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(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR
DISTRIBUTING DIGITAL CONTENT**

(76) Inventor: **Scott Levine, New York, NY (US)**

Correspondence Address:
GOTTLIEB RACKMAN & REISMAN PC
270 MADISON AVENUE, 8TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10016-0601 (US)

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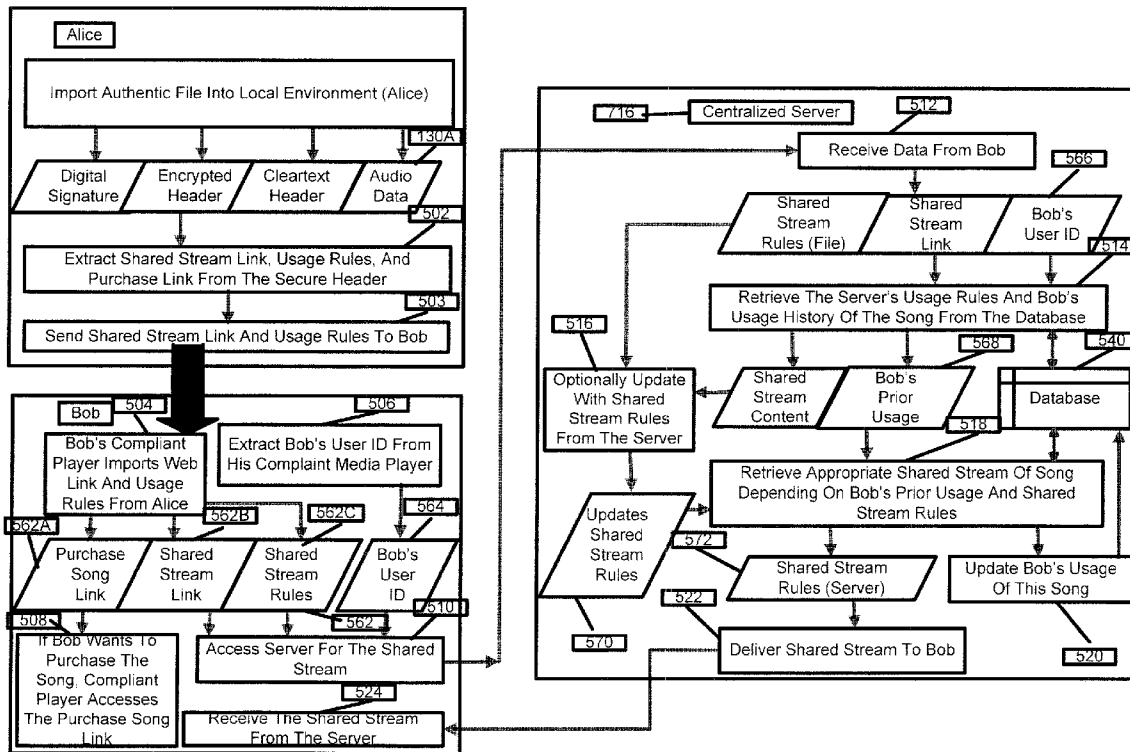
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention provides a system in which audio files are distributed that include watermarks, digital signatures and/or encryption. The file may offer content owners some amount of playback control, while offering the consumer value-added content & services, and maintaining backward compatibility to existing digital file players such as MP3 players. By enticing the consumer with value-added content and services alongside the purchased songs, the consumer is encouraged to obtain these files from participating retailers and to replay the files using compliant players.



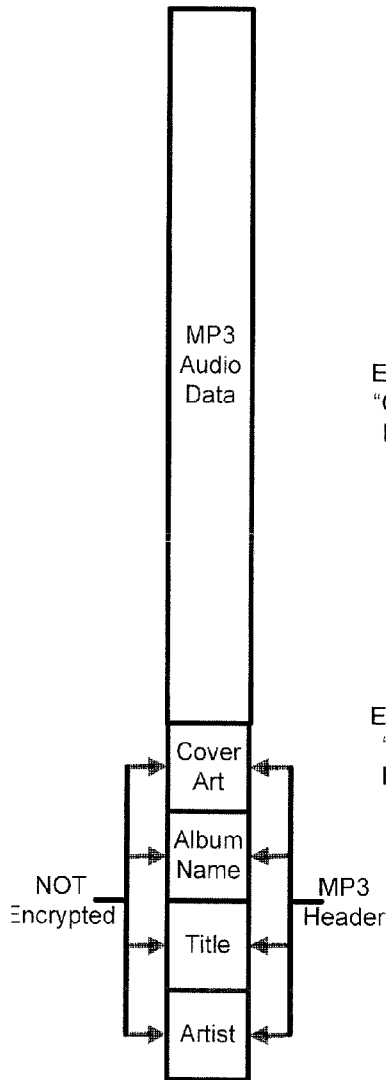


FIG. 1A
(PRIOR ART)

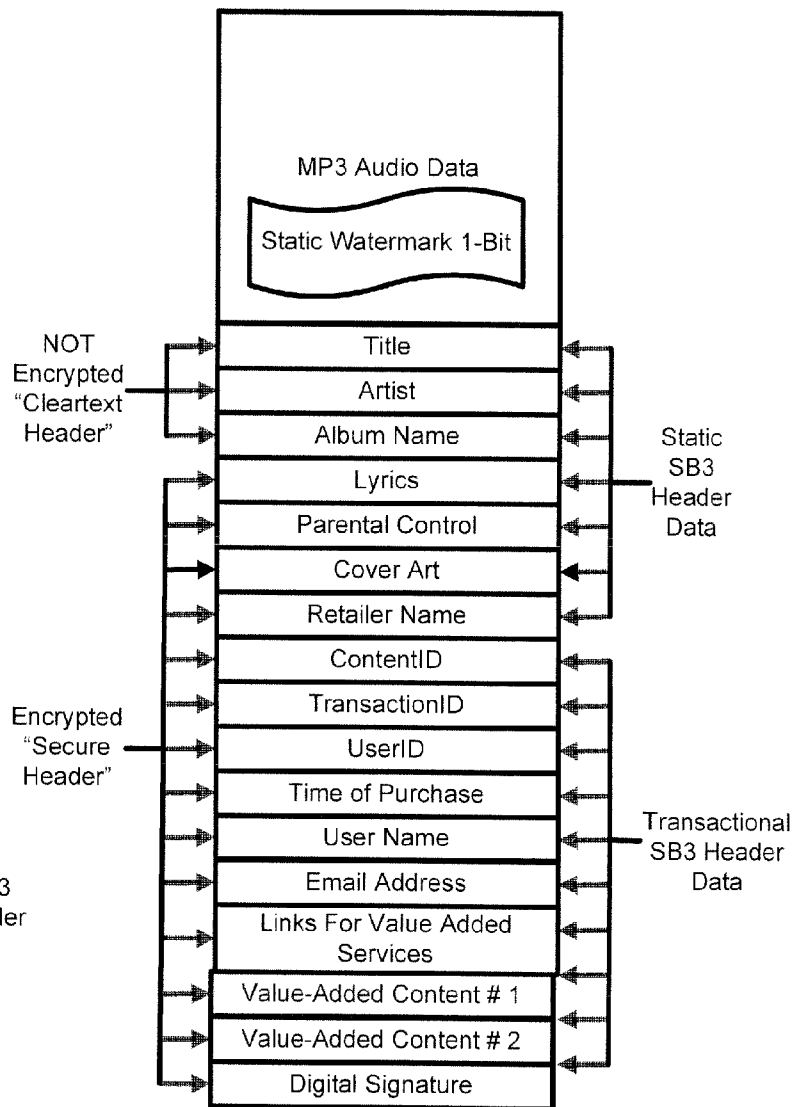
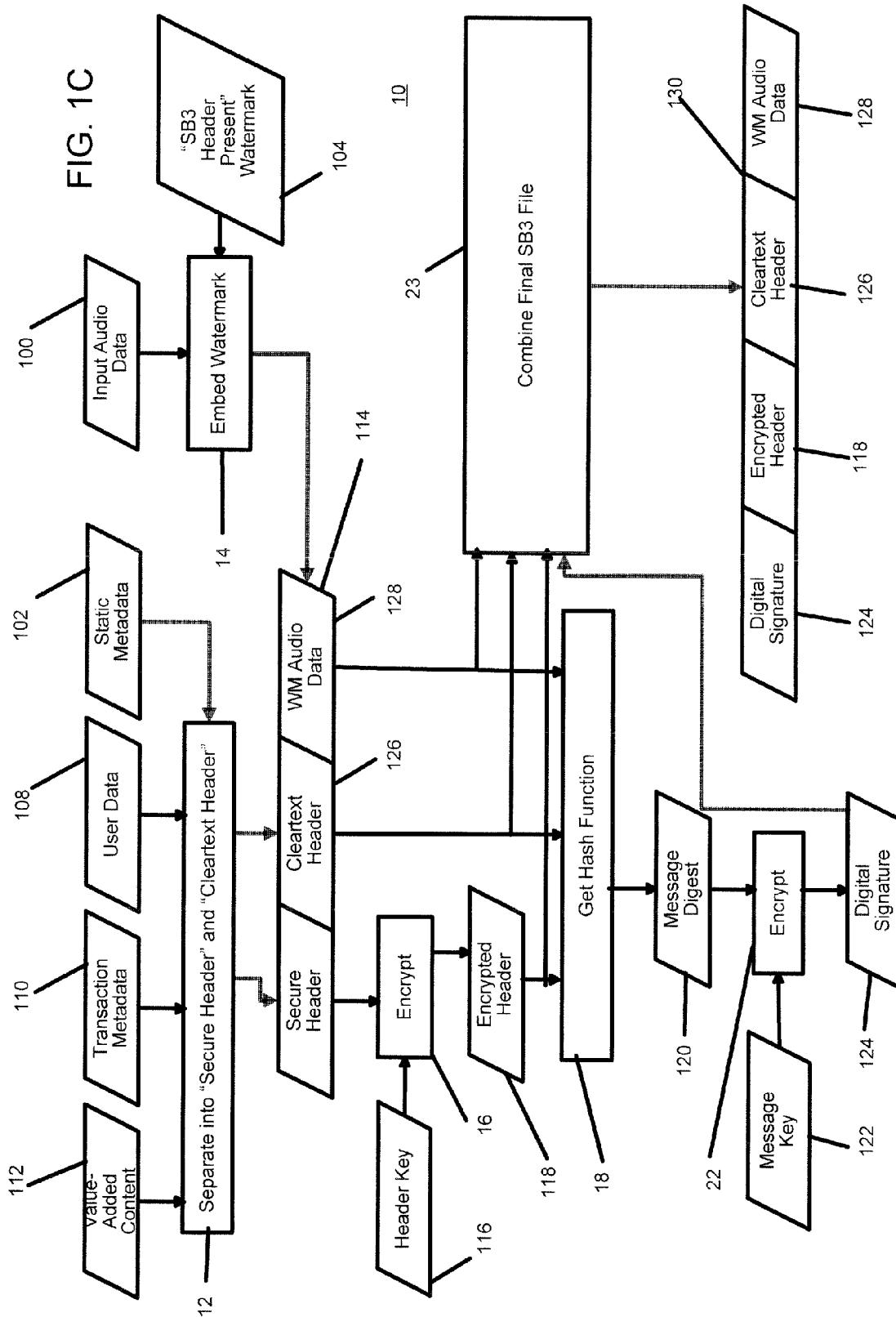


FIG. 1B



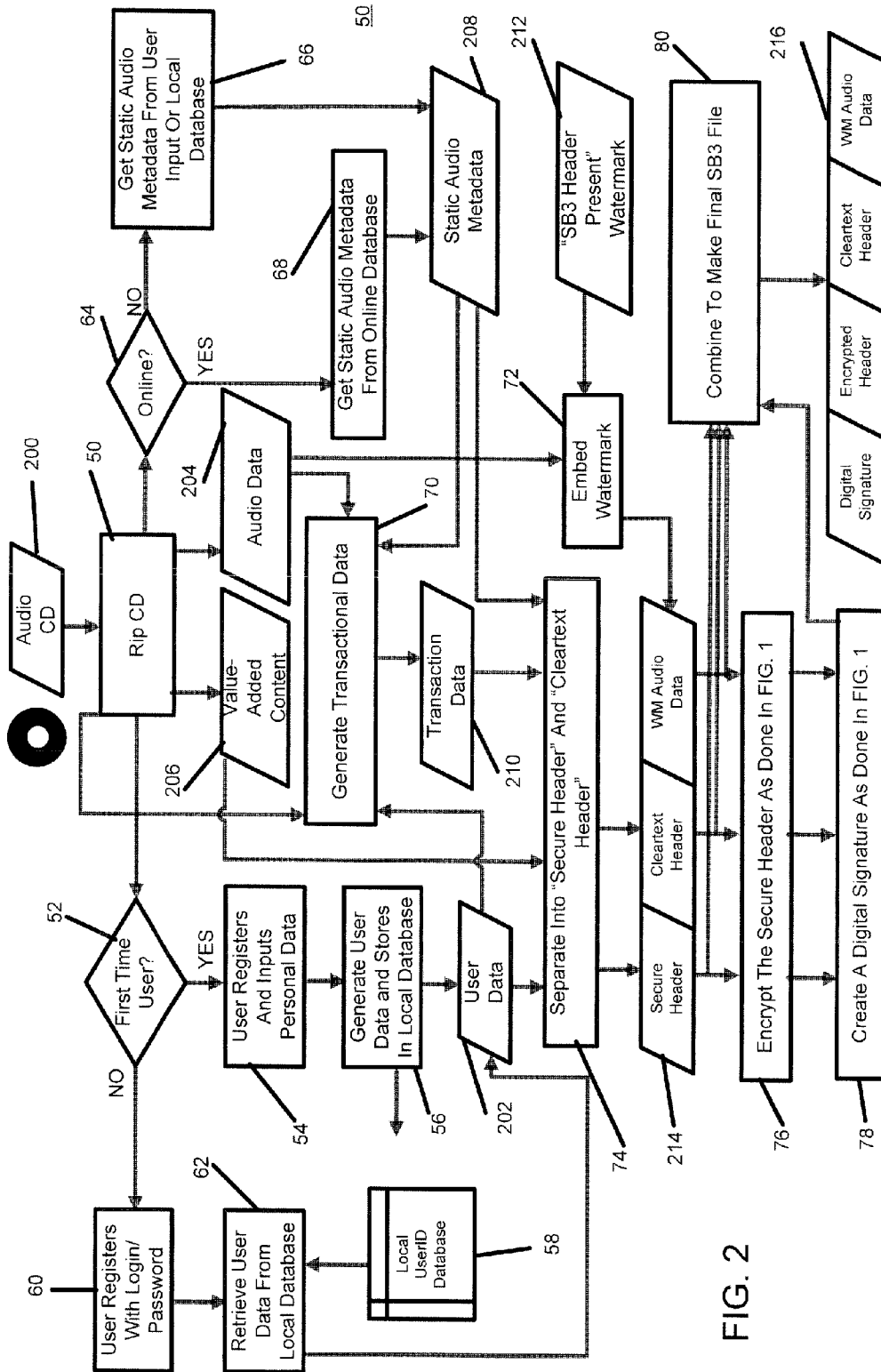
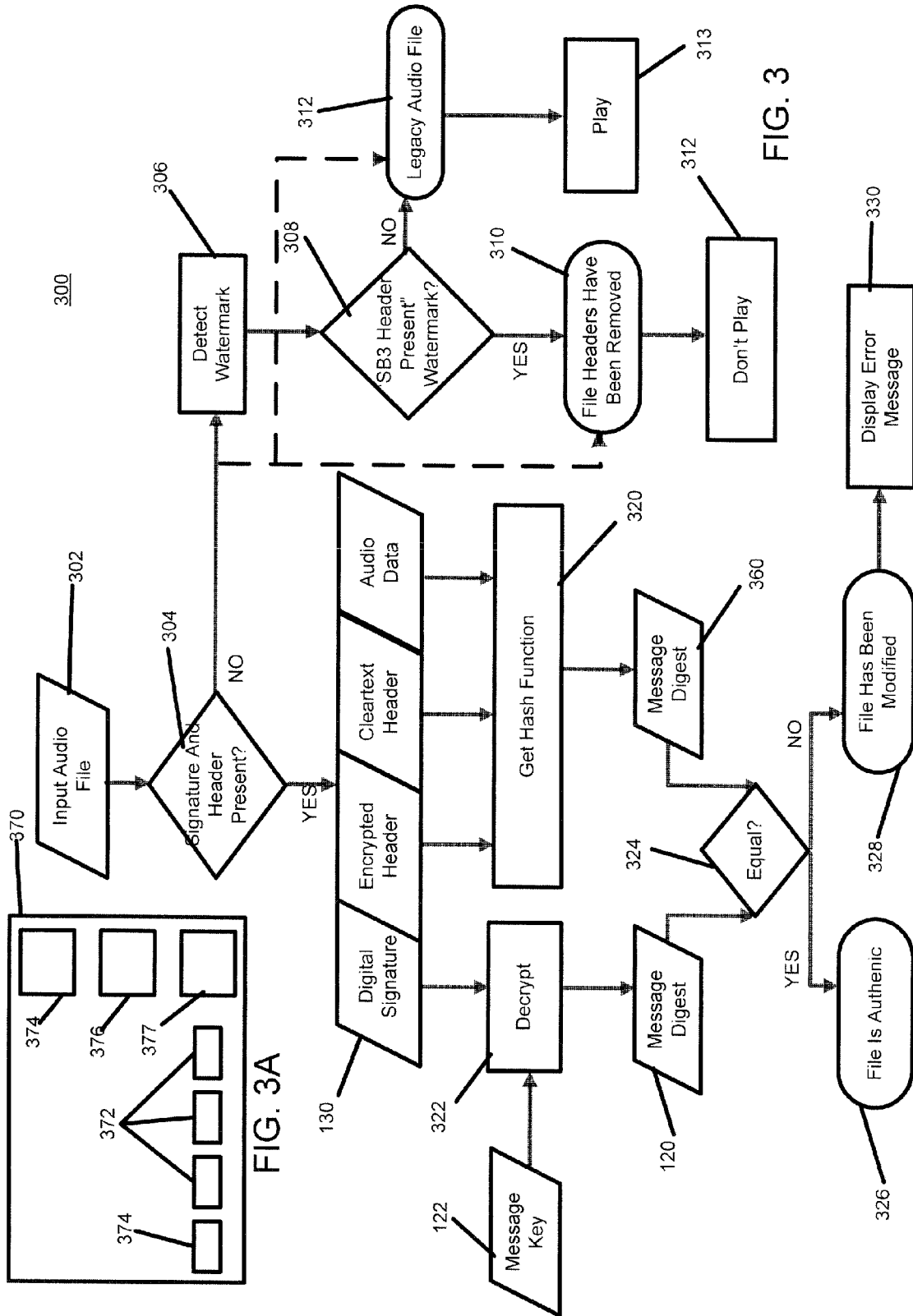


FIG. 2



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