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# United States Patent [19]

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Johnson et al.

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[54] **METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR PERSISTANT ELECTRONIC MAIL REPLY PROCESSING**

[75] Inventors: **William J. Johnson**, Flower Mound; **Daniel P. Ristow**, Watauga; **Marvin L. Williams**, Lewisville, all of Tex.

[73] Assignee: **International Business Machines Corporation**, Armonk, N.Y.

[21] Appl. No.: **905,055**

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[51] Int. Cl.<sup>5</sup> ..... **G06K 17/00**

[52] U.S. Cl. .... **364/514; 358/402**

[58] Field of Search ..... **364/514; 358/402**

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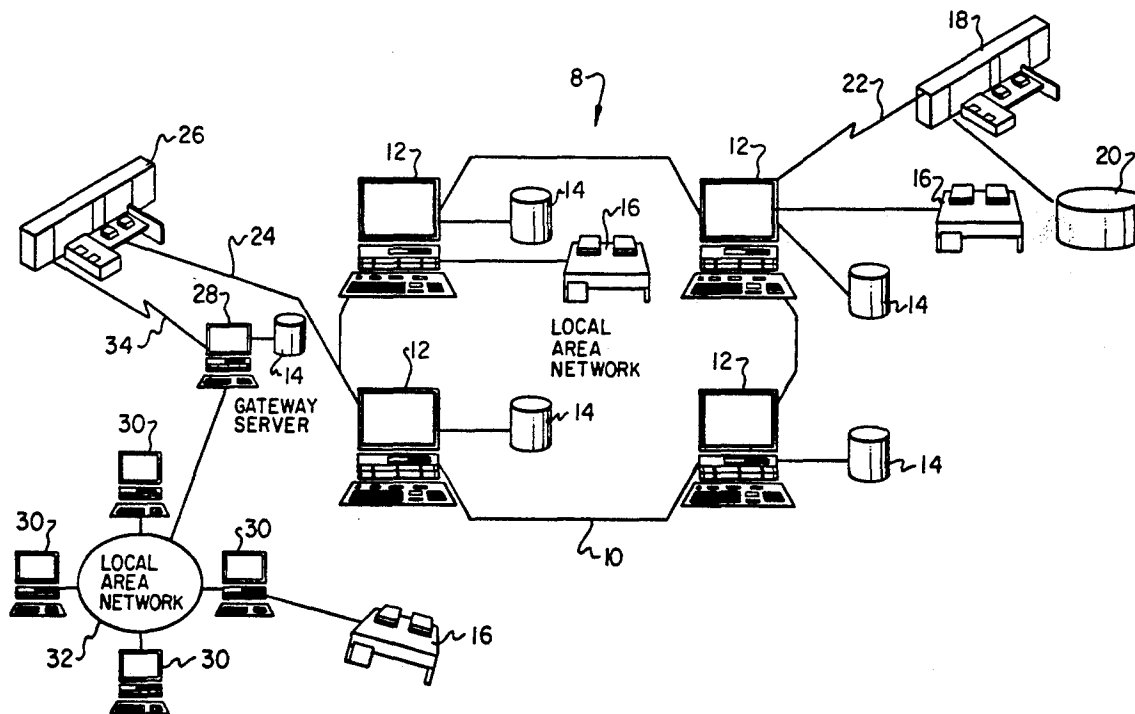
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*Primary Examiner*—Jack B. Harvey  
*Assistant Examiner*—Thomas Peeso  
*Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Duke W. Yee; Andrew J. Dillon; Jonathan E. Jobe, Jr.

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A method and system in a data processing system, having a plurality of users enrolled therein and having a number of electronic mail objects which may be transmitted and received within the distributed data processing system, are provided for ensuring a specific response to a selected electronic mail object by a recipient thereof within the data processing system. The method and system include designating an electronic mail object as requiring a specific response and then transmitting the electronic mail object to a recipient. The recipient of the electronic mail object is prompted for a specific response in response to the recipient opening an electronic mail object and is prohibited from performing a selected action until the specific response has been entered by the recipient.

**32 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets**



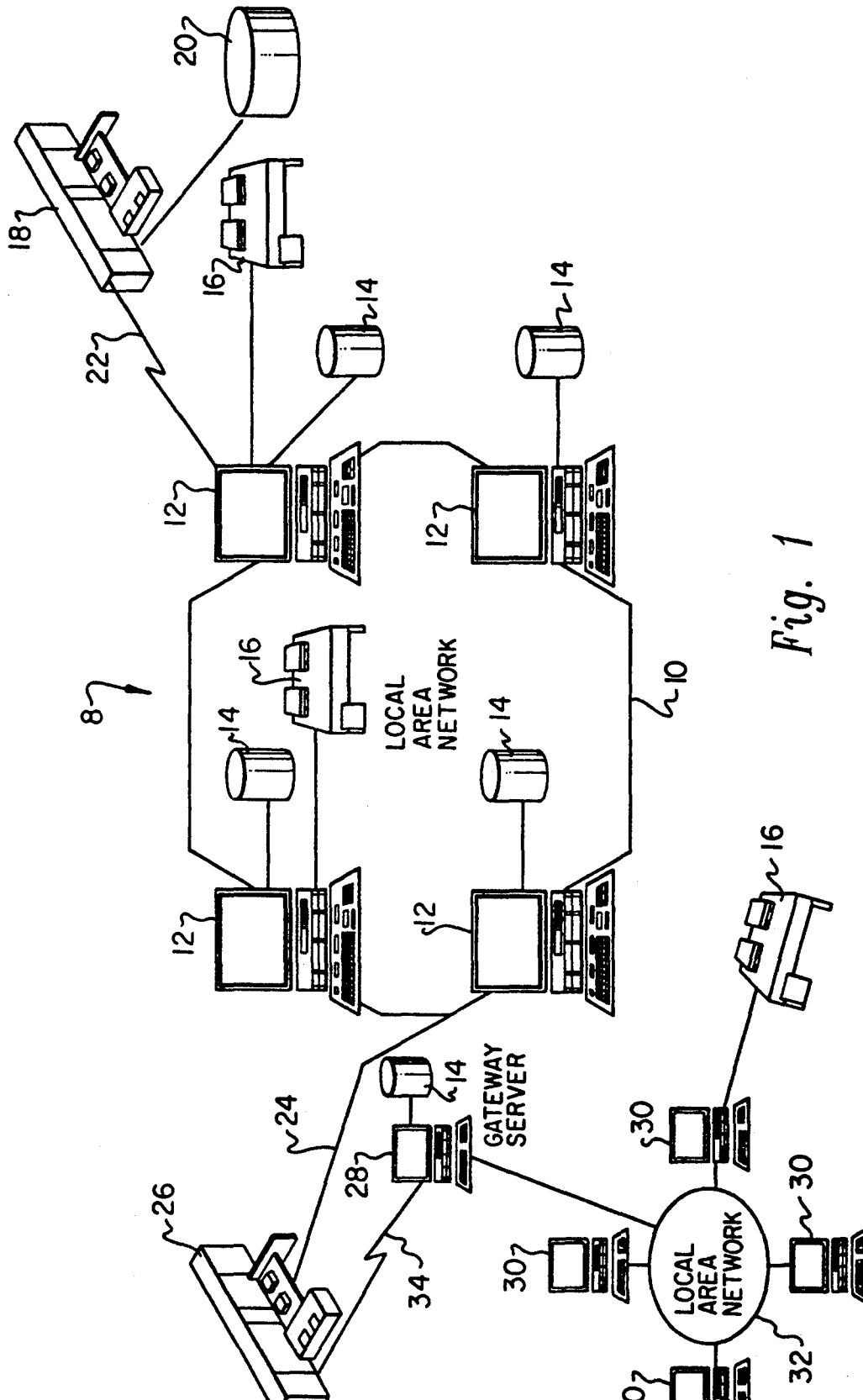


Fig. 1

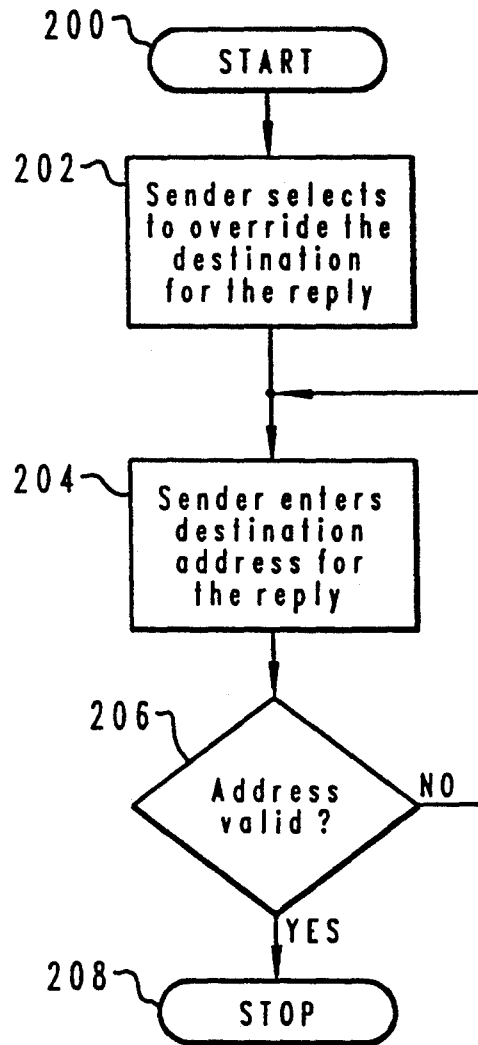


Fig. 2

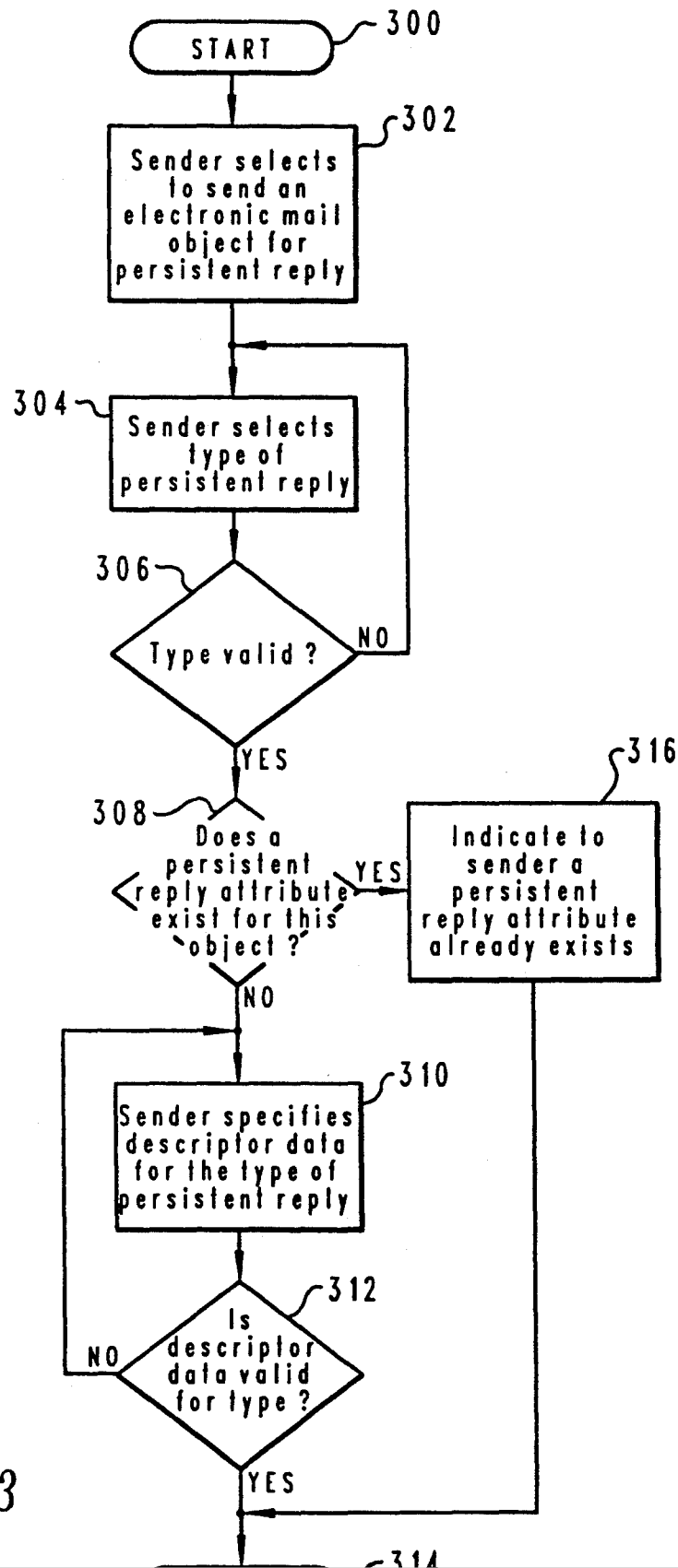


Fig. 3

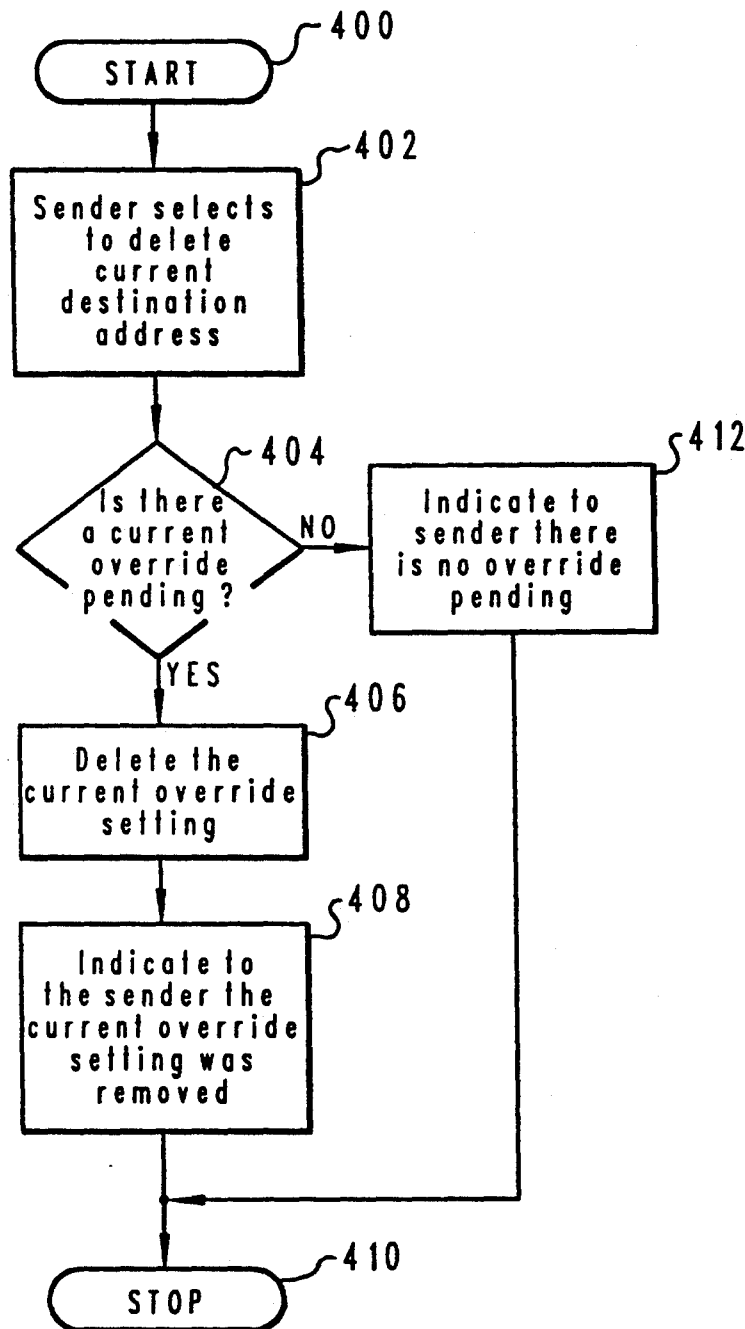


Fig. 4

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