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(54) **Title:** CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT OF VIRTUAL SYSTEMS

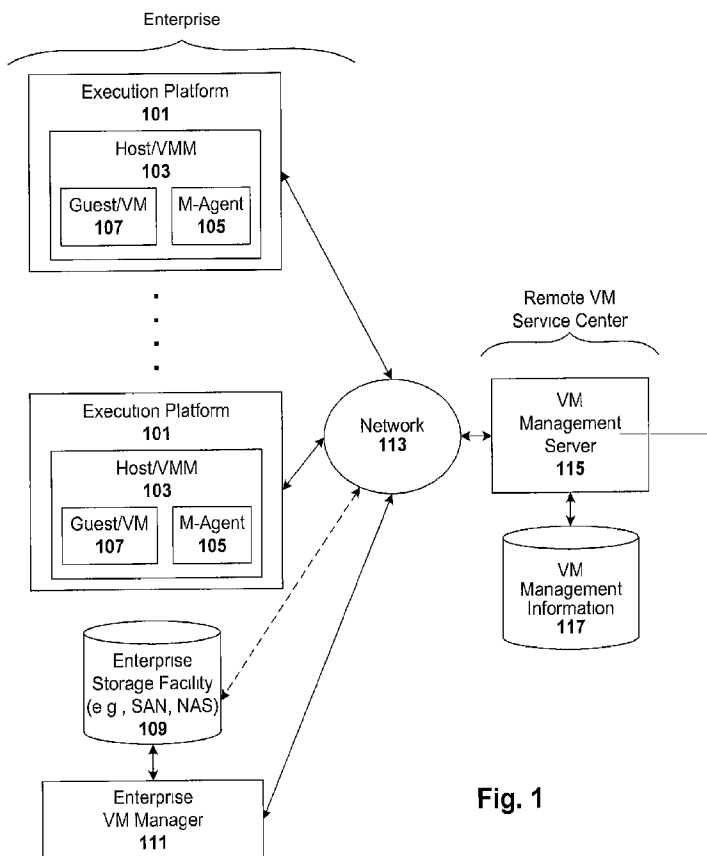


Fig. 1

(57) **Abstract:** Techniques are disclosed for controlling and managing virtual machines and other such virtual systems. VM execution approval is based on compliance with policies controlling various aspects of VM. The techniques can be employed to benefit all virtual environments, such as virtual machines, virtual appliances, and virtual applications. For ease of discussion herein, assume that a virtual machine (VM) represents each of these environments. In one particular embodiment, a systems management partition (SMP) is created inside the VM to provide a persistent and resilient storage for management information (e.g., logical and physical VM metadata). The SMP can also be used as a staging area for installing additional content or agentry on the VM when the VM is executed. Remote storage of management information can also be used. The VM management information can then be made available for pre-execution processing, including policy-based compliance testing.

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