

(54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR SELECTIVE INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A system and method for providing users with granular control over arbitrary information that allows for selective, real-time information sharing in a communications network such as the Internet is provided. In a network including a plurality of network devices operated by a plurality of users, a real-time information exchange system for sharing user profile information between respective users includes a database management system connected to the network. The database management system, which may be distributed across the network, stores the user profile information for a plurality of registered users of the information exchange system. The user profile information includes a plurality of data elements, each data element having an associated one of the plurality of registered users. Each data element has an associated group of users to whom access to the data element has been granted, and users not included in the associated group of users are denied access to the data element. Each registered user may selectively control the granting and denying of access to each of its associated data elements by other respective user, on an element-by-element, and user-by-user basis. Further, each registered user may dynamically create its own data fields.

(\* ) 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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**Related U.S. Application Data**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **713/201; 713/154; 713/166; 709/249; 705/51; 705/54; 375/741**

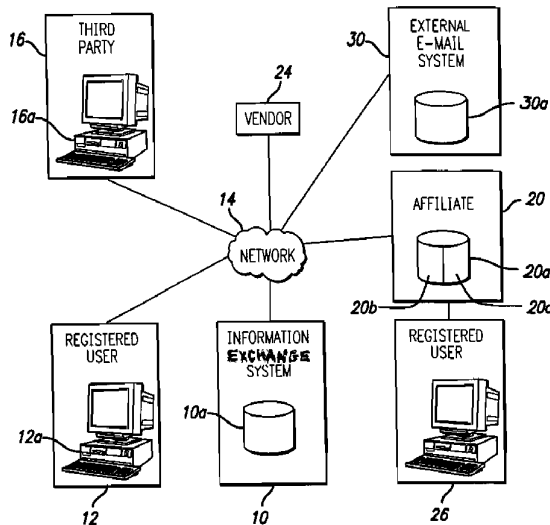
(58) **Field of Search** ..... 713/201, 200, 713/202, 152, 165, 166, 171, 167, 193; 709/224, 248, 225, 206, 250, 249, 44; 705/51, 54, 56, 58, 26, 52; 707/1, 10, 2; 379/93.02, 93.07; 235/380, 382.5, 492; 345/741

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**24 Claims, 42 Drawing Sheets**



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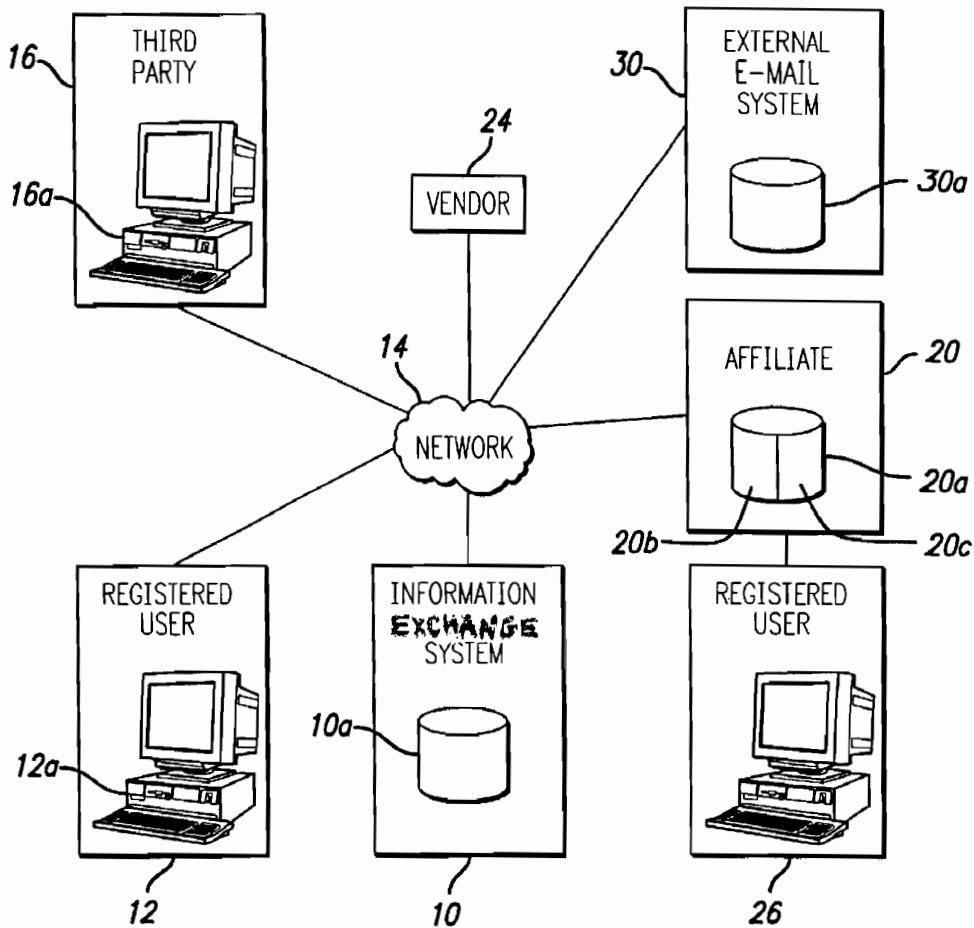


FIG. 1

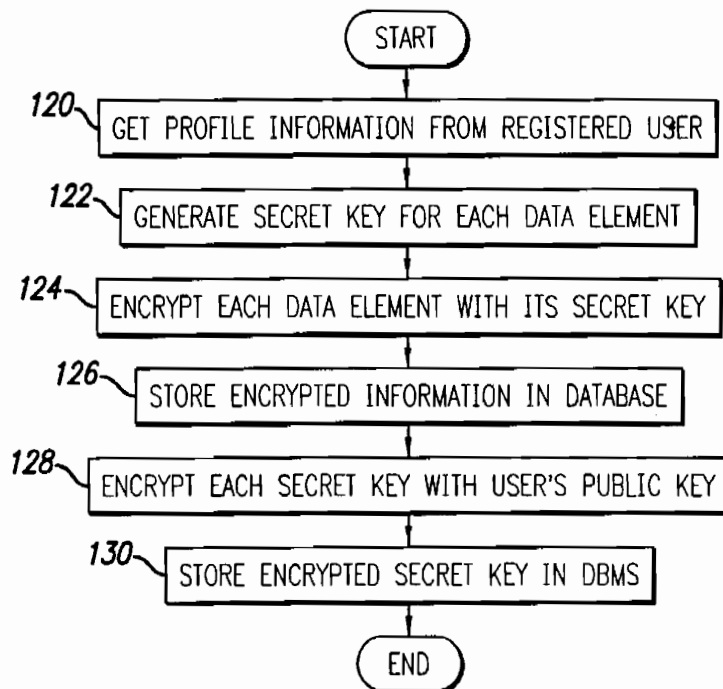
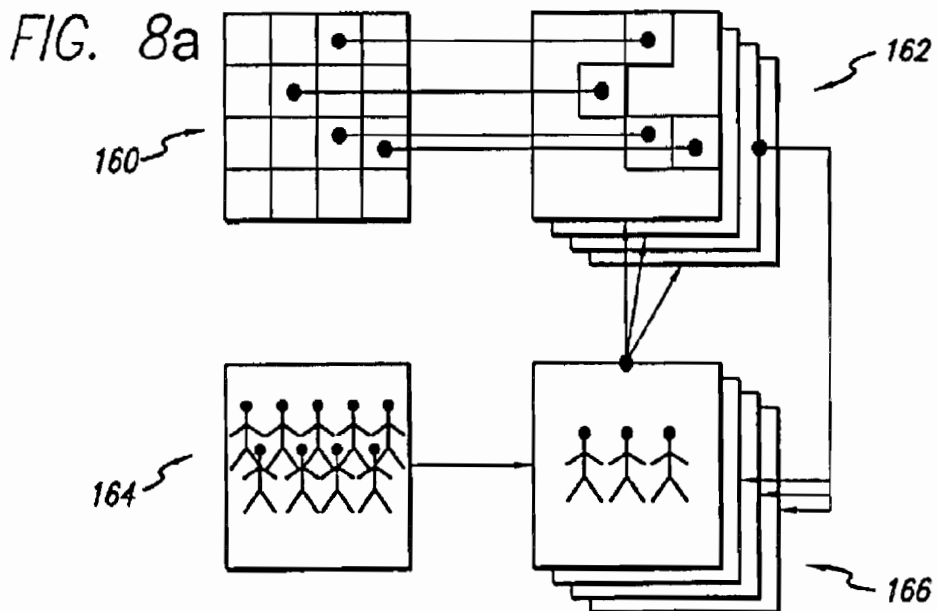
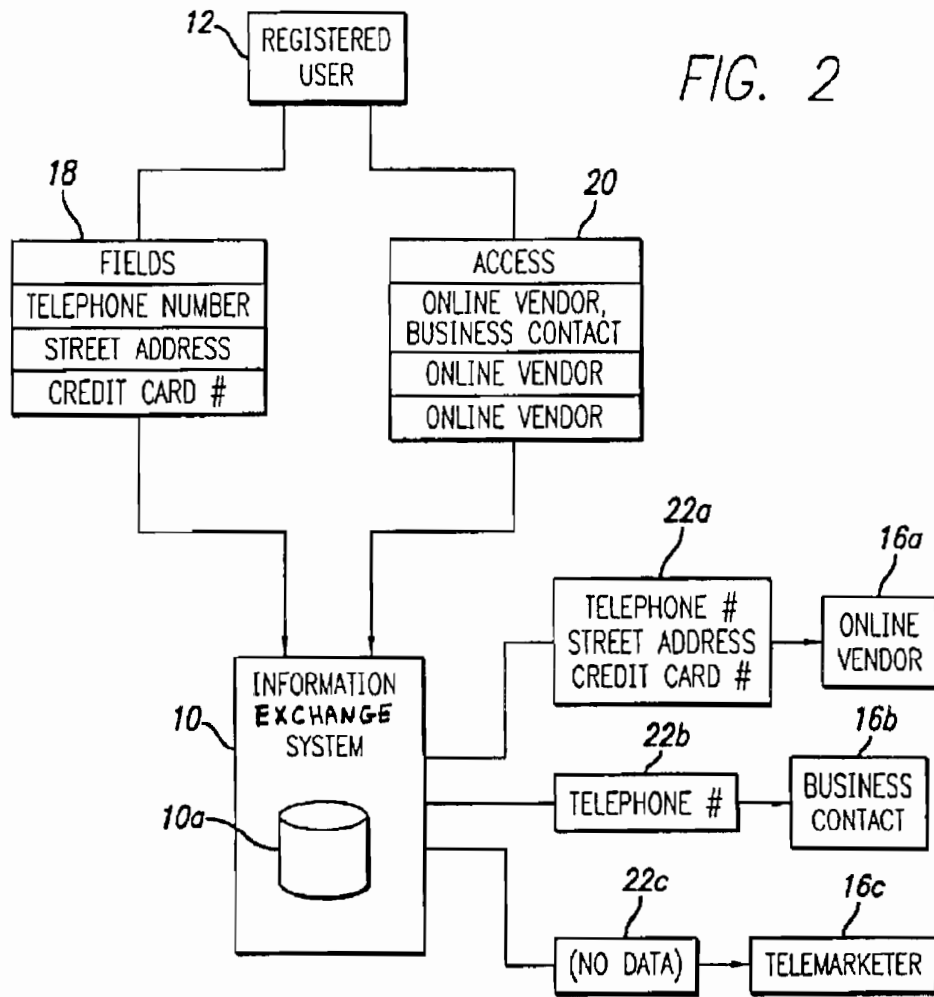


FIG. 6



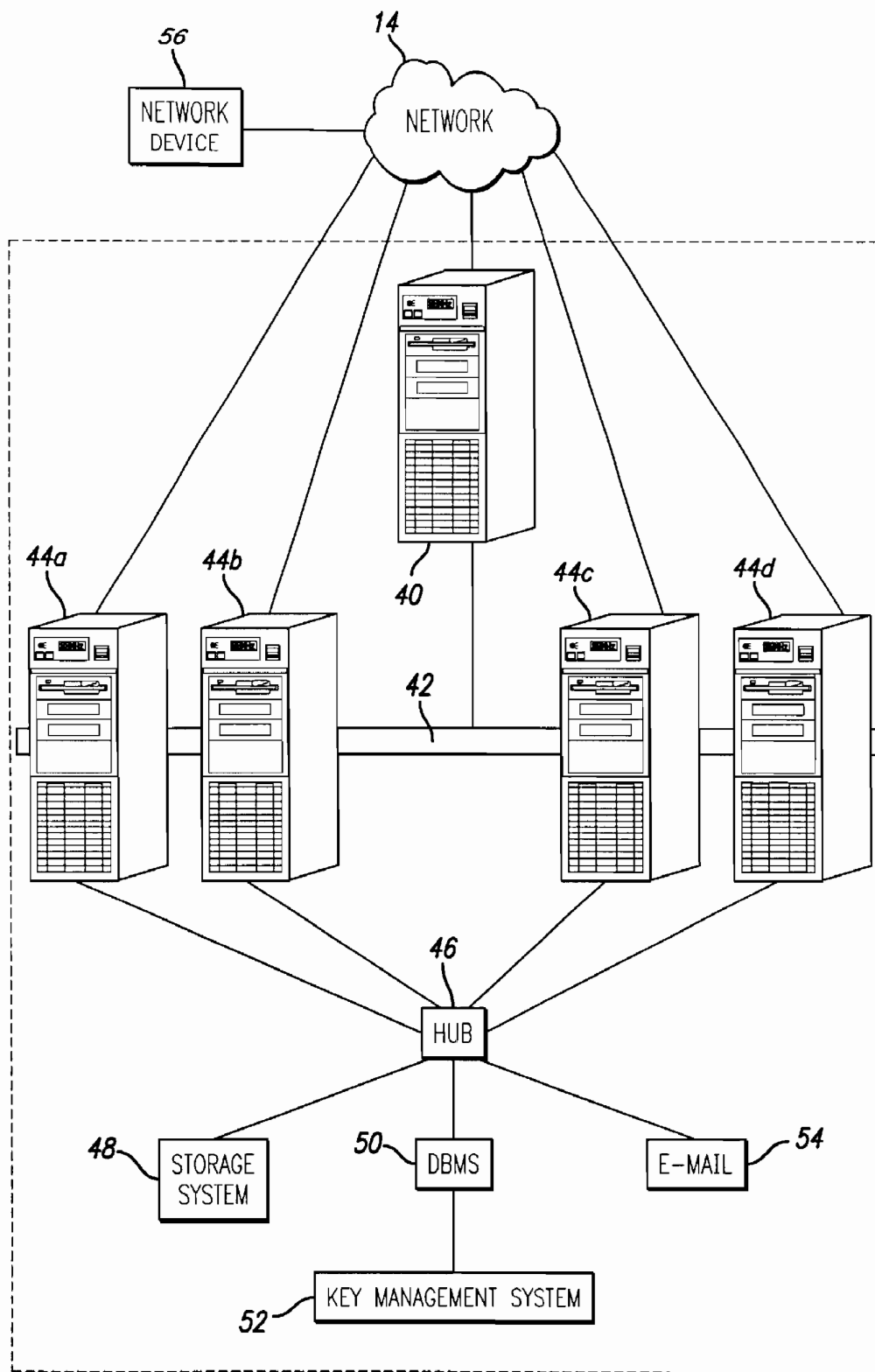


FIG. 3

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