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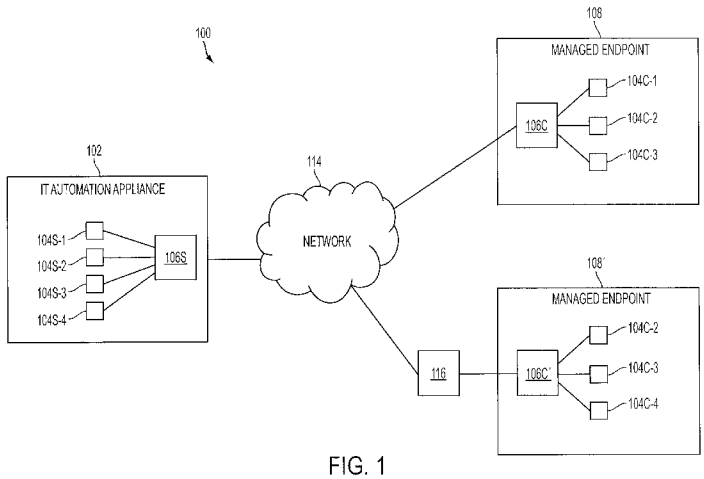


FIG. 1

(57) **Abstract:** A system performs information technology (IT) tasks using a computer. Examples of IT tasks include installing or configuring software, displaying alerts, executing programs or scripts on the endpoint, or logging activities. In an embodiment of the system, a connection initialization module receives a request for a persistent connection over a network from a managed endpoint. The request is accepted and a persistent connection is opened with the managed endpoint. A tier-1 module then receives configuration information from the managed endpoint over the persistent connection. The configuration information includes a list of functional plugins on the managed endpoint, where a functional plugin comprises a software module for performing an IT task. The tier-1 module stores this configuration information along with information describing the persistent connection and maintains the persistent connection in an open state.

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