

**METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROCESSING DIGITALLY SIGNED
MESSAGES TO DETERMINE ADDRESS MISMATCHES**

ABSTRACT

A method and apparatus for processing digitally signed messages in which address mismatch errors are detected. In at least one aspect, the number of address mismatch errors reported to a user for a message may be minimized for messages that properly incorporate message portions signed by someone other than the sender of the message, as may be the case where the message contains a conversation thread for example, by performing at least one pre-determined action for digital signatures corresponding to signed data appearing after a message separator. The message separator may indicate that the message contains data from an older forwarded message or from an older message that has been replied to, for example. The at least one-pre-determined action may comprise bypassing verification of address matches for those digital signatures, or verifying address matches for those digital signatures but suppressing user notification of any address mismatch errors, for example.

FIG. 7A