



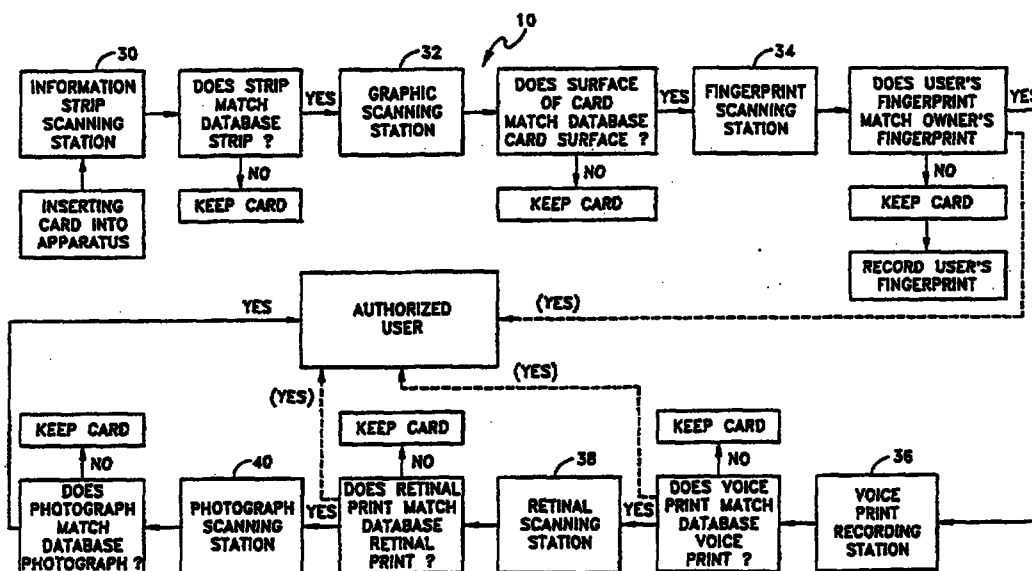
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(54) Title: SYSTEM FOR VERIFYING USE OF A CREDIT/IDENTIFICATION CARD INCLUDING RECORDING OF PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES OF UNAUTHORIZED USERS



(57) Abstract

The present invention is directed to a method and apparatus (10) for verifying an authorized user of a credit/identification card (12). The method includes the steps of scanning the card (12) with an apparatus having a plurality of scanning devices for scanning a bar code (16), scanning the card (12) for evidence of tampering, scanning at least one fingerprint (18) on the card (12), and any other detectable information, and comparing the scanned information on the card (12) to information of the owner stored on at least one accessible database (44) in communication with the apparatus (10). Data transmissions between the apparatus (10) and databases (44) are protected by an encryption system (63). If the information on the card (12) does not match the information germane to the owner of the card which is stored in the database (44), the card (12) is withheld from the user. Otherwise, the user of the card (12) is free to use it for a desired purpose.