

A VENDING SYSTEM, AN APPARATUS AND A PROCESSING METHOD IN ASSOCIATION THERETO

Field Of Invention

5 The present disclosure generally relates to a vending system. More specifically, the present disclosure relates to an in-vehicular type/based vending system. The present disclosure further relates to an apparatus and a processing method in association with the vending system.

Background

The concept of motor transport (e.g., motor vehicles) fitted with one or more vending devices (e.g., vending machines) is gaining a certain degree of traction.

15 An example would be a vehicle available for public hire (e.g., a taxi) carrying a vending device usable for vending of snacks to one or more passengers in the vehicle.

Therefore, in-vehicular (i.e., in the vehicle) vending services, via the aforementioned vending device, can be made available to a passenger riding in a vehicle.

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Currently, driver intervention would be required for the purpose of completing a transaction involving the vending device. For example, the driver would be required to manually retrieve (e.g., unlock the vending device and collect) an item (e.g., a particular snack carried by the vending device) ordered by a passenger.

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It can be appreciated that as substantial manual intervention by a driver is necessary, there could be safety concerns (e.g., in a situation where the driver becomes distracted while operating the vehicle and, at the same time, attempting to retrieve an item ordered by a passenger).

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Moreover, it may become necessary for a driver to safely park/stop the vehicle before retrieving an ordered item. Hence the passenger (i.e., who ordered the item)

may experience inconvenience in the sense that the passenger may experience substantial waiting time before being able to receive an ordered item.

Hence the present disclosure contemplates that current in-vehicular vending services are not provided in one or both of a user-friendly and efficient manner.

The present disclosure contemplates that there is therefore a need for a solution which addresses, at least in part, one or more of the forgoing problems.

10 **Summary of the Invention**

In accordance with an aspect of the disclosure, there is provided an apparatus (e.g., a vending device such as a vending machine).

Generally, the apparatus can be suitable for providing one or more vending services in a vehicle. Moreover, the vehicle can generally be operated (e.g., driven) by at least one driver for ferrying at least one passenger. The passenger(s) can, for example, be carrying at least one computer (e.g., an electronic mobile device such as a Smartphone or a tablet). The apparatus can, in one embodiment, be capable of being in communication with a computer (i.e., carried by a passenger).

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The apparatus can include a cover part, a body part, a lock part and a control part. As an option, the apparatus can further include a verification part. As a further option, the apparatus can include an input portion.

25 The cover part can be capable of being in either a locked configuration or an unlocked configuration.

The body part can be coupled to the cover part. Specifically, the cover part can be coupled to the body part in a manner so as to either allow access into the body part or impede access into the body part. The body part can be shaped and dimensioned in a manner so as to carry at least one item. Appreciably, a vending service can be in relation to at least one transaction involving a passenger and at least one item carried by the body part.

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In one embodiment, the item(s) can be associated with at least one input signal which can be generated by a passenger using a computer. Therefore, it is appreciable that, in one embodiment, the aforementioned computer can be configured to generate and communicate at least one input signal in connection/in association with an item carried by the body part. In this regard, in one embodiment, an item can be associated with an input signal, and the item associated with the input signal can, generally, correspond to an ordered item (i.e., ordered by a passenger)/an item of interest (i.e., an item of interest to a passenger).

The lock part carried by one or both of the cover part and the body part (i.e., cover part and/or the body part).

The control part can be configured to control the lock part in a manner such that the cover part is capable of being in either the locked configuration or the unlocked configuration.

In one embodiment, when in the locked configuration, the cover part can impede access into the body part so that retrieval of an item from the body part is impeded (i.e., disallowed). In one embodiment, when in the unlocked configuration, the cover part can allow access into the body part so as to allow a passenger to retrieve an item from the body part.

Moreover, the control part can be capable of being controlled (i.e., in a manner so as to, in-turn, control the lock part) either with minimal driver intervention or without driver intervention.

Preferably, in one embodiment, the control part can be controlled without driver intervention. For example, based on the aforementioned input signal(s), at least one command signal can be generated and communicated to the control part for further processing to produce at least one output signal. The output signal(s) can be communicated to the lock part for switching the cover part from the locked

configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the item associated with the input signal is capable of being retrieved from the body part without driver intervention.

The verification part can be configured to determine consistency as between an item associated with the input signal and an item as retrieved (e.g., by a passenger) from the body part. Specifically, in one embodiment, the verification part can be configured to generate and communicate either at least one alert signal or at least one acknowledgement signal.

In one embodiment, the alert signal(s) can be generated and communicated when inconsistency can be determined (e.g., in a situation where the item retrieved from the body part does not match the ordered item). In one embodiment, the acknowledgment signal(s) can be generated and communicated in the absence of inconsistency (i.e., the item retrieved from the body part matches the ordered item).

In this regard, it is appreciable that, in one embodiment, the alert signal can be indicative that (only) minimal driver intervention is required. Moreover, in one embodiment, the acknowledgement signal can be indicative that no driver intervention is required.

The input portion can be carried by one or both of the cover part and the body part (i.e., cover part and/or body part). The input portion can be configured to receive at least one biometric based input associated with the driver for switching the cover part from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the ordered item (i.e., item associated with the input signal) is capable of being retrieved from the body part with only minimal driver intervention. For example, in the event an alert signal is generated and communicated, the driver can have the option of unlocking the apparatus (i.e., switching the cover part from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration), by manner of providing at least one biometric based input (e.g., any one of touch input, voice recognition and facial recognition, or any combination thereof). In this manner, it is appreciable that only minimal driver intervention would be required even in an exceptional situation where driver intervention becomes necessary.

In accordance with another aspect of the disclosure, there is provided a vending system.

- 5 The vending system can be suitable for providing at least one vending service in a vehicle. The vehicle can be operated (e.g., driven) by at least one driver for ferrying at least one passenger.

10 The vending system can include a vending device, at least one computer and at least one database. As an option, the vending system can further include a verification part. As yet a further option, the vending system can include an input portion.

15 The vending device (i.e., which can also be simply referred to as an “apparatus”) can include a cover part and a body part. The body part can be shaped and dimensioned in a manner so as to carry at least one item. Appreciably, a vending service can be in relation to at least one transaction involving a passenger and at least one item carried by the body part. The cover part can be coupled to the body part in a manner so as to be movable (i.e., relative to the body part) between a
20 locked configuration (i.e., for impeding access into the body part to disallow retrieval of an item) and an unlocked configuration (i.e., for allowing access into the body part to retrieve an item). For example, the cover part can be coupled to the body part by manner of a hinged arrangement.

25 The computer(s) (e.g., mobile electronic device(s) such as Smartphone(s) and/or tablet(s)) can be carried by a passenger. Moreover, the computer(s) can be configured for generating at least one input signal in association with an item carried by the body part. In this regard, in one embodiment, an item can be associated with an input signal. The item associated with the input signal can, generally, correspond
30 to an ordered item (i.e., an item ordered by a passenger)/item of interest (i.e., an item of interest to a passenger).

The database(s) can be configured to carry a platform (e.g., in the form of a graphical user interface). The platform can be used by a passenger to perform at least one transaction in relation to a vending service. Moreover, the database(s) can be further configurable to receive and process the input signal in a manner so as to produce at least one command signal. The database(s) can be further configured to communicate the command signal to the vending device.

Based on the command signal, the cover part can be capable of being switched from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the ordered item can be capable of being retrieved from the body part by manner of either:

with minimal driver intervention, or
without driver intervention.

Preferably, in one embodiment, the ordered item can be retrieved from the body part without driver intervention.

The verification part (e.g., carried by the vending device) can be configured to determine consistency as between an ordered item (i.e., item associated with the input signal) and an item as retrieved, by a passenger, from the body part.

In one embodiment, when inconsistency can be determined (e.g., in a situation where the item retrieved from the body part does not match the ordered item) the verification part can be configured to generate and communicate at least one alert signal. In one embodiment, the verification part can be configured to generate and communicate at least one acknowledgment signal in the absence of (any) inconsistency (i.e., the item retrieved from the body part matches the ordered item).

In this regard, the verification part can be configured to generate and communicate either at least one alert signal (i.e., in the event of inconsistency) or at least one acknowledgement signal (i.e., in the absence of inconsistency). The alert signal(s) can be indicative that minimal driver intervention is required. The acknowledgement signal(s) can be indicative that no driver intervention is required.

The input portion can be carried by one or both of the cover part and the body part (i.e., cover part and/or body part).

5 In one embodiment, the input portion can be configured to receive at least one biometric based input (e.g., any one of touch input, facial recognition and voice recognition, or any combination thereof) associated with the driver (e.g., driver's fingerprint, driver's face and/or driver's voice) for switching the cover part from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the ordered item (i.e., item associated with the input signal) can be capable of being retrieved from the body
10 part with only minimal driver intervention.

For example, in the event an alert signal is generated and communicated, the driver can have the option of unlocking the vending device (i.e., switching the cover part from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration), by manner of providing
15 at least one biometric based input (e.g., any one of touch input, voice recognition and facial recognition, or any combination thereof). In this manner, it is appreciable that only minimal driver intervention would be required even in an exceptional situation where driver intervention becomes necessary.

20 In accordance with yet another aspect of the disclosure, there is provided a processing method.

The processing method can be in association with at least one vending service provided in a vehicle. The vending service(s) can, for example, be provided by a
25 vending system (i.e., the aforementioned vending system). In this regard, the processing method can be associated with the vending system.

The vehicle can be operated (e.g., driven) by at least one driver for ferrying at least one passenger. A vending service can be in relation to at least one transaction
30 involving a passenger and at least one item of interest to the passenger.

The processing method can include:

- generating at least one input signal (i.e., using the aforementioned computer(s)) in association with an item of interest
- 5 • generating at least one command signal (i.e., in association with the aforementioned database(s)) based on the input signal
- generating at least one output signal (i.e., in association with the aforementioned control part) based on the command signal

The processing method can further include either:

- 10 • impending access (i.e., in association with the cover part being in the locked configuration), in the absence of the output signal, to the item of interest, or
- allowing access (i.e., in association with the cover part being in the unlocked configuration), based on the output signal, to the item of interest.

15 Based on the processing method, the item of interest is capable of being retrieved (i.e., from the body part) either with minimal driver intervention or without driver intervention.

20 Preferably, in one embodiment, the item of interest can be retrieved (i.e., from the body part) without driver intervention.

In one embodiment, the processing method can further include generating either at least one alert signal or at least one acknowledgement signal. The alert signal(s) can be indicative that only minimal driver intervention is required for retrieving the
25 item of interest. The acknowledgement signal(s) can be indicative that the item of interest is capable of being retrieved without driver intervention.

In one embodiment, the processing method can further include receiving at least one biometric based input (e.g., any one of touch input, voice recognition and facial
30 recognition, or any combination thereof) from the driver (e.g., driver's fingerprint, driver's voice and/or driver's face) so that the item of interest is capable of being retrieved with only minimal driver intervention, if necessary (i.e., in an exceptional situation where driver intervention becomes necessary).

Brief Description of the Drawings

Embodiments of the disclosure are described hereinafter with reference to the following drawings, in which:

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Fig. 1 shows a vending system which can include a vending device, according to an embodiment of the disclosure;

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Fig. 2 shows the vending device, also simply referable to as an apparatus, of Fig. 1, according to an embodiment of the disclosure;

Fig. 3 shows an exemplary implementation associated with the vending system of Fig. 1, according to an embodiment of the disclosure; and

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Fig. 4 shows a flow diagram illustrating a processing method in association with the vending system of Fig. 1, according to an embodiment of the disclosure.

Detailed Description

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The present disclosure relates to a vending system which can be operated in association with, for example, a vehicle carrying one or more passengers. Specifically, the present disclosure contemplates a vending system which can be operated in a manner so as to providing vending services to one or more passengers, riding in a vehicle, without the need for substantial manual intervention by the driver of the vehicle. More specifically, minimal or no driver intervention would be required for the purpose or providing vending services to the passenger(s).

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An example of a vehicle can include an automobile. Other examples can include a watercraft, an aircraft, a bus and/or a train. Generally, a vehicle can be operated (e.g., driven) by at least one driver for ferrying at least one passenger.

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Generally, the present disclosure contemplates a vending system (i.e., which can be suitable for providing at least one vending service in a vehicle) can include a vending device (e.g., a vending machine). A vending service can be in relation to at least

one transaction involving a passenger and at least one item carried by the vending device. The vending device is capable of being operated in a manner so as to allow a transaction to be completed with minimal or no driver intervention. More preferably, the vending device is capable of being operated in a manner so as to allow a transaction to be completed without driver intervention.

The above will be discussed in further detail with reference to Fig. 1 to Fig. 4 hereinafter.

Referring to Fig. 1, a vending system 100 is shown, according to an embodiment of the disclosure.

Preferably, the vending system 100 can be suitable for use in association with a vehicle (e.g., an automobile suitable for ferrying one or more passengers). In one embodiment, at least a portion of the vending system 100 can be carried by a vehicle (e.g., an automobile suitable for ferrying one or more passengers). In another embodiment, one or more portions of the vending system 100 can be carried by a vehicle (e.g., an automobile suitable for ferrying one or more passengers). In yet another embodiment, the entire vending system 100 can be carried by a vehicle (e.g., an automobile suitable for ferrying one or more passengers).

The vending system 100 can include one or more computers 102 (e.g., portable electronic device(s) having computing capabilities such as Smartphone(s), electronic tablet(s) and/or laptop(s)), at least one vending device 104 (e.g., a vending machine), one or more databases 106 (e.g., one or more storage type servers/storage type devices) and a communication network 108 (e.g., an Internet network).

The computer(s) 102 and the vending device 104 can be coupled to the communication network 108. The database(s) 106 can be one or both of coupled to the communication network 108 and reside in/carried by the vending device 104 (i.e., coupled to the communication network 108 and/or reside in/carried by the vending device 104).

In one embodiment, each of the computer(s) 102, the vending device 104 and the database(s) 106 can be coupled to the communication network 108 by manner of one or both of wired connection and wireless connection (i.e., wired connection and/or wireless connection).

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In another embodiment, each of the computer(s) 102 and the vending device 104 can be coupled to the communication network 108 by manner of one or both of wired connection and wireless connection (i.e., wired connection and/or wireless connection). Additionally, the database(s) 106 can be carried by the vending device 104.

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In yet another embodiment, the computer(s) 102, the vending device 104 and one or more databases 106 can be coupled to the communication network 108 (i.e., by manner of one or both of wired connection and wireless connection), and one or more other databases 106 can be carried by the vending device 104 (i.e., at least one database 106 can reside in the vending device 104, and at least one other database 106 can be coupled to the vending device 104 and/or the computer(s) 102 via the communication network 108).

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The computer(s) 102 and the vending device 104 can be configured to communicate with each other via the communication network 108. Moreover, one or both of the computer(s) 102 and the vending device 104 can be configured to communicate with one or more database(s) 106. In this regard, the computer(s) 102, the vending device 104 and one or more database(s) 106 can be coupled to each other (e.g., via the communication network 108).

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In one embodiment, the computer(s) 102 can, for example, include a first computer 102a and a second computer 102b. Each of the first and second computers 102a/102b can include a display screen (not shown). The first computer 102a, the second computer 102a and the vending device 104 can be configured to communicate with each other via the communication network 108. Moreover, the first computer 102a, the second computer 102b and/or the vending device 104 can

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be configured to communicate with at least one database 106 via, for example, the communication network 108.

Moreover, the database(s) 106 can be configured to host/carry a platform (not shown) which can be used by one or more users (e.g., one or more passenger(s)) to perform one or more transactions in relation to the aforementioned vending service(s). In one example, the platform can be in the form of a graphical user interface (GUI). In another example, the platform can be associated with a GUI. In yet another example, the platform can correspond to a GUI.

In one exemplary scenario, the database(s) 106 can be configured to communicate signals corresponding to a GUI associated with the platform to the computer(s) 102 such that the platform can be displayed at the computer(s) 102 (i.e., via the display screen of the first computer 102a and/or the display screen of the second computer 102b) for use by the user(s) operating the computer(s) 102. For example, the first computer 102a can be used by a first user (e.g., a first passenger) and the second computer 102b can be used by a second user (e.g., a second passenger). The computer(s) 102 can be operated/usable by the aforementioned user(s) (i.e., the first user and/or the second user) to generate one or more input signals. The input signal(s) can be communicated from the computer(s) 102 to the database(s) 106. The database(s) 106 can, in one embodiment, be configured to receive and process the input signal(s) to generate one or more command signals. The command signal(s) can, for example, be communicated to the vending device 104.

In the exemplary scenario, one or more items can be carried by the vending device 104 and the item(s) can, for example, be available for sale. The GUI can, for example, be configured to display a graphical representation of one or more items (i.e., as carried by the vending device 104) available for sale. The input signal(s) can be indicative of one or more items ordered by the user(s) using the computer(s) 102. Based on the command signal(s), access to one or more items carried by the vending device 104 can be facilitated.

Referring to Fig. 2, the vending device 104 is shown in further detail, according to an embodiment of the disclosure. In Fig. 2, the vending device 104 can be simply referred to as an apparatus 200.

5 As shown, the apparatus 200 can, in one embodiment, include a cover part 202 and a body part 204. The apparatus 200 can, in one embodiment, further include a lock part 206. The apparatus 200 can, in one embodiment, yet further include a control part 208. Moreover, the apparatus 200 can, in one embodiment, further include a verification part (not shown).

10 The cover part 202 can be coupled to the body part 204 in a manner so as to either allow access into the body part 204 or impede access into the body part 204. In one example, the cover part 202 can be coupled to the body part 204 by manner of a hinged arrangement. Additionally, the lock part 206 can be carried by one or both of
15 the cover part 202 and the body part 204. Moreover, the control part 208 can be carried by one or both of the cover part 202 and the body part 204. Furthermore, the verification part can be carried by one or both of the cover part 202 and the body part 204. In this regard, any one of the lock part 206, the control part 208 and the verification part, or any combination thereof, can be carried by at least one of the
20 cover part 202 and the body part 204 (i.e., carried by the cover part 202 and/or the body part 204).

In one embodiment, the lock part 206 can be coupled to the control part 208 by manner of one or both of wired coupling and wireless coupling.

25 In one embodiment, the verification part can be coupled to any one of the computer(s) 102, the database(s) 106 and the control part 208, or any combination thereof. In this regard, the verification part can be coupled to at least one of the computer(s) 102, the database(s) 106 and the control part 208. Moreover, the
30 verification part can be coupled to the computer(s) 102, the database(s) 106 and/or the control part 208 by manner of one or both of wired coupling and wireless coupling.

The cover part 202 can, for example, correspond to a door/lid which can be either in a locked configuration or an unlocked configuration.

5 When in the locked configuration, the cover part 202 can impede access into the body part 204. Therefore, user/passenger access to the item(s) carried by the body part 204 can be impeded (i.e., disallowed).

10 When the unlocked configuration, the cover part 202 can be moved (e.g., by manner of being swung away from the body part 204) such that an opening into the body part 204 can be defined and access into the body part 204 can be allowed via the opening. Therefore, user/passenger access to the item(s) carried by the body part 204 can be facilitated (i.e., allowed).

15 The body part 204 can, for example, correspond to a container/case/box which can be shaped and dimensioned in a manner so as to be capable of carrying one or more items. As mentioned earlier, the item(s) carried can, for example, be available for sale to one or more users (e.g., one or more passengers).

20 The lock part 206 can, for example, correspond to an electronic type lock capable of being controlled by the control part 208. Specifically, the lock part 206 can be controlled by the control part 208 in a manner such that the cover part 202 can be in either the locked configuration or the unlocked configuration.

25 The control part 208 can, for example, correspond to a transceiver-based module capable of receiving the aforementioned command signal(s) and transmitting one or more output signals based on the command signal(s) for switching the cover part 202 between the locked configuration and unlocked configuration. The control part 208 can, for example, include a processor (not shown) for processing the command signal(s) in a manner so as to produce the output signal(s). Specifically, the output
30 signal(s) can be, for example, indicative of a command to either lock (i.e., in relation to the locked configuration) the cover part 202 or unlock (i.e., in relation to the unlocked configuration) the cover part 202.

The verification part can, for example, correspond to a detection system (e.g., an electronic based detection system) which can be configured to verify whether the item(s) retrieved by the user(s) (e.g., passenger(s)) from the body part 204 can correspond to the item(s) as ordered by the user(s) (e.g., passenger(s)) via the computer(s) 102. Verification can be, for example, by manner of optical based recognition.

For example, the verification part can include a processor portion (not shown) and an image capturing portion (not shown).

The processor portion can be configured to receive and/or store any of the input signal(s) (i.e., communicated from the computer(s) 102), the command signal(s) (i.e., communicated from the database(s) 106) and the output signal(s) (i.e., communicated from the control part 208) for further processing to produce one or more reference signals. Appreciably, any one of the input signal(s), the command signal(s) and the output signal(s), or any combination thereof, can be indicative of the item(s) as ordered by the user(s)/item(s) of interest to the user(s) using the computer(s) 102. In this regard, the processor portion can be configured to process the input signal(s), the command signal(s) and/or the output signal(s) to produce reference signal(s) which can be indicative of the item(s) ordered by the user(s)/item(s) of interest to the user(s).

The image capturing portion can be configured to capture one or more images of the item(s) retrieved from the body part 204 and communicate the captured image(s) (i.e., in the form of one or more image signals) to the processor portion for further processing.

The image signal(s) (i.e., captured image(s)) can be further processed by the processor portion by manner of comparison-based processing. Specifically, the processor portion can be further configured to compare the received image signal(s) with the reference signal(s). Based on comparison between the image signal(s) and the reference signal(s), consistency as between the item(s) as ordered (i.e., by the

user(s) using the computer(s) 102) and the item(s) retrieved from the body part 204 (i.e., by the user(s) who made the order) can be determined.

5 In a first exemplary event where the processor portion determines that a mismatch has occurred (i.e., inconsistency can be detected/determined), the processor portion can be configured to generate and communicate one or more alert signals, according to an embodiment of the disclosure. A mismatch can, for example, be considered to have occurred when, based on comparison between the image signal(s) and the reference signal(s), the processor portion determines that there is a
10 mismatch in item(s) as ordered (i.e., by the user(s) using the computer(s) 102) and the item(s) retrieved from the body part 204 (i.e., by the user(s) who made the order). Specifically, a mismatch (i.e., in consistency) can, for example, be considered to have occurred when it can be determined (i.e., by the processor portion) that the item(s) retrieved from the body part 204 is/are not the same as the item(s) as
15 ordered via the computer(s) 102.

In the context of the above mentioned first exemplary event, the alert signal(s) can be based on one or both of audio-based signal(s) and graphical-based signal(s). Additionally, the audio-based signal(s) can, for example, correspond to an audio
20 sound (i.e., audibly perceivable by, for example, the driver of the vehicle) indicating that a mismatch has occurred. Furthermore, the graphical-based signal(s) can, for example, correspond to a graphical representation (i.e., visually perceivable by, for example, the driver of the vehicle) indicating that a mismatch has occurred.

25 Further in the context of the above mentioned first exemplary event, in one embodiment, at least a portion of the alert signal(s) can be communicated to a device (e.g., a mobile phone) used by the driver. For example, one or both of the audio-based signal(s) (e.g., verbalizing the phrase "please check order") and the graphical-based signal(s) (e.g., displaying the words "pleases check order") can be
30 communicated (i.e., from the processor portion) to a device used by the driver. In a more specific example, the graphical-based signals(s) can be received by a mobile phone used by the driver and a graphical representation indicative of the occurrence of a mismatch can be displayed on the screen of the mobile phone. In another

embodiment, the aforementioned audio-based signal(s) can be directly output (i.e., audibly perceivable) by the apparatus 200 (e.g., the apparatus 200 can include an audio output part such as a speaker for providing an audible output of the phrase “please check order”).

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In a second exemplary event, where the processor portion determines that no mismatch has occurred (i.e., consistency can be confirmed/determined), the processor portion can be configured to generate and communicate one or more acknowledgement signals, according to an embodiment of the disclosure. It can, for example, be determined that no mismatch has occurred when, based on comparison between the image signal(s) and the reference signal(s), the processor portion determines that there is a no mismatch in item(s) as ordered (i.e., by the user(s) using the computer(s) 102) and the item(s) retrieved from the body part 204 (i.e., by the user(s) who made the order). Specifically, a match (i.e., consistency) can, for example, be considered to be confirmed/determined when it can be determined (i.e., by the processor portion) that the item(s) retrieved from the body part 204 is/are the same as the item(s) as ordered via the computer(s) 102.

In the context of the above mentioned second exemplary event, the acknowledgement signal(s) can be based on one or both of audio-based signal(s) and graphical-based signal(s). Additionally, the audio-based signal(s) can, for example, correspond to an audio sound (i.e., audibly perceivable by, for example, the driver of the vehicle) indicating that there is no mismatch. Furthermore, the graphical-based signal(s) can, for example, correspond to a graphical representation (i.e., visually perceivable by, for example, the driver of the vehicle) indicating that there is no mismatch.

Further in the context of the above mentioned second exemplary event, in one embodiment, at least a portion of the acknowledgement signal(s) can be communicated to a device (e.g., a mobile phone) used by the driver. For example, one or both of the audio-based signal(s) (e.g., verbalizing the phrase “thank you for using our services”) and the graphical-based signal(s) (e.g., displaying the words “transaction completed”) can be communicated (i.e., from the processor portion) to a

device used by the driver. In a more specific example, the graphical-based signals(s) can be received by a mobile phone used by the driver and a graphical representation indicative of the occurrence of a match can be displayed on the screen of the mobile phone. In another embodiment, the aforementioned audio-based signal(s) can be directly output (i.e., audibly perceivable) by the apparatus 200 (e.g., the apparatus 200 can include an audio output part such as a speaker for providing an audible output of the phrase “thank you for using our services”).

It can be appreciated based on the aforementioned alert signal(s) and acknowledgement signal(s), the driver can have at least an indication as to whether intervention would be required. In one example, in the absence of any alert signal(s) (i.e., acknowledgment signal(s) are generated and communicated), the driver can concentrate on the task of driving without having to pay attention to transaction(s) in relation to the aforementioned vending services. In another example, if alert signal(s) are generated and communicated, the driver can be made aware that minimal intervention may be required.

The put the foregoing in general perspective, the vending system 100 will now be discussed in relation to an exemplary implementation with reference to Fig. 3 hereinafter.

Referring to Fig. 3, an exemplary implementation 300 associated with the vending system 100 is shown, according to an embodiment of the disclosure.

In the exemplary implementation 300, the vending system 100 is used in a vehicle (not shown) suitable for ferrying one or more passengers 302. The vehicle can be operated (e.g., driven) by a driver (not shown).

The aforementioned vending device 104 can correspond to a vending machine 304 shaped and dimensioned so as to be capable of being carried within the vehicle. In this regard, it is appreciable that the vending machine 304 can, for example, be considered to be a mobile vending machine.

The vending machine 304 can carry one or more items (e.g., merchandise such as snacks). The aforementioned computer 102 can correspond to a Smartphone 306 carried by a passenger 302.

5 The vending machine 304 can, in one embodiment, be configured to carry a quick access portion 308 which can be configured to allow the passenger 302 to access an online menu which can, for example, graphically present the item(s) carried by the vending machine 304. The online menu can correspond to, or be in the form of, the aforementioned GUI. The quick access portion 308 can, for example, correspond to
10 a quick response (QR) code and the Smartphone 306 can be configured to function as a QR code reader. Specifically, the passenger 302 can use the Smartphone 306 as a reader (e.g., QR code reader) to read the quick access portion 308 (e.g., QR code) to conveniently and/or expeditiously access an online menu for ordering one or more items carried by the vending machine 304. In this regard, in one
15 embodiment, the vending machine 304 can be configured to communicate one or more quick access signals (i.e., via the quick access portion 308) to the Smartphone 306.

Moreover, the vending machine 304 can, in one embodiment, be shaped and
20 dimensioned so as to carry one or more window portions (not shown) which can allow visual perception into the vending machine 304, so that the passenger 302 can see the item(s) carried by the vending machine 304. In one embodiment, one or more window portions can be carried by one or both of the cover part 202 and the body part 204.

25 In one example, when the passenger 302 (i.e., who is ferried by the vehicle) sees a desired item (i.e., carried by the vending machine 304), the passenger 302 can, using the Smartphone 306 (i.e., owned by the passenger 302), access the online menu for making at least one transaction. A transaction can include making one or
30 more orders (i.e., in association with generating the aforementioned input signal(s)) in connection/in association with the desired item. A transaction can further include the passenger 302 fulfilling one or more predetermined conditions (e.g., making a payment via an electronic mobile wallet) so as to complete the transaction. After the

transaction has been considered to be completed, the aforementioned command signal(s) can be generated. As mentioned earlier, based on the command signal(s), access to one or more items carried by the vending device 104 can be facilitated. Specifically, based on the command signal(s), the vending machine 304 can be
5 unlocked so that the passenger can retrieve the ordered item(s). More specifically, based on the command signal(s), the vending machine 304 can be unlocked so that the passenger 302 can open the vending machine 304 for the purpose of collecting/retrieving the ordered item(s).

10 After the passenger 302 has collected the ordered item(s)/while the passenger 302 is collecting the ordered item(s), either the aforementioned acknowledgement signal(s) or the alert signal(s) can be generated and communicated as discussed earlier in respect of the earlier mentioned first and second exemplary events.

15 In view of the foregoing, it is appreciable that the aforementioned vending service(s) associated with the vending system 100 can relate to, for example, the vending of one or more item(s) carried by the vending device 104 in a vehicle to one or more passengers 302 being ferried by the driver of the vehicle. Moreover, the vending service(s) can be self-service based in that the transaction(s) between the
20 passenger(s) 302 and the vending device 104 would not generally require intervention by the driver (i.e., driver intervention is generally not required in regard to vending service(s) associated with the vending system 100). Driver intervention may only be necessary in exceptional circumstances such as when an alert signal is generated.

25 Therefore, the present disclosure contemplates that the vending system 100, unlike conventional in-vehicular vending services, can generally facilitate driver concentration in regard to essential tasks such as driving without distraction (i.e., without needing to pay excessive attention to the transaction(s) involving the
30 aforementioned vending service(s)). In this regard, aforementioned safety concerns can be substantially mitigated.

Moreover, as the passenger(s) 302 need not generally require substantial driver intervention (i.e., minimal or no driver intervention) to complete a transaction, substantial waiting time would be unnecessary. Hence, in comparison to conventional in-vehicular vending services, user experience (i.e., by the passenger(s) 302) associated with the vending system 100 can be improved in that the
5 aforementioned inconvenience experienced by a passenger (e.g., due to substantial waiting time before being able to receive an ordered item) can be substantially addressed.

10 In view of the foregoing, it can be appreciated that the present disclosure contemplates a vending system 100. The vending system 100 can be suitable for providing at least one vending service in a vehicle (not shown). The vehicle can be operated (e.g., driven) by at least one driver for ferrying at least one passenger.

15 The vending system 100 can include a vending device 104, at least one computer 102 and at least one database 106. As an option, the vending system 100 can further include a verification part (not shown).

The vending device 104 can include a cover part 202 and a body part 204. The
20 body part 204 can be shaped and dimensioned in a manner so as to carry at least one item. Appreciably, a vending service can be in relation to at least one transaction involving a passenger and at least one item carried by the body part 204. The cover part 202 can be coupled to the body part 204 in a manner so as to be movable between a locked configuration (i.e., for impeding access into the body part
25 204 to disallow retrieval of an item) and an unlocked configuration (i.e., for allowing access into the body part 204 to retrieve an item). Specifically, the cover part 202 can be moved, relative to the body part 204, between the locked configuration and the unlocked configuration.

30 The computer(s) 102 can be carried by a passenger. Moreover, the computer(s) 102 can be configured for generating at least one input signal in association with an item carried by the body part 204.

In this regard, in one embodiment, an item can be associated with an input signal. The item associated with the input signal can, generally, correspond to an ordered item (i.e., by the passenger)/an item of interest (i.e., to the passenger), according to an embodiment of the disclosure.

5

The database(s) 106 can be configured to carry a platform (e.g., in the form of a graphical user interface). The platform can be used by a passenger to perform at least one transaction in relation to a vending service. Moreover, the database(s) 106 can be further configurable to receive and process the input signal in a manner so as to produce at least one command signal. The database(s) 106 can be further configured to communicate the command signal to the vending device 104.

Based on the command signal, the cover part 202 can be capable of being switched from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the ordered item can be capable of being retrieved from the body part 204 by manner of either:

- with minimal driver intervention, or
- without driver intervention.

Preferably, in one embodiment, the ordered item can be retrieved from the body part 204 without driver intervention.

The verification part (e.g., carried by the vending device) can be configured to determine consistency as between an ordered item (i.e., item associated with the input signal) and an item as retrieved, by a passenger, from the body part 204.

25

In one embodiment, when inconsistency can be determined (e.g., in a situation, such as the aforementioned first exemplary event, where the item retrieved from the body part does not match the ordered item) the verification part can be configured to generate and communicate at least one alert signal. In one embodiment, the verification part can be configured to generate and communicate at least one acknowledgment signal in the absence of (any) inconsistency (i.e., in a situation, such as the aforementioned second exemplary event, where the item retrieved from the body part matches the ordered item).

30

In this regard, the verification part can be configured to generate and communicate either at least one alert signal (i.e., in the event of inconsistency in connection with the aforementioned first exemplary event) or at least acknowledgement signal (i.e.,
5 in the absence of inconsistency in connection with the aforementioned second exemplary event).

The alert signal(s) can be indicative that minimal driver intervention is required. The acknowledgement signal(s) can be indicative that no driver intervention is required.

10

In view of the foregoing, it can yet be appreciated that the present disclosure contemplates an apparatus 200. The apparatus 200 can be analogous to/correspond to the aforementioned vending device 104.

15 Generally, the apparatus 200 can be suitable for providing one or more vending services in a vehicle (not shown). Moreover, the vehicle can generally be operated (e.g., driven) by at least one driver for ferrying at least one passenger. The passenger(s) can, for example, be carrying at least one computer 102 (e.g., an electronic mobile device such as a Smartphone or a tablet). The apparatus 200 can,
20 in one embodiment, be capable of being in communication with a computer 102 (i.e., carried by a passenger).

The apparatus can include a cover part 202, a body part 204, a lock part 206 and a control part 208. As an option, the apparatus can further include a verification part
25 (not shown).

The cover part 202 can be capable of being in either a locked configuration or an unlocked configuration.

30 The body part 204 can be coupled to the cover part 202. Specifically, the cover part 202 can be coupled to the body part 204 in a manner so as to either allow access into the body part 204 or impede access into the body part 204. The body part 204 can be shaped and dimensioned in a manner so as to carry at least one item.

Appreciably, a vending service can be in relation to at least one transaction involving a passenger and at least one item carried by the body part.

5 In one embodiment, the item(s) can be associated with at least one input signal which can be generated by a passenger using a computer 102. Therefore, it is appreciable that, in one embodiment, the aforementioned computer 102 can be configured to generate and communicate at least one input signal in connection/in association with an item carried by the body part 204. In this regard, in one embodiment, an item can be associated with an input signal and the item associated
10 with the input signal can, generally, correspond to an ordered item (i.e., ordered by a passenger)/item of interest (i.e., item of interest to a passenger).

The lock part 206 carried by one or both of the cover part 202 and the body part 204 (i.e., cover part 202 and/or the body part 204).

15

The control part 208 can be configured to control the lock part 206 in a manner such that the cover part 202 is capable of being in either the locked configuration or the unlocked configuration.

20 In one embodiment, when in the locked configuration, the cover part 202 can impede access into the body part 204 so that retrieval of an item from the body part 204 is impeded (i.e., disallowed). In one embodiment, when in the unlocked configuration, the cover part 202 can allow access into the body part 204 so as to allow a passenger to retrieve an item from the body part 204.

25

Moreover, the control part 208 can be capable of being controlled (i.e., in a manner so as to, in-turn, control the lock part 206) either with minimal driver intervention or without driver intervention.

30 Preferably, in one embodiment, the control part 208 can be controlled without driver intervention. For example, based on the aforementioned input signal(s), at least one command signal can be generated and communicated to the control part 208 for further processing to produce at least one output signal. The output signal(s) can be

communicated to the lock part 206 for switching the cover part 202 from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the item associated with the input signal is capable of being retrieved from the body part 204 without driver intervention.

5 Generally, the present disclosure contemplates that, in one embodiment, the output signal(s) can be generated based generally on the input signal(s). Specifically, the input signal(s) can be considered to be generated for subsequently generating the output signal(s), according to an embodiment of the disclosure.

10 The verification part can be configured to determine consistency as between an item associated with the input signal and an item as retrieved (e.g., by a passenger) from the body part 204. Specifically, in one embodiment, the verification part can be configured to generate and communicate either at least one alert signal or at least one acknowledgement signal.

15

In one embodiment, the alert signal can be generated and communicated when inconsistency can be determined (e.g., in a situation, such as the aforementioned first exemplary event, where the item retrieved from the body part 204 does not match the ordered item). In one embodiment, the acknowledgment signal can be
20 generated and communicated in the absence of inconsistency (i.e., in association with the aforementioned second exemplary event where the item retrieved from the body part 204 matches the ordered item).

In this regard, it is appreciable that, in one embodiment, the alert signal can be
25 indicative that minimal driver intervention is required. Moreover, in one embodiment, the acknowledgement signal can be indicative that no driver intervention is required.

Referring to Fig. 4, a flow diagram illustrating a processing method 400 in association with the vending system 100 is shown, according to an embodiment of
30 the disclosure.

As shown, in one embodiment, the processing method 400 can include an input step 402, a command step 404 and a feedback step 406. In another embodiment, the processing method 400 can further include a quick access step 408.

- 5 In regard to the input step 402, one or more input signals can be generated using the computer(s) 102 (e.g., Smartphone(s) 306).

In regard to the command step 404, one or more output signals can be generated (i.e., based on the aforementioned command signal(s)) by the control part 208 for
10 switching the cover part 202 between the locked configuration and unlocked configuration.

In regard to the feedback step 406, one or more feedback signals can be generated. The feedback signal(s) can correspond to either the aforementioned alert signal(s) or
15 the aforementioned acknowledgment signals. In this regard, the feedback signal(s) can be generated by the verification part.

In regard to the quick access step 408, one or more quick access signals can be generated by the quick access portion 308 for facilitating convenient and/or
20 expeditious access to an online menu for ordering one or more items carried by the apparatus 200 (e.g., vending machine 304).

Therefore, generally, the processing method 400 can be in association with at least one vending service provided in a vehicle (not shown). The vehicle can be operated
25 (e.g., driven) by at least one driver for ferrying at least one passenger. A vending service can be in relation to at least one transaction involving a passenger and at least one item of interest to the passenger.

The processing method 400 can include:

- 30
- generating at least one input signal (i.e., using the aforementioned computer(s) 102) in association with an item of interest (i.e., of interest to a passenger)
 - generating at least one command signal (i.e., in association with the aforementioned database(s) 106) based on the input signal

- generating at least one output signal (i.e., in association with the aforementioned control part 208) based on the command signal

The processing method 400 can further include either:

- 5 • impending access (i.e., in association with the cover part 202 being in the locked configuration), in the absence of the output signal, to the item of interest/ordered item, or
- 10 • allowing access (i.e., in association with the cover part 202 being in the unlocked configuration), based on the output signal, to the item of interest/ordered item.

It is appreciable that based on the processing method 400, the item of interest/ordered item is capable of being retrieved/collected (i.e., from the body part 204) either with minimal driver intervention or without driver intervention.

15

Preferably, in one embodiment, the item of interest can be retrieved (i.e., from the body part 204) without driver intervention.

In one embodiment, the processing method 400 can further include generating (i.e., via the verification part) either at least one alert signal or at least one acknowledgement signal. The alert signal(s) can be indicative that only minimal driver intervention is required for retrieving the item of interest/ordered item. The acknowledgement signal(s) can be indicative that the item of interest/ordered item is capable of being retrieved without driver intervention.

25

It should be further appreciated by the person skilled in the art that variations and combinations of features described above, not being alternatives or substitutes, may be combined to form yet further embodiments.

30 In one example, the aforementioned communication network 108 can be fully internet based or partially internet based. Specifically, it is appreciable that, in one embodiment, communication between the computer(s) 102 (e.g., Smartphone 306) and the vending device 104/apparatus 200 (e.g., vending machine 304) need not

require an internet connection in view of, in one example, the aforementioned quick access portion 308. The present disclosure further contemplates the possibility that, in one embodiment, the communication network 108 need not be internet based (i.e., based solely on direct “device to device” based communication).

5

In another example, making a payment via an electronic mobile wallet was mentioned as an example in connection with the aforementioned fulfillment of one or more predetermined conditions so as to complete the transaction. Making a payment via an electronic mobile wallet can be applicable to, for example, a non-

10 sponsored item. Other examples for fulfilling the predetermined condition(s) can include completing a survey, watching an advertisement/video clip and/or performing a share on social media (e.g., to promote the item) (e.g., where the item(s) are sponsored item(s)).

15 In yet another example, where driver intervention is required in view of an exceptional situation (e.g., in view of alert signal(s) being generated) and the driver determines that such an exceptional situation is a false alarm (e.g., the alert signal(s) had been communicated in error and can be ignored), the driver can, using his/her mobile device (generally mounted on a handsfree apparatus) to communicate one or

20 more command signals for the purpose of unlocking the vending device 104/apparatus 200 (e.g., vending machine 304) so that the passenger(s) can retrieve an ordered item. The command signal(s) can be generated by the driver (i.e., using his/her mobile device) by manner of, example, touch input, voice input and/or facial recognition. In this manner, it is appreciable that even if driver intervention is

25 required, any such intervention would still be considered to be non-substantial or minimal.

In yet a further example, the vending system 100 can further include an input portion (not shown). In one embodiment, the vending device 104/apparatus 200 can carry

30 the input portion (not shown). For example, the vending device 104/apparatus 200 can include an input portion (not shown).

The input portion (e.g., an embedded recognition system) can be configured to recognize one or more biometric based inputs associated with the driver. In the exceptional situation where driver intervention is necessary (e.g., the aforementioned false alarm), the driver can provide a biometric based input (touch input, voice input and/or facial recognition) via the input portion for the purpose of unlocking the vending device 104/apparatus 200 (e.g., vending machine 304) so that the passenger(s) can retrieve an ordered item. In this manner, it is appreciable that even if driver intervention is required, any such intervention would still be considered to be non-substantial or minimal. In one embodiment, the input portion can be carried by one or both of the cover part 202 and the body part 204. Moreover, in one embodiment, the input portion can be coupled to the control part 208.

Therefore, it is appreciable that, as yet a further option, the vending system 100 can include an input portion which can, for example, be carried by the vending device 104/apparatus 200. More specifically, in one embodiment, the input portion can be carried by one or both of the cover part 202 and the body part 204 (i.e., cover part 202 and/or body part 204).

In one embodiment, the input portion can be configured to receive at least one biometric based input (e.g., any one of touch input, facial recognition and voice recognition, or any combination thereof) associated with the driver (e.g., driver's fingerprint, driver's face and/or driver's voice) for switching the cover part 202 from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the ordered item (i.e., item associated with the input signal) can be capable of being retrieved from the body part 204 with only minimal driver intervention. For example, in the event an alert signal is generated and communicated, the driver can have the option of unlocking the vending device (i.e., switching the cover part from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration), by manner of providing at least one biometric based input (e.g., any one of touch input, voice recognition and facial recognition, or any combination thereof). In this manner, it is appreciable that only minimal driver intervention would be required even in an exceptional situation where driver intervention becomes necessary.

Additionally, in one embodiment, in the context of the aforementioned processing method 400, it is appreciable that the processing method 400 can, as an option, further include receiving at least one biometric based input (e.g., any one of touch input, voice recognition and facial recognition, or any combination thereof) from the driver (e.g., driver's fingerprint, driver's voice and/or driver's face) so that the item of interest/ordered item is capable of being retrieved with only minimal driver intervention.

In yet a further example, the earlier discussed exemplary implementation 300 relates to one context where the vending system 100 is used in a vehicle suitable for ferrying one or more passengers 302. It is appreciable that there can be one or more other contexts. Examples of such one or more other contexts include unmanned or lightly managed based retail (e.g., in hospitals, in places of interest for tourists and/or in schools).

In yet an additional example, the present disclosure contemplates that the aforementioned driver(s) operating the vehicle can be one or both of human driver(s) and machine based driver(s) (i.e., Artificial Intelligence based driver(s)). Specifically, for example, a vehicle can be operated by one or both of a human driver and a machine based driver. In one embodiment, the vehicle can be a non-autonomous based vehicle (i.e., operable only by a human driver). In another embodiment, the vehicle can be an autonomous based vehicle (i.e., a self-driving vehicle in the sense that it is operable only by a machine based driver). In yet another embodiment, the vehicle can be a quasi-autonomous/semi-autonomous based vehicle (i.e., operable by both a human driver and a machine based driver).

In yet an additional further example, the present disclosure further contemplates the possibility of the aforementioned driver(s) one or both of operating the vehicle locally (i.e., the driver can operate the vehicle from within the vehicle) and operating the vehicle remotely (i.e., the driver can operate the vehicle from outside of the vehicle). In this regard, the present disclosure contemplates the possibility that the vehicle can be operated locally and/or remotely.

In the foregoing manner, various embodiments of the disclosure are described for addressing at least one of the foregoing disadvantages. Such embodiments are intended to be encompassed by the following claims, and are not to be limited to specific forms or arrangements of parts so described and it will be apparent to one
5 skilled in the art in view of this disclosure that numerous changes and/or modification can be made, which are also intended to be encompassed by the following claims.

Claim(s)

1. An apparatus suitable for providing at least one vending service in a vehicle operable by at least one driver for ferrying at least one passenger, the apparatus comprising:

a cover part capable of being in one of a locked configuration and an unlocked configuration;

a body part to which the cover part is capable of being coupled in a manner so as to one of allow access into the body part and impede access into the body part,

wherein the body part is shaped and dimensioned in a manner so as to carry at least one item, and a vending service being in relation to at least one transaction involving a passenger and at least one item carried by the body part;

a lock part carried by at least one of the cover part and the body part; and

a control part configurable to control the lock part in a manner such that the cover part is capable of being in one of a locked configuration and an unlocked configuration,

wherein when in the locked configuration, the cover part impedes access into the body part so that retrieval of an item from the body part is impeded, and

wherein when in the unlocked configuration, the cover part allows access into the body part so as to allow a passenger to retrieve an item from the body part,

wherein the control part is capable of being controlled, in a manner so as to in turn control the lock part, one of with minimal driver intervention and without driver intervention.

2. The apparatus as in claim 1,

wherein the apparatus is capable of being in communication with at least one computer carried by a passenger, the computer being configurable

to generate and communicate at least one input signal in association with an item carried by the body part,

wherein at least one command signal is generated, based on the input signal, and communicated to the control part for further processing to produce at least one output signal, and

wherein the output signal is communicable to the lock part for switching the cover part from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the item associated with the input signal is capable of being retrieved from the body part without driver intervention.

3. The apparatus as in claim 1 further comprising:

a verification part configurable to determine consistency as between an item associated with the input signal and an item as retrieved, by a passenger, from the body part,

wherein the verification part is configurable to one of:

generate and communicate an alert signal when inconsistency is determined, and

generate and communicate an acknowledgement signal in the absence of inconsistency,

wherein the alert signal is indicative that minimal driver intervention is required, and

wherein the acknowledgement signal is indicative that no driver intervention is required.

4. The apparatus as in claim 3 further comprising:

an input portion carried by at least one of the cover part and the body part,

wherein the input portion is configurable to receive at least one biometric based input associated with the driver for switching the cover part from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the item associated with the input signal is capable of being retrieved from the body part with only minimal driver intervention.

5. A vending system suitable for providing at least one vending service in a vehicle operable by at least one driver for ferrying at least one passenger, the vending system comprising:

a vending device comprising a cover part and a body part,

wherein the body part is shaped and dimensioned in a manner so as to carry at least one item, and a vending service being in relation to at least one transaction involving a passenger and at least one item carried by the body part, and

wherein the cover part is coupled to the body part in a manner so as to be movable, relative to the body part, between:

a locked configuration for impeding access into the body part to disallow retrieval of an item. and

an unlocked configuration for allowing access into the body part to retrieve an item;

at least one computer carried by a passenger configurable for generating at least one input signal in association with an item carried by the body part;

at least one database configured to carry a platform usable by a passenger to perform at least one transaction in relation to a vending service, the database being further configurable to receive and process the input signal in a manner so as to produce at least one command signal, the database being further configurable for communicating the command signal to the vending device,

wherein based on the command signal, the cover part is capable of being switched from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the item associated with the input signal is capable of being retrieved from the body part by manner of one of:

with minimal driver intervention and
without driver intervention.

6. The vending system as in claim 5 further comprising:
a verification part configurable to determine consistency as between an item associated with the input signal and an item as retrieved, by a passenger, from the body part,

5 wherein the verification part is configurable to one of:
generate and communicate an alert signal when inconsistency is determined, and

generate and communicate an acknowledgement signal in the absence of inconsistency,

10 wherein the alert signal is indicative that minimal driver intervention is required, and

wherein the acknowledgement signal is indicative that no driver intervention is required.

15 7. The vending system as in claim 6 further comprising:

an input portion carried by at least one of the cover part and the body part,

20 wherein the input portion is configurable to receive at least one biometric based input associated with the driver for switching the cover part from the locked configuration to the unlocked configuration so that the item associated with the input signal is capable of being retrieved from the body part with only minimal driver intervention.

8. A processing method in association with at least one vending service provided in a vehicle operable by at least one driver for ferrying at least one passenger, a vending service being in relation to at least one transaction involving a passenger and at least one item of interest to the passenger, the processing method comprising:

generating at least one input signal in association with an item of interest;

30 generating at least one command signal based on the input signal;
generating at least one output signal based on the command signal;
one of:

impending access, in the absence of the output signal, to the item of interest, and

allowing access, based on the output signal, to the item of interest,

such that the item of interest is capable of being retrieved by manner of

5 one of:

with minimal driver intervention and

without driver intervention.

9. The processing method of claim 8 further comprising generating one of:

10 at least one alert signal, and

at least one acknowledgement signal,

wherein the alert signal is indicative that only minimal driver intervention is required for retrieving the item of interest, and

15 wherein the acknowledgement signal is indicative that the item of interest is capable of being retrieved without driver intervention.

10. The processing method of claim 9 further comprising receiving at least one biometric based input from the driver so that the item of interest is capable of being retrieved with only minimal driver intervention.

20