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Alfke

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(54) **METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR PROCESSING ELECTRONIC MESSAGES**

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(58) **Field of Classification Search** **709/205, 709/206, 207**
See application file for complete search history.

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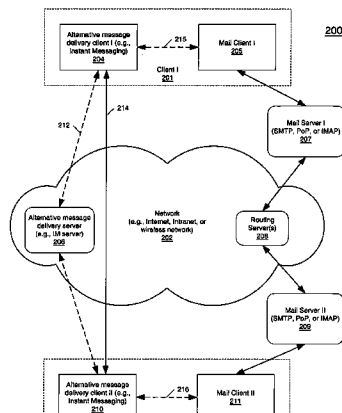
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Methods and apparatuses for processing electronic messages are described herein. In one aspect of the invention, for an outgoing message addressed to a mail address of a recipient, the mail client determines whether is an alternative messaging system available to the mail address of the recipient. If there is an alternative messaging system available, the mail client determines whether the recipient's alternative messaging system is online. If so, the mail client sends the mail message to the recipient via the alternative messaging system. Otherwise, the mail client sends the message via normal mail system. Other methods and apparatuses are also described.

90 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets



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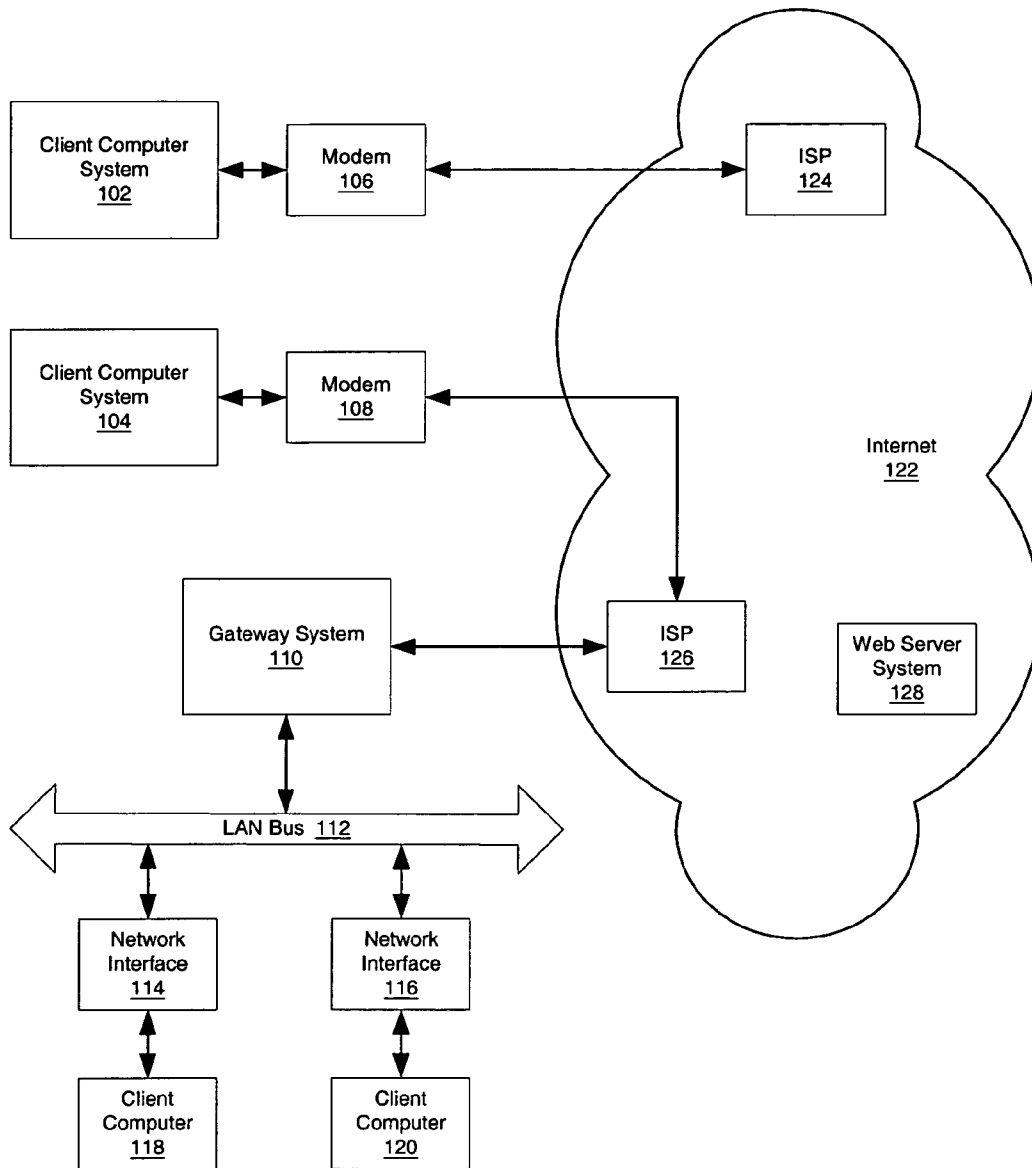


Fig. 1

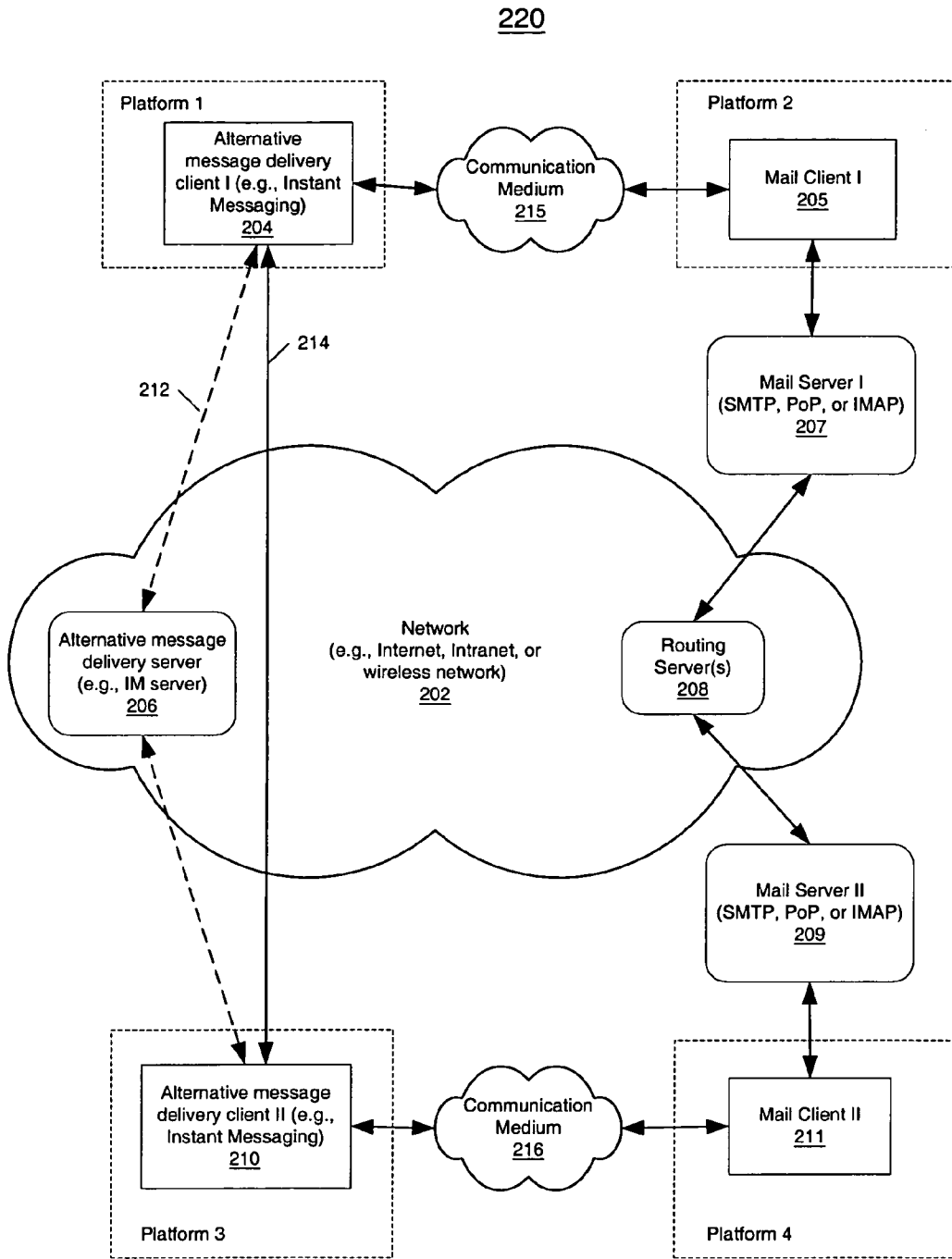


Fig. 2B

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