure are independently reconfigurable, so that a company can specify different hierarchial relationships in the software for authorization, billing and reporting purposes. Different authorization tests can be established for each position in a hierarchy, with a particular position being required to pass not only its own test, but the test of elements higher in the hierarchial tree.

Related U.S. Application Data

[63] Continuation of Ser. No. 241,106, May 11, 1994, Pat. No. 5,500,513.

[51] Int. Cl.⁶ **G06K 5/00**

[52] U.S. Cl. **235/380; 395/238**

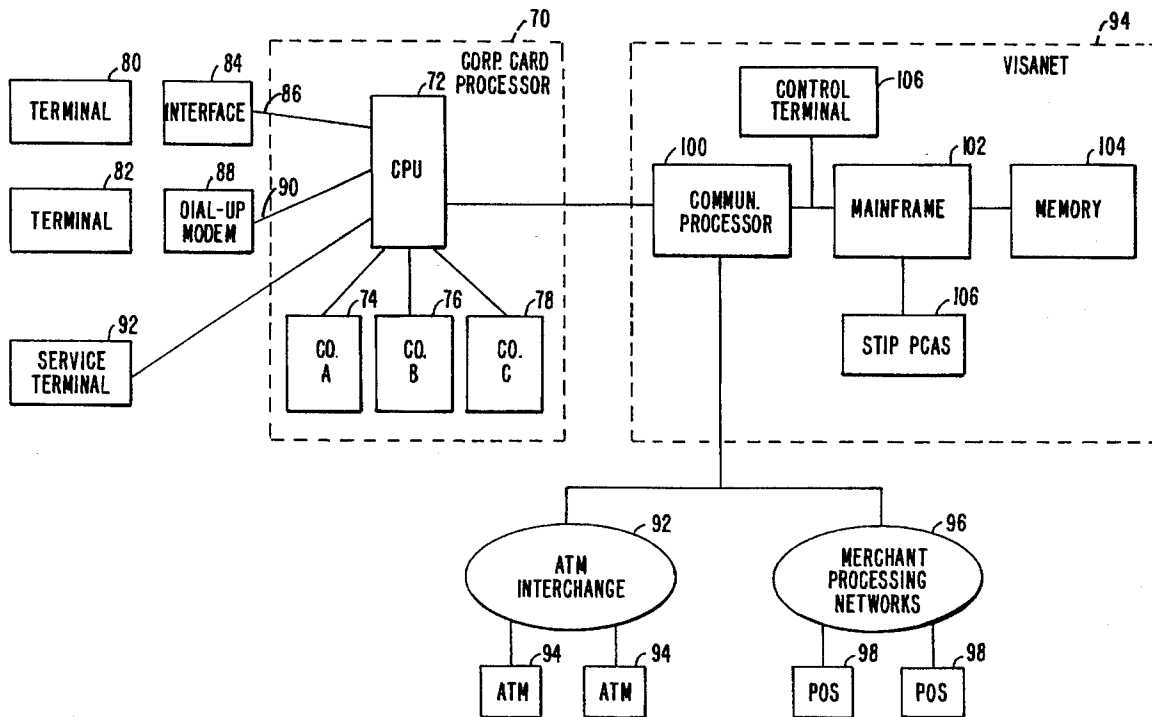
[58] Field of Search 235/380; 340/825.33;
364/408

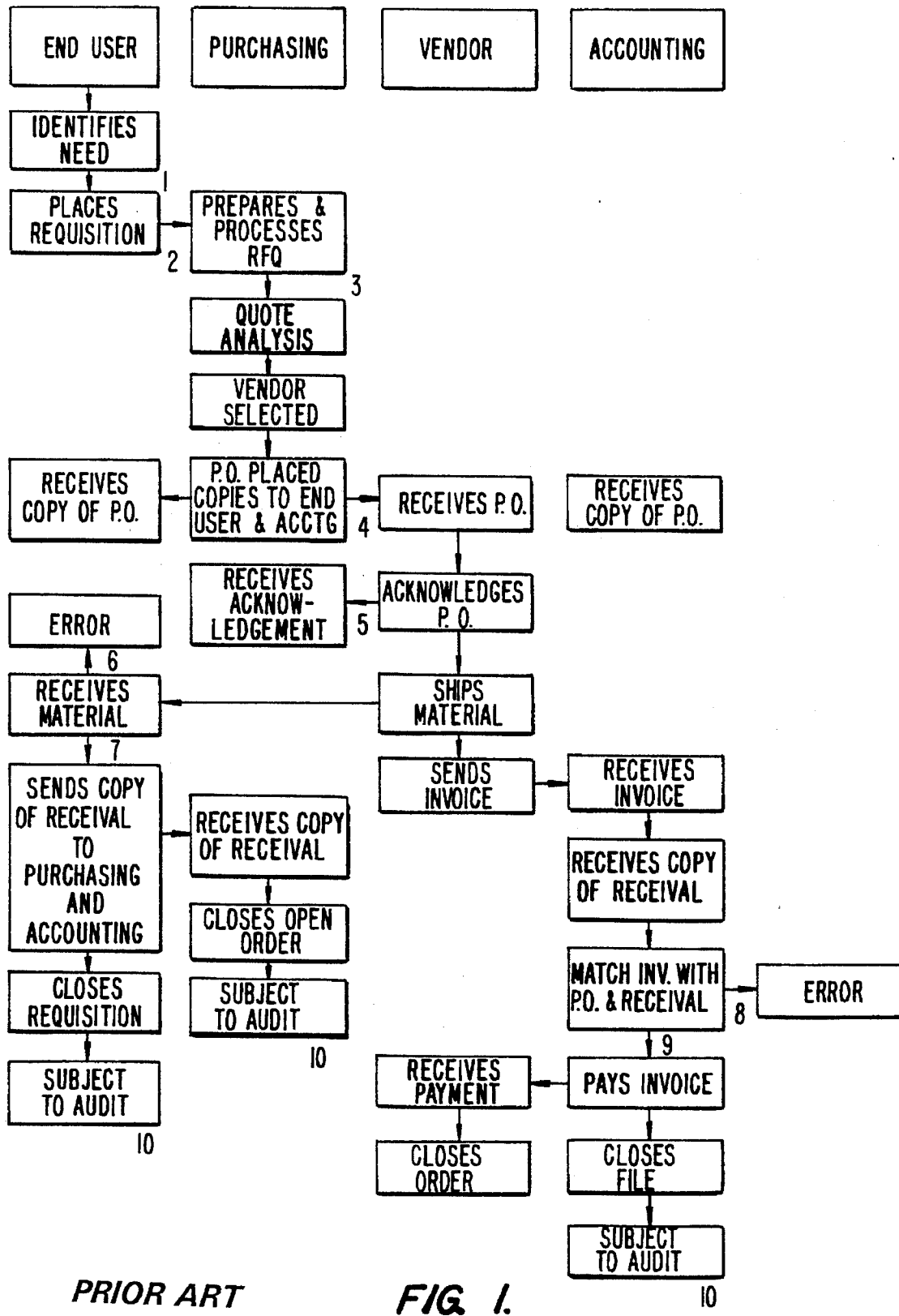
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4,727,243 2/1988 Savar 235/379

14 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets





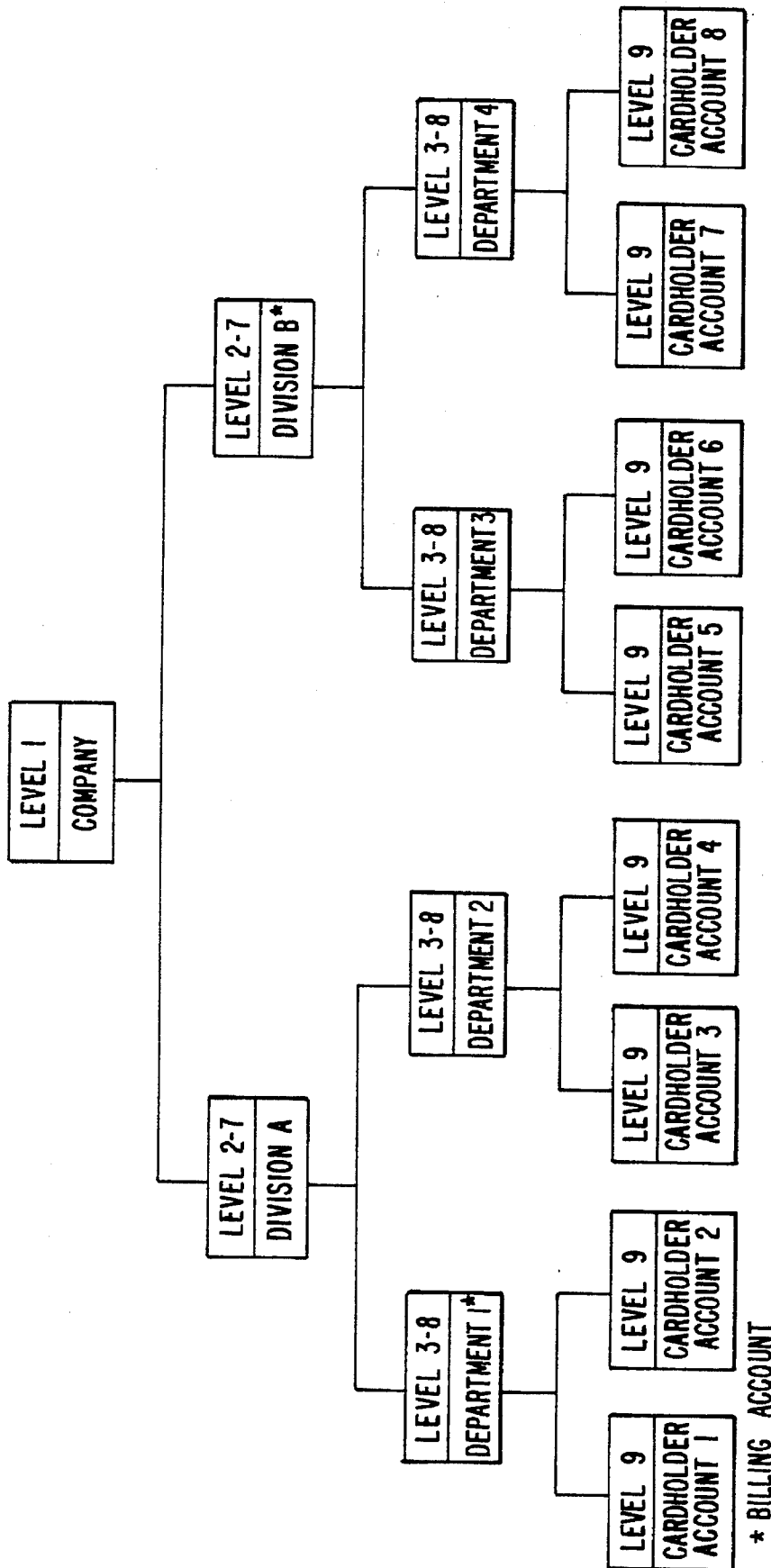
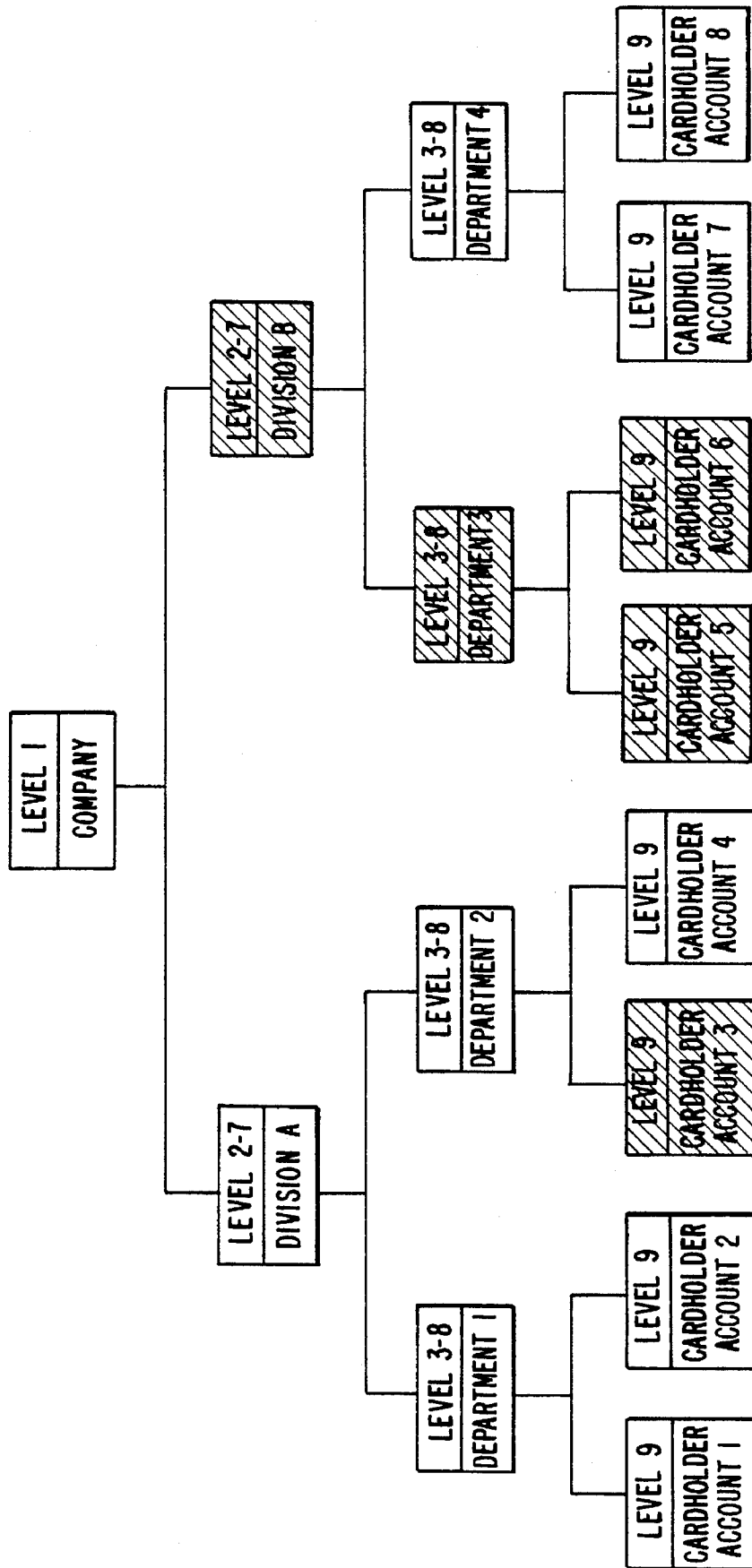


FIG. 2.



▨ REPORTING HIERARCHY

FIG. 3.

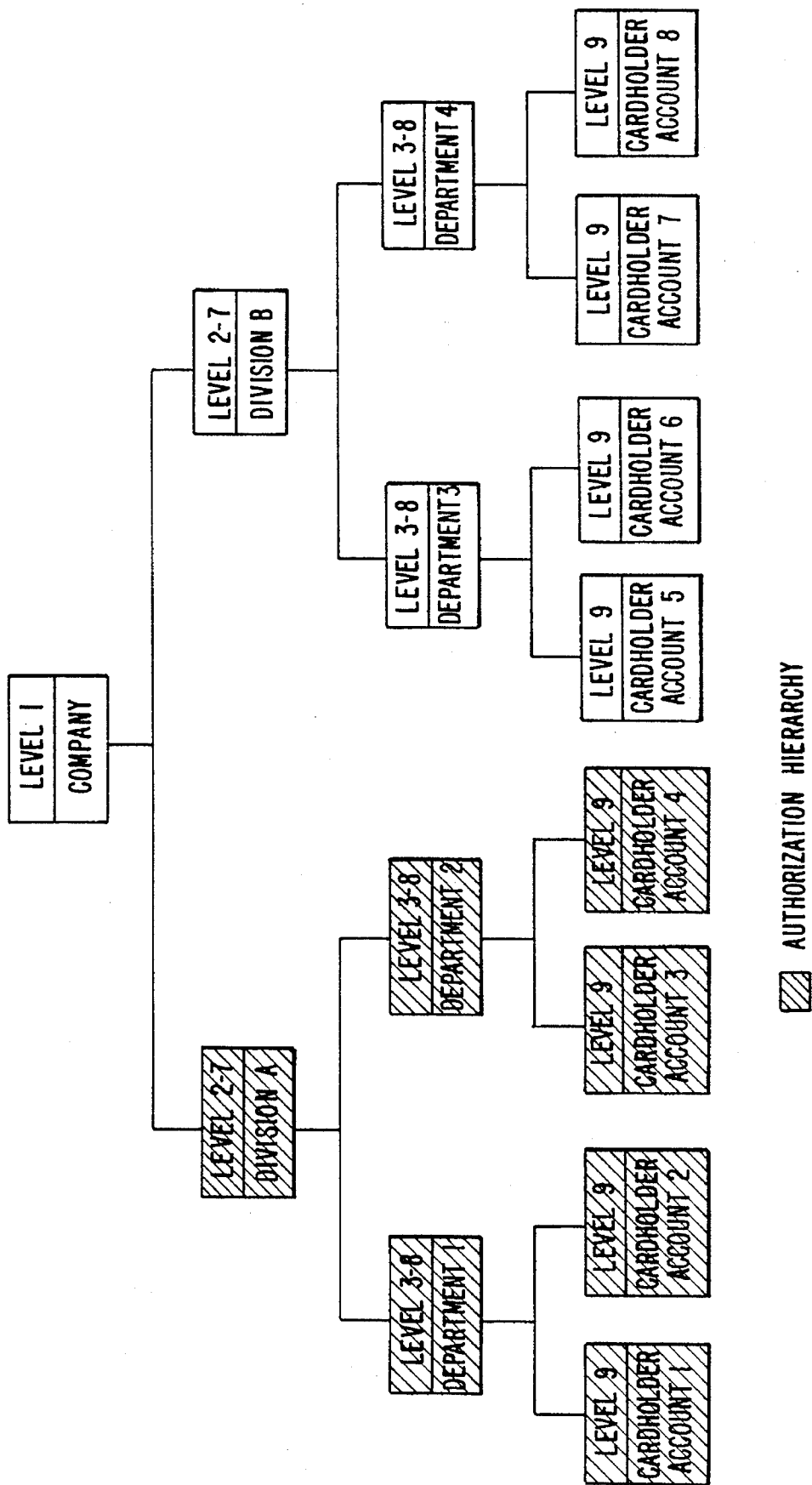


FIG. 4.

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