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(54) Title: **TELEPHONIC VOICE MESSAGE STORE AND FORWARD METHOD HAVING NETWORK ADDRESS AND VOICE AUTHENTICATION**

(57) Abstract

Authentication of voice message recipient network addresses employs generating (102) and storing (104) a "network file" that includes "voice clips" and associated network addresses that are extracted from voice messages received across a network (10) from voice message systems (16, 18). A voice clip is the first one to three seconds of voice extracted from each received voice message. Over time, the network file will grow to contain multiple voice clips and associated network voice message addresses. When a voice message originator subsequently enters a recipient's network address (106), the originating voice message system searches (114) the network file for the network address, retrieves the associated voice clip (116), and plays it for the voice message originator to authenticate the recipient's network address. Voice authentication of a voice message originator entails encoding (134) into a "voice print file", original voice clips and associated network addresses received from positively identified voice message originators. Thereafter, when a questionable voice message is received (138), the voice message system extracts a new voice clip (142), generates a new voice print (144), and compares it with the original voice print associated with the voice message address (148). If the voice prints are substantially the same, the received voice message is annotated with an "authenticating" message (150).

