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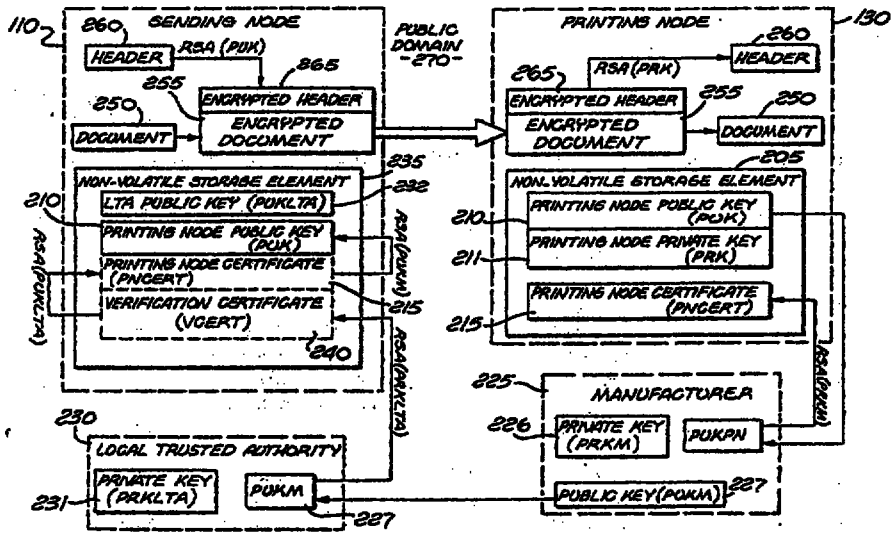
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(54) Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR PREVENTING DISCLOSURE THROUGH USER-AUTHENTICATION AT A PRINTING NODE



(57) Abstract

A system (100) and method for preventing a copy of a document to the output from a printing node (130) until the printing node (130) authenticates the intended recipient. The system (100) includes the sending node (110), the printing node (130), and a communication link (120) coupling these nodes (110, 130) together in a network fashion. The sending node (110) has access to a public key (210) of the printing node (130) and uses this public key (210) to encrypt a header (265) and document (255) before transmission to the printing node (130) over the communication link (120). The printing node (130) has access to its private key (211) to decrypt the header (265) to ascertain whether the document (255) requires authentication by the intended recipient before being output.