Claims

1. A lottery system comprising:
   (a) a wireless communication device for use by a lottery subscriber to participate in a lottery;
   (b) a billing system associated with the use of the wireless communication device over a wireless network;
   (c) a gaming server in communication with the wireless communication device; the gaming server including:
      (i) a lottery registration module;
      (ii) a lottery database comprising at least one lottery;
      (iii) a lottery draw module;
   (d) a chance units account linked to the gaming server to deposit therein chance units for use by a lottery subscriber to participate in at least one lottery,
   wherein in response to receiving a request from the wireless communication device, the gaming server generates chance units by debiting an amount from the billing system, quantifying the debited amount into chance units and crediting the chance units into the chance units account.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein the wireless communication device comprises a subscriber interface for communicating with the gaming server.

3. The system of claim 2 wherein the subscriber interface comprises a lottery menu downloaded into the wireless communication device or is a WAP page link to the gaming server.

4. The system of claim 1 wherein the wireless communication device is a cellular telephone.

5. The system of claim 1 further comprising a payment network system in communication with the gaming server, the payment network system comprising an account from which, in response to receiving a request from the wireless communication device, the gaming server debits an amount which amount is quantified into commensurate chance units, of which the chance units are credited into the chance units account.

6. The system of claim 5 wherein the payment network system is selected from the group comprising of a banking system operatively in communication with the wireless network provider, a money transfer system, a credit card system, top up scratch cards for the cellular telephone and internet based money transfer systems.

7. The system of claim 1 further comprising a lottery website configured to communicate with the gaming server.

8. The system of claim 1 further comprising a prize database for recording of various prizes on offer in the lottery wherein the gaming server updates the prize database upon a lottery subscriber redeeming a prize that has been won.

9. The system of claim 8 wherein the prize database is accessible by third parties who may view and monitor the transactions details relating to redeeming of the prizes.

10. The system of claim 1 wherein the lottery subscribers can transfer or trade chance units with one another.

11. The system of claim 1 wherein the lottery database comprises a selection of lotteries from which the lottery subscribers can select and participate in at least one lottery.

12. The system of claim 1 wherein the gaming server is configured to reconvert chance units into virtual money that can be redeemed in designated outlets.

13. The system of claim 1 wherein the registration module is configured to perform a registration method for registering subscribers to the lottery system, the registration method comprising the following steps :

    (a) receiving a registration request;
    (b) generating and recording an identification code associated with the user's telephone number;
    (c) activating a lottery interface;
    (d) creating a chance units account associated with the subscriber's mobile phone number.

14. The system of claim 13 wherein the registration request comprises a user sending or dialling a designated code on the wireless communication device.

15. The system of claim 14 wherein the subscriber is further required to provide a personal identification number (PIN) for logging to the gaming server.

16. The system of claim 14 wherein the registration request is sent in response to the wireless communication device user receiving an invitation to subscribe to the lottery.

17. The system of claim 16 wherein the invitation to subscribe to the lottery is sent in response to the wireless communication device user topping up airtime or paying a bill in relation to usage of the wireless communication device.

18. The system of claim 13 wherein the subscriber further receives notification on status of registration to the lottery system, including the PIN and statement of the chance units account.

19. The system of claim 13 further configured to register lottery groups where a subscriber recruits friends into the lottery to establish a lottery group.

20. The system of claim 1 wherein the process of generating chance units comprises:
    (a) receiving a request for generation of a designated number of chance units;
    (b) debiting an amount equivalent to the requested number of chance units from a designated account;
    (c) quantifying the debited amount into chance units and ;
    (d) crediting the chance units into the subscriber's chance units account.

21. The system of claim 20 wherein the request for generation of chance units is sent using the lottery menu of the wireless communication device or through the lottery website.

22. The system of claim 20 wherein the request for generation of chance units further comprises the subscriber registering with the gaming server for periodic generation of chance units.

23. The system of claim 22 wherein the request for periodic generation of chance units may be based on: a time period, or upon a subscriber topping-up or crediting their wireless communication device airtime, or at the occurrence of specific events.

24. The system of claim 1 wherein a lottery subscriber participates in a lottery by submitting entries in the lottery system in a method comprising:
    (a) the subscriber sending a request to the gaming server via the wireless communication device, the request comprising identification of the lottery and an indication of the number of entries to be submitted thereof;
    (b) the gaming server evaluating the number of chance units commensurate with the requested number of entries and debiting the chance units from the chance units account;
    (c) the gaming server making the requested number of entries in the lottery;
    (d) the gaming server sending a confirmation message to the wireless communication device, the confirmation message comprising information that identifies the lottery, the number of entries submitted and the subscriber's balance in the chance units account.

25. The system of claims 24 wherein a lottery subscriber submits entries in a lottery on behalf of another subscriber.

26. A method of conducting a lottery, the method comprising the steps of:
    (a) providing a lottery system, the lottery system comprising
        (i) a wireless communication device;
        (ii) a billing system associated with the use of the wireless communication device over a wireless network;
        (iii) a gaming server in communication with the wireless communication device; the gaming server including a lottery registration module; a lottery database comprising at least one lottery; a lottery draw module; and a chance units account linked to the gaming server to deposit therein chance units for use by a lottery subscriber to participate in at least one lottery,

    wherein in response to receiving a request from the wireless communication device, the gaming server generates chance units by debiting an amount from the billing

system, quantifying the debited amount into chance units and crediting the chance units into the chance units account;

(b) registering users in the lottery system;

(c) lottery subscribers participating in a draw in the lottery system by submitting entries;

(d) performing a lottery draw and notifying the lottery subscribers.

27. The method of claim 26 wherein the request for generation of chance units includes the subscriber sending a request for periodic generation of chance units, the request indicating the desired period for generation of the chance units.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein the desired period for the periodic generation of chance units include: a time period, or upon a subscriber topping-up or crediting their mobile phone airtime, or at the occurrence of specific events.

29. The method of claim 26 wherein the registration of users in the lottery system comprises:

(a) a user sending a registration request to the gaming server over the wireless network;

(b) the gaming server, upon receipt of the request, generating and recording an identification code associated with the user's telephone number;

(c) the gaming server sending a lottery subscriber interface to the wireless communication device;

(d) creating a chance units account associated with the subscriber's wireless communication device at the gaming server.

30. The method of claim and 29 wherein the request for registration is sent in response to the user receiving an invitation to subscribe to the lottery.

31. The method of claim 30 wherein the invitation to subscribe to the lottery is sent in response to a user topping up or paying a bill relating to the wireless communication device account.

32. The method of claim 30 wherein the invitation to subscribe to the lottery is an SMS message.

33. The method of claim 29 wherein the request for registration comprises sending or dialling a designated code on the wireless communication device.

34. The method of claim 29 wherein the identification code associated with the user's telephone number may be the same as the user's telephone number.

35. The method of claim 29 wherein the lottery subscriber interface is a lottery menu or WAP link to the lottery website.

36. The method of claim 29 wherein the subscriber is in addition required to provide a personal identification number (PIN) which may subsequently be used for verifying all transactions with the gaming server.

37. The method of claim 29 wherein the subscriber receives notification on the status of registration to the lottery system, the notification including the PIN and statement of their chance units account.

38. The method of claim 29 further enabling registration of lottery groups wherein a subscriber recruits other people into the lottery to form a lottery group.

39. The method of claim 38 wherein a lottery subscriber may join a lottery group from the lottery website or from the wireless communication device.

40. The method of claim 26 wherein participation in the lottery comprises:
    (a) a lottery subscriber sending a request to the gaming server via the wireless communication device, the request comprising identification of the lottery and an indication of the number of entries to be submitted thereof;
    (b) the gaming server evaluating the number of chance units commensurate with the requested number of entries and debiting the chance units from the chance units account;
    (c) the gaming server making the requested number of entries in the lottery;
    (d) the gaming server sending a confirmation message to the wireless communication device, the confirmation message comprising information that identifies the

lottery, the number of entries submitted and the subscriber's balance in the chance units account.

41. The method of claim 40 wherein the subscriber's participation in a lottery draw by submitting entries further comprises the subscriber registering for periodic entries in a lottery.

42. The method of claim 41 wherein the method of making periodic entries includes the steps of:
    (a) the subscriber sending a request for entries to be submitted at a desired period;
    (b) registering the request at the gaming server;
    (c) the gaming server automatically submitting entries at the desired period.

43. The method of claim 42 wherein the desired period for making periodic entries includes: a time period, or upon a subscriber topping up or crediting their wireless communication device airtime, or at the occurrence of specific events.

44. The method of claim 26 wherein the performing of a lottery draw and notifying the subscribers includes the steps of:
    (a) The lottery draw module selecting winning entries according to the lottery draw rules;
    (b) gaming server sending messages to all winners notifying them of their win;
    (c) paying prizes to the winners.

45. The method of claim 44 wherein the prizes are grouped and awarded country wise, region wise, continent wise and international.

46. The method of claim 44 wherein the prize may be paid by crediting the prize into the subscriber's chance units account in the lottery system or into the subscriber's account maintained by the payment network system or into the subscriber's account maintained by the billing system of the wireless network

47. The method of claim 44 wherein the winners may redeem their prizes in designated outlets.

48. The method of claim 26 wherein the gaming server is further configured to generate free extra chance units as bonuses to be credited to eligible subscribers' chance units accounts.

49. The method of claim 48 wherein the eligible subscribers may be selected as a result of coincidences of certain events from within and outside the subscriber's wireless network.

50. The method of any of the proceeding claims wherein the wireless communication device is a cellular telephone.

Claims

1. A lottery system comprising:
   (a) a wireless communication device for use by a lottery subscriber to participate in a lottery;
   (b) a billing system associated with the use of the wireless communication device over a wireless network;
   (c) a gaming server in communication with the wireless communication device; the gaming server including:
      (i) a lottery registration module;
      (ii) a lottery database comprising at least one lottery;
      (iii) a lottery draw module;
   (d) a chance units account linked to the gaming server to deposit therein chance units for use by a lottery subscriber to participate in at least one lottery,

   wherein in response to receiving a request from the wireless communication device, the gaming server generates chance units by debiting an amount from the billing system, quantifying the debited amount into chance units and crediting the chance units into the chance units account, and

   wherein the lottery subscribers can transfer or trade chance units with one another.

2. The system of claim 1 wherein the gaming server is configured to reconvert chance units into virtual money that can be redeemed in designated outlets.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein the registration module is configured to perform a registration method for registering subscribers to the lottery system, the registration method comprising the following steps :

   (a) receiving a registration request, wherein the registration request comprises a user sending or dialling a designated code on the wireless communication device, wherein the registration request is sent in response to the wireless communication device user receiving an invitation to subscribe to the lottery, and wherein the invitation to subscribe to the lottery is sent in response to the

wireless communication device user topping up airtime or paying a bill in relation to usage of the wireless communication device;

(b) generating and recording an identification code associated with the user's telephone number;

(c) activating a lottery interface;

(d) creating a chance units account associated with the subscriber's mobile phone number.

4. The system of claim 1 wherein the registration module is configured to perform a registration method for registering subscribers to the lottery system, the registration method comprising the following steps :

(a) receiving a registration request;

(b) generating and recording an identification code associated with the user's telephone number;

(c) activating a lottery interface;

(d) creating a chance units account associated with the subscriber's mobile phone number,

the system further configured to register lottery groups where a subscriber recruits friends into the lottery to establish a lottery group.

5. The system of claim 1 wherein the process of generating chance units comprises:

(a) receiving a request for generation of a designated number of chance units. wherein the request for generation of chance units further comprises the subscriber registering with the gaming server for periodic generation of chance units, wherein the request for periodic generation of chance units may be based on: a time period, or upon a subscriber topping-up or crediting their wireless communication device airtime, or at the occurrence of specific events;

(b) debiting an amount equivalent to the requested number of chance units from a designated account;

(c) quantifying the debited amount into chance units and ;

(d) crediting the chance units into the subscriber's chance units account.

6. A method of conducting a lottery, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a lottery system, the lottery system comprising

(i) a wireless communication device;

(ii) a billing system associated with the use of the wireless communication device over a wireless network;

(iii) a gaming server in communication with the wireless communication device; the gaming server including a lottery registration module; a lottery database comprising at least one lottery; a lottery draw module; and a chance units account linked to the gaming server to deposit therein chance units for use by a lottery subscriber to participate in at least one lottery,

wherein in response to receiving a request from the wireless communication device, the gaming server generates chance units by debiting an amount from the billing system, quantifying the debited amount into chance units and crediting the chance units into the chance units account, wherein the request for generation of chance units includes the subscriber sending a request for periodic generation of chance units, the request indicating the desired period for generation of the chance units, wherein the desired period for the periodic generation of chance units include: a time period, or upon a subscriber topping-up or crediting their mobile phone airtime, or at the occurrence of specific events;

(b) registering users in the lottery system;

(c) lottery subscribers participating in a draw in the lottery system by submitting entries;

(d) performing a lottery draw and notifying the lottery subscribers.

7. The method of claim 6 wherein the registration of users in the lottery system comprises:

(a) a user sending a registration request to the gaming server over the wireless network, wherein the request for registration is sent in response to the user receiving an invitation to subscribe to the lottery, wherein the invitation to subscribe to the lottery is sent in response to a user topping up or paying a bill relating to the wireless communication device account;

(b) the gaming server, upon receipt of the request, generating and recording an identification code associated with the user's telephone number;

(c) the gaming server sending a lottery subscriber interface to the wireless communication device;

(d) creating a chance units account associated with the subscriber's wireless communication device at the gaming server.

8. The method of claim 7 further enabling registration of lottery groups wherein a subscriber recruits other people into the lottery to form a lottery group.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein a lottery subscriber may join a lottery group from the lottery website or from the wireless communication device.

10. The method of claim 6 wherein participation in the lottery comprises:

(a) a lottery subscriber sending a request to the gaming server via the wireless communication device, the request comprising identification of the lottery and an indication of the number of entries to be submitted thereof, wherein the subscriber's participation in a lottery draw by submitting entries further comprises the subscriber registering for periodic entries in a lottery, wherein the method of making periodic entries includes the steps of

(i) the subscriber sending a request for entries to be submitted at a desired period;

(ii) registering the request at the gaming server;

(iii) the gaming server automatically submitting entries at the desired period;

wherein the desired period for making periodic entries includes: a time period, or upon a subscriber topping-up or crediting their wireless communication device airtime, or at the occurrence of specific events;

(b) the gaming server evaluating the number of chance units commensurate with the requested number of entries and debiting the chance units from the chance units account;

(c) the gaming server making the requested number of entries in the lottery;

(d) the gaming server sending a confirmation message to the wireless communication device, the confirmation message comprising information that identifies the lottery, the number of entries submitted and the subscriber's balance in the chance units account.

11. The method of claim 6 wherein the performing of a lottery draw and notifying the subscribers includes the steps of:
    (a) The lottery draw module selecting winning entries according to the lottery draw rules;
    (b) gaming server sending messages to all winners notifying them of their win;
    (c) paying prizes to the winners, wherein the prizes are grouped and awarded country wise, region wise, continent wise and international.

12. The method of claim 6 wherein the gaming server is further configured to generate free extra chance units as bonuses to be credited to eligible subscribers' chance units accounts.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the eligible subscribers may be selected as a result of coincidences of certain events from within and outside the subscriber's wireless network.