CLAIMS

~~What is claimed is:~~

1. A computer-implemented method for product support services, the method comprising:

receiving, at a support services application programming interface (API) of a server running on server hardware representing a support center that provides support services to a plurality of products of a plurality of vendors as product providers, a login request from a mobile application running on a mobile device associated with a user for support services of a product;

authenticating the user by matching a credential extracted from the login request with a corresponding one previously registered and stored in a user profile of the user at the server, including matching a username and a password associated with the user;

upon successfully authenticating the user, transmitting a personalized page to the mobile application to be displayed at the mobile device, the personalized page having a list of a plurality of products that have been registered with the server by the user, wherein the list of products includes a first product acquired from a first of the product providers and a second product acquired from a second of the product providers, and wherein the personalized page includes a first set of communications channels available for obtaining a technical support for the first product, wherein the personalized page includes a second set of communications channels available for obtaining a technical support for the second product, wherein the first and second sets of communications channels are utilized to establish a communications session with one of a plurality of support agents associated with the support center for technical support of the first and second products, respectively, and wherein the first and second sets of communications channels include at least one of voice, chat, and email communications;

receiving a support request from the mobile application of the mobile device for technical support services of the first product selected from the personalized page displayed by the mobile application, wherein the support request

identifies a communications channel selected from the first set of communications channels;

in response to the request, instantly generating a case identifier (ID) that uniquely identifies a current instant support services session associated with the user for supporting the product;

dynamically creating a touch plan representing an instance of the support services session, wherein the touch plan is identified and tracked by the case ID; and

establishing a communication session between an agent associated with the support center and the user using the selected communication channel identified by the support request; and

transmitting the touch plan to an agent device of the agent to allow the agent to provide support services to the user based on the touch plan, wherein the touch plan is utilized by the agent to access product information related to the first product and client information related to the first product provider during the communication session.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

determining the first set of communications channels, including

retrieving from a first client database associated with the first product provider a first preferred set of communications channels that is preferred by the first product provider in supporting the first product,

retrieving from a user profile a second preferred set of communications channels that is preferred by the user, which has been registered with the server previously, and

determining the first set of communications channels based on the first and second preferred sets of communications channels; and

determining the second set of communications channels, including

retrieving from a second client database associated with the second product provider a third preferred set of communications channels that is preferred by the second product provider in supporting the second product, and

determining the second set of communications channels based on the second and third preferred sets of communications channels,

wherein the first set of communications channels is different from the second set of communications channels.

~~transmitting, via the support services API, the case ID to the mobile device of the user, including information identifying a list of communication channels that are available for contacting the agent; and~~

~~receiving, at the support services API, a selection of one or more of the communication channels, the selection being associated with the case ID, wherein the touch plan and the communication session are created based on the selection and the case ID.~~

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:

performing an analysis, by a persuasive engine, on user interactive history with the support center, wherein the user interactive history is stored in an interactive history store;

identifying, by the persuasive engine, a third product based on the analysis and product information of the first product, wherein the touch plan includes information concerning the third product to allow the agent to propose the third product as an alternative solution during the live communication session.

~~escalating to the agent as one of a plurality of agents available for the support services via the selected communication channel; and~~

~~causing data of the touch plan to be available to the agent via the support services API, wherein the touch plan includes user information and product information that can be utilized by the agent during the communication session.~~

4. The method of claim 2, wherein the first set of communications channels represents one or more common communications channels preferred by both the first preferred set and the second preferred set, wherein the second set of communications channels represents one or more common communications channels preferred by both the second preferred set and the third preferred set, wherein the first preferred set of communications channels associated with the first product provider is different from the third preferred set of communications channels associated with the second product provider.~~claim 1, further comprising:~~

~~prior to receiving the request for support of the product, authenticating the user in response to a login request received at the support services API from the one-touch application activated from the mobile device by the user; and~~

~~upon having successfully authenticated the user, presenting to the user via the support services API a list of one or more products that have been previously registered by the user.~~

5. The method of claim 4, ~~wherein the request for support is received in response to a selection of one of the products in the list, without requiring the user entering product information identifying the product that needs the support services.~~wherein the personalized page further comprises:

a first universal resource locator (URL) link associated with the first product, the first URL link linking to a first Web page having information describing one or more solutions concerning a problem with the first product, such that the user can access the first Web page for self-support of the first product via the first URL link without having to initiate a live support session; and

a second URL link associated with the second product, the second URL link linking to a second Web page having information describing one or more solutions concerning a problem with the second product, such that the user can access the second Web page for self-support of the second product via the second URL link without having to initiate a live support session.

6. The method of claim 4, ~~wherein a product is registered by receiving from the one-touch application of the mobile device via the support services API a machine-readable code uniquely representing the product without requiring the user specifically provide product information.~~ wherein the personalized page further comprises:

a first social network link associated with the first product, the first social network link linking to a first discussion forum of a first social network site to allow the user to participate in a discussion related to the first product; and

a second social network link associated with the second product, the second social network link linking to a second discussion forum of a second social network site to allow the user to participate in a discussion related to the second product.

7. The method of claim 3, wherein the case ID is generated based on a combination of a product ID identifying the first product, a client ID identifying the first product provider, a user ID identifying the user, and a device ID identifying the mobile device ~~claim 6, wherein the machine-readable code comprises one of a serial number and a universal product code (UPC) of the product, and wherein the machine-readable code is obtained by scanning the product using a scanner or camera of the mobile device~~.

8. A computer-readable storage medium having instructions stored therein, which when executed by a computer, cause the computer to perform a method of any of claims 1 to 7.

9. An apparatus comprising means for performing a method of any of claims 1 to 7.

10. A system for product support services, comprising:

a support services application programming interface (API) to receive a login request from a mobile application running on a mobile device associated with a user for support services of a product;

a security module coupled to the support services API, in response to the login request, to authenticate the user by matching a credential extracted from the login request with a corresponding one previously registered and stored in a user profile of the user at the server, including matching a username and a password associated with the user;

a reporting module, upon successfully authenticating the user, to transmit a personalized page to the mobile application to be displayed at the mobile device, the personalized page having a list of a plurality of products that have been registered with the server by the user, wherein the list of products includes a first product acquired from a first of the product providers and a second product acquired from a second of the product providers, and wherein the personalized page includes a first set of communications channels available for obtaining a technical support for the first product, wherein the personalized page includes a second set of communications channels available for obtaining a technical support for the second product, wherein the first and second sets of communications channels are utilized to establish a communications session with one of a plurality of support agents associated with the support center for technical support of the first and second products,

respectively, and wherein the first and second sets of communications channels include at least one of voice, chat, and email communications;

a case management module coupled to the support services API, in response to a support request received via the support services API from the mobile application of the mobile device for technical support services of the first product selected from the personalized page displayed by the mobile application~~the request~~, to instantly generate a case identifier (ID) that uniquely identifies a current instant support services session associated with the user for supporting the product, wherein the support request identifies a communications channel selected from the first set of communications channels; ~~and~~

a touch-plan engine coupled to the support services API to dynamically create a touch plan representing an instance of the support services session, wherein the touch plan is identified and tracked by the case ID~~, and wherein the touch plan engine causes a communication session to be established~~; and

a multi-channel communication system to establish a communication session between an agent associated with the support center and the user using the selected communication channel identified by the support request, wherein the touch plan is transmitted to an agent device of the agent to allow the agent to provide support services to the user based on the touch plan, wherein the touch plan is utilized by the agent to access product information related to the first product and client information related to the first product provider during the communication session.

11. The system of claim 10, ~~wherein the support services API is configured to transmit the case ID to the mobile device of the user including information identifying a list of communication channels that are available for contacting the agent, wherein in response to a selection of one or more of the communication channels received at the support services API, the touch plan engine is configured to create the touch plan.~~wherein the reporting module is further configured to:

determine the first set of communications channels, including

retrieving from a first client database associated with the first product provider a first preferred set of communications channels that is preferred by the first product provider in supporting the first product,

retrieving from a user profile a second preferred set of communications channels that is preferred by the user, which has been registered with the server previously, and

determining the first set of communications channels based on the first and second preferred sets of communications channels; and

determine the second set of communications channels, including

retrieving from a second client database associated with the second product provider a third preferred set of communications channels that is preferred by the second product provider in supporting the second product, and

determining the second set of communications channels based on the second and third preferred sets of communications channels,

wherein the first set of communications channels is different from the second set of communications channels.

12. The system of claim 11, ~~wherein the touch plan engine is configured to escalate to an agent as one of a plurality of agents available for the support services via the selected communication channel and to make available the touch plan session data to the agent via the support services API, wherein the touch plan includes user information and product information that can be utilized by the agent during the communication session.~~further comprising a persuasive engine configured to

perform an analysis on user interactive history with the support center, wherein the user interactive history is stored in an interactive history store;

identify a third product based on the analysis and product information of the first product; and

transmit the touch plan to the selected support agent, the touch plan including information concerning the third product to allow the selected agent to propose the third product as an alternative solution during the live communication session.

13. The system of claim 11, wherein the first set of communications channels represents one or more common communications channels preferred by both the first preferred set and the second preferred set, wherein the second set of communications channels represents one or more common communications channels preferred by both the second preferred set and

the third preferred set, wherein the first preferred set of communications channels associated with the first product provider is different from the third preferred set of communications channels associated with the second product provider~~10, further comprising a security module, prior to receiving the request for support of the product, to authenticate the user in response to a login request received at the support services API from the one-touch application activated from the mobile device by the user, wherein upon having successfully authenticated the user, the support services API is configured to present to the user a list of one or more products that have been previously registered by the user~~.

14. The system of claim 13, wherein ~~the request for support is received in response to a selection of one of the products in the list, without requiring the user entering product information identifying the product that needs the support services.~~the personalized page further comprises

a first universal resource locator (URL) link associated with the first product, the first URL link linking to a first Web page having information describing one or more solutions concerning a problem with the first product, such that the user can access the first Web page for self-support of the first product via the first URL link without having to initiate a live support session; and

a second URL link associated with the second product, the second URL link linking to a second Web page having information describing one or more solutions concerning a problem with the second product, such that the user can access the second Web page for self-support of the second product via the second URL link without having to initiate a live support session.

15. The system of claim 13, wherein ~~a product is registered by receiving from the one-touch application of the mobile device via the support services API a machine-readable code uniquely representing the product without requiring the user specifically provide product information.~~the personalized page further comprises:

a first social network link associated with the first product, the first social network link linking to a first discussion forum of a first social network site to allow the user to participate in a discussion related to the first product; and

a second social network link associated with the second product, the second social network link linking to a second discussion forum of a second social network

site to allow the user to participate in a discussion related to the second product.

16. The system of claim 12, wherein the case ID is generated based on a combination of a product ID identifying the first product, a client ID identifying the first product provider, a user ID identifying the user, and a device ID identifying the mobile device~~claim 15, wherein the machine-readable code comprises one of a serial number and a universal product code (UPC) of the product, and wherein the machine-readable code is obtained by scanning the product using a scanner or camera of the mobile device~~.