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(54) **MULTI-OPTION AUTHENTICATION PORTAL IMPLEMENTATION IN A NETWORK ENVIRONMENT**

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**ABSTRACT**

According to one configuration, a wireless access service provider selects and assigns a particular authentication option amongst multiple different authentication options to an entity such as a wireless access point or a sub-network supported by the wireless access point. When a communication device attempts to use the corresponding wireless access point provided by the wireless access service provider, a wireless access gateway receives information from the wireless access point indicating the particular authentication option assigned to authenticate the communication device. The wireless access gateway communicates the notification of the particular authentication option to an authentication manager, which provides the wireless access gateway with network address information indicating a captive portal in which to authenticate the communication device. The wireless access gateway then uses the network address information to redirect the communication device to the captive portal, which is then used to authenticate the communication device, to access the Internet.

