

**(12) United States Patent**  
**Aravamudan et al.**

**(10) Patent No.: US 6,301,609 B1**  
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- (54) **ASSIGNABLE ASSOCIATE PRIORITIES FOR USER-DEFINABLE INSTANT MESSAGING BUDDY GROUPS**
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- (\* ) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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- (21) Appl. No.: **09/391,937**
- (22) Filed: **Sep. 8, 1999**

**Related U.S. Application Data**

- (60) Provisional application No. 60/142,597, filed on Jul. 7, 1999, and provisional application No. 60/142,598, filed on Jul. 7, 1999.
- (51) **Int. Cl.<sup>7</sup>** ..... **G06F 15/16**
- (52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **709/207; 709/204; 709/202; 709/206; 707/1**
- (58) **Field of Search** ..... **709/206, 207, 709/204, 202, 205; 707/1, 509, 513, 9, 154**

**(57) ABSTRACT**

A unified messaging solution and services platform is provided by utilizing the features and capabilities associated with instant messaging to locate a registered user, query the user for a proposed message disposition, and coordinate services among a plurality of communication devices, modes, and channels. A user proxy is registered to the user as a personal communication services platform. The user is able to define various rules for responding to received data and communications, the rules stored within a rules database servicing the communication services platform. Instant messaging is used for communications between the user and the communication services platform's user proxy.

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**12 Claims, 8 Drawing Sheets**

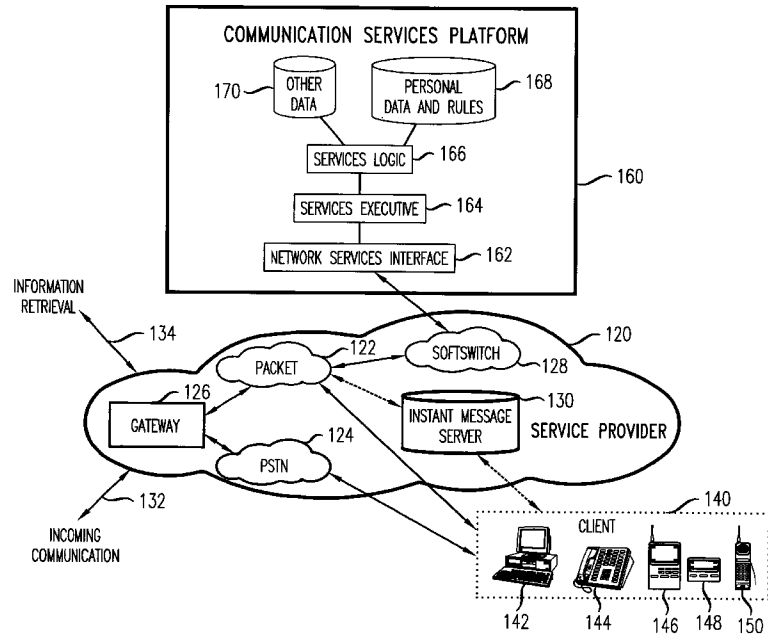


FIG. 1

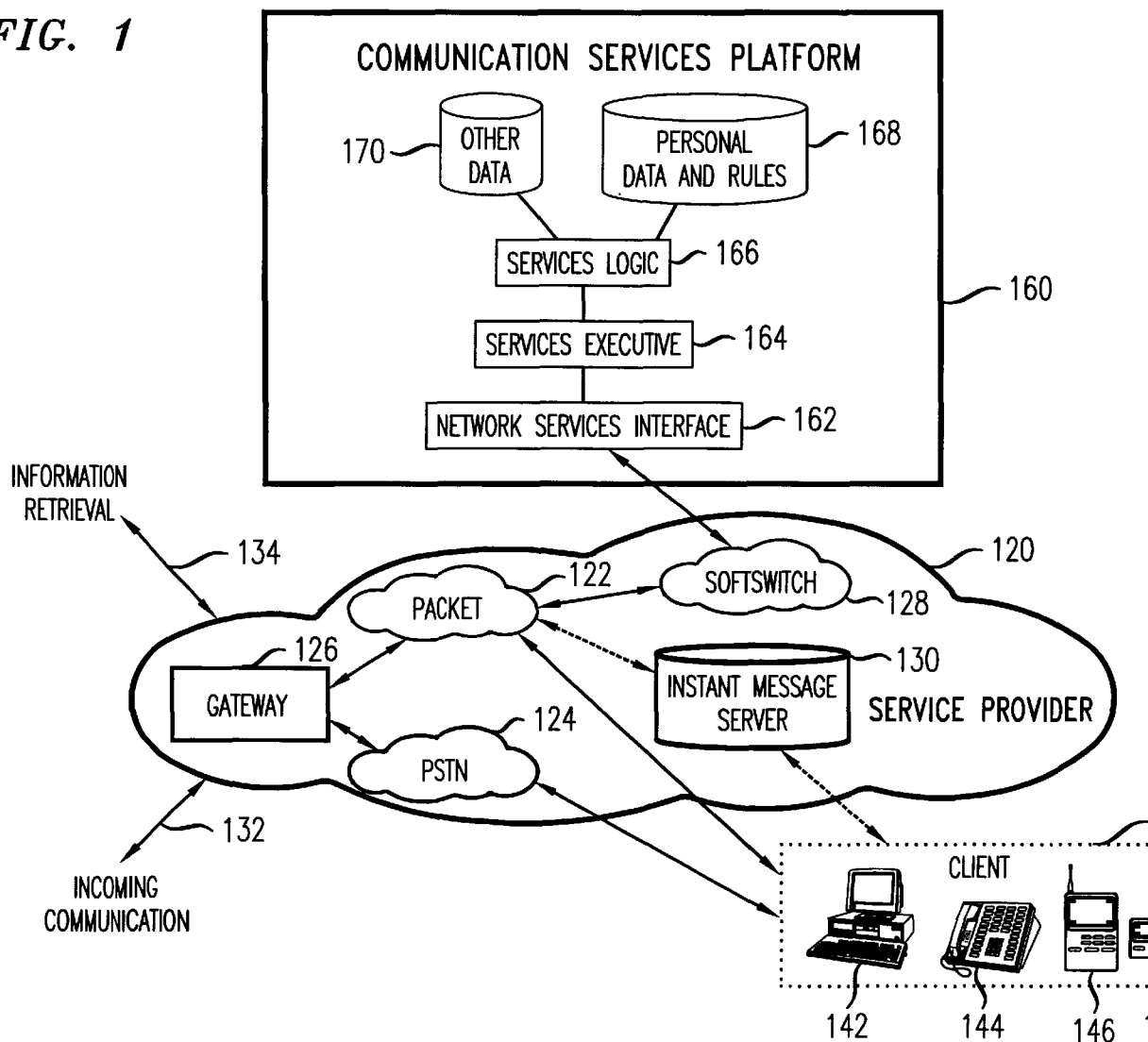


FIG. 2

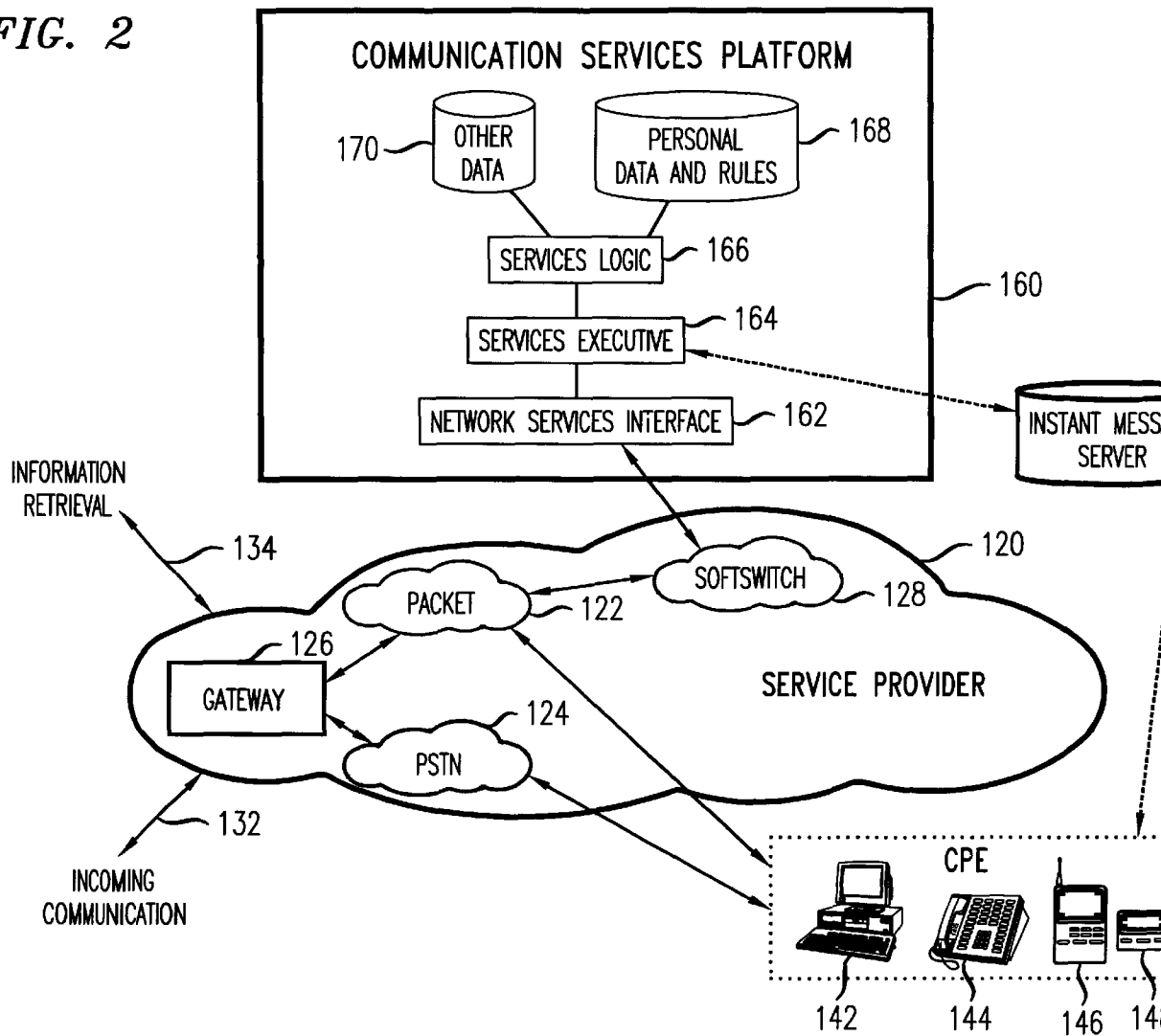


FIG. 3

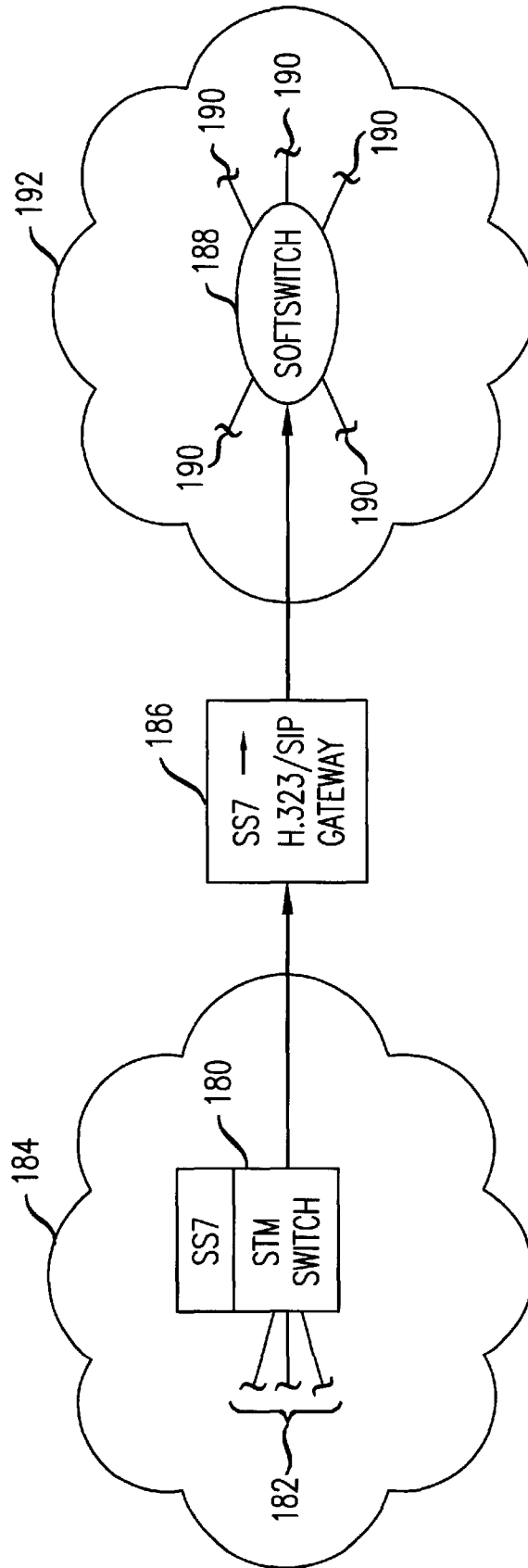
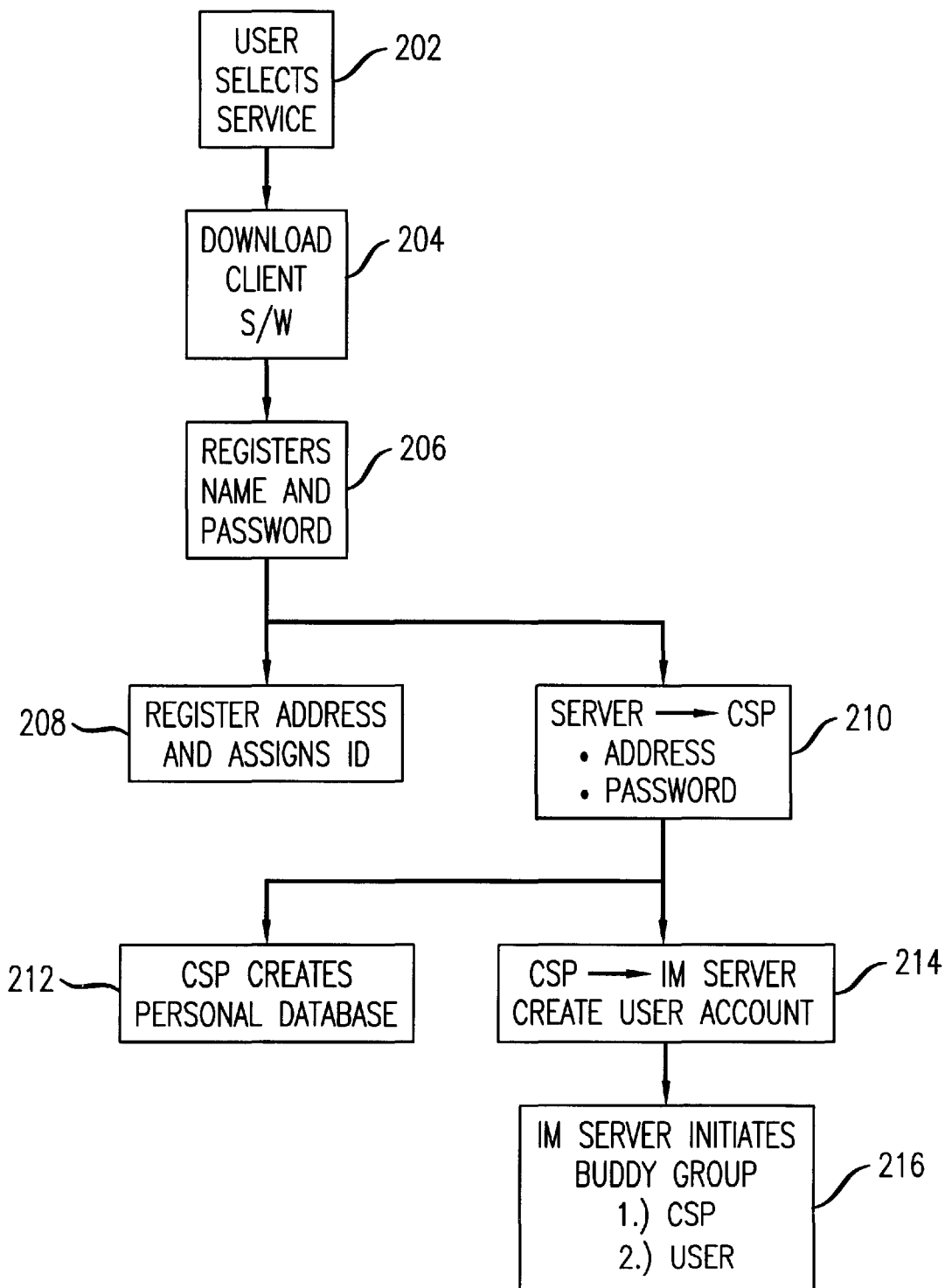


FIG. 4



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