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(54) DIGITAL RIGHTS MANAGEMENT

(76) Inventors: **Tom Grimes**, Ottawa (CA); **Khanh Mai**, Alpharetta, GA (US)

Correspondence Address:
DORSEY & WHITNEY
1001 PENNSYLVANIA AVE., N.W.
SUITE 300 SOUTH
WASHINGTON, DC 20004 (US)

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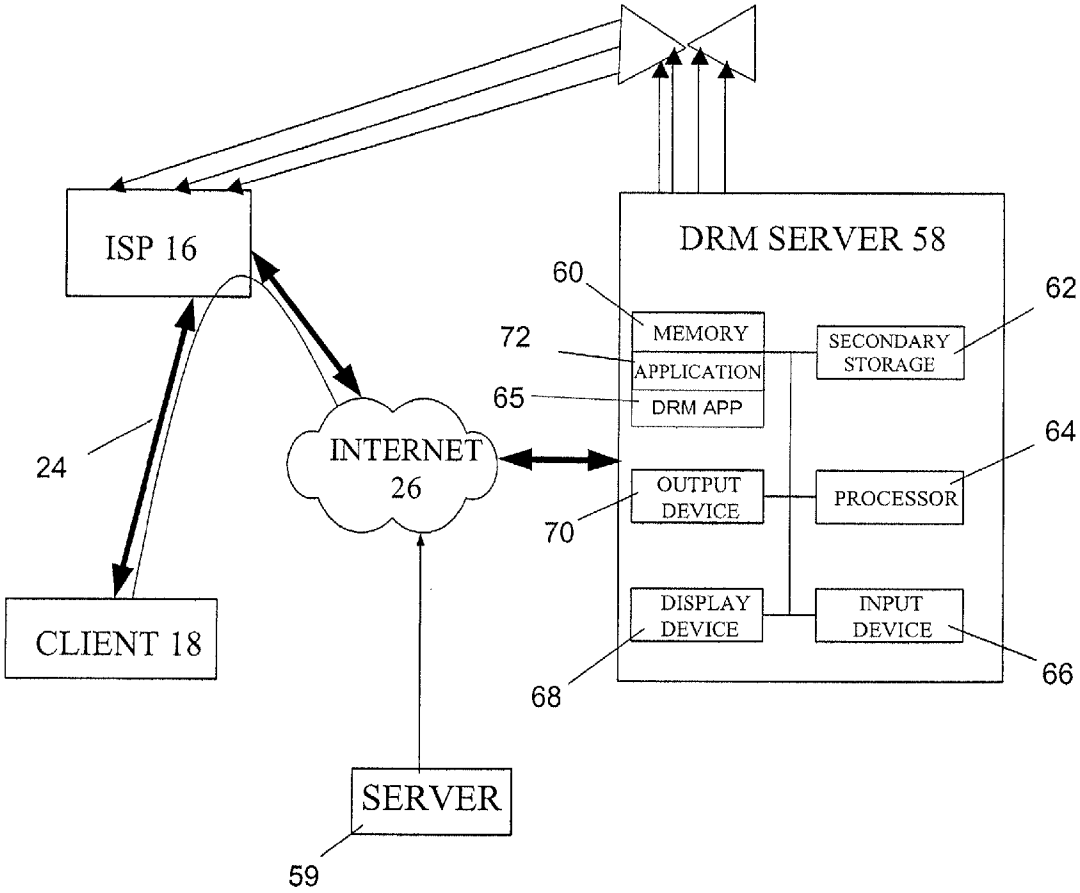
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A method and system for digital rights management is disclosed. The method and system utilize standalone certificates linked with hardware profiles to provide and efficient mechanism for digital rights management. A method for digital rights management includes receiving content at a client computer. The content is encrypted with an encryption key. The method further includes the client computer requesting the encryption key from a digital rights management (DRM) server using a digital certificate, the server receiving the request and the DRM server determining if the digital certificate is valid. The DRM server is remote from the client computer.



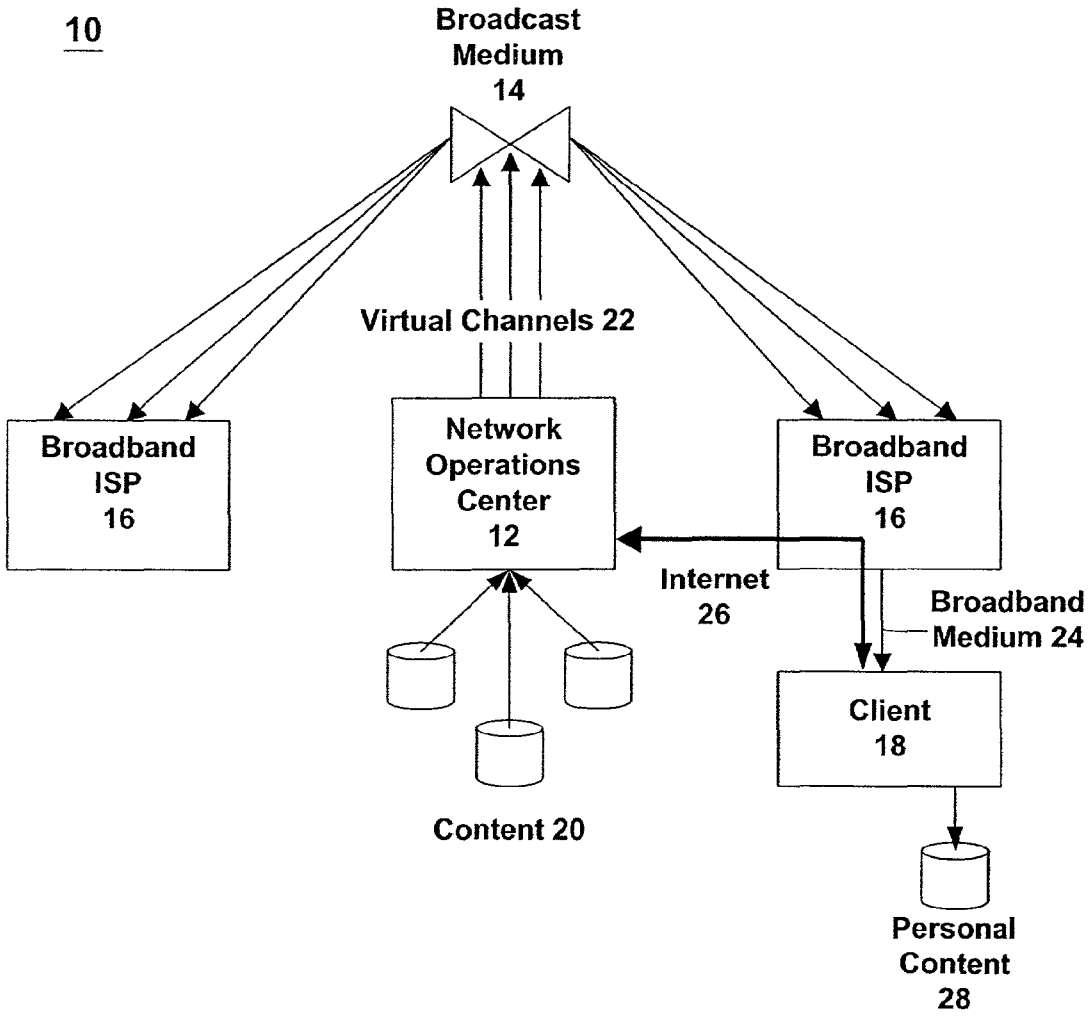

10
Broadcast Medium 14
Virtual Channels 22
Broadband ISP 16
Network Operations Center 12
Broadband ISP 16
Internet 26
Broadband Medium 24
Client 18
Content 20
Personal Content 28

FIGURE 1

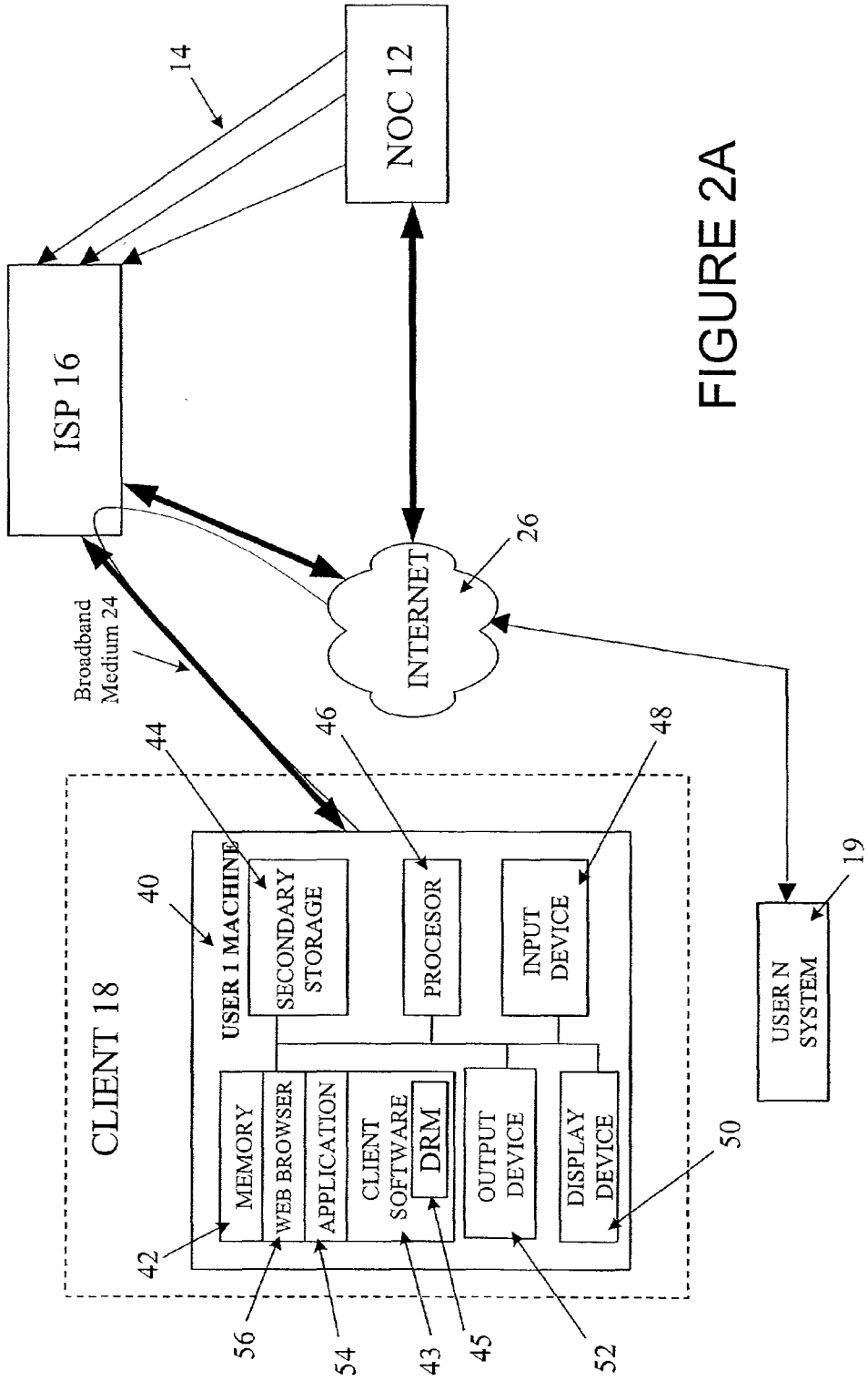

14
NOC 12
ISP 16
26
INTERNET
Broadband Medium 24
44
46
48
40
CLIENT 18
USER 1 MACHINE
SECONDARY STORAGE
PROCESOR
INPUT DEVICE
MEMORY
WEB BROWSER
APPLICATION
CLIENT SOFTWARE
DRM
OUTPUT DEVICE
DISPLAY DEVICE
42
56
54
43
45
52
50
USER N SYSTEM
19

FIGURE 2A

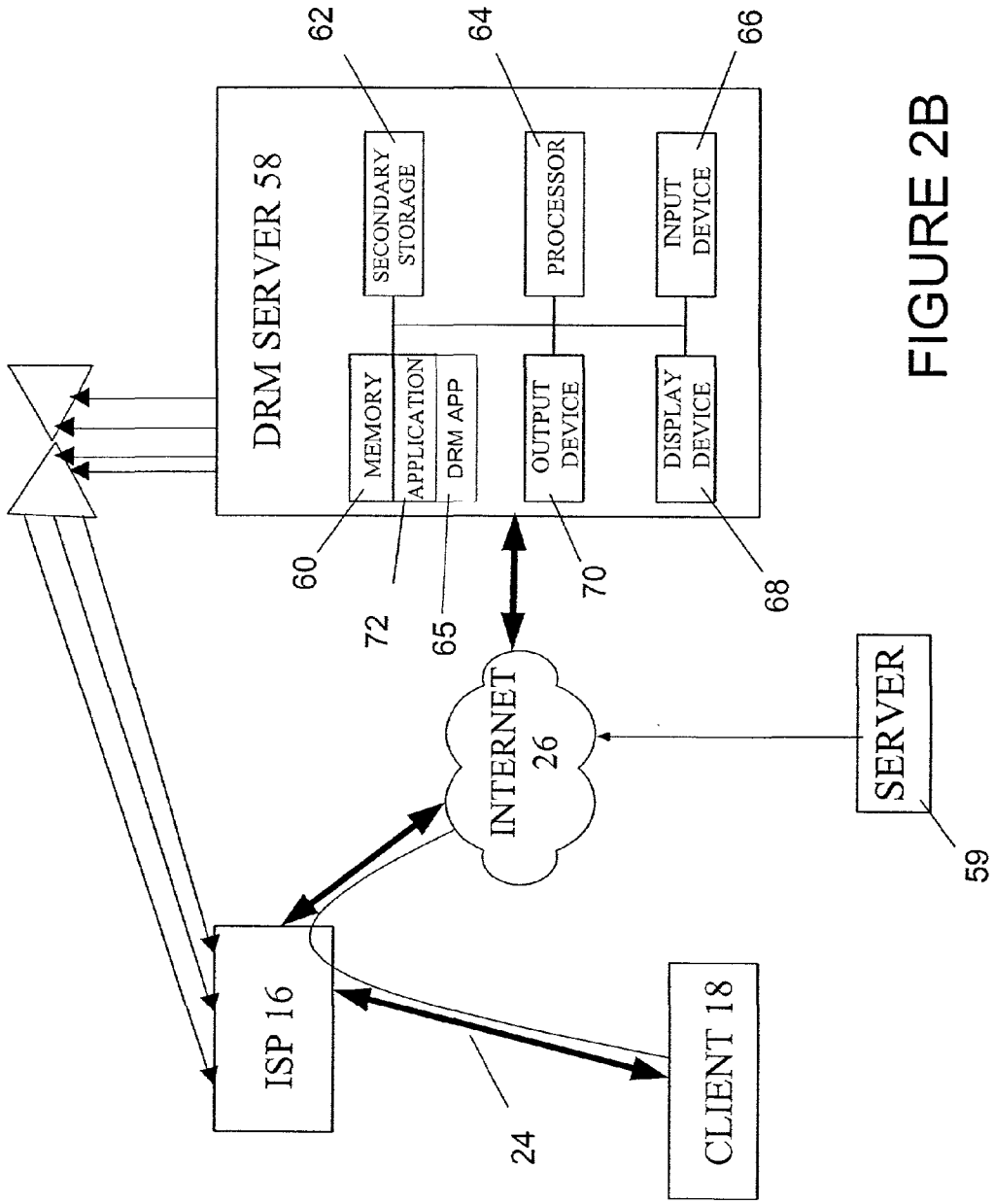

DRM SERVER 58
MEMORY
APPLICATION
DRM APP
SECONDARY STORAGE
PROCESSOR
INPUT DEVICE
OUTPUT DEVICE
DISPLAY DEVICE
60
72
65
62
64
66
70
68
INTERNET 26
SERVER
59
ISP 16
CLIENT 18
24

FIGURE 2B

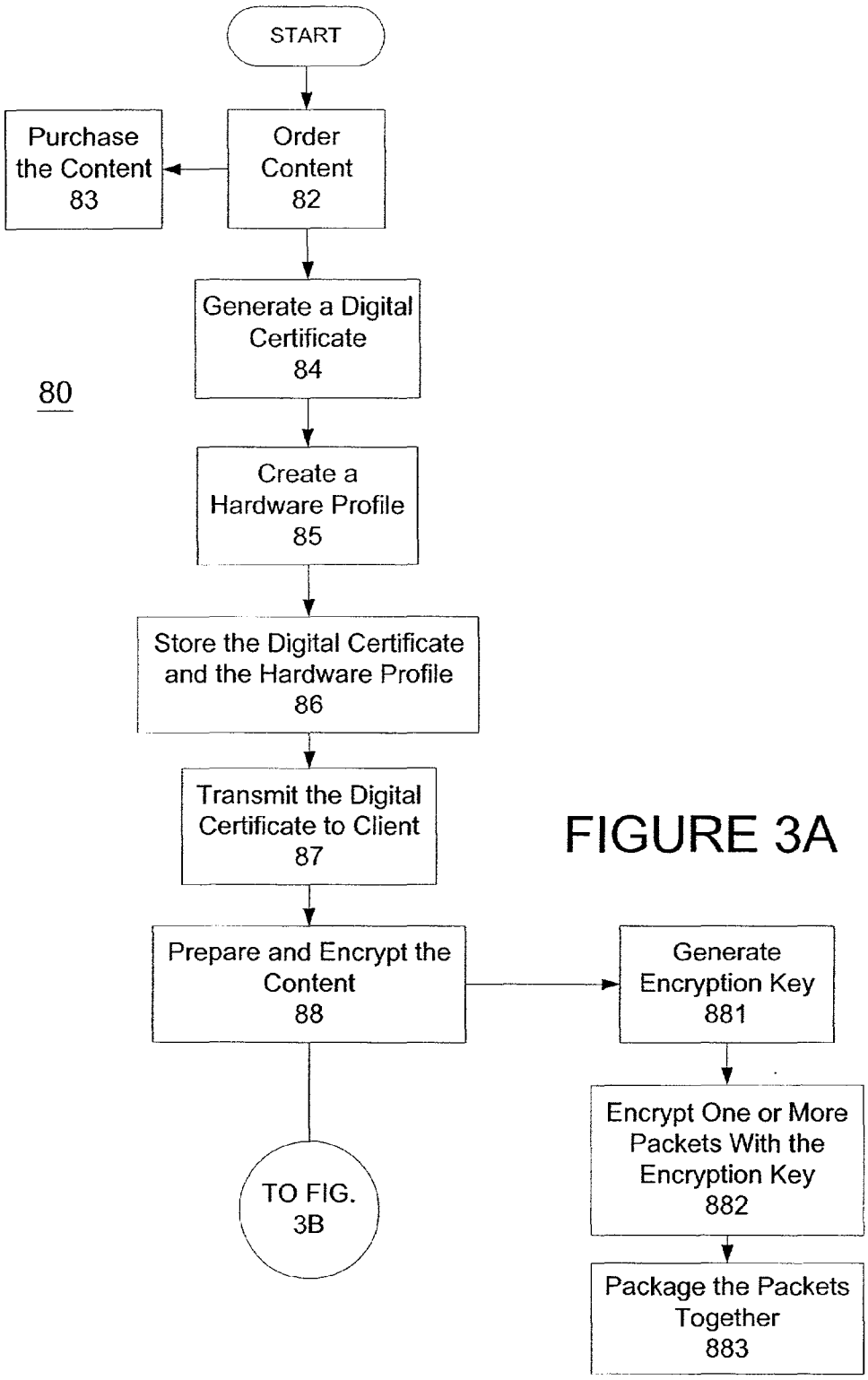

START
Order Content 82
Purchase the Content 83
Generate a Digital Certificate 84
80
Create a Hardware Profile 85
Store the Digital Certificate and the Hardware Profile 86
Transmit the Digital Certificate to Client 87
Prepare and Encrypt the Content 88
Generate Encryption Key 881
Encrypt One or More Packets With the Encryption Key 882
Package the Packets Together 883
TO FIG. 3B

FIGURE 3A

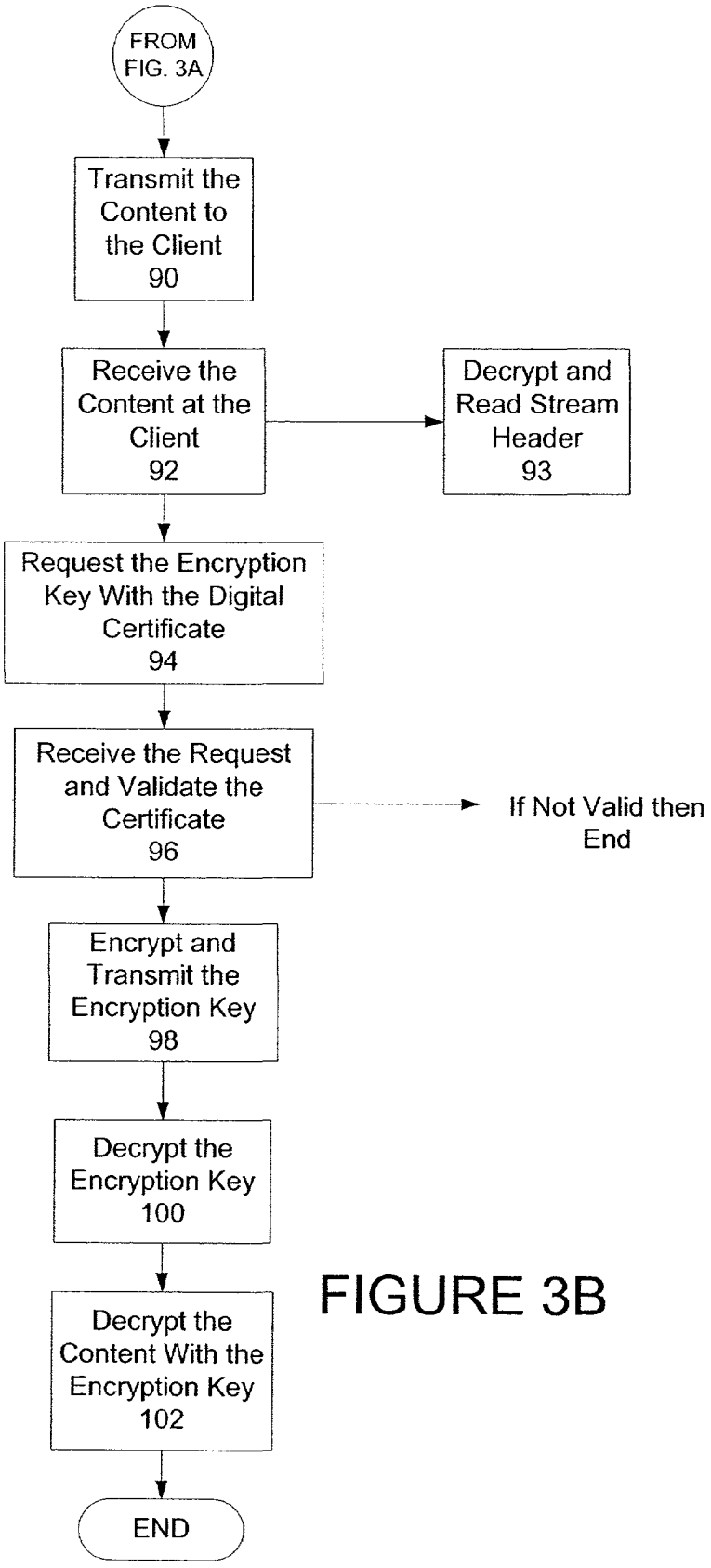

FROM FIG. 3A
Transmit the Content to the Client 90
Receive the Content at the Client 92
Decrypt and Read Stream Header 93
Request the Encryption Key With the Digital Certificate 94
Receive the Request and Validate the Certificate 96
If Not Valid then End
Encrypt and Transmit the Encryption Key 98
Decrypt the Encryption Key 100
Decrypt the Content With the Encryption Key 102
END

FIGURE 3B

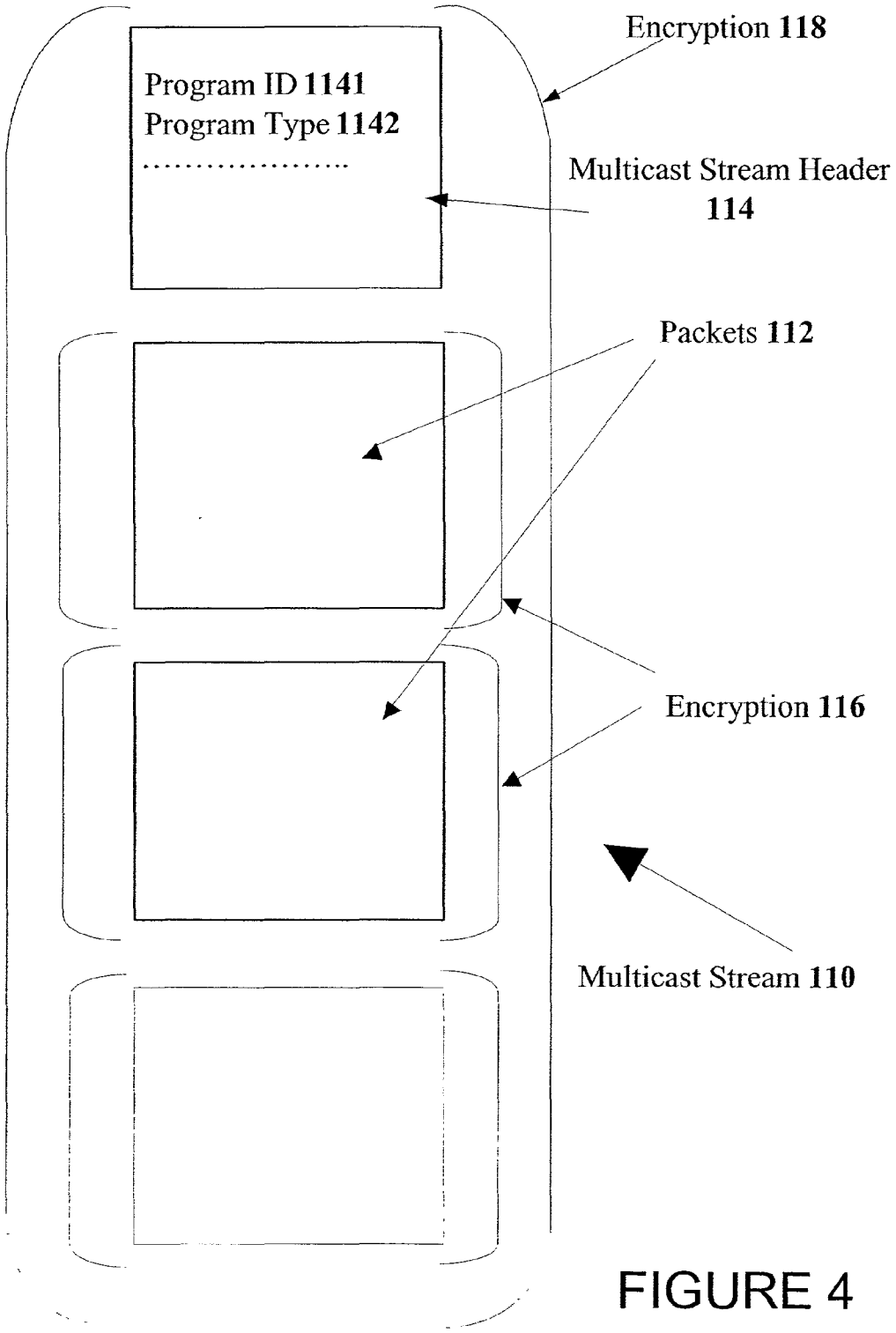

Encryption 118
Program ID 1141
Program Type 1142
.....
Multicast Stream Header
114
Packets 112
Encryption 116
Multicast Stream 110

FIGURE 4

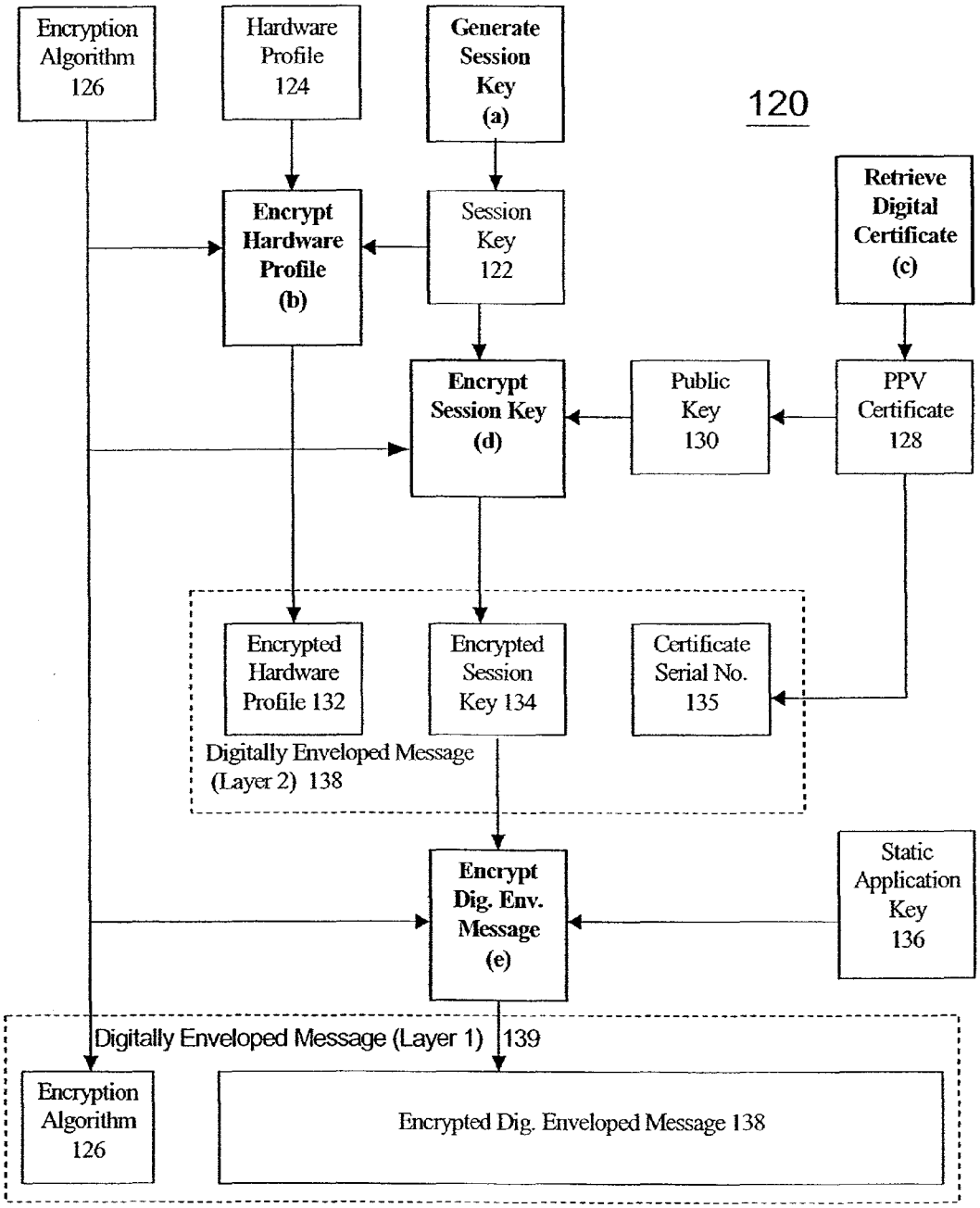

Encryption Algorithm 126
Hardware Profile 124
Generate Session Key (a)
120
Retrieve Digital Certificate (c)
Encrypt Hardware Profile (b)
Session Key 122
Encrypt Session Key (d)
Public Key 130
PPV Certificate 128
Encrypted Hardware Profile 132
Encrypted Session Key 134
Certificate Serial No. 135
Digitally Enveloped Message (Layer 2) 138
Encrypt Dig. Env. Message (e)
Static Application Key 136
Digitally Enveloped Message (Layer 1) 139
Encryption Algorithm 126
Encrypted Dig. Enveloped Message 138

FIGURE 5A

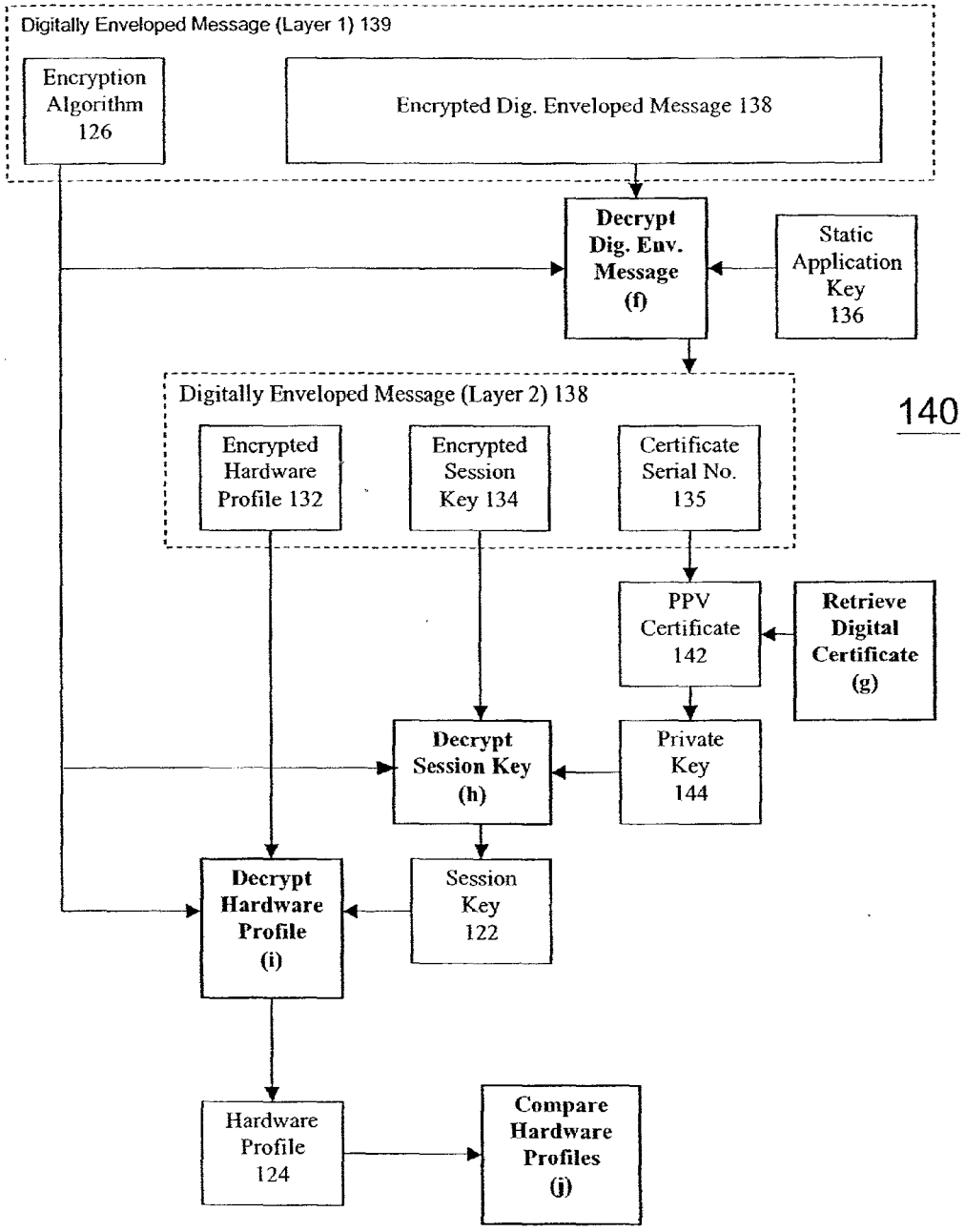
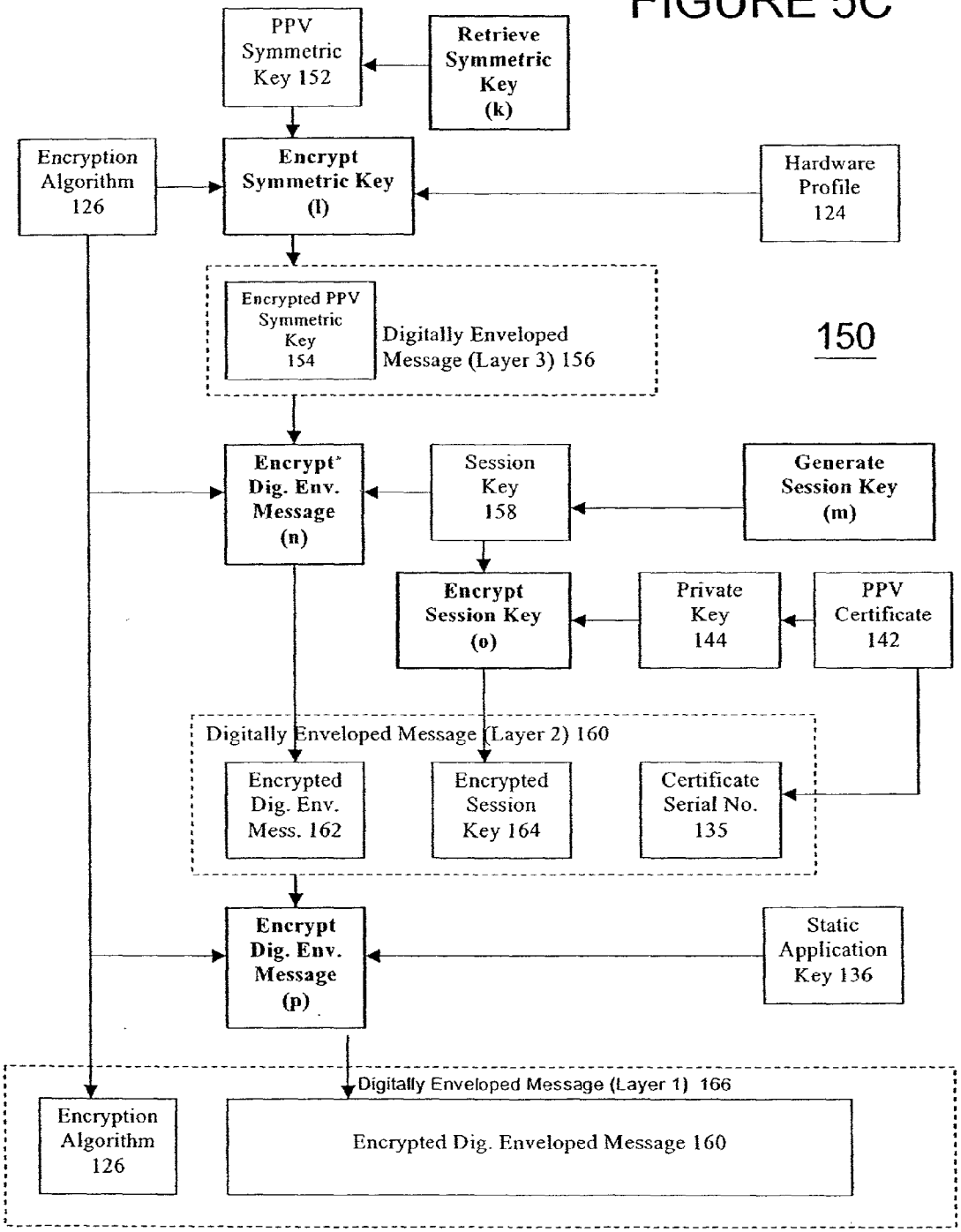

Digitally Enveloped Message (Layer 1) 139
Encryption Algorithm 126
Encrypted Dig. Enveloped Message 138
Decrypt Dig. Env. Message (f)
Static Application Key 136
Digitally Enveloped Message (Layer 2) 138
140
Encrypted Hardware Profile 132
Encrypted Session Key 134
Certificate Serial No. 135
PPV Certificate 142
Retrieve Digital Certificate (g)
Decrypt Session Key (h)
Private Key 144
Decrypt Hardware Profile (i)
Session Key 122
Hardware Profile 124
Compare Hardware Profiles (j)

FIGURE 5B

FIGURE 5C


PPV Symmetric Key 152
Retrieve Symmetric Key (k)
Encryption Algorithm 126
Encrypt Symmetric Key (l)
Hardware Profile 124
Encrypted PPV Symmetric Key 154
Digitally Enveloped Message (Layer 3) 156
150
Encrypt* Dig. Env. Message (n)
Session Key 158
Generate Session Key (m)
Encrypt Session Key (o)
Private Key 144
PPV Certificate 142
Digitally Enveloped Message (Layer 2) 160
Encrypted Dig. Env. Mess. 162
Encrypted Session Key 164
Certificate Serial No. 135
Encrypt Dig. Env. Message (p)
Static Application Key 136
Digitally Enveloped Message (Layer 1) 166
Encryption Algorithm 126
Encrypted Dig. Enveloped Message 160

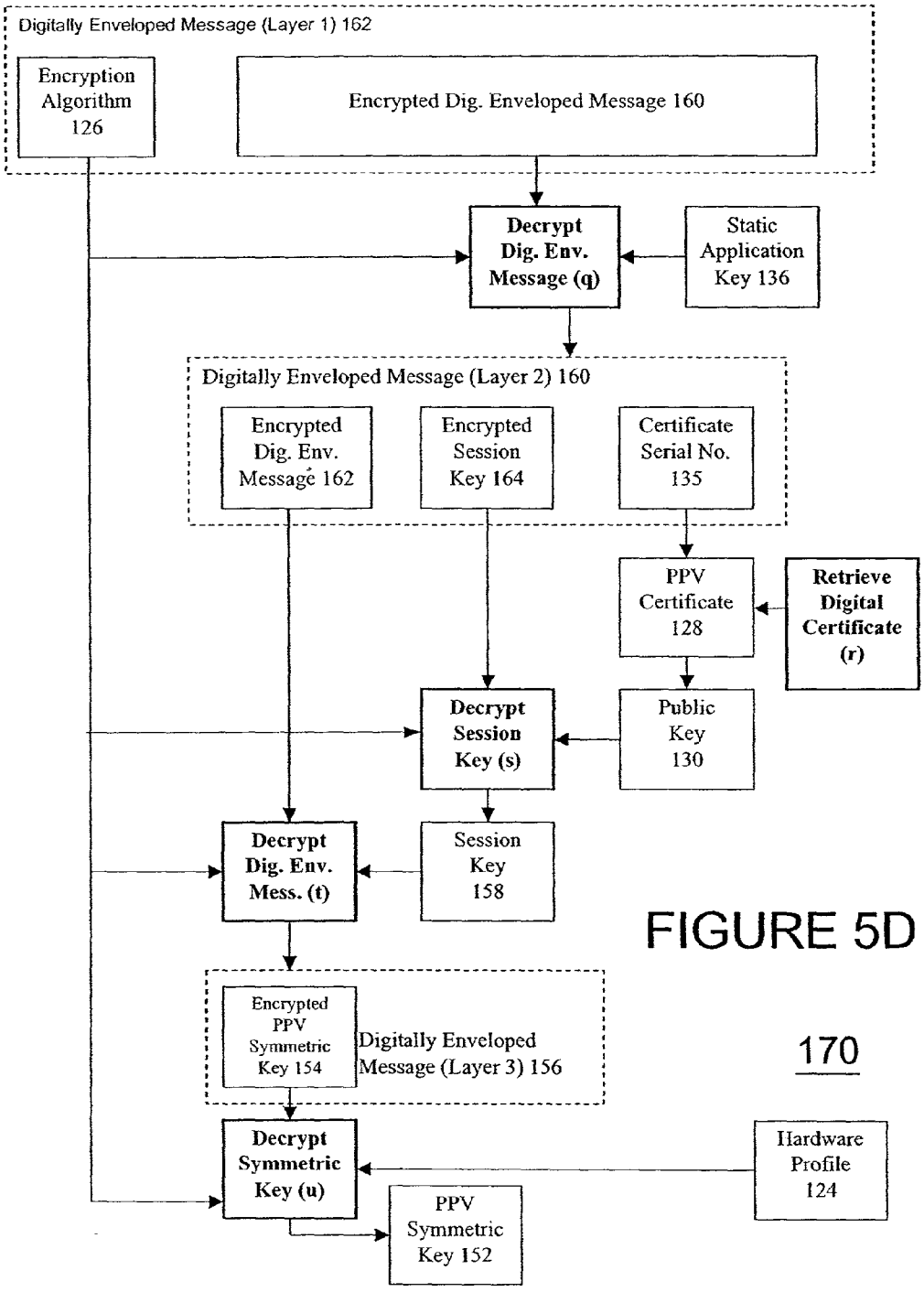
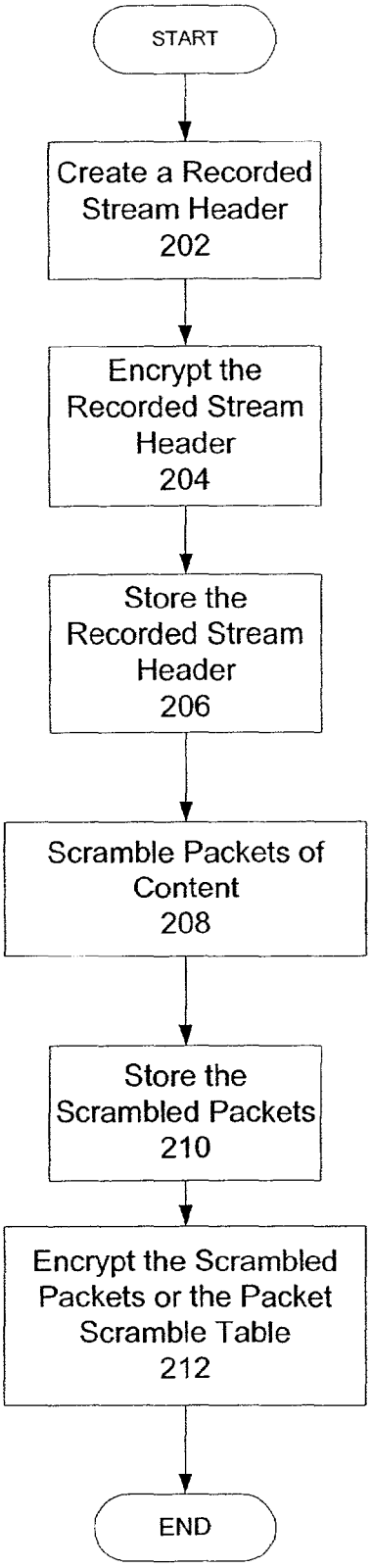

Digitally Enveloped Message (Layer 1) 162
Encryption Algorithm 126
Encrypted Dig. Enveloped Message 160
Decrypt Dig. Env. Message (q)
Static Application Key 136
Digitally Enveloped Message (Layer 2) 160
Encrypted Dig. Env. Message 162
Encrypted Session Key 164
Certificate Serial No. 135
PPV Certificate 128
Retrieve Digital Certificate (r)
Decrypt Session Key (s)
Public Key 130
Decrypt Dig. Env. Mess. (t)
Session Key 158
Encrypted PPV Symmetric Key 154
Digitally Enveloped Message (Layer 3) 156
170
Decrypt Symmetric Key (u)
Hardware Profile 124
PPV Symmetric Key 152

FIGURE 5D



200

FIGURE 6A

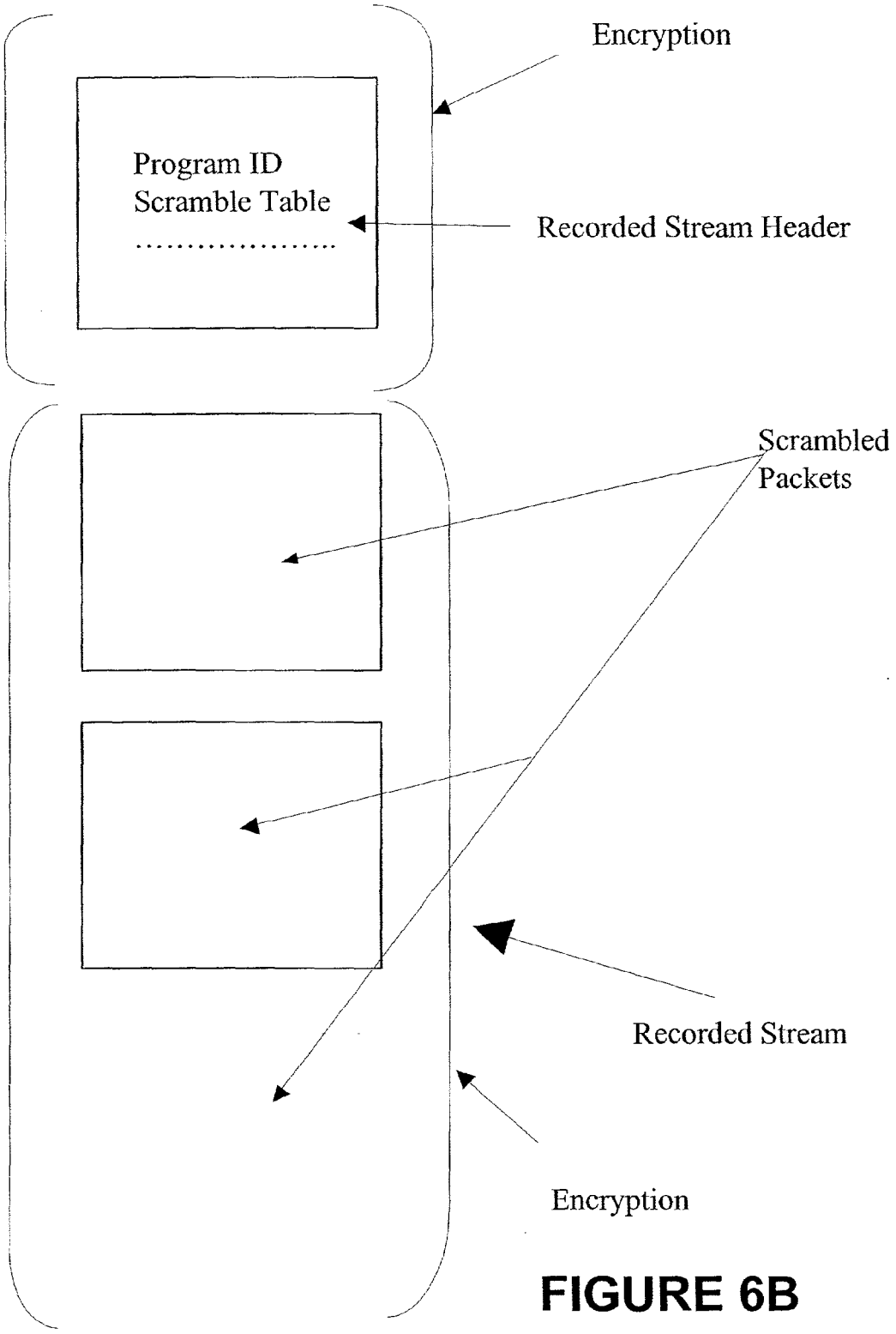

Encryption
Program ID
Scramble Table
.....
Recorded Stream Header
Scrambled
Packets
Recorded Stream
Encryption

FIGURE 6B

DIGITAL RIGHTS MANAGEMENT

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application hereby claims the benefit of the priority of U.S. Provisional Patent Application, Ser. No. 60/214,726, filed Jun. 29, 2000, which is hereby incorporated by reference. This application also hereby incorporates by reference U.S. Patent Application, Ser. No. 09/835,529, entitled "Channel Dancer" and filed Apr. 17, 2001, U.S. Patent Application, Ser. No. 09/878,232, entitled "Personal Content Manager" and filed Jun. 12, 2000, and U.S. Patent Application entitled "Virtual Multicasting", invented by Khanh Mai, Roland Noll, Tom Grimes and Tom Dong, and filed on the same date, under separate cover, as the present application.

BACKGROUND

[0002] 1. Technical Field

[0003] The present invention is related to access to secure or restricted content, and more particularly to the management of digital rights to secure or restricted rich media and multimedia content available over high bandwidth connections.

[0004] 2. Description of Related Art

[0005] Over the past ten years, the bandwidth capacity available to consumers for receiving content from the Internet and other networks has increased ten-fold and more. The increased bandwidth capacity has enabled consumers to download larger and larger files and other content, including rich media and multimedia content such as audio clips, video clips, songs, programs and movies (collectively, programs or content). This increased bandwidth capacity has increased Internet usage and the potential for enjoyable and productive usage.

[0006] Often the content offered to users over the Internet or other networks is restricted or secured for any number of reasons. For example, the content may be secured since it is confidential and only intended for a certain user or users. Likewise, the content may be available only on a pay-per-view or membership basis and, therefore, is restricted to only those users that pay for the content or are members of a particular group. Further, the content may be restricted since it is copyright protected. Also, the content may be restricted by age (e.g., adult-only content) and is, therefore, restricted to users above a certain age.

[0007] Unfortunately, present systems for securing or restricting content are cumbersome and inefficient. The infrastructure to support secure distribution and provide ongoing enforcement of digital rights management is not in place. Existing systems are not flexible enough to provide an efficient system of digital rights management for a wide variety of types of content.

[0008] What is needed is a mechanism for flexibly and efficiently providing secure access of protected content to users.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] An advantage of the present invention is that it overcomes the disadvantages and shortcomings of the prior art. Another advantage of the present invention is that it provides generic digital rights management that may be used in providing protection for content disseminated in most any manner. Another advantage of the present invention is that it provides conditional access to protected material on a standalone digital certificate basis.

[0010] These and other advantages of the present invention are achieved in a method for digital rights management includes receiving content at a client computer. The content is encrypted with an encryption key. The method further includes the client computer requesting the encryption key from a digital rights management (DRM) server using a digital certificate, the DRM server receiving the request and the DRM server determining if the digital certificate is valid. The DRM server is remote from the client computer.

[0011] These and other advantages of the present invention are also achieved in a system for digital rights management comprising a client computer and a DRM server. The client computer includes software comprising instructions for receiving content. The content is encrypted with an encryption key. The client computer software further comprises instructions for requesting the encryption key from a digital rights management (DRM) server using a digital certificate. The DRM server includes software comprising instructions for receiving the request and determining if the digital certificate is valid. The DRM server is remote from the client computer.

[0012] These and other advantages of the present invention are also achieved in a computer-readable medium comprising instructions for digital rights management, by receiving content at a client computer. The content is encrypted with an encryption key. The computer-readable medium further comprises instructions for requesting the encryption key from a digital rights management (DRM) server using a digital certificate. The DRM server is remote from the client computer. The DRM server receives the request. The DRM server determines if the digital certificate is valid.

[0013] These and other advantages of the present invention are also achieved in a computer-readable medium comprising instructions for digital rights management, by receiving a client computer request, at a digital rights management (DRM) server, for an encryption key using a digital certificate and determining if the digital certificate is valid. The client computer receives content that is encrypted with the encryption key.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0014] The detailed description will refer to the following drawings, in which like numbers and letters refer to like items, and in which:

[0015] **FIG. 1** is a schematic diagram illustrating an exemplary content delivery system with which the present invention may be used.

[0016] **FIGS. 2A and 2B** are block diagrams illustrating exemplary hardware components that support and enable the present invention.

[0017] FIGS. **3A-3B** are flowcharts illustrating an exemplary method of digital rights management.

[0018] **FIG. 4** is a block diagram illustrating an exemplary stream of content.

[0019] **FIGS. 5A** to **5**D are flow-block diagrams illustrating an exemplary method of digital rights management.

[0020] **FIG. 6A** is a flowchart illustrating an exemplary method of digital rights management.

[0021] **FIG. 6B** is a block diagram illustrating an exemplary recorded stream of content.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0022] **FIG. 1** illustrates a broadband content delivery system **10** with which the digital rights management system and method of the present invention may be used to regulate and control access to broadband content delivered by the system and other content (e.g., digital music or video files from websites on the Internet). The illustrative broadband content delivery system **10** comprises a signal origination point **12**, a transmission medium **14** (e.g., a satellite or a landline), one or more service providers **16**, and one or more clients **18**. The client **18** typically includes a user machine (e.g., a PC) that includes resident client software. The client software enables access to the broadband content, supports the broadband content delivery system **10** and the digital rights management system. Indeed, the client software is part of the digital rights management system. Typically, high bandwidth content **20** (e.g., video, audio and web data) is transmitted from a signal origination point **12** such as a Network Operations Center ("NOC") on high-resolution ("high rez") virtual channels **22**. The transmission medium **14** is satellite, ether and/or landline, or a combination thereof. The content **20** is received by a service provider **16**, typically an edge-of-net broadband Internet service provider ("ISP") and transmitted over a broadband medium **24**, such as a digital subscriber line ("DSL") or coaxial cable, to a client **18**. The broadband medium connection may be maintained or "open" continuously or substantially maintained continuously. Two-way communications between the client **18** and the NOC **12** are maintained over the Internet **26**. Content may also be received by the client **18** directly from the Internet **26** via the ISP **16**.

[0023] In addition to transmitting the content on virtual channels **22**, the broadband content delivery system **10** also transmits a control channel (signal) that is received by the client **18**. The control channel contains information and instructions that help enable the client **18** (i e., the client software) to access and control the content **20** provided by the broadband content delivery system **10**. The control channel is used to issue commands or directives to the client **18**. These commands or directives may result in feedback or a report back from the client **18** to the NOC **12** via the Internet. Significantly, the control channel is used to deliver program descriptors or "program nuggets", and digital messages, such as those described below (e.g., in FIGS. **5**A-**5**D). Additionally, some commands or directives may report a failed identity or digital rights check. For example, a command or directive may report an invalid digital certificate to the client **18**. Digital certificates are described in detail below.

[0024] Not necessarily all clients **18** of the broadband content delivery system **10** will have the bandwidth capability or resources to receive the high bandwidth on high rez virtual channels **22** (e.g., 512 Kbps or more). Accordingly, in addition to high bandwidth content **20**, the broadband content delivery system **10** provides low bandwidth content **20** on low-resolution ("low rez") virtual channels **22** (e.g., approximately 200 Kbps) or other communications bandwidth to accommodate these clients. Consequently, when a client **18** signs-on, the broadband content delivery system **10** preferably conducts a bandwidth test to measure client's **18** bandwidth capability ("available bandwidth"). Usually, the available bandwidth is calculated as the maximum bandwidth content that the client **18** can consistently receive.

[0025] Referring back to **FIG. 1**, content **20** may be transmitted or broadcast by the NOC **12** on the virtual channels **22** as real-time multicast or unicast streams. A multicast stream comprises streaming content that is directed to and available to multiple clients **18** that join a multicast group. A unicast stream comprises streaming content that is directed to and available to one client **18** (at a time unicast content must be replicated for each client **18** that receives it). Furthermore, additional content **20** may be provided by third-parties as on-demand broadband content selected from the Internet ("edge-of-net") by a user at the client **18**. For example, an ISP **16** may provide the edge-of-net content. Likewise, the user may store selected content, such as portions of the real-time multicast or unicast streams in a local cache at the client **18**. This stored or personal content **28** may be kept on a user machine hard-drive or other storage medium.

[0026] **FIGS. 2A and 2B** are block diagrams illustrating exemplary hardware components of the broadband content delivery system **10** that may be used for implementing the digital rights management system. **FIG. 2A** includes the client **18**, comprising a user machine **40** connected with a network such as the Internet **26**, providing network connections to the NOC **12** and the ISP **16**. The user machine **40** includes the client software **43** that the user has downloaded from an ISP **16** or portal or otherwise obtained (e.g., by loading from a CD-ROM or magnetic disk or by being pre-installed on the user machine **40**). As mentioned, the client software **43** supports the broadband content delivery system **10** and is executed to perform functions of the digital rights management system. Preferably, the client software **43** includes a digital rights management ("DRM") module **45** that is programmed to perform the digital rights management methods (or portions thereof) described below. Other clients **18**, such as client **19** may also be connected with network and may include the same components as client **18**.

[0027] The user machine **40** illustrates typical components of a user machine. The user machine **40** typically includes a memory **42**, a secondary storage device **44**, a processor **46**, an input device **48**, a display device **50**, and an output device **52**. Memory **42** may include random access memory (RAM) or similar types of memory, and it may store one or more applications **44**, including client software **43**, and a web browser **56**, for execution by processor **46**. The secondary storage device **44** may include a hard disk drive, floppy disk drive, CD-ROM drive, or other types of non-volatile data storage. The local cache that includes a user's personal content **28**, and a user's personal profile, may be stored on the secondary storage device **44**.

[0028] The processor **46** may execute client software **43** (including the DRM module **45**) and other applications **44** stored in memory **42** or secondary storage **50**, or received from the Internet or other network **60**. The processor **46** may execute client software **43**, including the DRM module **45**, in order to provide the functions described in this specification including the digital rights management functions described below. The input device **48** may include any device for entering information into the user machine **40**, such as a keyboard, mouse, cursor-control device, touch-screen, infrared, microphone, digital camera, video recorder or camcorder. The display device **50** may include any type of device for presenting visual information such as, for example, a computer monitor or flat-screen display. The output device **52** may include any type of device for presenting a hard copy of information, such as a printer, and other types of output devices include speakers or any device for providing information in audio form.

[0029] The web browser **56** is used to access the client software **43** and display interface screens through which the user can manage and access the broadband content broadcast by the broadband content delivery system **10**. The web browser **56** also is used to access the NOC **12**, the ISP **16**, and third-party websites including other content (e.g., digital music and video files). Examples of web browsers **56** include the Netscape Navigator program and the Microsoft Internet Explorer program. The content broadcast on virtual channels and received by the client **18** may be displayed through the web-browser. The content may include "links", for example, HyperText Transport Protocol ("HTTP") hyperlinks to other content and/or Internet websites. Multimedia applications such as Microsoft Media Player™ and RealPlayer™ may be used to enable viewing of the real-time multicast stream. Any web browser, co-browser, or other application capable of retrieving content from a network (any wireline or wireless network may be used) and displaying pages or screens may be used.

[0030] Examples of user machines **40** for interacting within the broadband content delivery system **10** include personal computers, laptop computers, notebook computers, palm top computers, network computers, Internet appliances, or any processor-controlled device capable of executing a web browser **56** or other type of application for interacting with the broadband content delivery system **10**.

[0031] The NOC **12** may comprise a plurality of servers. **FIG. 2B** illustrates typical hardware components of a digital rights management ("DRM") server **58** at the NOC **12**. Other servers at the NOC **12**, such as the channel controller, and at the ISP **16**, such as a local system POP server, may have similar or the same hardware components. The DRM server **58** typically includes a memory **60**, a secondary storage device **62**, a processor **64**, an input device **66**, a display device **68**, and an output device **70**. The memory **60** may include RAM or similar types of memory, and it may store one or more applications **72** for execution by processor **64**. The applications **72** include a digital rights management ("DRM") application **65** (or module) that is programmed to perform the digital rights management methods (or portions thereof) described below.

[0032] The secondary storage device **62** may include a hard disk drive, floppy disk drive, CD-ROM drive, or other types of non-volatile data storage. The processor **64** executes DRM application **65**, and other application(s) **72**, that is stored in memory **60** or secondary storage **62**, or received from the Internet **26** or other network. The input device **66** may include any device for entering information into DRM server **58**, such as a keyboard, mouse, cursor-control device, touch-screen, infrared, microphone, digital camera, video recorder or camcorder. The display device **68** may include any type of device for presenting visual information such as, for example, a computer monitor or flatscreen display. The output device **70** may include any type of device for presenting a hard copy of information, such as a printer, and other types of output devices include speakers or any device for providing information in audio form.

[0033] The DRM server **58** may store a database structure in secondary storage **74**, for example, for storing and maintaining information regarding the broadband content delivery system **10** and the clients **18**. For example, it may maintain a relational, object-oriented, or other DRM database for storing DRM information such as digital certificates with private keys and linked hardware profiles (see below).

[0034] As mentioned above, processor **46** and/or processor **64** may execute one or more software applications **44** or **72**, such as DRM module **45** and DRM application **65**, in order to provide the digital rights management system and methods, and other functions described in this specification. The processing may be implemented in software, such as software modules, for execution by computers or other machines. Preferably, the DRM module **45** is a module or component of the client software **43**.

[0035] The processing by processor **46** and/or processor **64** may provide and support pages, windows and menus (collectively, "screens ") described in this specification and otherwise for display on display devices associated with the client **18**. The term "screen" refers to any visual element or combinations of visual elements for displaying information or forms; examples include, but are not limited to, graphical user interfaces on a display device or information displayed in web pages or in pop-up windows/menus on a display device. The screens may be formatted, for example, as web pages in HyperText Markup Language (HTML), Extensible Markup Language (XML) or in any other suitable form for presentation on a display device depending upon applications used by users to interact with the broadband content delivery system **10**.

[0036] Although only one DRM server **58** is shown, broadband content delivery system **10** may use multiple servers **59** as necessary or desired to support the users and may also use back-up or redundant servers to prevent network downtime in the event of a failure of a particular server. In addition, although the user machine **40** and DRM server **58** are depicted with various components, one skilled in the art will appreciate that the user machine **40** and the DRM server **58** can contain additional or different components. In addition, although aspects of an implementation consistent with the present invention are described as being stored in memory, one skilled in the art will appreciate that these aspects can also be stored on or read from other types of computer program products or computer-readable media, such as secondary storage devices, including hard disks, floppy disks, or CD-ROM; a carrier wave from the Internet or other network; or other forms of RAM or ROM. The computer-readable media may include instructions for con-

trolling a computer system, such as user machine **40** and DRM server **58**, to perform a particular method or implementation, such as those described below.

[**0037**] FIGS. **3**A-**3**B are flowcharts illustrating a method **80** of digital rights management according to the present invention. Method **80** may be implemented, for example, with software modules for execution by processor **46**, processor **64**, or a combination of the two processors. As shown, the method **80** preferably comprises the steps of: ordering content **82**, which may include purchasing the content **83**; generating a digital certificate **84**; creating a hardware profile **85**; storing the certificate and hardware profile **86**; transmitting the certificate to client **87**; preparing and encrypting the content **88**; transmitting the content to the client **90**; receiving the content at the client **92**, which may include decrypting and reading a stream header **93**; requesting an encryption key using digital certificate **94**; receiving the encryption key request and validating the digital certificate **96**; encrypting and transmitting the encryption key **98**; decrypting the encryption key **100**; and, decrypting the content with the encryption key **102**.

[**0038**] Ordering content **82** comprises a user at the client **18** ordering content, that is transmitted via a virtual channel **22**, from the NOC **12**. The content may be ordered from the NOC **12** via the Internet **26** using an interface screen displayed on the web browser **56**. The interface screen may be, for example, any of the interface screens shown in related application Personal Content Management, Ser. No. 09/878,232, filed Jun. 12, 2001, which is hereby incorporated by reference. Alternatively, ordering content **82** comprises a user at the client **18** ordering content from a third-party content provider, such as a from a third-party website accessible through the Internet **26**.

[**0039**] As noted above, ordering content **82** may include purchasing the content **83**. Purchasing the content **83** comprises, for example, the user purchasing pay-per-view ("PPV") content or a subscription to content through, for example, a secure sockets layer ("SSL") transaction with the DRM server **58** (or other NOC **12** component) or with a third-party website server. The user may pay for the content using known methods, such as with a credit card payment or a submission of credits previously purchased or earned by the user. If the content is restricted content, e.g., content restricted by age, ordering content **82** may also include the user submitting proof that the user meets the restriction (e.g., that the user is above the age limit).

[**0040**] If the ordered content is PPV content or subscription content, or is otherwise restricted content, a digital certificate may be generated for the content and the content may be encrypted so that only clients **18** that receive the digital certificate can access the content. Consequently, only those clients **18** that purchased the PPV content or the subscription, or that meet the restriction, will receive the digital certificate. When a user successfully purchases PPV content or subscription content, or otherwise restricted content is broadcast, the DRM server **58** or other server at the NOC **12** creates an encrypted digital certificate and transmits it, via the control channel, the Internet **26**, or some other communication medium, to the client **18**. For example, the process of ordering content **82** may include an interactive session between the client **18** and the DRM server **58** in which the DRM application **65** creates the digital certificate and transmits it to the client **18** in advance of broadcast of the PPV content, subscription content, or otherwise restricted content.

[**0041**] Therefore, referring to **FIG. 3**A, generating a digital certificate **84** preferably comprises the DRM application **65** creating a unique standard public key infrastructure ("PKI") key pair (ie., corresponding public and private keys), creating a digital certificate that includes a program ID that identifies the ordered content, the public key of the PKI key pair and a digital certificate serial number, and creating a corresponding digital certificate that includes the private key of the PKI key pair and the digital certificate serial number, using methods known to one of ordinary skill in the art. Alternatively, generating a digital certificate **84** may be performed by the third-party website server (e.g., when the user orders content from a third-party website). If the third-party website server generates the digital certificate, the digital certificate with the public key is transmitted to the client **18** and the digital certificate with the private key is transmitted to the DRM server **58**. The digital certificate serial number is used to identify and locate the digital certificate, as explained below. The digital certificate preferably also includes associated business rules, such as a certificate expiration date, that are used as part of the certificate validation process.

[**0042**] A hardware profile (or pc profile) that identifies the hardware components of the client **18** that ordered the content is preferably linked to and stored with the digital certificate with the private key in the DRM database. The hardware profile is preferably a proprietary representation of the user machine **40** based on hardware related constants. The hardware profile may include, for example, a serial number of the user machine **40**, a description of the processor **46** (e.g., a Pentium III processor), components of the user machine **40** (e.g., amount/type of memory, amount/type of secondary storage, etc.), the type of user machine **40** (e.g, a Dell® laptop, a Palm Pilot®, etc.), or a combination of this and/or other information that may be automatically retrieved, using methods known to one of ordinary skill in the art, from the user machine **40** of the client **18** that ordered the content. Therefore, generating a hardware profile **85** preferably comprises DRM application **65** retrieving such hardware profile information from the user machine **40** of the client **18** that ordered the content and creating a hardware profile file that includes the hardware profile information. The DRM application **65** may determine the hardware profile information in the background during the interactive content ordering session between the client **18** and the DRM server **58**. Alternatively, the user may be prompted to manually enter or confirm the hardware profile information. The generating step **85** alternatively may be performed during installation of the client software **43**. The hardware profile generally remains constant throughout the life of the user machine **40**. The hardware profile is preferably a unique characteristic or set of characteristics (i.e., digital DNA) of the user machine **40**.

[**0043**] Storing the certificate and the hardware profile **86** preferably comprises the DRM application **65** storing the digital certificate with the private key and the hardware profile (of the client **18** that ordered the content) in the DRM database maintained by the DRM server **58**. The hardware profile of the client **18** is linked with the digital certificate. Transmitting the certificate **87** preferably comprises the

DRM application **65** transmitting the digital certificate with the public key to the client **18** that ordered the content. The digital certificate may be transmitted **87** during the interactive content ordering session between the client **18** and the DRM server **58**. If the digital certificate is generated by a third-party website server, the digital certificate is transmitted **87** by the third-party website server to the client **18** (and to the DRM server **58**). The digital certificate is preferably stored in the secondary storage device **44** of the client **18**.

[**0044**] A portion of the digital rights management takes place during the preparation and broadcast of content as a real-time multicast (or unicast) stream on a virtual channel **22**. The real-time streams on the virtual channels **22** preferably include a plurality of digital data packets. Each piece of content (e.g., a program, digital music file, digital video file) preferably comprises a plurality of related digital data packets. One of the related digital data packets is a multicast (or unicast) stream header, as illustrated in **FIG. 4**. The multicast stream header preferably includes a program ID and a program type. The program ID identifies the particular piece of content. The program type indicates further information about the program such as whether the particular piece of content is pay-per-view, pay-per-download or subscription ("PPV") content or otherwise restricted (e.g., R-rated, adult only, parental controlled, certain employees only, etc.) content. The digital certificate issued for the particular piece of content preferably includes a program ID that matches the program ID with stream header.

[**0045**] Referring back to **FIG. 3**A, preparing and encrypting the content **88** preferably comprises generating a symmetric encryption key **881**, encrypting one or more of the related digital data packets with the symmetric encryption key **882**, and packaging the related digital data packets together **883**. Generating a symmetric encryption key preferably comprises the DRM application **65** generating a symmetric encryption key for the content in a manner known to one of ordinary skill in the art, storing and linking the symmetric encryption key with the digital certificate of the content in the DRM database, and transmitting the symmetric encryption key to a channel controller. Channel controllers are used to produce the virtual channels **22** on which the streams are broadcast, as described in related U.S. patent application, Ser. No. 09/835,529, filed Apr. 17, 2001, hereby incorporated by reference. Alternatively, the symmetric key may be generated by the third-party website server and transmitted to the DRM server **58** for storage and linkage with the digital certificate of the content in the DRM database, if the content originates from the third-party website. Encrypting one or more of the related digital data packets with the symmetric encryption key **882** preferably comprises the channel controller encrypting one or more of the digital data packets of the content with the symmetric encryption key in a manner known to one of ordinary skill in the art. Alternatively, the encrypting step **882** may be performed by the third-party website server, if the content originates from the third-party website.

[**0046**] Packaging the related digital data packets together **883** preferably comprises the channel controller encrypting the related digital data packets with a static application key. The static application key is preferably maintained at the NOC **12** and the client **18**. This encryption is a second, optional encryption. This and the above encryption are generally less than 128-bit encryption, so that the client **18** processor **46** can decrypt the packets fast enough to keep up with the high data rates of the real-time stream. Generally, the more bits used in the encryption, the more processing is required to decrypt the packets. With faster client **18** processors **46**, greater-bit encryption may be used.

[**0047**] Referring to **FIG. 3**B, transmitting the content **90** preferably comprises the NOC **12** broadcasting the content as a real-time stream on a virtual channel **22**. Alternatively, the third-party website server may transmit the content **90** via the Internet **26**. Receiving the content **92** preferably comprises the client **18** receiving the real-time stream (i e., the packaged related digital data packets). After initial receipt of the real-time stream, the client **18** de-crypts the multicast stream header. Decrypting and reading a stream header **93** preferably comprises the client software **43** decrypting the packaged content with the static encryption key and reading the multicast stream header to determine if the program type indicates that the particular piece of content is PPV, subscription or otherwise restricted viewing.

[**0048**] Referring to **FIG. 3**B, if the piece of content is PPV, subscription or otherwise restricted viewing, the client **18** (e.g., the DRM module **45**) preferably requests the symmetric encryption key using the digital certificate **94**. **FIG. 5A** illustrates an exemplary method of the client **18** requesting the symmetric encryption key using the digital certificate. When the client **18** requests the symmetric encryption key, the DRM server **58** (e.g., the DRM application **65**) receives the request and validates the digital certificate **96**, which is exemplarily illustrated in **FIG. 5**B and described in detail below. If the request is validated, the DRM server **58** (e.g., the DRM application **65**) encrypts and transmits the symmetric encryption key **98**, as exemplarily illustrated in **FIG. 5**C and described in detail below. Upon receipt, the client **18** decrypts the symmetric encryption key **100**, as exemplarily illustrated in **FIG. 5**D and described in detail below. In a manner known to one of ordinary skill in the art, the DRM module **45** decrypts the content **102** (i.e., the related digital data packets) with the symmetric encryption key. Once the content is decrypted **102**, the content may be displayed on the display device **50**, played on a speaker or other audio output device of the user machine **40**, or otherwise output by the client **18**.

[**0049**] **FIG. 4** illustrates the first few related digital data packets **112** of a piece of content in a multicast stream **110** (may be a unicast stream). One of the digital data packets **112** is the multicast (or unicast) stream header **114**. As discussed above, the multicast stream header **114** preferably includes the program ID **1141** and program type **1142**. The related digital data packets **112** are shown with a first layer of symmetric key encryption **116** and an outer layer of static application key encryption **118**, with reference to step **88** in **FIG. 3A** above. As shown, the static application key encryption **118** preferably encrypts all of the related digital data packets **112**, including the multicast stream header **114**. Likewise, the symmetric key encryption **116** preferably encrypts a subset of the related digital data packets **112**, excluding the multicast stream header **114**.

[**0050**] As discussed above, **FIG. 5A** is a function-block diagram that illustrates an exemplary method **120** of the client **18** requesting the symmetric encryption key of received content, corresponding to step **94** of the method **80** shown in **FIG. 3B**. Steps of the method **120** are represented

by reference letters while various components, files, keys, etc. utilized or effected by the method **120** are represented by reference numbers. As shown in **FIG. 5**A, the method **120** comprises the DRM module **45** (not shown in **FIG. 5A**) (a) randomly generating a session key **122**. The DRM module **45** (b) encrypts the hardware profile **124** of the client **18** with the session key **122** using a standard encryption algorithm **126**. Using the program ID from the multicast stream header **114** of the received content, the DRM module **45** (c) retrieves the corresponding digital certificate **128** for the received content from a digital certificate store on the client **18** (e.g., in the secondary storage device **44**) by searching the digital certificate store for a digital certificate with a program ID matching the program ID from the multicast stream header **114**. In the example shown in **FIG. 5**A, the content is PPV content so the digital certificate **128** for the received content is a PPV certificate. The digital certificate **128** is preferably retrieved (c) from the secondary storage device **44** of the client **18**.

[**0051**] As discussed above, the digital certificate **128** transmitted and received by the client **18** includes the public key **130** of the PKI key pair generated by the DRM application **65** (e.g., step **84** of **FIG. 3**). The method **120** further comprises the DRM module **45** (d) encrypting the session key with the public key **130** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. The DRM module **45** digitally envelopes (step not shown) the encrypted hardware profile **132**, the encrypted session key **134**, and the digital certificate serial number **1143** together as a second layer digitally enveloped message **138**. The DRM module **45** (e) encrypts the digitally enveloped message **138** with the static application key **136** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. The DRM module **45** preferably digitally envelopes (step not shown) the encrypted digitally enveloped message **138** and the standard encryption algorithm **126** together as a first layer digitally enveloped message **139** and transmits (not shown) the first layer digitally enveloped message **139** to the NOC **12** (via the Internet **26** or other connection).

[**0052**] **FIG. 5B** is a function-block diagram that illustrates an exemplary method **140** of the NOC **12** receiving and validating the client **18** request, corresponding to step **96** of the method **80** shown in **FIG. 3**. As above, steps of the method **140** are represented by reference letters while various components utilized or effected by the method **140** are represented by reference numbers. The method **140** comprises the DRM application **65** (f) decrypting the encrypted digitally enveloped message **138** with the static application key **136** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. Using the digital certificate serial number **135** contained in the digitally enveloped message **138**, the DRM application **65** (g) retrieves the corresponding digital certificate **142** from the DRM database. As discussed above, the digital certificate **142** is preferably the same as the digital certificate **126** stored at the client **18** except that the digital certificate **142** includes the private key **144** of the PKI key pair.

[**0053**] Accordingly, the method **140** further comprises the DRM application **65** (h) decrypting the encrypted session key **134** with the private key **144** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. The DRM application **65** decrypts (i) the encrypted hardware profile **132** with the session key **122** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. The DRM application **65** then compares (j) the hardware profile **124** with the hardware profile (not shown) linked to the digital certificate **142** in the DRM database. If the hardware profiles match, and the associated business rules are satisfied (e.g., the digital certificate is not expired), the digital certificate is validated and the method shown in **FIG. 5C** is performed. If the hardware profiles do not match or the associated business rules are not satisfied (e.g., the digital certificate is expired), a "validation refused" message, or similar message, is returned to the client **18** (e.g., via a control channel) and the process ends.

[**0054**] **FIG. 5C** is a function-block diagram that illustrates an exemplary method **150** of the NOC **12** encrypting and transmitting the symmetric encryption key, corresponding to step **98** of the method **80** shown in **FIG. 3**. As above, steps of the method **150** are represented by reference letters while various components utilized or effected by the method **150** are represented by reference numbers. The method **150** comprises the DRM application **65** (k) retrieving the symmetric encryption key **152** linked to the digital certificate **142** in the DRM database and encrypting the symmetric encryption key **152** with hardware profile **126** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. The encrypted symmetric encryption key **154** is preferably digitally enveloped (step not shown) as a third layer digitally enveloped message **156**.

[**0055**] The method **150** further comprises the DRM application **65** (m) randomly generating a session key **158** and (n) encrypting the digitally enveloped message **156** with the session key **158** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. The DRM application **65** (o) encrypts the session key **158** with the private key **144** using the standard encryption algorithm **126** and digital envelopes (not shown) the encrypted digitally enveloped message **162**, the encrypted session key **164** and the digital certificate serial number **135** in a second layer digitally enveloped message **160**. The DRM application **65** (p) encrypts the digitally enveloped message **160** with the static application key **136** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. The encrypted digitally enveloped message **160** and the standard encryption algorithm **126** are preferably enveloped (not shown) as a first layer digitally enveloped message **166** and transmitted (not shown) to the client **18**.

[**0056**] **FIG. 5D** is a function-block diagram that illustrates an exemplary method **170** of the client **18** receiving and decrypting the symmetric encryption key, corresponding to step **100** of the method **80** shown in **FIG. 3**. As above, steps of the method **170** are represented by reference letters while various components utilized or effected by the method **170** are represented by reference numbers. The method **170** comprises the preferably DRM module **45** (q) decrypting the encrypted digitally enveloped message **160** with the static application key **136** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. Using the digital certificate serial number **135** from the digitally enveloped message **160**, the DRM module **45** (r) retrieves the corresponding digital certificate **128** for the received content and (s) decrypts the encrypted session key **164** with the public key **130** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. The DRM module **45** (t) decrypts the encrypted digitally enveloped message **162** with the session key **158** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. The DRM module **45** (u) decrypts the encrypted symmetric encryption key **154** with the hardware profile **124** using the standard encryption algorithm **126**. The symmetric encryption key **152** may then be used to decrypt the content (e.g.,

the symmetric key encryption **116** of the subset of the related digital data packets **112**), as in step **102** of the method **80** illustrated in **FIG. 3**.

[**0057**] The NOC **12** explicitly enables recording of content. Generally, if the NOC **12** does not enable recording for a particular piece of content, a client **18** will not record the content. The NOC **12** may enable the recording of a piece of content by including an indication of such in the stream header **114**. If recorded content has a corresponding digital certificate (the recorded content is PPV content, subscription content or otherwise restricted content), access to the content may be determined as shown above in **FIGS. 5A** to **5**D. In other words, the recorded content may be encrypted with a symmetric encryption key **152** that must be requested as shown in **FIG. 5A**. If the digital certificate is expired or the business rules associated with the digital certificate otherwise indicate that the digital certificate is invalid (e.g., content was not permitted to be recorded) the request is invalidated and the recorded content cannot be accessed.

[**0058**] When content is recorded and stored in the client's local cache (e.g., on the secondary storage device **50** of the user machine **40**), another portion of the digital rights management takes place, as shown in **FIG. 6A**. **FIG. 6A** illustrates a method **200** of digital rights management for recorded content. Method **200** may be implemented, for example, with software modules for execution by processor **46**, processor **64**, or a combination of the two processors. The method **200** comprises the steps of: creating a recorded stream header **202**, encrypting the recorded stream header **204**, storing the recorded stream header **206**, scrambling packets of the content **208**, storing the scrambled packets **210**, and encrypting the scrambled packets or the packet scramble table **212**. When a client records content, additional security is built into the recorded stream. A recorded stream header **214**, as shown in **FIG. 6***b*, is created **202** and stored at the client **12** (e.g., on the secondary storage device **50**) with the related digital data packets **214** of the recorded content. The recorded stream header is encrypted **204** with 128-bit encryption using the static application key (the DRM module **45** preferably includes static application key necessary for decrypting the recorded stream header **214**). The recorded stream header **214** includes the program ID of the recording content and a packet scramble table. Accordingly, the stream of packets may be scrambled if the packets are recorded or stored. For example, the contents of each individual packet may be scrambled using a mathematical "XOR" operation or other similar process such as that utilizing a lookup table. The recorded stream header must be first decrypted and the packet scramble table read in order to determine the proper order of the packet contents. The inherent security in scrambling the packets is enhanced by using different scrambling for each instance of recording content. The scrambled packets or the packet scramble table are encrypted **212** with the symmetric key from the content's digital certificate.

[**0059**] When a client attempts to display the recorded content, the client software **43** (e.g., the DRM module **45**) decrypts the recorded stream header and attempts to retrieve the symmetric key as shown above in FIGS. **5A-5**D. If the symmetric key is successfully retrieved the client **18** decrypts the scrambled packets or the packet scramble table and then de-scrambles the recorded stream of packets. Once the recorded stream of packets is de-scrambled, they may be displayed as streaming video on the user machine display.

[**0060**] Note that the hardware profile will not match the user machine **40** of client **18** if the user has made an unauthorized transfer of the client software **43**. Normally, the present invention supports the user's migration from one user machine to another. This allows the user to upgrade the user machine **40** in order to take advantage of better technology. However, for example, the user may have copied the client software **43**, including the certificate store, onto a second user machine while the client software **43** is still resident on a first user machine, without registering or otherwise receiving authorization from the system. In this situation, the digital certificate on the DRM server **58** would retain the hardware profile of the first user machine **40**, thereby preventing unauthorized viewing of content on the second user machine.

[**0061**] For recorded content, a packet scramble table, or other additional encryption information for the recorded content, may be placed in the header of each recorded packet instead of the recorded stream header. For example, the recorded content packets may be encrypted with 128-bit encryption and the content data in each recorded packet may be scrambled. When the recorded content is displayed, the recorded content packets are decrypted and the packet scramble table in each header is used to de-scramble the content data in each recorded packet. Alternatively, a subset of the recorded content packets may include a packet scramble table in their headers.

[**0062**] The digital rights management described above includes the encryption of every packet of a particular piece of content. Alternatively, other encryption method may be used, such as encrypting every other packet or some other combination of packets. Likewise, the multicast stream utilizes forward error correction with redundant information every fifteenth (15th) packet. Alternatively, other error correction may be user and the redundant information may be spaced at different intervals.

[**0063**] While the invention has been described with reference to the exemplary embodiments thereof, those skilled in the art will be able to make various modifications to the described embodiments of the invention without departing from the true spirit and scope of the invention. The terms and descriptions used herein are set forth by way of illustration only and are not meant as limitations. Those skilled in the art will recognize that these and other variations are possible within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined in the following claims and their equivalents.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of digital rights management (DRM), comprising the steps of:

receiving content at a client computer, wherein the content is encrypted with an encryption key;

the client computer requesting the encryption key from a server using a digital certificate, wherein the server is remote from the client computer;

the server receiving the request; and

determining if the digital certificate is valid.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein if the digital certificate is valid the method further comprises the steps of:

transmitting the encryption key to the client computer; and

the client computer decrypting the content with the encryption key.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising the steps of:

encrypting the encryption key, wherein:

the transmitting step transmits the encrypted encryption key to the client computer; and

the client computer decrypting the encrypted encryption key.

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of:

determining a hardware profile of the client computer, wherein:

the encrypting step encrypts the encryption key with the hardware profile of the client computer.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein:

the hardware profile of the client computer is stored and linked with a copy of the digital certificate on the server; and

the determining step retrieves the hardware profile that is linked with the copy of the digital certificate.

6. The method of claim 2, wherein encryption key is only stored in volatile memory of the client computer.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein:

a first hardware profile of the client computer is stored and linked with a copy of the digital certificate on the server;

the requesting step includes transmitting a second hardware profile of the client computer to the server; and

the determining step determines whether the second hardware profile is the same as the first hardware profile.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the digital certificate includes a public key of a public key infrastructure (PKI) key pair and the method further comprises the step of:

encrypting the second hardware profile of the client computer with a random session key; and

encrypting the random session key with the public key of the PKI key pair.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein:

a copy of the digital certificate including a private key of the PKI key pair is stored on the server; and

the determining step includes decrypting the random session key with the private key of the PKI key pair.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein:

the digital certificate includes a certificate serial number;

a copy of the digital certificate that includes the certificate serial number is stored on the server;

the requesting step includes transmitting the certificate serial number to the server; and

the determining step includes retrieving the copy of the digital certificate using the certificate serial number.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the receiving step receives content from a website server.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the server is a first server and the receiving step receives content from a second server co-located with the first server.

13. A system for digital rights management comprising:

a client computer, wherein the client computer includes software comprising instructions for:

receiving content, wherein the content is encrypted with an encryption key; and

requesting the encryption key from a digital rights management (DRM) server using a digital certificate, wherein the server is remote from the client computer; and

the server, wherein the server includes software comprising instructions for:

receiving the request; and

determining if the digital certificate is valid.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein the server software further comprises instructions for:

if the digital certificate is valid, transmitting the encryption key to the client computer

15. The system of claim 14, wherein the client computer software further comprises instructions for:

decrypting the content with the encryption key.

16. The system of claim 13, wherein the server software further comprises instructions for:

encrypting the encryption key, wherein the transmitting instruction transmits the encrypted encryption key to the client computer.

17. The system of claim 16, wherein the server software further comprises instructions for:

determining a hardware profile of the client computer, wherein the encrypting instruction encrypts the encryption key with the hardware profile of the client computer.

18. The system of claim 16, wherein the hardware profile of the client computer is stored and linked with a copy of the digital certificate on the server and the determining instruction retrieves the hardware profile that is linked with the copy of the digital certificate.

19. The system of claim 13, wherein:

the server includes a first hardware profile of the client computer stored and linked with a copy of the digital certificate;

the requesting instruction includes transmitting a second hardware profile of the client computer to the server; and

the determining instruction determines whether the second hardware profile is the same as the first hardware profile.

20. The system of claim 19, wherein the digital certificate includes a public key of a public key infrastructure (PKI) key pair and the client computer software further comprises instructions for:

encrypting the second hardware profile of the client computer with a random session key; and

encrypting the random session key with the public key of the PKI key pair.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein the server includes a copy of the digital certificate including a private key of the PKI key pair and the determining instruction includes decrypting the random session key with the private key of the PKI key pair.

22. The system of claim 13, wherein:

the digital certificate includes a certificate serial number;

the server includes a copy of the digital certificate including the certificate serial number;

the requesting instruction includes transmitting the certificate serial number to the server; and

the determining instruction includes retrieving the copy of the digital certificate using the certificate serial number.

23. The system of claim 13, wherein the receiving instruction receives content from a website server.

24. The system of claim 13, wherein the server is a first server and the receiving instruction receives content from a second server co-located with the first server.

25. A computer-readable medium comprising instructions for digital rights management, by:

receiving content at a client computer, wherein the content is encrypted with an encryption key; and

requesting the encryption key from a digital rights management (DRM) server using a digital certificate, wherein:

the server is remote from the client computer;

the server receives the request; and

the server determines if the digital certificate is valid.

26. The computer-readable medium of claim 25, further comprising instructions for:

receiving the encryption key from the server, wherein the encryption key is encrypted; and

decrypting the encryption key.

27. The computer-readable medium of claim 26, wherein:

the encryption key is encrypted with a hardware profile of the client computer; and

the decrypting instruction decrypts the encryption key with the hardware profile of the client computer.

28. The computer-readable medium of claim 25, wherein:

a first hardware profile of the client computer is stored on the server; and

the requesting instruction includes transmitting a second hardware profile of the client computer to the server, wherein the DRM determines if the digital certificate is valid by comparing the second hardware profile of the client computer to the first hardware profile of the client computer.

29. The computer-readable medium of claim 28, wherein the digital certificate includes a public key of a public key infrastructure (PKI) key pair, further comprising instructions for:

encrypting the second hardware profile of the client computer with a random session key; and

encrypting the random session key with the public key of the PKI key pair.

30. The computer-readable medium of claim 25 wherein:

the digital certificate includes a certificate serial number;

the server includes a copy of the digital certificate including the certificate serial number;

the requesting instruction includes transmitting the certificate serial number to the server; and

the DRM determines if the digital certificate is valid by retrieving the copy of the digital certificate using the certificate serial number.

31. The computer-readable medium of claim 25 wherein the receiving instruction receives content from a website server.

32. The computer-readable medium of claim 25 wherein the server is a first server and the receiving instruction receives content from a second server co-located with the first server.

33. A computer-readable medium comprising instructions for digital rights management, by:

receiving a client computer request, at a digital rights management (DRM) server, for an encryption key using a digital certificate, wherein the client computer receives content that is encrypted with the encryption key; and

determining if the digital certificate is valid.

34. The computer-readable medium of claim 33 further comprising instructions for:

if the digital certificate is valid, transmitting the encryption key to the client computer.

35. The computer-readable medium of claim 34 further comprising instructions for:

encrypting the encryption key, wherein:

the transmitting instruction transmits the encrypted encryption key to the client computer.

36. The computer-readable medium of claim 35 further comprising instructions for:

determining a hardware profile of the client computer, wherein:

the encrypting instructions encrypts the encryption key with the hardware profile of the client computer.

37. The computer-readable medium of claim 36, wherein:

the hardware profile of the client computer is stored and linked with a copy of the digital certificate on the server; and

the determining instruction retrieves the hardware profile that is linked with the copy of the digital certificate.

38. The computer-readable medium of claim 33, wherein

a first hardware profile of the client computer is stored and linked with a copy of the digital certificate on the server;

the request includes a second hardware profile of the client computer; and

the determining instruction determines whether the second hardware profile is the same as the first hardware profile.

39. The computer-readable medium of claim 38, wherein:

the digital certificate includes a public key of a public key infrastructure (PKI) key pair;

the second hardware profile of the client computer is encrypted with a random session key;

the random session key is encrypted with the public key of the PKI key pair;

a copy of the digital certificate including a private key of the PKI key pair is stored on the server; and

the determining instruction includes decrypting the random session key with the private key of the PKI key pair.

40. The computer-readable medium of claim 33 wherein:

the digital certificate includes a certificate serial number;

a copy of the digital certificate that includes the certificate serial number is stored on the server;

the request includes the certificate serial number; and

the determining instruction includes retrieving the copy of the digital certificate using the certificate serial number.

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