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- (54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ESCROWING PROPERTIES USED FOR ACCESSING EXECUTABLE MODULES**
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- (51) **Int. Cl.<sup>7</sup>** ..... **H04L 9/00**
- (52) **U.S. Cl.** ..... **713/164**; 713/171; 713/189; 380/277; 380/286
- (58) **Field of Search** ..... 380/277, 286; 713/171, 189, 164

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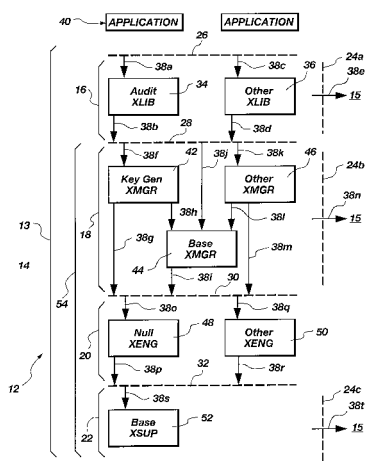
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An apparatus and method provide a controlled, dynamically loaded, modular, cryptographic implementation for integration of flexible policy implementations on policy engines, and the like, into a base executable having at least one slot. The base executable may rely on an integrated loader to control loading and linking of fillers and submodules. A policy module may be included for use in limiting each module's function, access, and potential for modification or substitution. The policy may be implemented organically within a manager layer or may be modularized further in an underlying engine layer as an independent policy, or as a policy created by a policy engine existing in an engine layer. The policy module is subordinate to the manager module in the manager layer in that the manager module calls the policy module when it is needed by the manager module. The policy module is preferably dynamically linkable, providing flexibility, and is layered deeper within the filler module than the manager module.

**21 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets**



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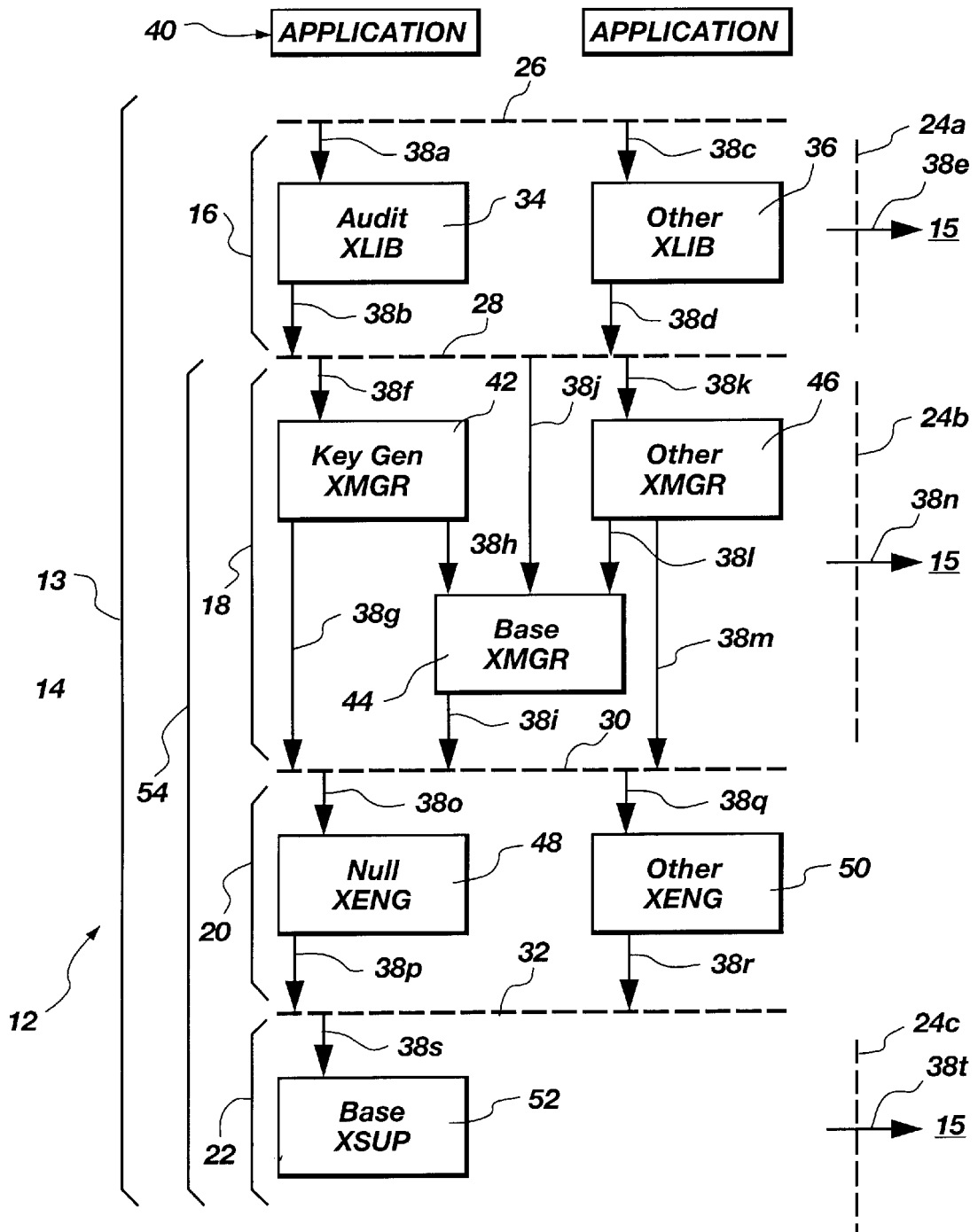


Fig. 1



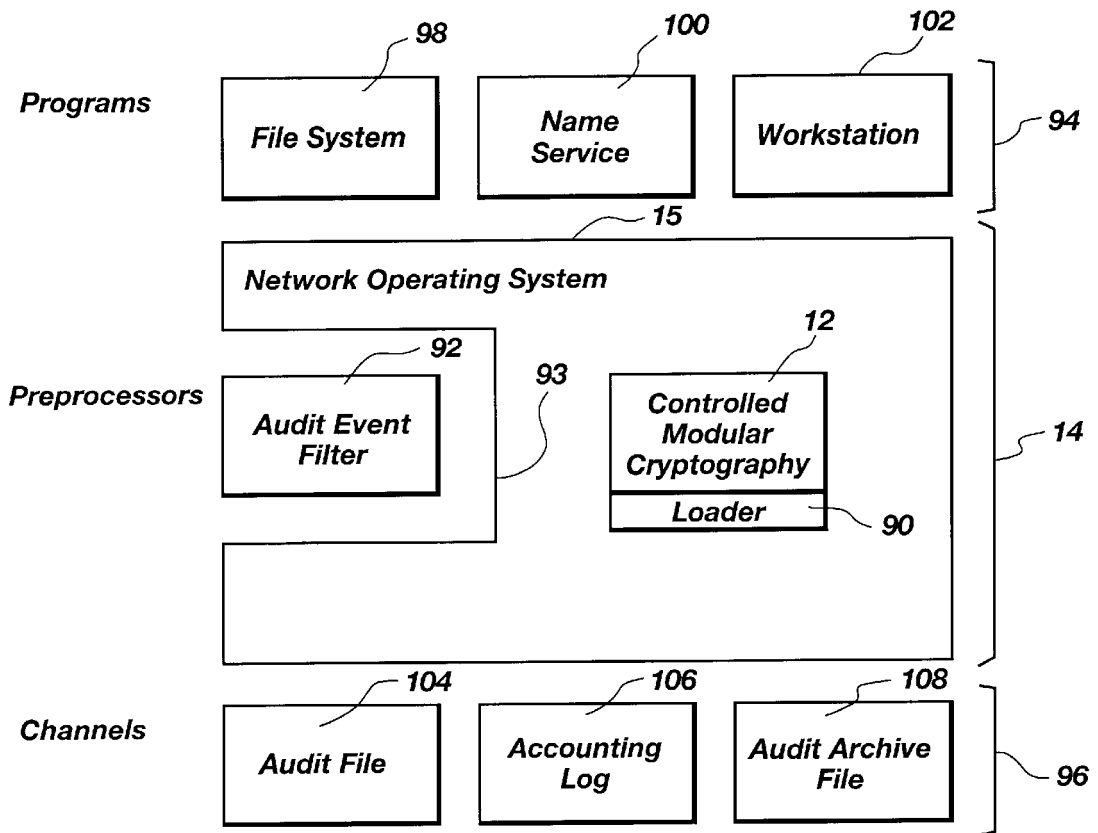


Fig. 3

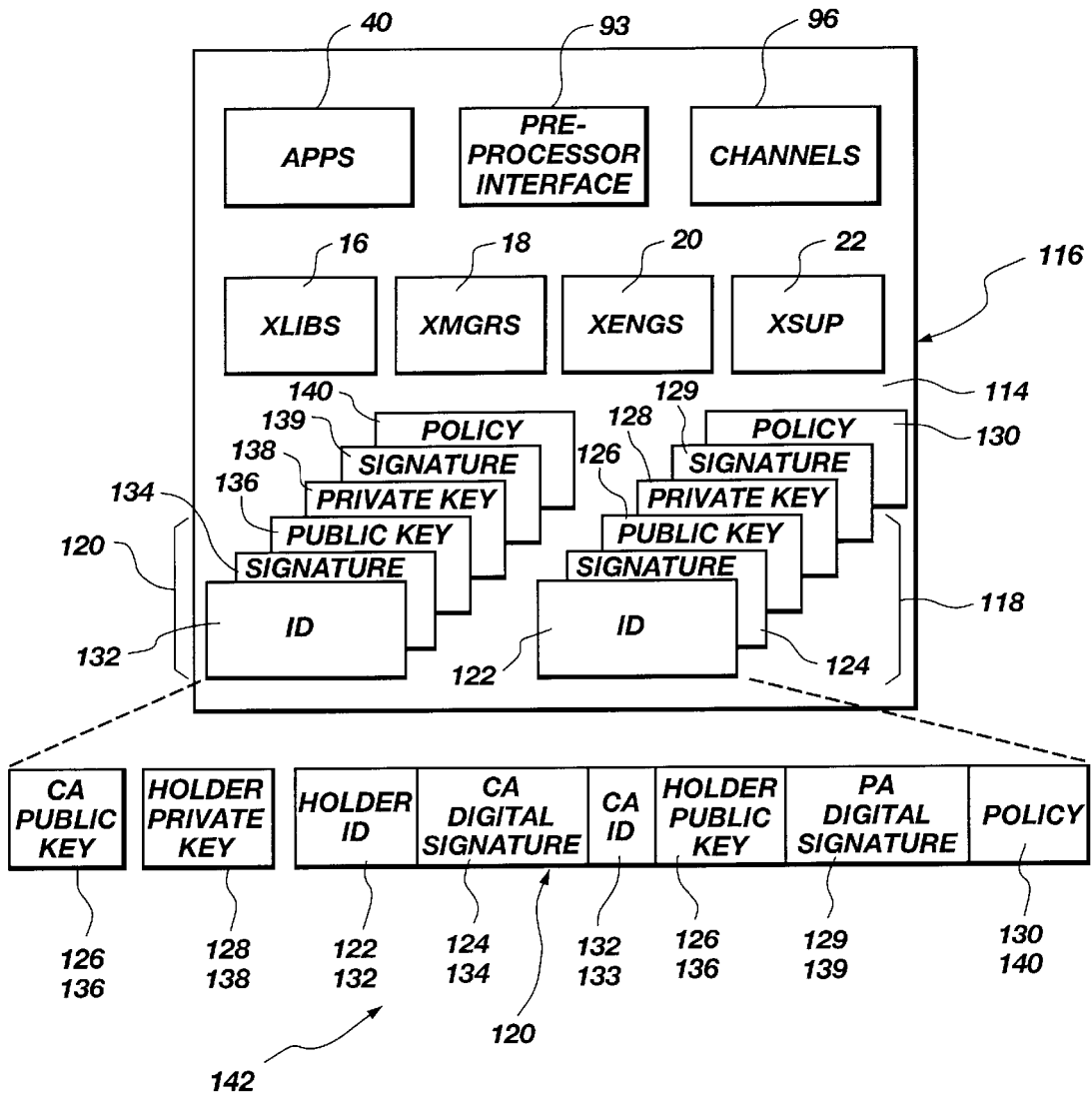


Fig. 4

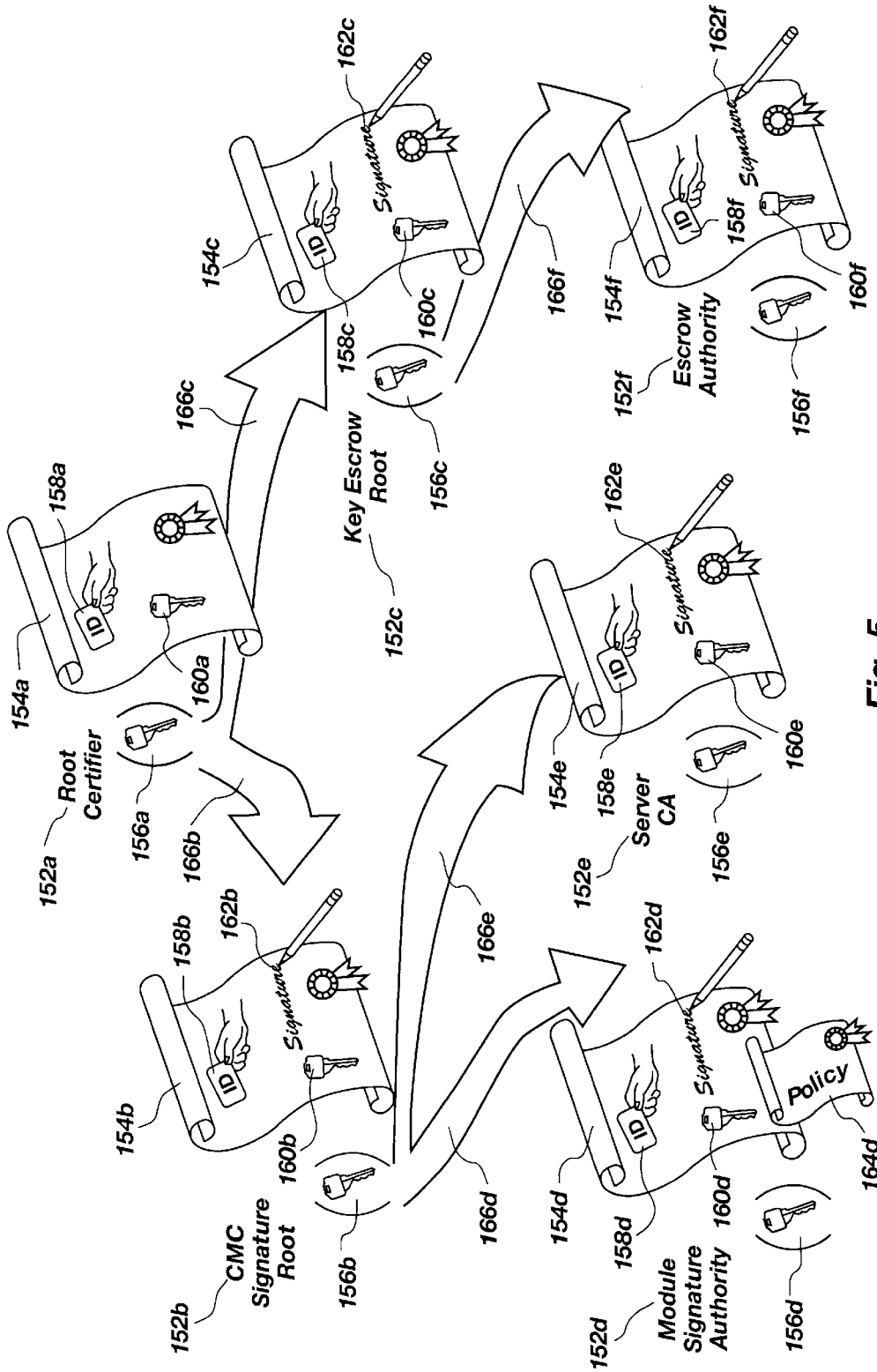
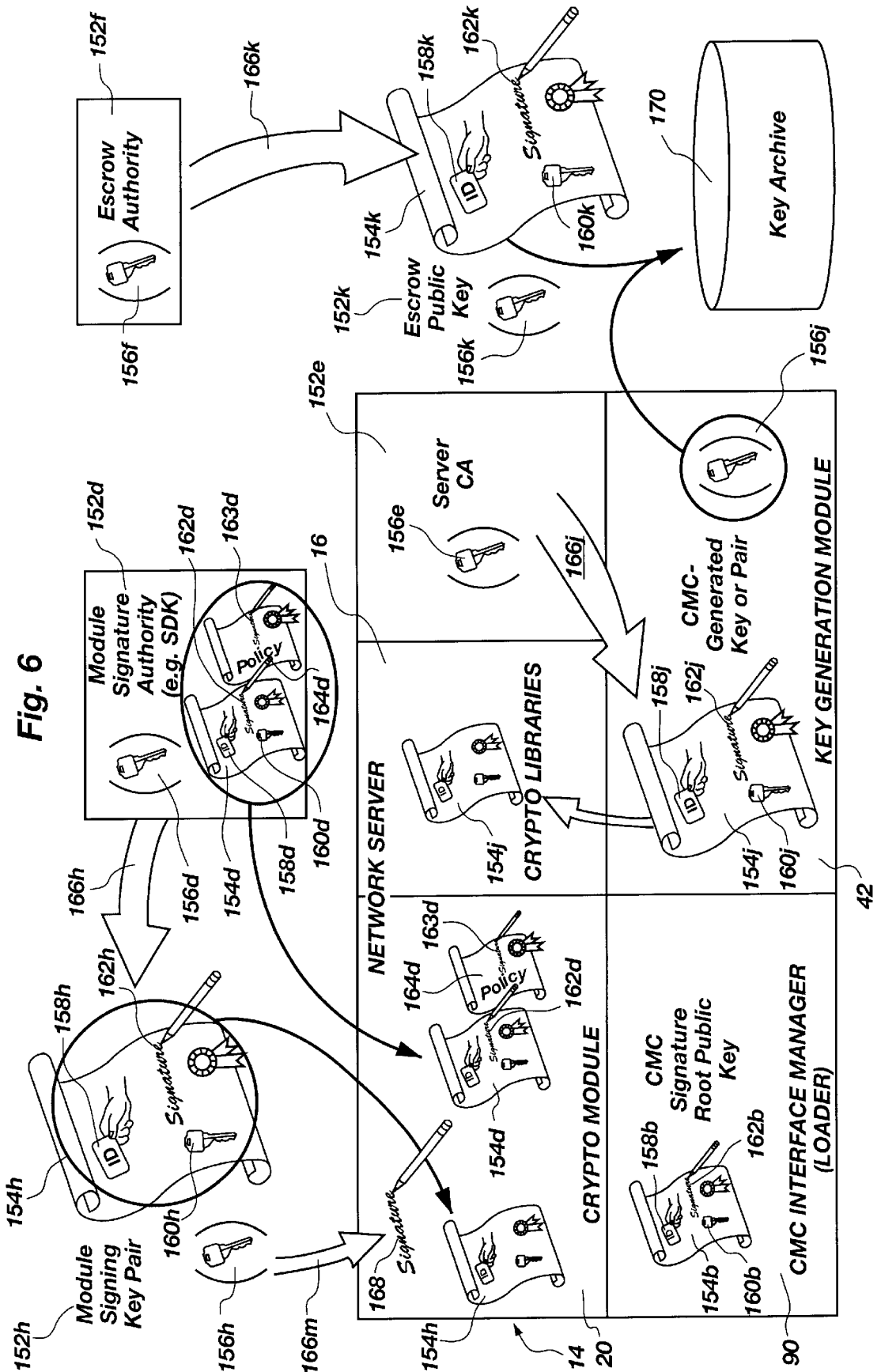


Fig. 5



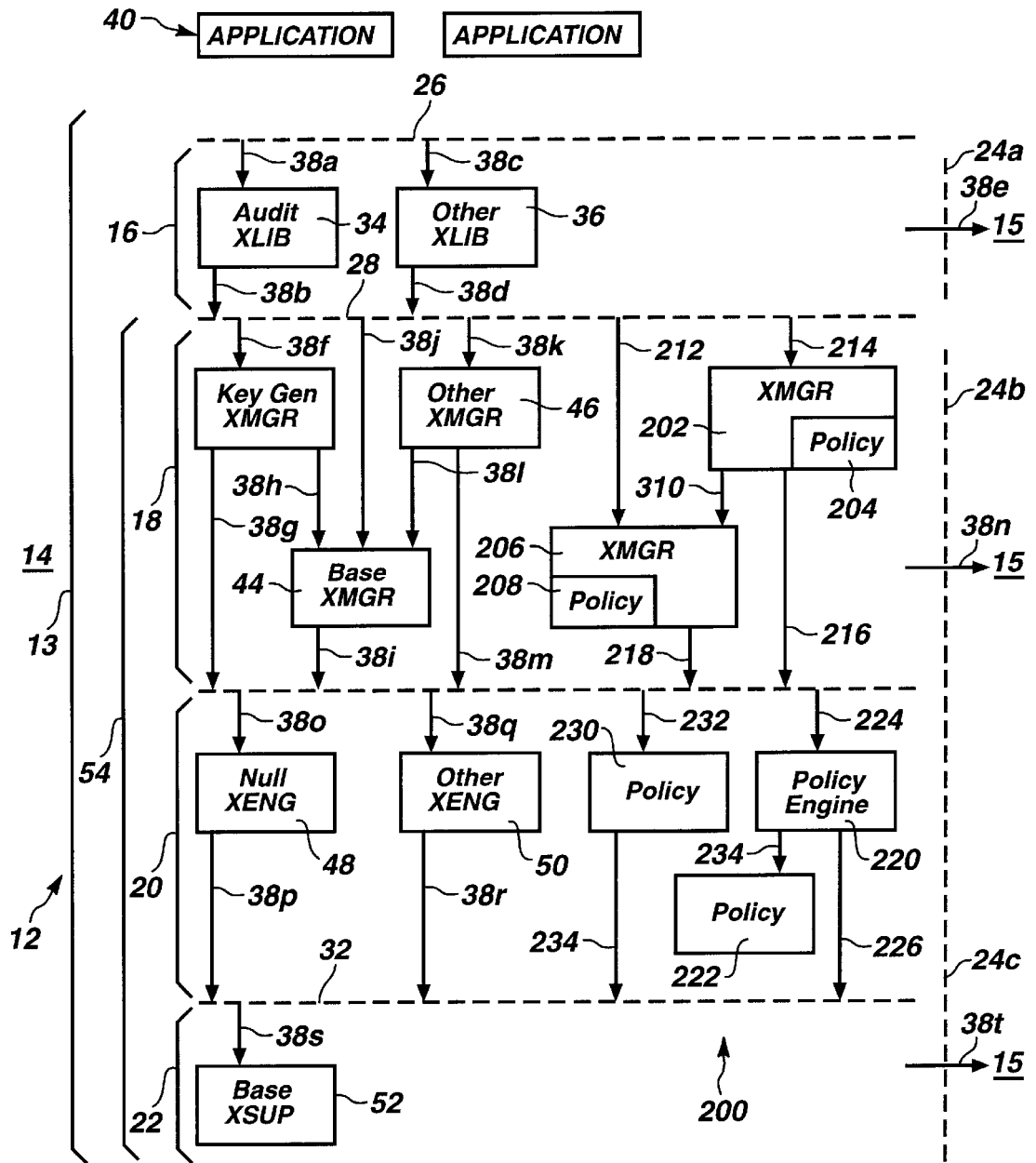


Fig. 7

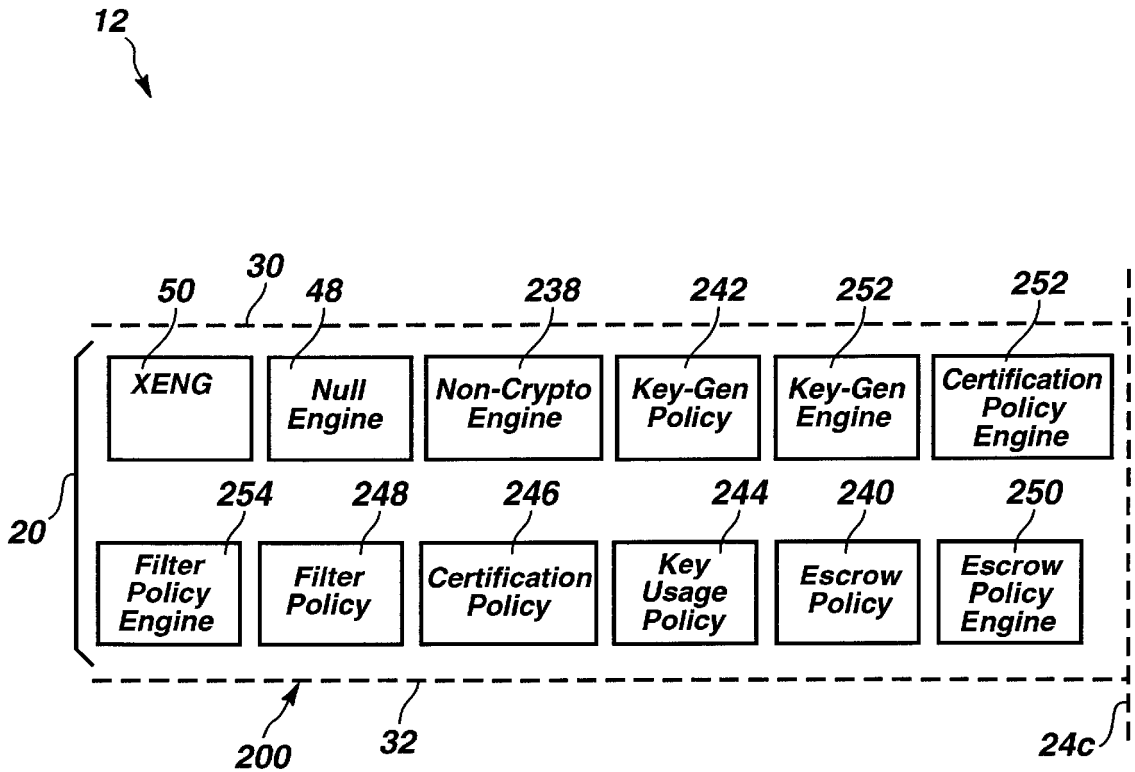


Fig. 8

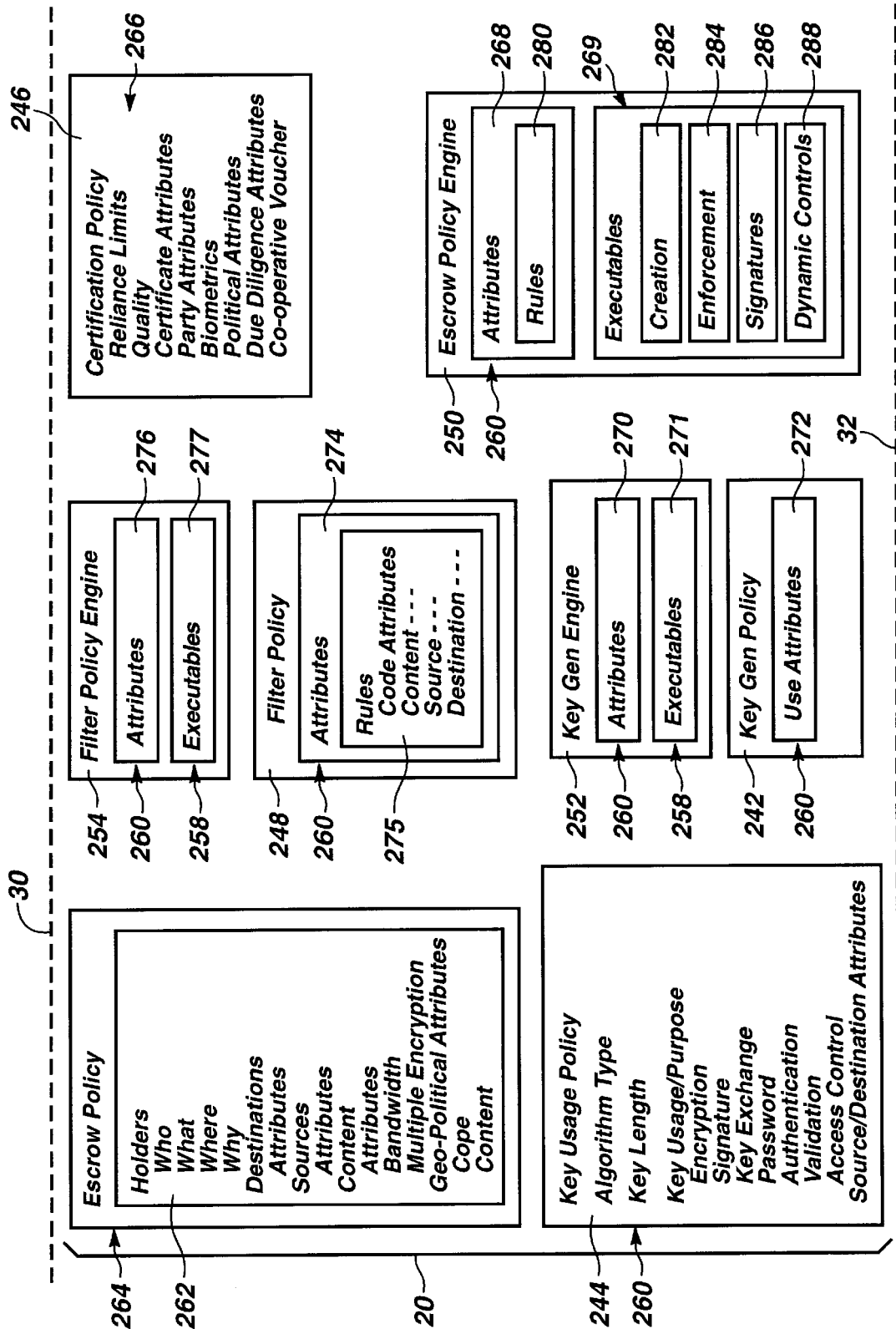


Fig. 9

## METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR ESCROWING PROPERTIES USED FOR ACCESSING EXECUTABLE MODULES

### RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a Continuation-In-Part of and claims priority to copending U.S. Provisional Patent Application Ser. No. 60/079133, filed on Mar. 23, 1998.

### BACKGROUND

#### 1. The Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to novel systems and methods for controlling access, use, and authorization of encrypting applications hosted on computers. More particularly, the present invention relates to the use of separate modules, located within different access layers, for managing access to cryptography and for container policies in accordance with which access is granted.

#### 2. The Background Art

Encryption is a technology dating from ancient times. In modern times, encryption of military communications has been common. However, since the famous "ENIGMA" machine of World War II, cryptography has been used in numerous functions. One of those functions is special purpose software or applications that may be hosted on computers. Hiding underlying algorithms, limiting access, inhibiting reverse engineering, limiting unauthorized use, controlling licensure, and the like may be legitimate uses of cryptography.

#### Cryptographic Processes

Modern cryptography protects data transmitted over high-speed electronic lines or stored in computer systems. There are two principal objectives: secrecy, to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of data, and integrity (or authenticity), to prevent the unauthorized modification of data. The process of disguising plaintext data in such a way as to hide its substance is encryption, and the encrypted result is cyphertext. The process of turning cyphertext back into plaintext is decryption.

A cryptographic algorithm, also called a cipher, is the computational function used to perform encryption and/or decryption. Both encryption and decryption are controlled by a cryptographic key or keys. In modern cryptography, all of the security of cryptographic algorithms is based in the key or keys and does not primarily depend on keeping any details of the algorithms secret.

There are two general types of key-based cryptographic algorithms: symmetric and public-key. Symmetric algorithms (also called secret-key algorithms) are algorithms where the encryption key can be calculated from the decryption key and vice versa (and in fact these keys are usually the same). These require that a sender and receiver agree on these keys before they can protect their communications using encryption. The security of these algorithms rests in the key, and divulging the key allows anyone to encrypt and decrypt data or messages with it.

In public-key algorithms (also called asymmetric algorithms), the keys used for encryption and decryption different from each other in such a way that at least one key is computationally infeasible to determine from the other. To ensure secrecy of data or communications, only the decryption key need be kept private, and the encryption key can thus be made public without danger of encrypted data being decipherable by anyone other than the holder of the private decryption key. Conversely, to ensure integrity of data or communications, only the encryption key need be kept

private, and a holder of a publicly-exposed decryption key can be assured that any ciphertext that decrypts into meaningful plaintext using this key could only have been encrypted by the holder of the corresponding private key, thus precluding any tampering or corruption of the ciphertext after its encryption.

Most public-key cryptographic algorithms can be used to provide only one of secrecy or integrity but not the other; some algorithms can provide either one but not both. Only the RSA (Rivest, Shamir, and Adleman) public-key algorithm (U.S. Pat. No. 4,405,829), whose security is based on the difficulty of factoring large numbers, has been able to be used to provide both secrecy and integrity.

A private key and a public key may be thought of as functionally reciprocal. Thus, whatever a possessor of one key of a key pair can do, a possessor of the other key of the key pair can undo. The result is that pairwise, secret, protected communication may be available without an exchange of keys. Thus, in general, a receiver, in possession of its own private key may decrypt messages targeted to the receiver and encrypted by the sender using the receiver's public key. A receiver may authenticate the message, using its own copy of a sender's public key, to decrypt data (e.g., a signature) encrypted with a sender's private key corresponding to the sender's public key.

An asymmetric algorithm assumes that public keys are well publicized in an integrity-secure manner. A sender (user of a public key associated with a receiver) can then know that the public key is valid, effective, and untampered with. One way to ensure integrity of data packets is to run data through a cryptographic algorithm. A cryptographic hash algorithm may encrypt and compress selected data. Such hash algorithms are commercially available. For example, the message digest 5 (MD 5), and the message digest 4 (MD 4) are commercially available software packages or applications for such functions.

A certificate may be thought of as a data structure containing information or data representing information, associated with assurance of integrity and/or privacy of encrypted data. A certificate binds an identity of a holder to a public key of that holder, and may be signed by a certifying authority. A signature is sometimes spoken of as binding an identity of a holder to a public key in a certificate. As a practical matter, a certificate may be very valuable in determining some level of confidence in keys associated with encryption. That is, just how "good" is an encryption in terms of privacy and integrity? That confidence level may be established by means of a certificate hierarchy. By certificate hierarchy is meant a certification process or series of processes for providing certificates from a trusted authority to another creator of keys.

A certificate, being a data structure, may contain, for example, data regarding the identity of the entity being certified as the holder of the key associated with the certificate, the key held (typically it is a public key), the identity (typically self-authenticating) of the certifying authority issuing the certificate to the holder, and a digital signature, protecting the integrity of the contents of the certificate. A digital signature may typically be based on the private key of the certifying authority issuing the certificate to the holder. Thus, any entity to whom the certificate is asserted may verify the signature corresponding to the private key of the certifying authority.

In general, a signature of a certifying authority is a digital signature. The digital signature associated with a certificate enables a holder of the certificate, and one to whom the certificate is asserted as authority of the holder, to use the

signature of the certifying authority to verify that nothing in the certificate has been modified. This verification is accomplished using the certificate authority's public key. This is a means to verify the integrity and authenticity of the certificate and of the public key in the certificate.

#### Cryptographic Policies

Government authorities throughout the world have interests in controlling the use of cryptographic algorithms and keys. Many nations have specific policies directed to creation, use, import, and export of cryptographic devices and software. Numerous policies may exist within a single government. Moreover, these policies are undergoing constant change periodically.

Cryptographic policies may limit markets. For example, a cryptographic algorithm may not be included in software shipped to a country having laws restricting its importation. On the other hand, such a cryptographic device may be desired, highly marketable, and demanded by the market in another country. Thus, generalized software development, standardization of software, and the like may become difficult for software vendors. Moreover, users have difficulties attendant with supporting limited installed bases of specialized software. That is, a sufficient installed base is required to assure adequate software.

In short, cryptographic use policies sometimes constrain the set of cryptographic algorithms that may be used in a software system. In addition to restrictions on allowable algorithms, cryptographic use policies may also place constraints on the use and strength of keys associated with those algorithms. Software shipped or used in any country must be in compliance with the policies extant.

Another common aspect of certain cryptographic use policies is a requirement that a copy of cryptographic keys be stored or "escrowed" with an appropriate authority. However, the mechanisms necessary to satisfy different policies can vary greatly.

Cryptography, especially public key cryptography, provides certain benefits to software designers. U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,200,700, 4,218,582, and 4,405,829 are directed to such technology and are incorporated herein by reference. These benefits are available in situations where data may be shared. Many modern software packages (applications, operating systems, executables) are used in businesses or in other networks where multiple "clients" may share a network, data, applications, and the like. Most modern software packages employ cryptography in some form.

One application for cryptography in network management or network operating systems includes authentication. Also, integrity of data packets transferred, encryption of files, encoding associated with licenses for software or servers, and license distribution or serving are some of the applications for cryptography.

Users may be identified and their rights to access may be authenticated by means of passwords on a network. Cryptography is typically used to transfer some authentication, integrity, verification, or the like in a secure manner across a network that may be open to channel tapping. Public key cryptography is typically used in such a circumstance. Another application of cryptography for authentication involves a single sign-on. For example, a user may need to enter a single password at the beginning of a session. This may remain true regardless of the number of servers that may eventually be called into service by the individual user (client) during this single session. Historically, scripts have been used to provide a single sign-on, but public key mechanisms are now being provided for this function.

Users have previously demonstrated that networks may be subject to attack by spoofing of network control packets.

This procedure may be demonstrated in playback and in man-in-the-middle scenarios. By such spoofing, users may obtain unauthorized privileges on a network server. Adding packet signatures, keyed on a per-session basis may provide improved packet integrity.

File encryption is becoming more available. Such encryption has particular use in the special circumstance of audit files. For example, a need exists to protect an audit trail from inspection or modification, or both, by a system administrator, even though the audit trail remains under the system administrator's physical control.

Certain licensing schemes may use various encryption modes to protect software against piracy by end users and others throughout a distribution chain. Data structures, cryptography methodologies, checks, and other protection mechanisms may be proprietary to a software developer. Nevertheless, license server mechanisms are being developed to support control of the use of application software in conformity with licenses. Licenses may be provided by an application software provider. The license server may use public key cryptography to create and verify signed data structures. Secret key cryptography may be used to support authentication and file encryption.

Certain applications may provide file confidentiality using proprietary, exportable, secret key algorithms. Users in large numbers make use of such algorithms. Nevertheless, considerable interest in breaking such proprietary algorithms has been successful with certain software. Proprietary encryption methodologies have been consistently broken, given enough time and attention by interested hackers.

Certain applications use public key cryptography for digital signatures. Market leaders in software have provided relatively weak secret key algorithms adopted by others. Thus, files written in different applications from different vendors, even encrypted files, may be opened by an application from any of the vendors using the market leader's secret key algorithm. Within a single product line, a vendor of software applications may use multiple algorithms. Several, if not a plethora of, algorithms exist, including both secret key algorithms and public key algorithms. Stream and block ciphers, as well as hash functions are available and well documented in the computer programming art. Also, certain algorithms are the subject of patent applications which may cloud their broadly based use.

What is needed is a standardized cryptography methodology for distribution across entire product lines. Moreover, encryption technologies are needed for permitting a licensee of a principal software manufacturer to become a third party vendor or value-added distributor capable of producing its own proprietary software, software additions, or pre-planned software modules. Currently, software-with-a-hole may provide an operating system with a cryptographic module that fits in the "hole" in an operating system. However, software manufacturers using this technology typically require that a third-party vendor send its product to the principal software manufacturer for integration. The manufacturer may then provide all interfacing and wrapping of the third-party's filler (such as an encryption engine) to fit within the "hole" in the software of the manufacturer.

Also, export restrictions exist for encryption technology. Limiting the strength of exported cryptography is established by statute. To be exportable, such products must meet certain criteria (primarily limitations on key size) that effectively prevent the exportation of strong cryptographic mechanisms usable for data confidentiality. Moreover creating "cryptography with a hole" is undesirable for several reasons, including export and import restrictions. Cryptog-

raphy with a hole is the presence of components specifically designed or modified to allow introduction of arbitrary cryptographic mechanisms by end users. A great escalation of the difficulty of such introduction, without creating numerous, individually customized software packages, is a major need today, although not necessarily well-recognized.

Certain foreign countries have more stringent regulation of the importation of encryption technology by non-government entities. A government may require that any imported encryption technology be subject to certain governmental policies as well as key escrow by some governmental agency. Key escrow systems may be easily provided in software, but integrity and assurance remain difficult. Using only software, reliable key escrow may be impossible, in the absence of very high assurance. For example, Class B3 or A1 may be required of a "trusted computing base" in order to protect keys against disclosure or modification. Likewise, protection of algorithms against disclosure or modification, and escrow against bypass, are also often required. Under any circumstances, software offers few protections when compared with hardware solutions.

Customers, whether third-party vendors, distributors, or end users, need information security. International commercial markets need products that may be marketed internationally without a host of special revisions that must be tracked, updated, and maintained with forward and backward compatibility as to upgrades and the like. Meanwhile, such solutions as key escrow do not receive ready customer acceptance in U.S. markets, particularly where a government is an escrow agent.

Flexibility of encryption technologies is also important, particularly to software development. For instance, it is important that standards or properties be created for managing access to encryption technologies. At the same time, it is likely that the properties will change over time, and the properties should be easily modified. The properties should also be securely contained with specific applications implementing the encryption technologies.

Therefore, what is needed is a cryptography apparatus and method that may be mass produced in a variety of products across an entire product line. A technology, or product that can be sold in identical form both domestically and abroad is highly desirable. An encryption method and apparatus are needed that may provide improved methods for security and integrity of data provided by cryptographic algorithms and keys themselves, without requiring "trust" between sender and receiver.

Also needed is a key escrow mechanism for corporate environments. For example, file encryption by an employee will usually be required to be subject to an escrow key in the possession of the employer. Also, in conjunction with signature authorities, delegation of such authority may be useful in a corporate environment. Nevertheless, each corporate user may be viewed as a secondary (vendor) level desiring to have its own encryption and escrow control of all copies of all keys.

What is needed is a method for producing cryptographic applications that may be customized individually, from individual modules. That is, what is needed is modules that may be used to limit the capabilities of cryptographic applications without proliferating individual customized software products that may become very difficult to maintain, upgrade, support, and the like. What is needed is an apparatus and method that can separate a cryptography application or a cryptography filler for an operating system "slot" into modules. Modules need to be configured to minimize the extent of interfaces and the amount of code

that must be interfaced. Modules should minimize the number of exclusions from a system that must be patched or replaced in order to enable the software system to satisfy relevant cryptography usage policies.

Such a system is also needed in which a cryptography filler can be provided with separate access manager and access properties modules. Such property modules should be securely loaded within deeper, less accessible layers than the manager modules and should be subordinate to one manager module, responding when called by one manager modules.

What is needed also are an apparatus and method effective to enable a manufacturer of a cryptographic engine to produce a single implementation of a modular package embodying particular cryptographic algorithms. The manufacturer should remain able to include that implementation in all versions of a software product. This should be true regardless of different key usage policies mandated by various regulatory authorities. It should be true regardless of a requirement for disabling of certain of the included algorithms.

Also needed is an alternative to prior art systems that require both a "policy" and an algorithm implementation to be supplied (even lastly shipped) from the manufacturer of a cryptography engine as the wrapping and certifying entity. Instead, what is needed is an apparatus having an architecture and implementation by which a manufacturer of a cryptographic engine need not be the same entity as a supplier/generator of a policy (e.g. government) to which the cryptographic engine's algorithms are constrained to conform.

Beneficial, and therefore desirable or needed, is an apparatus and method having distinct executable modules and policy data structures sufficiently separable to reduce the cost of customizing an entire software system. Thus, a system is needed that is adaptable to inexpensive customization without implementing an embedded policy.

Also needed is an apparatus and method for separating a policy from an algorithm to enable flexibility in the management and delivery of cryptographic capabilities in conformance with the local regulations. For example, some method is needed by which a manufacturer can produce a cryptographic engine, but exclude a policy certificate permitting use of the algorithms implemented by that engine. That is, a method is needed by which a manufacturer or one or more other policy certificate authorities may separately offer key and policy authorization, certification, and verification conforming to local regulations.

#### BRIEF SUMMARY AND OBJECTS OF THE INVENTION

In view of the foregoing, it is a primary object of the present invention to provide an apparatus and method comprising distinct, controlled modular cryptography modules and policy data structures.

It is another object of the invention to provide such an apparatus and method whereby separate manager and subordinate policy modules are dynamically loaded of modules into a base executable in a manner to prevent substitution, modification, extension, or misuse of algorithms implementable by the modules.

It is another object of the invention to provide such separate manager and subordinate policy modules whereby different policies may be implemented by modifying the policy modules without modifying the manager modules and whereby the modified policy modules may be independently indicated as coming from an intended vendor.

Consistent with the foregoing objects, and in accordance with the invention as embodied and broadly described

herein, an apparatus and method are disclosed in certain embodiments of the present invention as including a controlled modular cryptography system.

A principle feature provided by an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention includes limitation of software integration. For example, a software integration limiter may provide a cryptographic operating system with a "slot." That is, an operating system may be thought of as a block of executable instructions storable in a memory device, and loadable on a processor.

A software integration limiter in accordance with the invention may provide an architecture and coding to limit the integration of coding required to fill a "slot" left within an operating system. Thus, the operating system or other software cannot operate at all, or may be configured to not operate with cryptographic capability, absent an authorized, added software "filler" filling the "slot".

Another feature available in an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention may be a vendor-constrained, remotely sealed, software integration limiter. For example, prior art systems may require that a manufacturer receive, license for import, and wrap the code of value-added resellers and vendors, incorporating the codes into a cryptographically enabled software product.

By contrast, an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention may provide for a universal "base executable" comprising a software system for operating on a computer. A software development kit may be provided with certain authorizations to an agent, vendor, distributor, or partner. The authorizations may be provided as certificates permitting the agent to create software modules and wrap them without their contents being known, even to the original manufacturer of the "base executable" or the software development kit. Such a system may then include a constrained policy obtained by the agent, vendor, etc., in cooperation with a government, to meet the import laws of the country of sale of the entire package, the software "base executable," modules from vendors, and an authorizing policy. Such a system may allow an agent (development partner, third party value-added seller, module vendor, distributor) to provide sealed encryption algorithms. The algorithms may remain known only to the agent, (partner, distributor, etc.) although accessed for linking using keys authorized by the manufacturer of the base executable.

The software development kit may provide for an authorization mechanism, such as a certificate of authority immediately identified with the software development kit and the agent. Any "base executable" may then verify any module from any vendor to determine that the vendor has produced a module in accordance with policy constraints imposed on the software development kit and verified by the "base executable" produced by the manufacturer.

Thus, a universal "base executable" may be exportable by a manufacturer and importable by a distributor or reseller. A distributor may be responsible to obtain the proper licensure for cryptographic equipment and functionality. The "base executable" can verify that all modules by a distributor come from a software development kit operating within its bounds of policy authorization and other permitting functionality.

In short, the "base executable" knows how to recognize a valid signature provided from a module created on a proper software development kit. A software development kit may produce or generate proper digital signatures. The agent's, distributor's, or partner's module product may then carry the proper signature. Therefore, the "base executable" may recognize and run only those modules having valid signa-

tures corresponding to software development kit "tool-boxes" of known, authorized agents or distributors, and in accordance with authorized policies.

Another feature of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention may be a null engine. A null engine may be provided by a manufacturer with any "base executable" (principal software product, operating system), having no enabled cryptographic capability. Nevertheless, the null engine may support all interfaces required by a "slot" in the base executable, and all functionalities except cryptographic capabilities required by a "filler." Thus, for example, an operable software system may be delivered having no cryptographic capability, simply by providing a filler including a null engine to fill the "slot" within the software product (operating system, base executable) provided by the manufacturer.

Another feature of the apparatus and method in accordance with the invention may be flexible key escrow capability. This feature may be thought of as a modular key escrow method. Escrow capability may escalate from a self escrow. For example, an individual company, individual user, or the like, may hold and control all keys. At an opposite extreme, an escrow of a key may reside with some other independently authorized escrow agent. A key escrow may reside with a governmental agency itself as required in some countries.

Another feature of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention may include cryptographic wrapping of keys. That is, wrapping may be thought of as tamper proofing (authentication) and encrypting (secrecy protection) a key. Prior art system's keys may be simply bit strings of sufficient length and complexity to reduce the probability of their being deciphered.

Here, a holder's identification and a certification authority's identification may be applied to a key itself. The digital signature of the certifying authority may enable verification of such certification. The keys may be centrally managed, such as by a management module in the "base executable" from a manufacturer. Such a module can therefore restrict creation, distribution, and use of keys, especially within a network or internetwork.

Another feature of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention may include quality-graded certificates. The certificates may be generated by distributors (value-added resellers, module vendors, agents, partners). However, the certificates may provide a "pedigree" indicating an integrity level of the cryptography provided by a certificated software product. Thus, a purchaser of software who will become a user or owner (holder) may know the cryptographic strength (algorithm, key length) or quality (integrity; value limit of assurance) of the systems used or created, with a verification that cannot be forged.

Another feature of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention may be provision of cryptographic engines that are not independently usable. For example, cryptographic engines may be comprised of, or included with, wrapped, non-linkable modules that can only be used in a filler to fill a "slot" in a base executable (principal software application) from a specified manufacturer. Thus, unlike the prior art where a cryptographic engine obtained by a vendor or third party may be used with any software, cryptographic engines made in accordance with the invention may not be enabled absent verification of their integrity, applicability, policy, or the like by a base executable (principal software product). For example, a base executable, such as an operating system or other

manufacturer-supplied module may verify any and all modules attempting to link with the base executable and vice versa.

Another feature of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention may be constraining the linking of modules to a specific class of module, or within a specific class of module, through the use of cryptography. Thus, for example, a hierarchy of linking may be created within individual software modules, so that all modules may link only to peers (associated modules in one filler) and may not necessarily be able to link directly with selected modules of the total group of peer modules with the same filler. For example, an application or library module may not bypass an access limiting manager module to interface with a cryptographic engine module.

Another feature of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention is that modules such as the access limiting manager modules may rely upon other modules such as the policies of modules, which may be located at a lower hierarchical linking layer than the manager module. The manager module and the policies modules may be independently dynamically linked. Accordingly, the policies module may be modified, and the modifications can then be authenticated as coming from a project vendor by the base executable.

Thus, the above objects may be met by one or more embodiments of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention. Likewise, one or more embodiments of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention may provide the desirable features as described.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The foregoing and other objects and features of the present invention will become more fully apparent from the following description and appended claims, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings. Understanding that these drawings depict only typical embodiments of the invention and are, therefore, not to be considered limiting of its scope, the invention will be described with additional specificity and detail through use of the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a schematic block diagram of modules arranged in one embodiment of an architecture for an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention;

FIG. 2 is a schematic block diagram of an apparatus in a network for hosting and implementing the embodiment of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a schematic block diagram of an example of executables operable in a processor for implementing the embodiment of the invention illustrated in FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a schematic block diagram illustrating examples of data structures in a memory device corresponding to the apparatus of FIGS. 1-3;

FIG. 5 is a schematic block diagram illustrating certificate hierarchies for implementing one embodiment of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention; and

FIG. 6 is a schematic block diagram of certain operational processes for one embodiment of a controlled modular cryptography system implemented in accordance with the invention.

FIG. 7 is a schematic block diagram of modules arranged in an alternative embodiment of an architecture of the present invention.

FIG. 8, is a schematic block diagram illustrated in greater detail an engine layer of the architecture of FIG. 7.

FIG. 9 is a schematic block diagram illustrating in greater detail modules within the engine layer of FIG. 8.

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

It will be readily understood that the components of the present invention, as generally described and illustrated in the Figures herein, could be arranged and designed in a wide variety of different configurations. Thus, the following more detailed description of the embodiments of the system and method of the present invention, as represented in FIGS. 1 through 6, is not intended to limit the scope of the invention, as claimed, but it is merely representative of certain presently preferred embodiments of the invention.

The presently preferred embodiments of the invention will be best understood by reference to the drawings, wherein like parts are designated by like numerals throughout. Reference numerals having trailing letters may be used to represent specific individual items (e.g. instantiations) of a generic item associated with the reference numeral. Thus, a number 156*a*, for example, may be the same generic item as number 156*f*, but may result from a different version, instantiation, or the like. Any or all such items may be referred to by the reference numeral 156.

Referring to FIGS. 1-3, a method and apparatus for providing controlled modular cryptography is illustrated in software modules, supporting hardware, and as executables distributed through a processor. Reference is next made to FIGS. 4-6, which illustrate in more detail, schematic block diagrams of certain preferred embodiments of an apparatus and method for implementing controlled modular cryptography in accordance with the invention. Those of ordinary skill in the art will, of course, appreciate that various modifications to the detailed schematic diagram of FIGS. 1-6 may easily be made without departing from the essential characteristics of the invention as described. Thus, the following description of the detailed schematic diagrams of FIGS. 1-6 is intended only as an example, and it simply illustrates certain presently preferred embodiments of an apparatus and method consistent with the invention as claimed herein.

Referring now to FIGS. 1-6, a controlled modular cryptography (CMC) process 12 or method 12 may be implemented using a plurality of modules 13. The CMC process 12, alternately referred to herein as CMC 12, may be embedded within another executable 14 such as a network operating system 14. The network operating system 14 may include an operating system proper 15, what would conventionally be known in a generic operating system as the operating system 15.

The network operating system 14 may also have provision for insertion of a pre-processor 92 in a conventional hole 93.

By contrast, the CMC 12 is not accessible by third parties at a pre-processor slot 93. Third parties may create pre-processors 92 having direct access to the operating system 15. Prior art cryptographic engines are often mere pre-processors interposed between applications 40 and the operating system 15. Likewise, the unauthorized installation by a third party of a cryptographic engine in a pre-processor slot 93 may be rendered virtually impossible by the CMC 12 and operating system 15. Instead, the CMC 12 may be loaded into the base executable 14 such as the operating system 14 in a manner that embeds the CMC 12 into the operating system 14 and prevents interfacing by any third party to the cryptographic capability of the CMC 12. (See FIG. 3.)

Referring now to FIGS. 1-6, and more particularly to FIG. 1, the controlled modular cryptography 12 may include

library modules **16** for interfacing with applications **40**. Each library module **16** (X library **16**, or simply library **16**) may be application-specific.

The loader **90** (see FIG. **3**) provides layering (hierarchical linking) or nesting (recursive loading or linking) of interfaces. The layering may effectively prevent applications **40** on an operating system proper **15**, for example, from interfacing directly with controlling modules **13** (e.g. manager modules **18**) or with engines **20** (e.g. cryptographic engine **50**). The loader **90** may do this directly by dynamic loading of modules **13**, enforcing restrictions on access to interfaces between levels **16**, **18**, **20**, **22**, **15** illustrated in FIG. **1**.

Manager modules **18** as well as the original loader **90** loading a filler **12** (CMC **12**) may assure that a layering hierarchy is enforced between modules to limit interfaces. Manager modules **18** may interface with library modules **16**. The manager modules **18** may also interface with the cryptographic engines **50** of engine modules **20**. Support modules **22** may interface with engine modules **20** also.

Library modules **16**, manager modules **18**, and support modules **22** may interface with the operating system **15** in one preferred embodiment of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention. The engines **20** may be enabled to interface only with other modules **13**, and not with the operating system **15**.

By the subdivision of modules **13** in a layered architecture (e.g. layer **18** is manager modules **18** including modules **42**, **44**, **46**), great flexibility may be obtained. Since modules **13** are dynamically bound by the loader **90**, and managed by a manager module **18**, the modules **13** may be modified or exchanged as needed and as authorized. Management modules **18** not yet envisioned may be added in the future, without revising the base executable **14**, or even the filler **12**, outside the module **13** in question.

For example, a management module **18** may support cryptographic-token PIN (personal identification number) management, not available in an initially purchased product **14**. Another example may be added support for policy management enhancements, such as providing separate APIs (application programming interfaces) for encrypting and decrypting ubiquitous financial data used by banks.

New functionality, not typically used or required in current practice by banks, may include a separate key type or size specifically for financial data. Such keys **156**, **160** may be relatively stronger than general keys **156**, **160**, while use, holders, data types, and the like may be restricted by policies **164** crafted for special financial purposes. Thus financial keys **156**, **160** may be managed differently from other general types of keys **156**, **160**.

Referring now to FIG. **2**, a network **56** may comprise a plurality of nodes **58** (e.g. clients **58**). Although the clients **58a**, **58b**, **58c** are illustrated, the computers of the clients **58**, server **62**, and router **64** may also be thought of as being hosted, programmed to run on, any computer **58**, **60**, **62**, **64** on a network **56**. Likewise, the CMC **12** may be programmed into any of those computers **58**, **60**, **62**, **64**. By node is meant a computer on a network **56** in its broadest sense.

Likewise, the host **60** may actually be programmed to function as one of several servers **62** or routers **64**. As a practical matter, the server **62** may be replaced by the server **60**. A node **58** may include some or all of the structural contents illustrated for the host **60**. For example, if every node **58** comprises a computer, every node **58** may have any or all of the components **70-86**.

A network **56** may include a backbone **66** for interconnecting all the nodes **58** or clients **58**. The router **64** may also

connect to one or more other networks **68**. The network **68** may be a local area network (LAN), wide area network (WAN) or any size of internetwork.

The server **60** may include a CPU **70** or processor **70** for hosting the operating system **14** and CMC **12**. As a practical matter, a random access memory **72**, or RAM **72**, may temporarily store, in part or in total, any or all codes and data associated with executables within the CMC **12**. For example, during operation of the CMC **12**, individual modules **13** might be stored, or a portion thereof might be stored in the RAM **72**.

The CPU **70** and RAM **72** may be connected by a bus **74**. Also on the bus may be operably connected a network card **76** or network interface circuit **76** (net card **76**), one or more input devices **78**, and output devices **80**, or the like. Additional memory devices such as a read-only memory **82** (ROM **82**) and a storage device **84** (such as a hard disk **84**), may be operably connected to the bus **74** to communicate data with the processor **70**.

Additional ports **86** may be provided as appropriate. As a practical matter, the input device **78** and output device **80** may merely represent ports for accessing one or more available input or output devices **78**, **80**. Similarly, with the distributed nature of hardware and software in a modern computing environment, other devices may be accessed, through the net card **76**, elsewhere on the network **56**.

Referring to FIG. **1** once more, the interfacing between modules **13** may be restricted. Such a restriction may provide additional assurance that the CMC **12** may not be misused, modified, or replaced improperly. Therefore, certain of the modules **13** may have operating system interfaces **24**. For example, the interfaces **24a**, **24b**, **24c** represent the interfaces between the libraries **16**, managers **18**, base **22**, respectively, shared with the operating system **15**.

In the illustrated embodiment of FIG. **1**, the engines **20** share no interface with the operating system **15**. Instead, the engines **20** may interface through the base support **22**. Library interface **26** represents the interface between library **16** and applications **40**. The library interface **26** may be considered to be an interface between the CMC **12** and applications **40**.

The libraries **16** may be structured to interface directly with applications **40**. The foundation **54** or the CMC foundation **54** may be thought of as the core of the CMC **12**. The managers **18** provide cryptographic facility as well as controlling access to and between modules **13**, especially in the core **12**. The interface between the CMC enforcement by the foundation **54** and applications outside the base executable **14** is moved away from the manager interface **28** by the library interface **26** and interposed libraries **16**. Thus, applications **40** are not permitted to interface directly with the (controlling) management modules **18**. This further avoids creation of cryptography with a hole.

The manager interface **28** represents the interface between the manager modules **18** and the library modules **16**. The engine interface **30** represents the interface between engines **20** and the manager modules **18**. The support interface **32** represents the interface between the engines **20** and the support modules **22**.

In general, communications **38** may be calls from upper layers **40**, **16**, **18**, **20** to lower layers **16**, **18**, **20**, **22**, respectively, in FIG. **1**. Each layer **18**, **20**, **22** may properly execute without requiring anything from a layer **16**, **18**, **20**, respectively, above.

In one embodiment of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention, one library **16** may be an audit

library 34. For example, the audit library 34 may have functional responsibility for encrypting security audit data for storage. The underlying data may correspond to events of significance to audit executables. The network 56 itself may be managed by an individual acting as a system manager, yet the audit data encrypted by the audit library 34 may be inaccessible to the system manager.

Other libraries 36 may be provided. Each of the libraries 36 may be application-specific. In one presently preferred embodiment, each of the applications 40 interfacing at the library interface 26 may have an associated, unique, library module 36 provided.

The key generation manager 42 may create symmetric keys or asymmetric key pairs provided to cryptographic engines 20. The key generation manager 42 may also perform the escrow function of the escrow archive 170 (see FIG. 6). A base manager 44 may provide enforcement of policies 164.

Restriction on access to modules 13, such as the engines 20, and access to cryptographic algorithms within engine modules 20, and the like, may be enforced by the manager modules 18. In one embodiment of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention, the base manager 44 may provide an enforcement function with respect to all functions and all modules 13. Other managers 46 may also be provided. For example, manager modules 46 may alter methods of policy enforcement for the escrow of keys 156.

In one embodiment, the CMC 12 may be provided with a null engine 48. A null engine 48 may be operated to interface at the engine interface 30 and the support interface 32 while providing no enablement of cryptographic capability. Thus a base executable 14 may be fully functional otherwise, including all necessary interfaces to the filler 12 (CMC 12), while having no enabled cryptographic capability. The interfaces 26, 24 to the filler 12 may be as secure as if the dynamically loaded modules were manufactured as integrated portions of the base executable 14.

Thus, an apparatus 10 may be provided as a base executable 14, having fully imbedded support for a cryptographic engine 20. However, the presence of a null engine 48 accommodates all the proper interfaces 30, 32 while actually providing no cryptographic capability.

Thus, a CMC 12 (filler 12) may be provided with a base executable 14, including a null engine 48, exhibiting minimal differences with respect to the operating system 15 as compared to another cryptographically-enabled product. Meanwhile, other engines 50 may be provided by a manufacturer or a third party vendor authorized to create cryptographic engines 20 according to some policy and authorization.

A base support module 52 may provide some minimal set of operating system instructions for the engines 20. That is, in general, the engines 20 need some access to the operating system. Nevertheless, for providing the assurance that engines 20 may not be created, modified, extended, circumvented, inserted, or the like, in an unauthorized fashion, the support module 52 may intervene. Thus, the base module 52 may provide access to some limited number of functions from the operating system 15 for the engine 20.

Referring now to FIG. 3, an operating system 14 may be implemented in one embodiment of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention to include a loader 90. The loader 90 may be associated with the operating system proper 15. The functional responsibility of the loader 90 may be to dynamically load and properly link all modules 13 into the CMC 12 (filler 12), for example, installing (e.g. embedding) them into the operating system 14.

More specifically, the loader 90 may be tasked with the functional responsibility to provide all proper linking between modules 13. Linking may be enabled on a layer-to-layer (or interface 28, 30, 32) basis rather than on a module-by-module basis. For example, a binding may exist between any two modules 13 in a layer (e.g. layer 18, or layer of manager modules 18). Binding may also exist between any module (e.g. modules 42, 44, 46) in that layer (e.g. layer of managers 18) and another module (e.g. modules 48, 50) in a layer (e.g. layer 20, or layer of engines 20) sharing an interface (e.g. interface 30) with that layer (e.g. layer 18).

Specific modules 13 need not be individually limited and controlled by the loader 90. In one embodiment, individual modules 13 may be bound (linked). Thus, for example, only those functional features authorized for a key generation manager 42, or a cryptographic engine 50, might be enabled by being properly bound.

In one example, a cryptographic engine 50 may be manufactured to contain numerous algorithms. However, according to some policy 164 (see e.g. FIGS. 5, 6) associated with a certificate 154, a manager 46 and the loader 90 may limit linking (binding) to an enablement of algorithms and engines 20. A manager module 46 may also control key usage, including length and function. Function may be distinguished between, for example, encryption versus authentication. Use may be controlled based upon, for example, a manufacturer's (of the module 13) signature 162 and key type.

The operating system 15 may support a selection of preprocessors 92 such as the audit event filter 92. Preprocessors may be adaptable to fit in a hole 93 readily available for the purpose. In one currently preferred embodiment of an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention, a CMC 12 is not adaptable to be implemented as a preprocessor 92. Instead, the CMC 12 may be limited to interfacing only with the operating system proper 15 as illustrated in FIG. 1, and only after proper loading by a loader 90. Even within the operating system 15, the CMC 12 may be limited to interfacing with the operating system 15 through a limited number of interfaces 24.

As a practical matter, certain applications 94 or programs 94 have resident portions within the server 60 hosting the operating system 14. For example, a file system 98, a name service 100, a work station 102 and the like may have resident portions operating in the processor 70. Even if, for example, a server 62 is operating as a file server, the file system 98 may be a portion of a file server executable that needs to be resident within the processor 70 of the server 60 in order for the server 60 to communicate with the server 62 over the network 66.

Generally, certain data may need to flow into and out of the operating system 14. Accordingly, a number of channels 96 or data flow paths 96 may need to exist. As a practical matter, the channels 96 may be comprised of either paths, data itself, or as executables hosted on the processor 70 for the purpose of providing communication. Thus, an audit file 104, an accounting log 106, an archive file 108, and the like may be provided as channels 96 for communication.

Thus, the overall operating system 14 along with the applications 94 and channels 96 may be thought of as a local system 110 or the local processes 110. These local processes 110 operate within the CPU 70. The CPU 70 is a processor within the server 60 or host 60. As a practical matter, the processor 70 may be more than a single processor 70. The processor 70 may also be a single processor operating multiple threads under some multitasking operating system 15.

Data representing executables or information may be stored in a memory device **72, 82, 84**. Referring now to FIG. **4**, one may think of a dynamic data structure **114** or an operating system data structure **114** storable in an operable memory **116**. That is, for example, the operating memory **116** may be within the RAM **72** of the host **60**. All or part of the data structure **114** may be moved in and out of the processor **70** for support of execution of executables.

The data structure **114**, may be dynamic. The modules **13** for example, may be dynamically loadable, such as network loadable modules. Thus, for example, a host **60** may operate without having any fixed, storable, data structure **114**. That is, no static data structure need be assembled and stored in a manner that may make it vulnerable to being copied or otherwise inappropriately accessed. The data structure **114** may only exist dynamically during operation of the processor **70**, and even then need not all exist in the memory device **116** (e.g. RAM **72**) simultaneously at any time. Thus, additional assurance is provided against misuse, and abuse of data and executables in a CMC **12** associated with an operating system **14**.

The data structure **114** may contain a certificate **118** and certificate **120**. A certificate **118**, for the purposes of FIG. **4**, may be thought of as an instantiation of a certificate **154** associated with the operating system **14** and its included CMC **12**. The certificate **118** may be thought of as the data certifying the holder of a certificate operating and using the data structure **116**. By certificate **120** is meant data provided in a certificate issued to the holder.

A certificate **118, 120** may also be thought of as a binding of a holder ID **122, 132** to a public key **126, 136**, certified by a digital signature **124, 134** of a certifying authority. An issuer (e.g. **152b**) or authority and a holder (e.g. **152d**) may each be a holder (e.g. **152b**) to a higher authority (e.g. **152a**), and issuer (e.g. **152d**) to a lower holder (e.g. **152h** of FIG. **6**), respectively.

When discussing authorities, holders, receivers, and the like, it is important to realize that such an authority, holder, sender, receiver, or the like may actually be a hardware device, or a software operation being executed by a hardware device. Any hardware device, operating software, or data structure in a memory device may be owned, controlled, operated, or otherwise associated with an individual or an entity. Nevertheless, insofar as the invention is concerned, names of such entities may be used to represent the hardware, software, data structures, and the like controlled or otherwise associated with such entities.

As a practical matter, a certificate **118** authenticating the rights of the CMC **12** may contain an identification record **122** identifying the holder (the specific instance of the CMC **12**), a signature record **124** verifying the higher certification authority upon which the holder depends, and a public key record **126** representing the public key of the holder. The private key **128** may be very carefully controlled within the CMC foundation **54** using encryption for wrapping. The private key **128** may be associated with the holder (CMC **12**) and is the private half **128** of a key pair including the public key **126**. Thus, by means of the private key **128**, the holder may create the signature **134** in the certificate **120** for another use of the key pair **136, 138**.

Meanwhile, a certification authority **152** (see FIGS. **5-6**) may provide to a holder or sign **166**, the certificate **118** (one of the certificates **154**). The certificate **120** may reside in another computer or simply be allocated to a different thread or process than that of the certificate **118**.

As a practical matter, a private key **128, 138** may be protected by physical security. Therefore, a private key **128,**

**138** may typically be controlled and be cryptographically wrapped except when dynamically loaded into a dynamic data structure **114**.

The private key **128** may be used to certify an identification record **132** identifying a new holder. A signature **134** created by use of the private key **128** may verify the authenticity and quality of the certificate **120** and public key **136**. The public key **136** may be thought of as the matching key **136** to a key pair including the private key **138** created by the new holder of the certificate **120**. That is, one may think of a new holder, as a process, or an individual, issuing a public key **136** certified by the signature **134** of the private key **128** as duly authorized to create software which functions within the limits of a policy **140**. The certificate **118**, an instance of a certificate **154** held by the CMC **12**, may have a signature **124** by a higher certifying authority **152**.

A policy **130, 140** may limit the authorization of the holder identified by the ID **122, 132** and certified by the digital signature **124, 134**. A policy **130, 140** may incorporate the limitations governing the use of algorithms in engines **20**, for example. Thus, a policy **130, 140** may be thought of, for example, as the rules enforced by a manager module **18** controlling access to and from a module **13**, such as an engine (e.g. cryptographic engine **50**).

Each policy **164** (e.g. **164d**, see FIG. **5**) may contain a digital signature **163** (e.g. **163d**) of the certifying authority **152** (e.g. **152b**) above the holder **152** (e.g. **152d**) of the certificate **154** (e.g. **154d**) and policy **164** (e.g. **164d**). The policy **164** (e.g. **164d**) may thus be bound to the corresponding certificate **154** (e.g. **154d**) by the digital signature **163d**.

In one embodiment, policies **164** may be generated by a separate policy authority using a policy authority digital signature **129, 139** (see FIG. **4**). A policy authority signature **129, 139** binding a policy **130, 140** to a certificate **118, 120** need not be different from a certificate authority signature **124, 134**, but may be. This is analogous to the certification authorities **152** for certificates **154**. Thus, the policies **164** may be provided and signed **166** by a certifying signature **163** binding the policy **164** to a corresponding certificate **154**. Nevertheless, the policy **164** may be certified by a policy authority **129, 139** other than the certificate authority **152** creating the corresponding certificate **154**.

Referring to FIGS. **4-6**, the certificate **118** may include identification records **122**. The identification records **122** may contain information recursively identifying the higher certifying authority (e.g. **152a, 152b**), as well as the holder (CMC **12**) certified. However, the signature **124** may be verified by using the public key of the higher authority **152**. For example, the signature records **124** may comprise a signature of a signature root authority **152b** or higher authority **152a** certifying, which authority is known by the identification **133**. The private key **128** may be thought of as a key by which the holder (e.g. the CMC **12**) creates signatures **134** for certificates **120** associated with, for example the key generation module **42** of the base executable **14** (see FIG. **6**).

The identification records **132** may typically identify the holder of the certificate **154** associated with the certificate **120**. Although the signature **134** is associated with the certifying authority providing the certificate **120**, and itself holding the certificate **118**, identification records **133** may identify the certifying authority **152** (e.g. associated with the ID **122**). The signature **134** may be used by entities or processes needing to verify the authorization of the holder (entity identified by the ID **132**) of the certificate **120**.

As a practical matter, a private key **128, 138** is typically not stored in the clear in any non-volatile storage generally

available. That is, a private key **128**, **138** may typically be unwrapped or loaded only dynamically to minimize the chance of any unauthorized access. The private key **128**, **138** may optionally be stored within a cryptographic co-processor, for example an additional processor **70**. The cryptographic co-processor may be embodied as a chip, a token, a PCMCIA card, a smart card, or the like. The private key **128** may be unwrapped in the co-processor for use only within the co-processor.

The applications **40** the preprocessor **93** and the channels **96** may be stored in the data structure **114**. Nevertheless, the data structure **114** may be distributed.

The library modules **16**, the manager modules **18**, the engines **20**, and the support modules **22** may be stored in the data structure **114**. In one embodiment, the data structure **114** may all be resident in the RAM **72** in some dynamic fashion during operation of the operating system **14** functioning in the processor **70**.

The certificate **120** may be embodied as illustrated in the frames **142**. The identification record **132** may be thought of as a data segment **132** associated with a holder. The segment **133** may be provided to identify a certifying authority **152**. Each public key **136**, **126** may be represented as bits of a segment **136**, **126** in the frame **142**. The signature **134**, **124** of a certifying authority **152** may be represented as another set of bits of a segment **134**, **124** in the frame **142**. The policy **140**, **130** may be represented by another segment **140**, **130**. The certificates **118**, **120** may have corresponding (e.g. even identical) policies **130**, **140** under which to operate.

The public key **136**, **126** is identified with the holder ID **132**, **122**. A public key **136**, **126** is typically published to other functions or to other entities, just as a certification authority's **152a**, **152b**, **152c** public key **160a**, **160b**, **160c** is published. Thus, a certifying authority's public key **136**, **126** is illustrated in FIG. 4 as being separate from the frame **142**. The public key **136**, **126** may be embedded in another certificate held by a certifying authority. Similarly, a holder's private key **138**, **128** may be maintained with utmost security. Therefore, a holder's private key **138**, **128** is not available with the holder's published public key **136**, **126**, except to the holder. Thus, a holder's private key **138**, **128** may not actually be generally available or associated with the certificate **120**, or certificate **118**, respectively, in the frame **142**.

Referring now to FIGS. 4-6, the certificate hierarchy is illustrated, as is the implementation of operational keys **156**, **160**. Reference numerals having trailing letters, may be thought of as specific examples of a generic structure or function associated with the reference numeral alone. Thus, a certifier or certification authority **152** is a general expression, whereas the root certifier **152a** and the CMC signature root **152b** are specific examples of a certification authority **152**.

In general, an authority **152** (e.g., root certifier **152a**), may issue a certificate **154** (e.g., **154b**, **154c**) A certificate **154** (e.g., **154b**, **154c**) may be associated with authorization of a certificate holder (e.g., **152b**, **152c**) by a certification authority **152** (or just authority **152**). Associated with a certificate **154** may be certain data **120**, **118**. For example, in one embodiment, a certificate **154** may actually be embodied as a frame **142** as illustrated in FIG. 4.

In general, a certificate **154** (e.g., **154b**) may be prepared by an authority **152** (e.g., **152a**) using a private key **156** (e.g., **156a**) held securely in the possession of the authority **152** (e.g., **152a**). A certificate **154** (e.g., **154b**), itself, may contain information such as the holder identification **158** identifying

the holder to whom the authority **152** has issued the certificate **154**. Note that the holder **152** (e.g., **152b**) may itself be another authority **152** (e.g., **152b**) to a lower level holder **152** (e.g., **152d**).

The certificate **154** may also include the authority's **152** signature **162**. By signature **162** is meant, a digital signature as known in the cryptographic art. Also included in the certificate **154**, or linked by the signature **162** with the corresponding certificate **154**, may be a policy **164**. A policy **164** represents the extent of the authorization provided by the certificate **154**, (**154b**) to the holder (e.g., **154d**) of the certificate from the authority **152** (e.g., **152b**) in order to produce cryptographic functionality.

For example, a holder **152d** may have a certificate **154d** and private key **156d** authorizing the holder **152d** to produce modules, such as cryptographic engines **20**, manager modules **18**, library modules **16**, or symmetric or asymmetric keys **156**. The policy **164d** may embody the restrictions, limitations, and authorizations extended to the holder **152d** of the certificate **154d**.

In one embodiment, the enforcement of policies **164** may be managed in one or more of several, relatively sophisticated ways. For example, a policy **164** might permit a private key of a relatively long length, such as 1024 bits, to be used for digital signatures **162** only. On the other hand, a private key **156** used to wrap symmetric keys may be permitted to extend only to 768 bits, and only on condition that the key **156** be escrowed.

Also, rules for "composition" of policies **164** (certificated features or functions), or perhaps more descriptively, "superposition" of policies **164**, may be embodied in manager modules **18**. For example, more than a single policy may be loaded within a filler **12**, for one of several reasons. For example, modules **13** from different vendors may be manufactured under different authorities **152**. Also by way of example, as in FIG. 4, a policy authority digital signature **129**, **139**, certifying a respective policy **130**, **140**, need not be from the same source as a certificate authority digital signature **124**, **134**, but may be.

Meanwhile, a manager module **18** may be programmed to enforce the most restrictive intersection of all features (e.g., certificated features or functions such as quality, cryptographic strength, etc.). For example, one policy **164** (a certificated feature) may require that key-wrapping keys may be 1024 bits long and must be escrowed. Another policy **164** in another module **13** in the same filler **12** may require that keys be only 512 bits long, but need not be escrowed. The cryptographic manager module **18** may require a key length limit of 512 bits, and require escrow also. Thus a superposition of policies **164** may use the most restrictive intersection of policy limitations.

An authority **152**, thus certifies **166** or provides a signing operation **166** for a certificate **154** for a holder. Referring to FIG. 5, the certification authority **152a** (the root certifier **152a**) is an authority **152**, to the CMC signature root **152b** as a holder, both with respect to the certificate **154b**.

Each certificate **154**, is signed using a private key **156** of a certifying authority **152**. For example, the certifiers **152a**, **152b**, **152e** use private keys **156a**, **156b**, **156e**, respectively, to sign the certificates **154b** and **154e** delivered to the CMC signature root **152b** and server CA **152e**, and certificate **154j** forwarded by the key generation module **42**.

The certificate **154b** also includes a public key **160b**. A public key **160**, in general, is one half of a key pair including a private key **156**. For example, the private **156a**, **156b**, **156c**, **156d**, **156e**, **156f**, **156g**, **156h** is the matched half

associated with the public **160a**, **160b**, **160c**, **160d**, **160e**, **160f**, **160g**, **160h**. The key pair **156a**, **160a**, is associated with the root certifier **152a**. Similarly, the private key **156b** may be used by the CMC signature root **152b** to certify **166d**, **166e** the certificates **154d**, **154e** with the signatures **162d**, **162e**. Thus, in turn, each of the public keys **160d**, **160e**, respectively, is the public key half of the pair that includes the private key **156d**, **156e**, respectively.

A holder, such as the module signature authority **152d** or the server certification authority **152e** may verify the validity of the public key **160b** using the signature **162b** and the public key **160a**. Similarly, a processor entity may verify the validity of the certificates **154d**, **154e**, respectively, by recourse to the signature **162d**, **162e**, respectively and the publicly available public key **160b** responsible.

Referring to FIGS. 5 and 6, generation of private/public key pairs **156**, **160** and subsequent certification **166** may be represented by cascading certificates **154**. For example, at the top or root of all certification authorities **152** may be a root certifier **152a**. The root certifier **152a** may generate a private **156a**, and a public key **160a**, as a key pair **156**, **160**.

The root certifier **152a** need have no signature **162**. The root certifier **152a** in such circumstance must be "trusted". Another method, other than a digital signature **162** of a higher certifying authority **152**, may typically be required for verifying the public key **160a** of the root certifier **152a**.

Only one root certifier **152a** (RC **152a**) is needed for the entire world. In one embodiment, the root certifier **152a** may be an entity willing and able to credibly assume liability for the integrity of public keys **160**, and the integrity of associated certificates **154**. For example, an insurer, or a company known and trusted by the entire business world, may serve as a root certifier **152a**. Such companies may include large, multinational insurance companies and banks. The root certifier **152a** is functionally responsible to physically protect the secret key **156a**. The root certifier **152a** is also responsible to distribute the public key **160a**.

The root certifier **152a** may authorize private/public key pairs **156b**, **160b** to be created by the CMC signature root **152b**. The integrity of the public key **160b**, and the identity **158b** of the CMC signature root may be certified by a digital signature **162b** created by the root certifier **152a** using the private key **156a**.

Any subsequent entity, receiving a certificate **154** cascading from the CMC signature root **152b** as a certifying authority **152**, may verify the certificate **154**. For example, the certificate **154b**, and its contents (public key **160b**, ID **158b**, and signature **162b**) may be verified using the signature **162b**. The signature **162b** may be created using the private key **156a**. Therefore, the signature **162b** can be verified using the public key **160a** available to the entity to whom the authority of a certificate **154b** is asserted as authentication.

The root certifier **152a** may have its public key **160a** embedded in the base executable **14**. Alternatively, any method making the public key **160a** securely available may be used. In this example, the base executable **14** or principal software product **14** may typically, be an operating system **14**. The base executable **14**, operating system **14** or base executable **14** may be thought of as including everything that arrives in the base executable associated with a newly purchased, generic, software package **14**. This may sometimes be referred to as "the base executable **14**."

As a practical approach, the CMC signature root **152b** may be associated with, and the private key **156b** be in the possession of, the "manufacturer." For example the manu-

facturer of a base executable **14**, such as a network operating system **14** may be the holder of the private key **156b** used to certify all public keys **160d** and associated certificates **154d** of the module signature authority **152**.

As a practical matter, the highest level of public key **160** embedded in (or otherwise securely available to) a base executable **14** may be the signature root key **160b** associated with the certificate **154b**. An instantiation of the certificate **154b** may be embedded in, or otherwise securely available to, the CMC loader **90**. Thus, the loader **90** may verify against the manufacturer's public key **160b** (available to the loader) the signature **162d** in the certificate **154d** effectively presented by the module **13**. That is, one may think of the certificate **154d** as being included in the cryptographic module **13** (engine **20**) of FIG. 6 by a module vendor.

Thus, the loader **90** may verify that a vendor is authorized to produce the modules **13** under the policy **164d** bound to the certificate **154d**. However, the foregoing starts at the wrong end of the process. The signature **168** on the module **13** is present for verification of the module by the loader **90**. The signature **168**, encrypted using the private key **156h**, may be verified by recourse to (e.g. decryption using) the public key **160h**. The key **160h** is presented in the certificate **154h**, also available with the module **13**.

In turn, the signature **162h** on the certificate **154h**, may be verified using the public key **160d**. The key **160d** corresponds to the private key **156d** used to encrypt the signature **162h**. The key **160d** is available in the certificate **154d** with the module **13**. The certificate **154d** and key **160d** are verified by the signature **162d** on the certificate **154d** with the module. The signature **162d** may be verified (e.g. such as by decryption or other means) using the public key **160b** of the CMC signature root **152b**. An instantiation of this key **160b** is available to the loader **90** with the certificate **154d**, as discussed above. By having the certificate **154d** independently of the modules **13**, the loader may thus verify each module **13** before loading into the filler **12** (CMC **12**).

As an example, the CMC signature root **152b** may be associated with the manufacturer of the base executable **14**. The base executable **14** may be thought of as the principal software product **14**, such as an operating system **14**. By contrast, the CMC **12** may be thought of as a filler **12**, a modularized segment that is required to be present within the base executable **14**, but which may be modified, customized, limited, authorized, or the like, by a manufacturer for a class of customers or by a suitably authorized, third-party vendor of modules.

In the case of a base executable **14** that serves as a network operating system **14**, such as Novell Netware™, the manufacturer, (Novell, in this example) may be the CMC signature root **152b**. Another example may be a third-party vendor of modules **13**. A third party vendor of modules **13** may produce, for example, engine modules **20** for insertion into the CMC **12**, but may be a value-added reseller of the base executable **14** adapted with such a cryptographic engine module **20** or other module **13**.

For purposes of discussion, a manufacturer may be thought of as the maker of the base executable **14**. A vendor or third party vendor may be thought of as the maker of modules **13** for inclusion in the CMC **12** (filler **12**) portion of the base executable **14**. A distributor, reseller, or third party reseller may be thought of as a seller of base executables **14** purchased from a manufacturer. The manufacturer may distribute and create modules **13**. A vendor of modules **13** may be a distributor of the base executable **14**, also.

Thus, a situation of great interest involves a manufacturer desiring to provide the base executable **14**, while certifying a vendor's module products **13**. The modules **13** may be integrated as part of the CMC **12** of the base executable **14** after the base executable **14** is shipped from the manufacturer. As discussed above, shipment of a base executable **14** in some standard configuration is desirable. In a preferred embodiment a base executable **14** shipped into a foreign country having import restrictions on cryptography, may provide a reliable method for enabling authorized cryptography exactly, while disabling all other potential uses of cryptography. Minimum modification, interfacing, and cost may be provided by an apparatus and method in accordance with the invention, with maximum assurance of authorization and control, all at a reasonable processing speed.

The CMC signature root **152b** may be responsible for manufacturing and exporting the base executable **14** to customers (users) and third party resellers, and supporting software development kits (SDKs) to third party vendors. The manufacturer may be a maker of modules **13** also. Typically, the manufacturer may produce the null engine **48**, at least.

The module signature authority **152d** associated with the ID **158d** may be that of the holder of a software development kit for modules **13**. A policy **164d** bound to the certificate **154d** may be certified by the signature **162d** of the CMC signature root's **152b** private key **156b**.

The policy **164d** may be enforced by the manager module **42** and embodies the limits on the use and strength of keys **156d**. For example, the length (strength) of keys **156** useable under the policy **164d** and the types of modules **13** may be controlled by statute in each country of importation for the base executable **14**.

A loader **90** from the manufacturer may control linking of modules **13**. Thus, a third party, including a module vendor cannot change the limitations inherent in a key, the policy, or the like.

A policy **164**, in general, may define the maximum strength of the key. A module signature authority **152d**, holding a particular authorized software development kit may create different types of keys **156** as long as each is within the bounds of the policy **164d**.

The module signature authority **152d** may also then certify a module-signing key pair **152h** authority for each module type produced and sold. Certificate **154h**, so signed using the private key **156d**, may provide a key **156h** to sign each module **13**, such as the cryptographic modules **13** exemplified by the engine **20** of FIG. 4. Meanwhile a module signature authority **152d** may certify embedded keys **160h** and associated certificates **154h** automatically by using the software development kit.

Note that a chain or cascade of certificates **154d**, **154h** may be used in a module in order to have the signatures **162** for the loader **90** to verify. The loader **90** may then verify the keys **160d**, **160h** using signatures **162d**, **162h** of the certificates **154d**, **154h** to authorize the loading of the module **20** (see FIG. 6).

Verification may be necessary in order for the loader to have the certified keys **160d**, **160h**, **160b** necessary for verifying the module signature **168**. That is, a vendor may use a software development kit containing a module signature authority **152d** to create some number of module signing key pairs **152h**.

The private keys **156h** may be used to sign **166m** with a signature **168** every module **13** created. Note that the modules **16**, **10**, **42** in the base executable **14** of FIG. 6 may all

be thought of generically as modules **13** as in FIG. 1. The certificate hierarchy **154h**, **154d**, **154b** of the module **13** may all be verified by the loader **90** using the appropriate public keys **160d**, **160b**, to verify the respective signatures **162h**, **162d** from the certificates **154h**, **154d**.

The server certifying authority **152e** (CA **152e**) may be produced by the manufacturer based on a CMC signature root **152**. The server certificate authority **152e** may be embodied in the server **60** (see FIGS. 2,6) on a server-by-server basis. Thus, a server **60** may generate keys **156j** or pairs as shown in FIG. 6. Thus, the server **60** is able to certify by a key generation manager **42** keys **160** generated by that server **60**.

A private key **156** may preferably be unique to an individual server **60** so that there is no need to provide a globally exposed private key **156**. The private key **156e** of the server certificate authority **152e** of FIG. 6 may be the only private key **156** embedded in a base executable **14** or operating system **14** hosted by a server **60**. This may be very important for providing signatures **162j** for certifying **166j** other keys **160j** and IDs **158j** signatures **162**.

As a practical matter, by embedding is meant alternate methods that may be implemented in the server **60** in another manner well adapted to dynamic loading. For example, the private key **156e** may not necessarily need to be embedded, as in the illustrated example. Rather, the key **156e** may simply be "securely available," such as by reading from a secure hardware device. Thus, a key **156e** may be securely available to the CMC **12** in the server **60** and function as well as if actually embedded. The expression embedded should be interpreted broadly enough to include this "securely available" approach. This is particularly true since dynamic loading in combination with cryptographic techniques herein for verification make such methods readily tractable.

In general, a private key **156** may be used to produce certifying signatures **162**. A key **156** may also be used to decrypt data received when it has been encrypted using a corresponding public key **160** to ensure privacy.

Both keys **156**, **160** may be necessary for both privacy and integrity, but they are used at opposite ends of a communication. That is, for example, the CMC signature root **152b** may use the public key **160** of the module signature authority to assure privacy of communication to the module signature authority **152d**. The module signature authority **152d**, may use the public key **160b** of the CMC signature root **152b**. Each **152b**, **152d** may use its own private key **156b**, **156d** to decrypt received messages. Integrity may be verified by a signature **162** authored using an appropriate private key **156b**, **156d**.

Meanwhile, authenticity of communications, such as a signature **162d**, created using a private key **156b**, may be verified by an entity using the corresponding, published, public key **160b**.

As a matter of good cryptographic practice, integrity and confidentiality (privacy) may rely on separate keys. A module **13** may employ a plurality of private/public key pairs **156/160**. One pair may be used for channel confidentiality. A separate and distinct pair may be used for channel integrity.

The certificates **154** in the base executable **14**, for example in the module **13**, and loader **90** illustrate authentication of the cascade of certificates. Initially, the modules **13** of FIG. 6 are signed by the signature **168** created with the private key **156h**.

The public key **160h** may be used to verify the signature **168**. References to decryption of signatures **168** mean verification, which requires some amount of decryption.

The authenticity of the public key **160h** is assured by the signature **162h** on the certificate **154h**. The signature **162h** is verified using the public key **160d** in the certificate **154d** available.

The authenticity of the public key **160d** is assured by the signature **162d** on the certificate **154d**. The signature **162d** is verified using the public key **160b** in the certificate **154b** available.

This illustrates the practical limit to authentication. The following is not separately illustrated in the architecture, but could be implemented. The authenticity of the public key **160b** could be assured by the signature **162b** by obtaining the certificate **154b**. The signature **162b** would have to be verified using the public key **160a** in the certificate **154a** available. Note that some other mechanism must be used to verify the certificate **154a**.

A server may generate keys for cryptographic operations. For example, a separate set of keys **156j** may exist for each client **58** on the network **56**.

Asymmetric systems are more computationally expensive than symmetric systems. The key length used in asymmetric systems is typically much longer than that for symmetric systems. (e.g. asymmetric keys may be 1–2 k bits long, versus 40, 64, or 128 bits for typical symmetric keys). In cryptographic protection schemes, an asymmetric algorithm may be used to protect a symmetric key that will be distributed to a client **58** encrypted using the client's public key **160** and decrypted by the client's corresponding private key **156**. A shared secret key may be used for shared symmetric key communication in a network **56**. Thus, the server CA private key **156e** may be used to generate a signature certifying other public/private key pairs **160, 156**. That pair **156, 160** may be used to certify another pair or to distribute a symmetric key pair.

A certificate **154** is needed for a public key **160**, and must be signed (**162**) using the corresponding private key **156**. A private key **156**, for example, is used to certify any public key **160** created in the key generation module **42** of FIG. 6. That is, the key generation module **42** may generate a key pair **156, 160**; in which the server CA private key **156e** is used to sign the certificate **154j** created by the key generation module for the cryptographic libraries.

The server CA private key **156** may be used to sign all certificates **154** (with included public key **160**) generated by the CMC filler **12** in the base executable **14** of operating system **14** hosted on the server **62**.

A server key (not shown), which may be symmetric, may be generated by the key generation module **42** and used for key wrapping. All keys that should be kept secret may be wrapped for being transmitted or stored secretly outside of the CMC **12**, such as in a cryptographic library **36**.

Certain of the attributes of a key **156** (algorithm, archive, type, etc.) may be wrapped along with the key **156** before being passed outside of the CMC **12**. Thus a private half of an asymmetric key pair, or a symmetric, secret key should be wrapped preceding any export or output from the CMC **12**.

The libraries **16** may be (typically must be) application-specific, and anything transmitted to them may be considered to be outside of the control of the CMC **12** once it is transmitted to the library **16**.

Escrow is controlled by a manager **18** such as the key generation manager **42**, a cryptographic manager **18**. In any case, every key **156j** generated should be saved throughout its useful life. A key **156j** may be saved, typically, in an encrypted format in a secure environment called a key

archive **170**. The archived key **156j** may first be encrypted, and the key **160** to that encryption is the escrow public key **160k**. The corresponding public key **160j** is also archived, although it may be publicly available.

The escrow authority **152f** may be an entity generating a public/private key pair **160,156** for each server **60** in order to encrypt (privacy protect) private keys **156** before archival. Thus, the escrow authority **152f** may have a private key **156f** unique to itself, which is used to sign **162k** the certificates **154k** for all of those public/private key pairs **156k, 160k**. The escrow authority **152f** may receive its private/public key pair **156f, 160f** from a key escrow root **152c**. The key escrow root key **156c** may certify the key **160f** held by the escrow authority **152f**. The manufacturer of the base executable **14**, (Novell, in the example above, may be (i.e. control) the key escrow root **152c**.

The certificate **154c** held by the key escrow root **152c** may itself be signed by the root certifier **152a** certifying the public key pair **160c** of the key escrow root **152c**. Thus, the key escrow path (certifications **166**, cascade) of certificates **154** and keys **156, 160** may have its source in the root certifier **152a**, just as the CMC signature root **152b** does. Thus this single root public key **160** can serve as the basis for validation of all other certificates.

An escrow authority **152f** may hold the private key **156k** to the archive holding the encrypted, escrowed keys **156**. The archive **170** may actually be inside the server **60**. Thus, the holder of the base executable **14** has all the encrypted keys **156**.

However, a government or some such agency may require certain keys of the escrow authority **152f**. A manufacturer, such as Novell, the operating system manufacturer, in the example above, could also serve this function as well as being the key escrow root **152c**. This may be advantageous for the same reasons that a manufacturer would be the signature root **152b**. The escrow authority **152f** may give to the agent the escrow private key **156k** for the specific server. This may be the private half **156k** of an escrow key **156** that the keys **156** in question were encrypted in for archiving. The government may then go to the user of the server **60** to get access to the archive **170** in the server **60** of the owner of all the keys **156j**.

Some governments may want to be the escrow authority **152f** for all escrow keys. The government may unlock the key archive **170** whenever desired. In certain countries, the key archive **170** may be in possession of a trusted third party or the government. For example, the key generation module **42** may need to create keys **156j**, encrypt them, and send them as data to a trusted third party acting for the government to control the archive **170**.

From the above discussion, it will be appreciated that the present invention provides controlled modular cryptography in an executable designed to be embedded within another executable such as a network operating system, or the like. Cryptographic capability is controlled by a manager module operating according to a policy limiting the capability and access of other modules, particularly that of the cryptographic engine. Thus, a system **14** (a base executable **14**) may be provided having nearly all of the capabilities of the "filler" **12** intact. A very limited interface between a filler **12** and its internal engine selection **20** provides for examination of engines **20** by regulatory authority. Moreover, the restricted interfaces **30, 32** between the engines **20** and the remaining modules **13** of the filler **12** present great difficulty to those who would modify, circumvent, or replace any portion of the filler **12** (CMC **12**) in an attempt to alter its

capabilities. Meanwhile, asymmetric key technology provides for enforcement of all controls, thus providing privacy and integrity for all communications, operations, exchanging of keys, and the like.

#### Flexible Escrow

Referring to FIG. 7, a system 10 in accordance with the invention may include a flexible policy apparatus 200 implementing selected modules 13. In one embodiment, a manager module 202 may contain an embedded policy 204. A policy 204 may correspond to a key usage policy, key generation policy, escrow policy, escrow policy engine, filter policy, filter policy engine, certification policy, or the like.

In one presently preferred embodiment, the policy 204 may be located remote from the layer 18 in which the manager modules 42, 44, 46 are associated with, and be associated instead within the engine layer 20. In a further embodiment, other manager 10 modules 206 may also be present. The manager modules 202, 206 may each communicate directly with the library layer 16. The manager modules 202, 206 may also communicate with or through other manager modules 44 and 46 of FIG. 7. Thus, for instance, while the manager module 206 may rely upon a policy 208, it is not necessary that one policy 208 be integrally embedded within the manager module 206.

The manager module 206 may communicate 310 with the manager module 202, and may communicate 212 also or alternatively communicate with the library layer 16. In one embodiment, the manager module 202 communicates 214 directly with the library layer 16, while in another embodiment, the manager 206 communicates with the library layer 16 only through the manager 202 in the manager layer 18. This arrangement may remove the need for an embedded policy 204 governing the manager module 202.

In an embodiment of the invention, a policy engine 220 is located within the engine layer 20 and includes executables and data for establishing control attributes relied upon by modules 13 in the management layer 18. For example, a policy engine 220 may create or rely upon a policy 222. A call 224 may communicate 224 between the manager layer 18 and the policy engine 220. Alternatively, calls 224, 226, may be directed between modules 13 in the engine layer 20 and modules 13 in the manager layer 18, as well as modules 13 within the support layer 22. However, modules 13 within the engine layer 20 may also communicate with one another.

In one embodiment, a policy 230 may include no executables, and merely contain data relied upon and processed by a manager module 42, 44, 46, 202, 206, or the like. Calls 232, 234 may directly communicate with or operate upon the policy 230, rather than passing through or relying upon any engine 220 in the engine layer 20. Thus, an XMGR 202, 206 may be relied upon by a module 13 in the management layer 18 to implement a policy 230. Policies 230 may be linked to other policies 222. Moreover, executables within a policy engine 220 may be used to create, verify, sign, reconcile, and otherwise modify the attributes of various policies 222, 230. The policies 230 as with the other modules 13, may be dynamically linked and authenticated independent of the others of the modules 13. This minimizes the amount of code in any one module for efficiency and reduced exposure. It also increases flexibility of the policies 230 or other modules 13 may be modified independent of the other modules and the entire CMC 12.

Referring to FIG. 8, various types of modules 13 (of FIG. 1) in the engine layer 20 are illustrated. The modules 13 in the engine layer 20 are typically engines and are not displayed in any particular order to illustrate that the engines

are independent modules and need not be linked or otherwise related to each other. For example, a null engine 48 may be provided to operate in the absence or non-intentional non-use of a cryptographic engine 50. A non-cryptographic engine 238 may also be provided, the non-cryptographic engine 238 may provide specific functionality other than cryptography or merely maintaining links. For example an individual or organization may not need or desire cryptographic capability. Nevertheless, certain filtering and watchdog functions over incoming and outgoing communications may be desirable. Accordingly, policies 230 (of FIG. 7) may be put in place that have no cryptographic capacity or reliance.

An escrow policy 240 may also be implemented as a separate module 13 and located at a lower layer such as in the engine layer 20 in subjugation to the manager layer 18 is an escrow policy 240. Escrow policies, as discussed above, may be implemented independent from an individual manager 202, 206. Nevertheless, a manager module 42, 44, 46, 202, 206 may be responsible for controlling, establishing, enforcing, and the like, an escrow policy 240. Escrow policies 240 may control a substantial number of variables affecting accessibility to cryptographic features.

A key generation policy 242 may be implemented in the engine layer 20, as may a key usage policy 244. In certain embodiments, a key generation policy 242 may be relied upon by a key generation manager 42 in determining when, how, and to whom keys may be provided.

As a practical matter, a certification policy 246 may be extremely useful in an apparatus 10 in accordance with the invention. In certain embodiments, certificates 154 may be defined, provided with controlling data, and the like, in accordance with a certification policy 246 that may be loaded into the engine layer 20.

In an apparatus 10 in accordance with the invention, dismemberment of conventional functionalities into individual modules 13 dynamically linked by a loader 90 may be extremely helpful. For example, a filter policy 248 may be thought of as a policy 248 adapted to use no cryptography, but to provide a similar service with respect to non-cryptographic functionality. Accordingly, the filter policy 248 may be generalized for use and may be thought of as an abstraction for any policy 230.

An escrow policy engine 250 may be provided for containing executables associated with an escrow policy 240. The escrow policy engine 250 may contain all the data that an escrow policy 240 would contain. Nevertheless, an escrow policy engine 250 may contain exclusively executables. On the other hand, any amount of executable and operational data structures may be implemented in an escrow policy engine 250. As a practical matter, an escrow policy engine 250 may be a software object 250.

An apparatus 10 may be dynamically linked together as a variety of components 16, 18, 20, 22, separated from one another by cryptographically-imposed barriers 28, 30, 32. Similarly, a key generation engine 252 may be located within the engine layer 20. As a practical matter, a key generation engine may be embedded in a manager module 202, 206. Nevertheless, flexibility of key generation capacity may be more easily achieved using the general purpose cryptographically-implemented apparatus 10 developed to provide an infrastructure as illustrated. The apparatus 10 is thus effective to implement such various policies 242, 244, 246, 248, and other modules 13 with extreme flexibility, yet strict controls.

In general, a filter policy engine 254 may be thought of as an object or other combination of executables with related

data structures. In one embodiment, a filter policy engine 254 may be used to make traffic decision regarding incoming or outgoing features, data, capacities, entities, and the like.

The flexibility provisions of the present invention may extend beyond merely modularizing and subjugating the policies 222, 230 and policy engines 220. Thus, for example, other individual modules 13 might be contained within any policy and be modularized, nested, dynamically linked, and cryptographically controlled.

Referring to FIG. 9, shown therein are possible modules 13 for inclusion within an engine layer 20 or other layer subjugated to a manager layer 18, together with exemplary contents of those modules 13. For instance, the attributes 260 may be modularized and contain the particulars of a policy 230. A policy 230 may also contain modularized executables 258 relying on attributes 260 within the policy engine 220. Alternatively, a policy engine 220 may provide executables 258 effective to interact with, create, abide by, enforce, and the like certain policies 230 under the direction of a module 13 in the management layer 18.

Particular attributes 260 for one embodiment of an escrow policy 240 are illustrated in FIG. 9 these may include contents, and geopolitical considerations for particular holders of keys 156 and certificates 154, as well as destinations, sources, keys 156 and certificates 154. These attributes might also be separately modularized and optionally governed by a manager module 18.

Particular attributes 262 regarding holders of keys 156 and certificates 154 (privileges) might include particulars pertaining to who may hold the privileges 154, 156; what form the privileges 154, 156 may be in; where the privileges 154, 156 may be used and for what purposes.

Source information or destination information as attributes to effect of affect cryptographic features available from the apparatus 10. Attributes 262 associated with content may include frequencies of transmission, band width, and the like that may provide covert channels for communication. For example, a file that is sufficiently large and dense may be modulated ever-so slightly to provide a valuable but covert channel. Consequently, formats, carrier signals and the like may be governed by a policy 230, 240,

Geo-political attributes, might govern the use of certain cryptographic engines 50, e.g. in countries with legal restrictions on such engines 50. Additionally, escrow requirements also very among differing countries.

In another embodiment, multiple encryption may be forbidden to certain entities in accordance with a policy 240. As a practical matter, the escrow policy 240 is preferably effective to instruct a module 13 in the management layer 18 how to provide escrow functionality in accordance with laws and regulations effecting an entity using the apparatus 10.

Referring to FIG. 9, illustrated attributes 260 for one embodiment of a key usage policy 244 may include algorithm-types, key lengths, and key usages and purposes available. The particular attributes 260 of the key usage policy 244 may include limitations on usage for encryptions, signatures, key exchange, key words, pass words, certain authentications, validation, access control, and the like. Of course the key usage policy 244 may require a variety of other types of attributes 260 to be associated with keys 156.

The certificates 154 may be defined, controlled, evaluated, implemented, and the like in accordance with certification policy attributes 266, which may be associated within a certification policy 246. Examples of particular attributes 266 of a certification policy include financial reliance limits, and quality standards. Thus, trusted systems evaluation class, and other measures of reliability may be

implemented at will within certification policies 266 by implementing the methods and apparatus in accordance with the invention.

Certification policy attributes may also include certificate attributes deemed useful and pertinent in evaluating the reliability of a certificate 154. Party attributes, might include characteristics of parties engaging in a communication or transaction and other certification policy attributes 266 might be defined in virtually any detail from geographical, political, financial, or even by biometric considerations. Biometric considerations may include thumb prints, or other physically identifying characteristics that can be used to form a rational basis for a certification policy 246.

One immediate concern is political attributes throughout the world. Terrorists in one country may be responsible for instabilities causing entities from other countries to limit cryptographic capabilities sent thereto, received therefrom, or implemented in any way at that location. In certain environments, a degree of diligence must be exercised in evaluating trustworthiness of an organization.

Certification policy attributes may include any or every consideration from personal integrity, financial status, physical plant, sensitivity of information, and the like that may be evaluated in determining the trustworthiness or other reliability factors of certificates to be provided to or provided by such an entity. Likewise, as a co-signer on a loan, an individual who operates as a cooperative voucher for another may be identified as a particular attribute 266 in a certification policy 246.

The number of attributes 260 that may be used in the CMC 12 of the invention is effectively limitless. As infrastructure is developed, new individual attributes 260 and executables 258 may be added under the modularized scheme of the present invention used to implement a host of policies 230 and policy engines 220. Under this scheme, a high degree of integration need not be required or even desired at the manager level 18 or through the entire modules 13.

A certification policy engine 252b may also be present. Likewise, any characteristics of others of the attributes 260 that are to be implemented in a policy 230 may also be defined implemented, and enforced by a policy engine 220 typically under the direction of a manager 42, 44, 46.

An escrow policy engine 250 is illustrated by the way of example in FIG. 9 and may include modularized attributes, as well as modularized executables 269. As a practical matter, all attributes 268 may be thought of as defining characteristics of entities that would be governed by policies 240, 242, 244, 246, 248. Accordingly, executables 269 may merely control, enforce, or provide other operations necessary to implement rules 280. The executables 269 and a policy engine 250 may obviate the need for a module 13 in the management layer 18 to be pre-programmed in order to implement rules 280 in attributes 268 in a policy 230, 250.

A key generation engine 252 is also shown by way of example in FIG. 9 and may include attributes 270 and executables 271, as with the other engines 220. Similarly, the dichotomy between the engine 220 and the policy 230 may be implemented in a separate key generation engine 252, and key generation policy 242. Thus, the attributes 270 may be exported as use attributes 272 of a key generation policy 242.

The separation of the modules 13 in the management layer 18 and the policies 220, 230 may be further extended to a separation of any or all of the engines 252 from any policies 242 that the engine 252 may create under the direction of the management layer 18.

A filter policy engine 254, shown in FIG. 9 by way of example, may be thought of as a generalized engine 220. As a matter of utility, a filter policy engine 254 may use attributes 276 and executables 277 to implement any type of a filter. The attributes 276 and executables 277 may also be modularized in certain embodiments, the region of origin of code or content, may be limited. Regionality may be defined geographically, by spectrum position, by transmission frequency, and the like. Moreover, the region of origin and destination of content of messages may be controlled. For many years, the Internet and the broadcast media have wrestled with the difficulties of implementing proper controls at individual sites of received broadcasts.

The age, gender, or any other attribute 276 may be used to determine a suitable manner for filtering by a filter policy engine 254 or management engine 46 implementing a filter. Thus, the attributes 274 of a filter policy engine 254 may be a subset of the attributes 276, may be created by the executables 277 in lieu of the attributes 276, or may have some other relationship to the filter policy engine 254. In general, filter policy attributes 274 may include rules as to code, content, source, destination, and the like desired.

An escrow policy engine 250 is shown by way of example in FIG. 9 and may include therein rules 280 or attributes 268. Similarly, executables 269 may be contained therein and may include creation 282, enforcement 284, signing 286, and dynamically controls 288 of an escrow policy 240. As can be seen from the above discussion, a general purpose infrastructure implemented in the apparatus of FIGS. 1-9 utilizes dynamic linking and control of modules 13 to allow management modules 18 to access policy engines 220 or policies 230 without the need for integrating the policy engines 220 or the policy 230 therein. Accordingly, the policy engine 220 or policies 230 may themselves be independently dynamically linked within the CMC 12 of the present invention. The ability to flexibly escrow or establish other policies 230, including key generation, key usage, escrow of keys, and all of the implementation schemes associated therewith, may thus be implemented in a flexible, yet secure manner with the infrastructure of an apparatus 10 in accordance with the invention.

The present invention may be embodied in other specific forms without departing from its spirit or essential characteristics. The described embodiments are to be considered in all respects only as illustrative, and not restrictive. The scope of the invention is, therefore, indicated by the appended claims, rather than by the foregoing description. All changes which come within the meaning and range of equivalency of the claims are to be embraced within their scope.

What is claimed and desired to be secured by United States Letters Patent is:

1. An apparatus implemented in a digital computer having a processor and memory for executing applications, the apparatus, a plurality of executable modules, and the apparatus used to verify and load the modules, the apparatus comprising:

- a base executable loadable into the computer to perform a base function, the base executable module being provided with at least one slot adapted to receive a filler module;
- a first filler module containing a first unique property recognizable by the base executable, and alterable exclusively by an authorized entity;
- a second filler module containing a second unique property recognizable by the base executable and alterable exclusively by an authorized entity;
- the base executable being programmed to verify the presence of the first and second unique properties

within the first and second filler modules, respectively, and to dynamically load the first and second filler modules into the at least one slot only upon verification of the presence of the first and second unique properties;

a manager module included within the first filler module for enforcing policies propagated by the authorized entity; and

a policy module included within the second filler module, wherein the second filler module contains the policies to be enforced by the manager module, and wherein the policy module includes a cryptographic policy.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a loader module integral to the base executable, programmed to verify the presence of the unique property, and to dynamically load the filler module only if the unique property verifies correctly.

3. The apparatus of claim 2, further comprising a plurality of additional filler modules loadable by the loader module into the at least one slot.

4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the loader module is effective to provide linking between the first and second filler modules and the plurality of additional modules in a layered hierarchy containing levels, and in which a linking of one module of the first and second filler modules and the plurality of additional modules at a first level to a second module of the first and second filler modules and the plurality of additional modules at a second level defines an allowability of an invocation of the second module by the first module.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising an engine filler module dynamically loadable into the at least one slot and linkable with the manager module.

6. The apparatus of claim 5, wherein the engine filler module is a cryptographic engine programmed to execute a cryptographic algorithm.

7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the policy module contains an escrow policy.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first and second unique properties comprise cryptographic keys.

9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the policy module contains a cryptographic services usage policy.

10. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the policy module contains a cryptographic key usage policy.

11. An article, implemented in a computer readable medium, comprising a memory device having blocks for storing executables and data, the article including a first block storing a plurality of executable modules executable by a processor, the first block comprising:

a base module loadable to be executed by the processor to perform a base function, the base module being provided with at least one slot adapted to receive a first filler module;

the first filler module executable by a processor and containing a first unique property recognizable by a loader, the unique property being alterable exclusively by an authorized entity;

a second filler module containing a second unique property recognizable by the base executable, and alterable exclusively by an authorized entity;

a loader module integral to the base module and programmed to verify the presence of the first and second unique properties in the first and second filler module, respectively and to dynamically load the each of the first and second filler modules only upon verification of verification of the first and second unique properties in the first and second filler modules, respectively;

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- a manager module included within the first filler module for enforcing policies propagated by the authorized entity; and
- a policy module included within the authorized entity, wherein the policy module contains the policies to be enforced by the manager module, and wherein the policies include at least one cryptographic policy. 5
- 12. The article of claim 11, wherein the first and second unique properties comprise cryptographic keys.
- 13. The article of claim 11, wherein the policy module contains a cryptographic services usage policy. 10
- 14. The article of claim 11, wherein the policy module contains a cryptographic key usage policy.
- 15. The article of claim 11, further comprising an engine filler module. 15
- 16. The article of claim 15, wherein the engine filler module is a cryptographic engine programmed to execute a cryptographic algorithm.
- 17. The article of claim 11, wherein the policy module contains an escrow policy. 20
- 18. A method for flexibly integrating policies into a software module, the method implemented in a computer readable medium and executable by a processor of a computer, the method comprising: 25
  - providing a base module executable by the processor, the base module having at least one slot for receiving filler modules and having a loader programmed to operate within the base executable to control loading of the filler modules into the at least one slot;

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- providing a manager filler module containing a unique property recognizable by the first loader and alterable exclusively by an authorized entity;
- providing a policy filler module containing a second unique property recognizable by the first loader and alterable exclusively by an authorized entity, the policy filler module containing policies enforceable by the manager filler module, wherein at least one of the policies is a cryptographic policy;
- verifying by the loader the presence of the first unique property in the manager filler module;
- loading dynamically the manager filler module only after the loader verifies the presence of the first unique property successfully;
- verifying by the loader the presence of the second unique property in the policy filler module; and
- loading dynamically the policy filler module only after the loader verifies the second unique property successfully.
- 19. The method of claim 18, further comprising a cryptographic engine filler module dynamically loadable into the at least one slot and linkable with the manager filler module.
- 20. The method of claim 18, wherein the first unique property is a digital signature and the second unique property is another digital signature.
- 21. The method of claim 18, further comprising: linking the policy filler module to the manager filler module by a loader to enable invocation of the policy module by the manager filler module.

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