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Thomlinson et al.

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[54] **METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR SECURELY ARCHIVING CORE DATA SECRETS**

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[57] ABSTRACT

Related U.S. Application Data

[63] Continuation-in-part of application No. 08/884,864, Jun. 30, 1997.

The invention provides central storage for core data secrets, referred to as data items. The data items are encrypted by a client computer using a client key that is derived from a logon secret, such as a password, supplied by a user during a network logon procedure. The client key is escrowed with the participation of a network supervisory computer such as a domain controller. The client sends the client key to the domain controller. The domain controller appends a user identification corresponding to the currently authenticated user of the client computer, and encrypts the resulting combination. The encrypted combination is sent back to and stored locally by the client. To recover the client key, the encrypted combination is sent to the domain controller, which decrypts the combination to obtain the data item. However, the data item is returned to the client computer only if the decrypted user identification corresponds to the currently authenticated user of the client computer.

[51] **Int. Cl.**⁷ **H04K 1/00; H04K 9/00**

[52] **U.S. Cl.** **380/49; 380/25**

[58] **Field of Search** 380/25, 49

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61 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets

