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(54) **MERCHANDISE-INTEGRAL TRANSACTION
RECEIPT AND AUDITABLE PRODUCT
OWNERSHIP TRAIL**

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(58) **Field of Classification Search** 340/10.1
See application file for complete search history.

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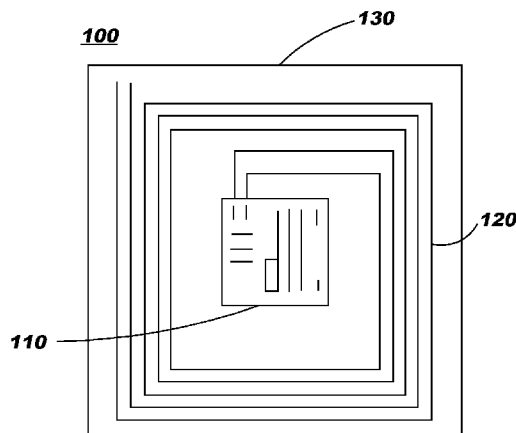
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Techniques are disclosed for writing data directly onto a product to record each ownership transfer. As a result, the product itself now carries a traceable, auditable, non-forgable, non-repudiable proof of ownership (and, optionally, ownership history) that can be used in a variety of ways. This recorded ownership transfer information provides an electronic receipt, which may be used by the present owner to prove his or her ownership. (Optionally, other types of transfers may be recorded in addition to, or instead of, ownership transfers.) A transfer agent or registrar may create a unique transaction identifier to represent the transfer, and preferably creates a cryptographic signature over fields representing the transfer. This information may be recorded in a repository that is external from the product.

9 Claims, 19 Drawing Sheets



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