Patent Claims

1. A method of controlling access to a predetermined service or area (112), comprising:

sending from a communications system an access code to a portable electronic device (170) of a user (150) based on a device identifier of the portable electronic device (170), wherein the device identifier comprises a global identifier for the communications system, the communications system being external to an access control system;

reading, using an electronic reader at a service site, the access code from the portable electronic device (170); and

as a result of reading the access code from the portable electronic device (170), providing service-related information collected by the access control system to the portable electronic device (170) through the communications system.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising verifying if the access code is valid and, if it is valid, granting access to the user (150).

3. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the service-related information is provided to the portable electronic device (170) using a webpage displayed on the portable electronic device (170).

4. The method of claim 3, further comprising using the webpage to display the access code on the portable electronic device (170).

5. The method of claims 3 or 4, further comprising using the webpage for requesting the access code.

6. The method of any preceding claim, further comprising generating an audio message in conjunction with the service-related information at the portable electronic device (170).

7. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the access code is displayed on the portable electronic device (170) as an optical code.

8. The method of any preceding claim, further comprising processing an elevator call associated with the read access code and assigning an elevator to service the elevator call, wherein the processing and assigning is performed by an elevator control system.

9. The method of any preceding claim, wherein the service-related information comprises at least one of an indication of an assigned elevator and guidance information, and wherein the at least one of an indication of an assigned elevator and guidance information is communicated to the user via the portable electronic device (150).

10. The method of any preceding claim, wherein providing the service-related information includes causing the portable electronic device (150) to display at least one of text and one or more pictograms or symbols, and/or to generate an audible announcement.

11. A system (200), comprising:

a sensor (220);

an access terminal (250) at a service site;

a wireless communication network (260);

a database (212); and

a computer-based control unit (210) coupled to the sensor (220), the access terminal (250), the wireless communication network (260), and the database (212), the control unit (210) comprising a processor (710) and a computer-readable storage medium (720), the computer-readable storage medium (720) comprising instructions (730) that cause the processor (710) to

send an access code from a communications system to a portable electronic device (170) of a user (150) based on a device identifier of the portable electronic device (170), wherein the device identifier comprises a global identifier for the communications system, the communications system being external to an access control system;

read, using the sensor (220), an access code from the portable electronic device (170); and

provide, as a result of reading the access code from the portable electronic device (170), service-related information collected by the access control system to the portable electronic device (170) through the communications system.

12. The system of claim 11, wherein the sensor (220) includes an optical reader to sense an optical code.

13. The system of one of claims 11 – 12, wherein the instructions (730) further cause the processor (710) to grant access to the user (150).

14. The system of one of claims 11 – 13, wherein the instructions (730) further cause the processor (710) to process an elevator call associated with the read access code and assign an elevator to service the elevator call, wherein the processing and assigning is performed by an elevator control system.

15. The system of one of claims 11 – 14, wherein the service-related information comprises at least one of an indication of an assigned elevator and guidance information, and wherein the instructions (730) cause the processor (710) to communicate at least one

of an indication of an assigned elevator and guidance information to the user via the portable electronic device (150).

16. The system of one of claims 11 – 15, wherein the instructions (730) further cause the processor (710) to at least one of provide the service-related information to the portable electronic device (170) using a webpage displayed on the portable electronic device (170), to use the webpage to display the access code on the portable electronic device (170), and to use the webpage for requesting the access code.