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(54) **TANDEM ACCESS CONTROLLER WITHIN THE PUBLIC SWITCHED TELEPHONE NETWORK**

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This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

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Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation of application No. 10/426,279, filed on Apr. 30, 2003, now Pat. No. 7,324,635, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 09/565,565, filed on May 4, 2000, now Pat. No. 6,574,328.

In one embodiment, the system includes a processor, referred to herein as a tandem access controller (TAC), coupled to the PSTN, where the TAC allows a subscriber to set-up and make changes to the configuration of his or her phone line or other communications device. Such changes include selective call forwarding. In one embodiment, the TAC is controlled by the subscriber using the web. The TAC is coupled internally to the PSTN in a local service area and is outside the central office of the subscriber. A calling party makes a first call to the subscriber using the subscriber's public telephone number. The TAC receives the first call prior to the call reaching the subscriber's terminating central office, which in some cases avoids a toll. The TAC then carries out the subscriber's instructions for the first call, such as making one or more second calls using telephone numbers different from the subscriber's public telephone number. When the second call is answered, the answering phone is connected by the TAC to the caller.

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** 379/211.01; 379/224

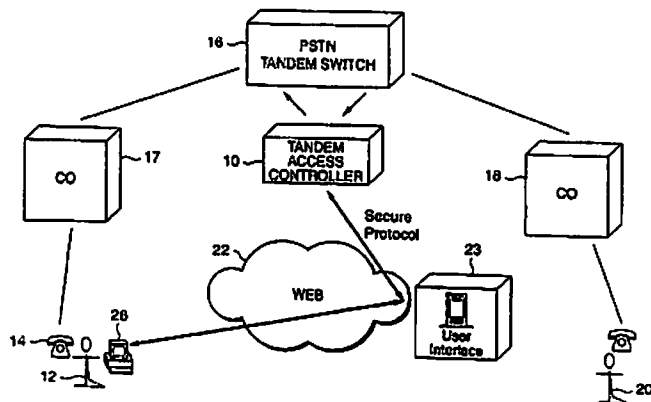
(58) **Field of Classification Search** 379/224, 379/221.11, 221.08, 211.01, 221
See application file for complete search history.

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42 Claims, 11 Drawing Sheets



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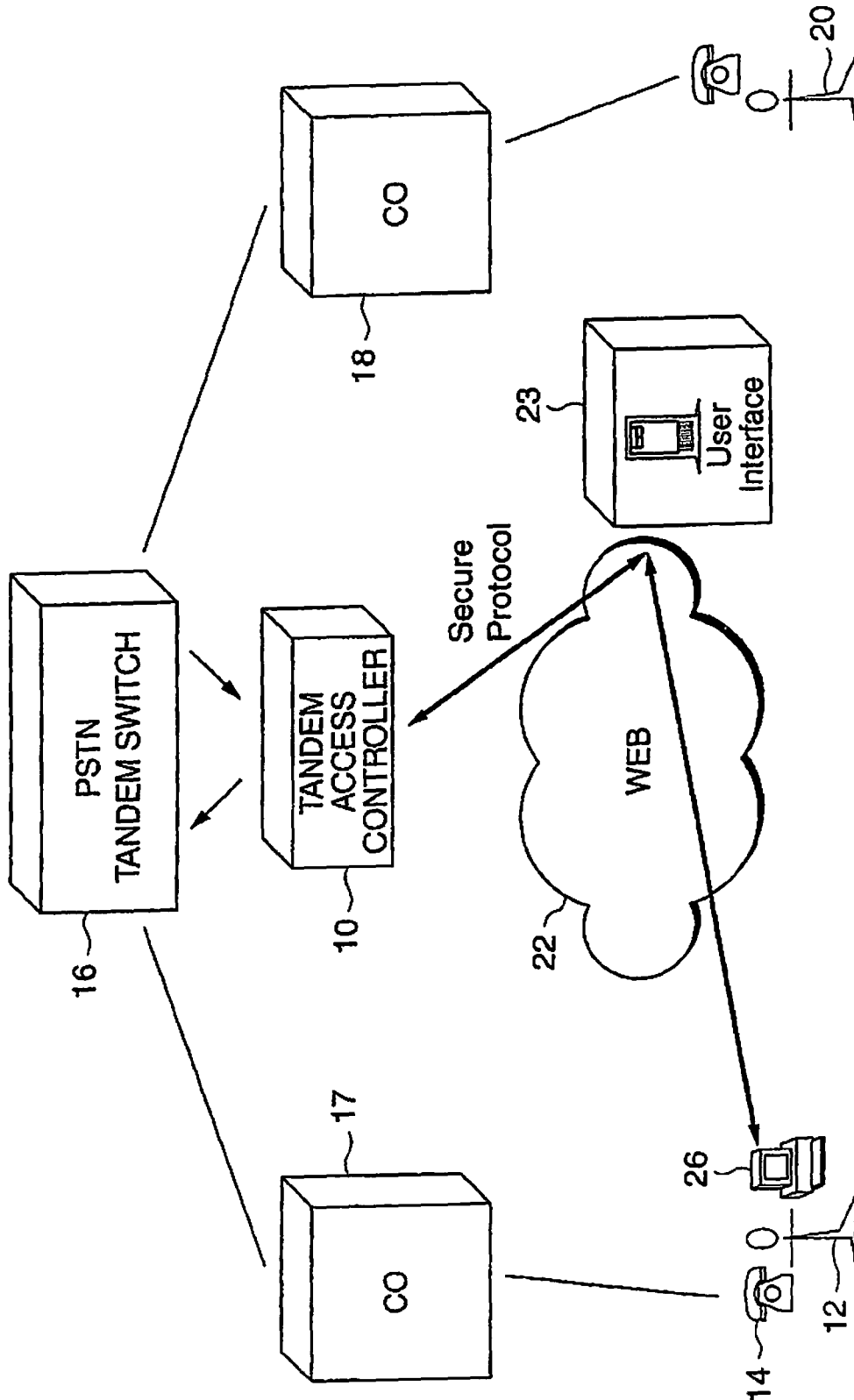


FIG. 1

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