CLAIMS

1. A charge management system comprising:

a user managing unit configured to manage pieces of user identification information for identifying users and pieces of terminal identification information for identifying a plurality of transmission terminals, each piece of user identification information being associated with pieces of terminal identification information for identifying transmission terminals used by a user identified by the each piece of identification information; and

a calculating unit configured to calculate a participation charge to each of the transmission terminals, on the basis of a total participation duration in which the each of the transmission terminals has participated in a conversation during a predetermined period, and calculate a total participation charge to each of the users by summing up the participation charges to transmission terminals specified by the pieces of terminal identification information associated with the each piece of the user identification information by referring to the user managing unit.

2. The charge management system according to claim 1, wherein the calculating unit calculates the total participation duration by summing up participation durations each indicated by a piece of participation duration information, the piece of participation duration information indicating a participation duration in which the each of the transmission terminals has participated in the conversation and being managed by a participation log managing unit.

3. The charge management system according to claim 1, wherein

the user managing unit manages electronic mail addresses of the users identified by the pieces of the user identification information, in association with the pieces of the user identification information, and

the charge management system further comprises a charging unit configured to transmit an electronic mail as a notice of the total participation charge to an electronic mail address associated with the user identification information corresponding to a user in charge of payment of the total participation charge, by referring to the user managing unit.

4. A charge management method for a charge management system that includes a user managing unit configured to manage pieces of user identification information for identifying users and pieces of terminal identification information for identifying a plurality of transmission terminals, each piece of user identification information being associated with pieces of terminal identification information for identifying transmission terminals used by a user identified by the each piece of identification information, the charge management method comprising:

calculating a participation charge to each of the transmission terminals, on the basis of a total participation duration in which the each of the transmission terminals has participated in a conversation during a predetermined period; and

calculating a total participation charge to each of the users by summing up the participation charges to transmission terminals specified by the pieces of terminal

identification information associated with the each piece of the user identification information by referring to the user managing unit.

5. The charge management method according to claim 4, further comprising calculating the total participation duration by summing up participation durations each indicated by a piece of participation duration information, the piece of participation duration information indicating a participation duration in which the each of the transmission terminals has participated in the conversation and being managed by a participation log managing unit.

6. The charge management method according to claim 4, further comprising transmitting an electronic mail as a notice of the total participation charge to an electronic mail address associated with the user identification information corresponding to a user in charge of payment of the total participation charge.

7. A program causing a computer to perform the charge management method according to any one of claims 4 to 6.

8. A program providing system for providing the program according to claim 7 to the charge managing system via a communication network.

9. A maintenance system for performing maintenance on the charge management system according to any one of claims 1 to 3.

CLAIMS

1. A charge management system comprising:

a user managing unit configured to manage pieces of user identification information for identifying users and pieces of terminal identification information for identifying a plurality of transmission terminals, each piece of user identification information being associated with pieces of terminal identification information for identifying transmission terminals used by a user identified by the each piece of information; and

a calculating unit configured to calculate a total participation duration of each of the transmission terminals by summing up participation durations each indicated by a piece of participation duration information associated with the pieces of terminal identification information for identifying transmission terminals, the piece of participation duration information indicating a participation duration in which each of the transmission terminals has participated in a conversation during a predetermined period, by referring to a participation log management table,

calculate a participation charge to each of the transmission terminals, on the basis of the total participation duration in which the each of the transmission terminals has participated in a conversation, and

calculate a total participation charge to each of the users by summing up the participation charges to transmission terminals specified by the pieces of terminal identification information associated with

the each piece of the user identification information by referring to the user managing unit.

2. The charge management system according to claim 1, wherein

the user managing unit manages electronic mail addresses of the users identified by the pieces of the user identification information, in association with the pieces of the user identification information, and

the charge management system further comprises a charging unit configured to transmit an electronic mail as a notice of the total participation charge to an electronic mail address associated with the user identification information corresponding to a user in charge of payment of the total participation charge, by referring to the user managing unit.

3. A charge management method for a charge management system that includes a user managing unit configured to manage pieces of user identification information for identifying users and pieces of terminal identification information for identifying a plurality of transmission terminals, each piece of user identification information being associated with pieces of terminal identification information for identifying transmission terminals used by a user identified by the each piece of identification information, the charge management method comprising:

calculating a total participation duration of each of the transmission terminals by summing up participation durations each indicated by a piece of participation duration information associated with the pieces of terminal

identification information for identifying transmission terminals, the piece of participation duration information indicating a participation duration in which each of the transmission terminals has participated in a conversation during a predetermined period, by referring to a participation log management table,

calculating a participation charge to each of the transmission terminals, on the basis of the total participation duration in which the each of the transmission terminals has participated in a conversation, and

calculating a total participation charge to each of the users by summing up the participation charges to transmission terminals specified by the pieces of terminal identification information associated with the each piece of the user identification information by referring to the user managing unit.

4. A charge management method according to claim 3, further comprising calculating the total participation duration by summing up participation durations each indicated by a piece of participation duration information, the piece of participation duration information indicating a participation duration in which the each of the transmission terminals has participated in the conversation and being managed by a participation log managing unit.

5. A charge management method according to claim 3 or claim 4, further comprising transmitting an electronic mail as a notice of the total participation charge to

an electronic mail address associated with the user identification information corresponding to a user in charge of payment of the total participation charge.

6. A computer-readable recording medium with an executable program stored thereon, wherein the program instructs a computer to perform the charge management method according to any one of claims 3 to 5.

7. A program providing system for providing the program stored on the computer-readable recording medium according to claim 6 to the charge managing system via a communication network.

8. A maintenance system for performing maintenance on the charge management system according to claim 1 or claim 2.