



**United States Patent** [19]  
**Cunningham**

[11] **Patent Number:** **5,832,449**  
[45] **Date of Patent:** **Nov. 3, 1998**

[54] **METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR DISPENSING, TRACKING AND MANAGING PHARMACEUTICAL TRIAL PRODUCTS**

[76] Inventor: **David W. Cunningham**, 11929 Eagle Bluff Cir., Raleigh, N.C. 27613

[21] Appl. No.: **556,466**

[22] Filed: **Nov. 13, 1995**

[51] **Int. Cl.<sup>6</sup>** ..... **G06F 159/00**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** ..... **705/3; 705/2**

[58] **Field of Search** ..... 395/201, 202, 395/203, 228, 601, 610; 235/385, 375; 340/825.29, 825.34; 283/55, 67; 705/1, 2, 3, 28; 707/1, 10

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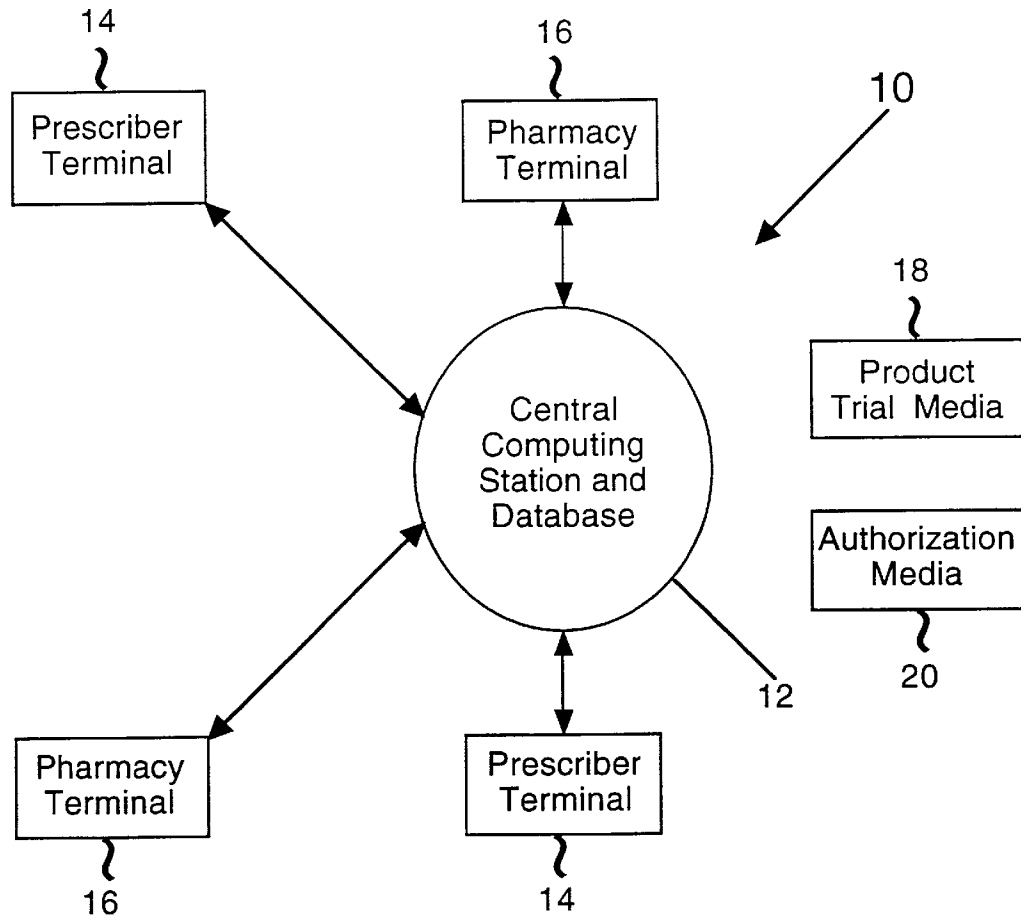
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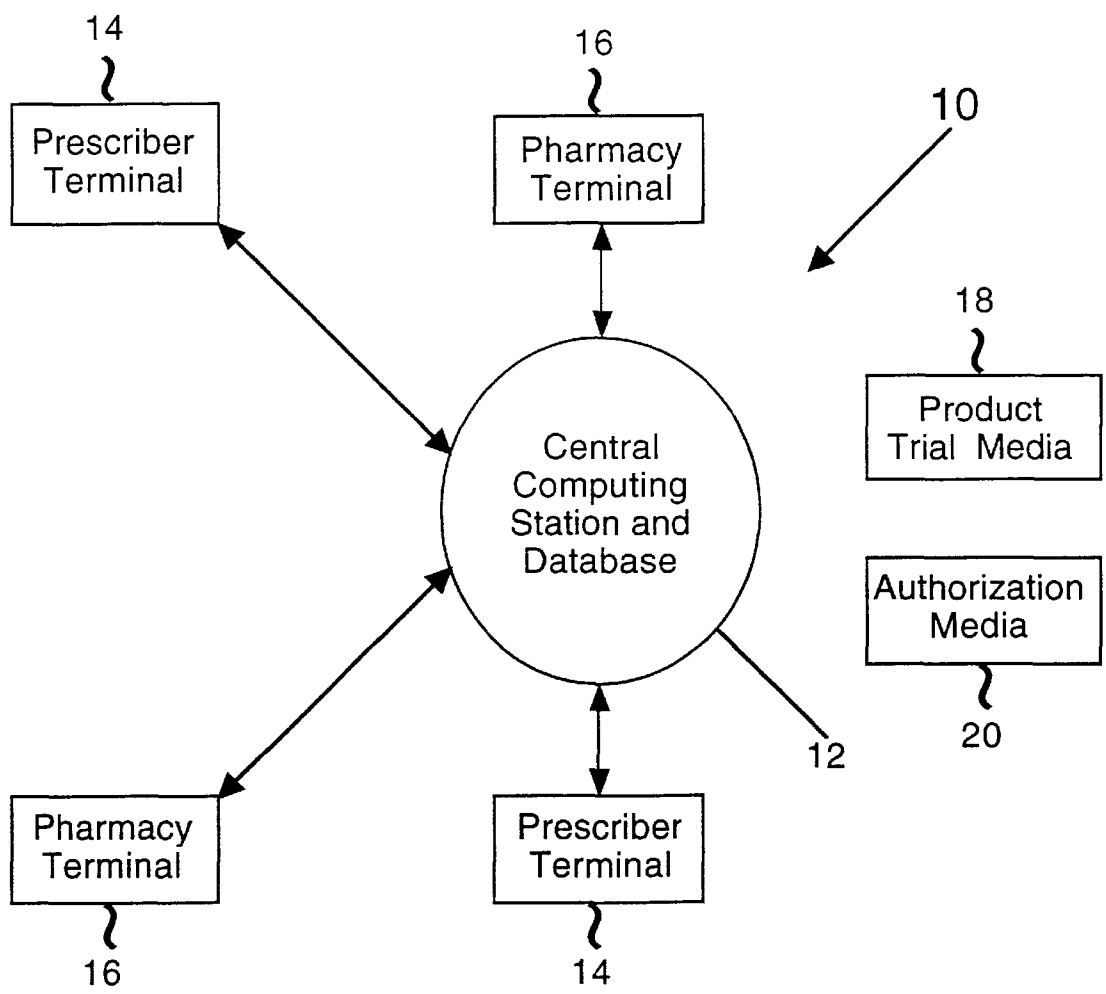
*Primary Examiner*—Frantzy Poinvil  
*Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Rhodes, Coats, & Bennett, LLP

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A new and improved method of dispensing, tracking and managing pharmaceutical product samples by communicatively linking prescribers and pharmacies to a central computing station. The method entails utilizing product trial media that is exchanged for actual pharmaceutical product. The media is encoded with information that identifies a particular pharmaceutical trial product, such as by magnetic encoding similar to that used with credit cards. The media is distributed to participating medical doctors or prescribers who then activate the media via the central computing station. The prescriber then transfers the activated media to patients who then present the media to participating pharmacies. Before filling the pharmaceutical trial product identified by the media, the pharmacy validates the media via a link with the central computing station. Then, the pharmacy dispenses the prescribed pharmaceutical trial product. The central computing station also includes a database that records data related to the use of the media so that all pharmaceutical trial products can be accounted for.

**30 Claims, 14 Drawing Sheets**





18  
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TRIAL PRODUCT TRADE NAME  
TRIAL PRODUCT GENERIC NAME  
TRIAL PRODUCT FORM & STRENGTH  
TRIAL PRODUCT QUANTITY

CARD SERIAL NUMBER  
CARD EXPIRATION DATE

Figure 2A

AUTHORIZER ID NUMBER

AUTHORIZER NAME  
CARD EXPIRATION DATE

Figure 3A

20  
↗

18  
↓

\_\_\_\_\_ A

\_\_\_\_\_  
Physician Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pharmacist Signature A

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient Signature

Figure 2B

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorizer Signature

Figure 3B

20  
↗

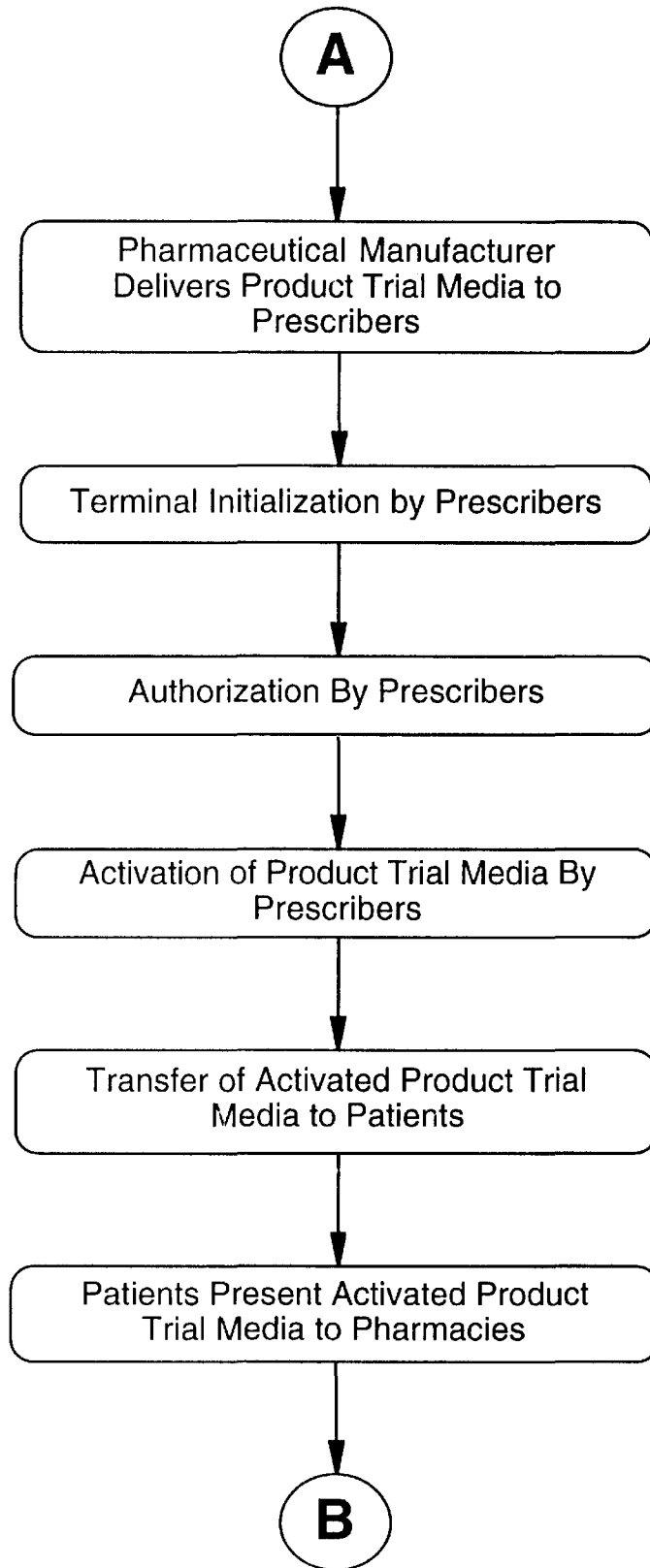


Figure 4A

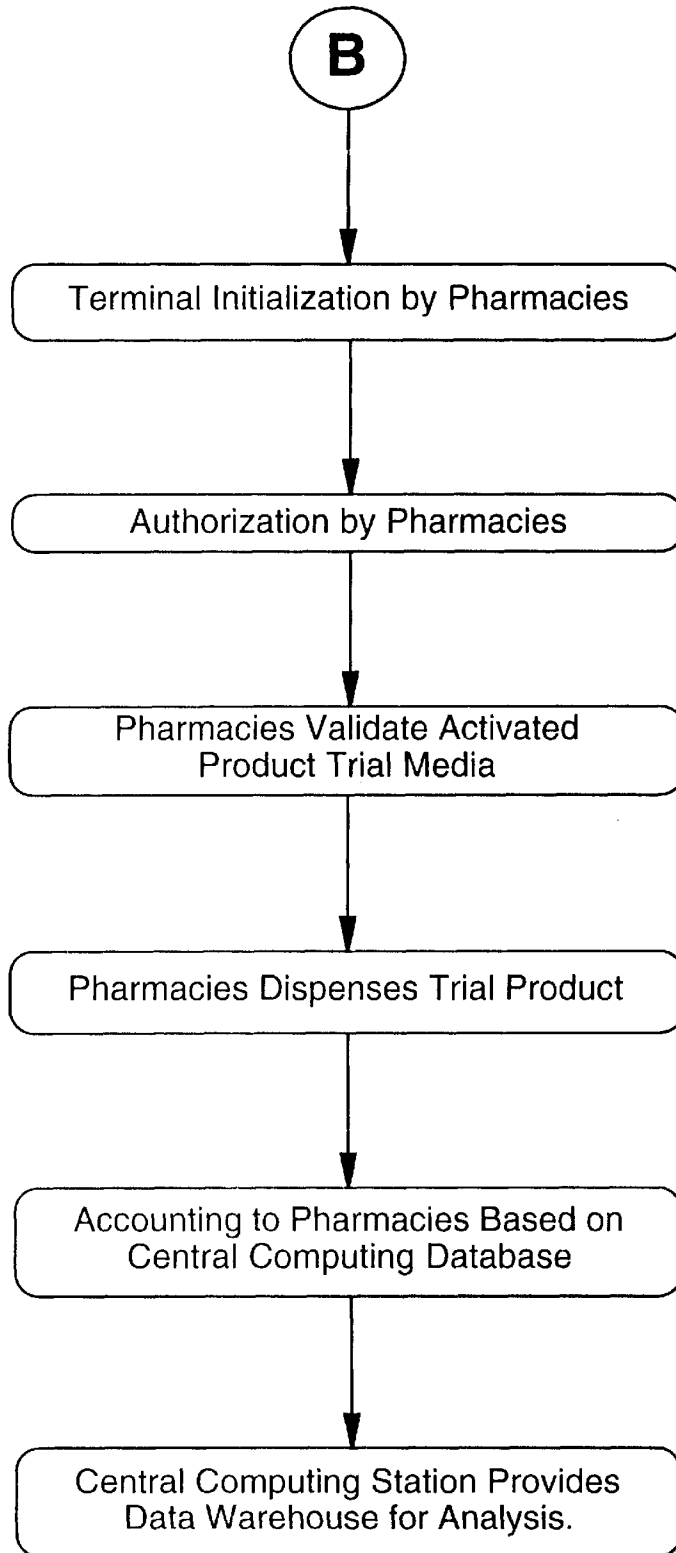


Figure 4B

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