

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR BIOLOGICAL AUTHORIZATION FOR FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) from provisional application No. 60/177,235, filed Jan. 20, 2000. The 60/177,235 provisional application is incorporated by reference herein, in its entirety, for all purposes.

INTRODUCTION

[0002] This application relates generally to the authorization of funds electronically. More particularly, the present invention provides a system and method for selectively authorizing user-specified amounts of money for access by third parties using biological or physiological authentication.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] It is frequently the case that funds may be required by dependents of a primary cardholder for legitimate purposes. For example, a child away at college may require access to funds from time to time. However the primary cardholder, for example the parent, may not wish to have the child have access to unlimited amounts of funds for fear that the privilege may be abused.

[0004] Another situation where funds may be required relates to domestic and foreign travel. When an individual is on foreign travel, in order to minimize the potential for fraud, specific limits may be desired to be placed upon automated teller machine withdrawals from credit cards and other financial devices.

[0005] What would be quite useful is to allow third parties to have access to funds subject to particular limits that can be flexibly set by a primary card or account holder. It would be further useful if the primary card or account holder can create such limitations and authorizations over a network such as the word wide web.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] It is therefore, an objective of the present invention to allow third parties to have access to funds of a primary card/account holder (hereinafter the primary account holder).

[0007] It is a further objective to allow the primary account holder to flexibly set limitations on the access of funds by third parties.

[0008] It is yet another objective of the present invention to allow the primary account holder to specify limitations based upon dollar amounts in a particular period of time.

[0009] It is yet another objective of the present invention to set geographic limits associated with the travel of third parties who might potentially access the finances of the primary account holder.

[0010] It is yet another objective of the present invention to allow the primary account holder to flexibly set limitations on access to the primary account by third parties over a network such as for example, the world wide web.

[0011] It is yet another objective of the present invention to allow the primary account holder to specify limitations based upon type of merchant (Standard Industry Codes).

[0012] It is yet another objective of the present invention to allow the primary account holder to specify limitations based upon type of transaction (i.e. cash advance or purchase).

[0013] It is yet another objective of the present invention to allow authorization for access to funds in the primary account by biological and physiological authentication.

[0014] The present invention provides a secure infrastructure via which primary account holders are free to control access by third parties to their accounts with a great deal of flexibility.

[0015] The present invention is a system and method for the authorization of access by a third party to a value account controlled by a primary account holder using biological or physiological authentication. For purposes of this application, a primary account holder is the person financially responsible for the use of a particular value account.

[0016] The term "value account" is meant by applicant to refer generically both to credit accounts, funds accounts, or other accounts representing things or intangibles of value. Common examples of value accounts are a bank account, a credit instrument, or a line of credit with a merchant for which the primary account holder is responsible. To the extent that the primary account holder desires to authorize other persons to have access to such accounts, the present invention is useful.

[0017] As an example, the present invention is embodied as one or more accounts, or lines of credit, which are held in one or more banks or other credit facilities (e.g., VISA, MasterCard, American Express). A primary account holder is named as the responsible party for both depositing funds and for payment of bills incurred by the value account. The value account, residing in some form of financial institution, is electronically connected to a network. The network may be private or may be an open, globally-interconnected network of networks, such as the Internet.

[0018] According to the preferred embodiment, the primary account holder is also connected to the same network via a communication device, such as home computer, a cellular telephone, a wireless personal digital assistant, a two-way pager, or other similar devices known in the art.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0019] Additional objects and advantages of the present invention will be apparent in the following detailed description read in conjunction with the accompanying drawing figures.

[0020] FIG. 1 illustrates the architecture of a system according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0021] FIG. 2 illustrates a flow chart diagram of the initial registration process by the primary account holder.

[0022] FIG. 3 illustrates a flow chart diagram of the process of initial authorization of third parties to the value account.