CLAIMS

[Claim 1] A mobile device connected via a network to an information management device, the mobile device comprising:

a reception means which receives information via the network from the information management device;

a control means which leaves a part of a plurality of function units possessed by the mobile device prohibited to operate; and

a location information acquisition means which acquires location information for pointing a current location,

the reception means receiving access permission information, used for unlocking operation of the function unit having been prohibited by the control means, from the information management device via the network, and

the control means controlling the function unit so as to operate only for a predetermined duration, based on the location information and the access permission information.

[Claim 2] The mobile device according to Claim 1, further comprising:

an information acquisition means as the function unit; and

a transmission means which sends, via the network to the information management device, access request information, which is attached with location information acquired by the location information acquisition means, and is used for requesting access to the information acquisition means,

the reception means receives, from the information management device via the network, access permission information or access prohibition information in response to the access request information, and

the control means leaves the information acquisition means prohibited to operate, if the access permission information has not been received yet by the reception means, and controls the information acquisition means so as to operate only for a predetermined duration to acquire information, upon reception of the access permission information by the reception means.

[Claim 3] The mobile device according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein the control means refers to the access permission

information received from the information management device via the network, to determine whether prohibition of operation of the function unit is unlocked or not based on the location information acquired by the location information acquisition means, and controls the function unit to operate based on the result of determination.

[Claim 4] The mobile device according to any one of Claims 1 to 3, further comprising a transmission means which sends, via the network to the information management device, identification information which indicates the mobile device or the user of the mobile device,

the reception means receives, from the information management device via the network, access permission information or access prohibition information in response to the identification information, and

the control means controls the function unit so as to operate only for a predetermined duration, upon reception of the access permission information by the reception means.

[Claim 5] The mobile device according to any one of Claims 1 to 4, wherein the location information acquisition means acquires the location information which is calculated based on signals received from artificial satellites, as the location information for pointing a current location.

[Claim 6] The mobile device according to any one of Claims 1 to 4,

wherein the location information acquisition means acquires identification information of a communicable wireless access point, which is installed in a permission zone where access to the information acquisition means is permitted, or in a prohibition zone where access to the information acquisition means is prohibited, as the location information for pointing a current location.

[Claim 7] The mobile device according to any one of Claims 1 to 6,

wherein the control means further comprises a transfer control means which transfers information, acquired by the information acquisition means operated only for a predetermined duration, via

the network to the information management device.

[Claim 8] The mobile device according to any one of Claims 1 to 6, further comprising an encryption means which encrypts information, acquired by allowing the information acquisition means to operate only for a predetermined duration, according to a predetermined procedure of encryption.

[Claim 9] An information management system comprising a mobile device and an information management device connected to each other via a network,

the mobile device comprising:

a reception means which receives information via the network from the information management device;

a plurality of function units;

a control means which leaves a part of the plurality of function units prohibited to operate; and

a location information acquisition means which acquires location information for pointing a current location,

the information management device comprising:

a transmission means which sends, to the mobile device via the network, access permission information used for unlocking operation of the function unit having been prohibited by the control means; and

the control means unlocks the prohibition of operation of the function unit, and allows the function unit to operate only for a predetermined duration, based on the location information acquired by the location information acquisition means, and the access permission information sent from the information management device to the mobile device.

[Claim 10] The information management system according to Claim 9,

wherein the control means refers to the access permission information received from the information management device via the network, to determine whether the prohibition of operation of the function unit is unlocked or not, based on the location information acquired by the location information acquisition means, and controls

the function unit to operate based on the result of determination.

[Claim 11] The information management system according to Claim 9 or 10, further comprising:

a transmission means which sends, via the network to the information management device, identification information which indicates the mobile device or the user of the mobile device,

the reception means receives, from the information management device via the network, access permission information or access prohibition information in response to the identification information, and

the control means controls the function unit to operate only for a predetermined duration, upon reception of the access permission information by the reception means.

[Claim 12] The information management system according to any one of Claims 9 to 11,

wherein the mobile device further comprises:

an information acquisition means as the function unit; and

a first transmission means which sends, via the network to the information management device, access request information, which is attached with location information acquired by the location information acquisition means, and is used for requesting access to the information acquisition means,

the reception means is a first transmission means which receives, from the information management device via the network, access permission information or access prohibition information in response to the access request information,

the control means leaves the information acquisition means prohibited to operate, if the access permission information has not been received yet, and controls the information acquisition means so as to operate only for a predetermined duration to acquire information, upon reception of the access permission information by the reception means,

the information management device further comprises:

a second reception means which receives access request information from the mobile device; and

a propriety determination means which determines whether the information acquisition means is permitted to operate or not, based on the location information attached to the access request information received by the second reception means,

and,

the transmission means is a second transmission means which sends, to the mobile device via the network, the access permission information, if determined by the propriety determination means that the information acquisition means is permitted to operate.

[Claim 13] The information management system according to Claim 12,

wherein the information management device further comprises:

a storage means which stores at least either permission zone information used for permitting access to the information acquisition means, or prohibition zone information used for prohibiting access to the information acquisition means,

and,

the propriety determination means determines whether the information acquisition means is permitted to operate or not, based on the location information attached to the access request information, referring to at least either the permission zone information or the prohibition zone information stored in the storage means.

[Claim 14] The information management system according to Claim 13,

wherein the mobile device further comprises a transfer control means which adds, when the information was acquired by the information acquisition means operated only for a predetermined duration, the location information acquired by the location information acquisition means to the information, and transfers them via the network to the information management device,

and,

the information management device further comprises an accessibility setting means which sets access permission/prohibition of the information, based on the location

information attached to the information acquired by the information acquisition means, and sent from the mobile device, referring to at least either the permission zone information or the prohibition zone information stored in the storage means.

[Claim 15] The information management system according to Claim 14,

wherein the mobile device further comprises an encryption means which encrypts the information acquired when the information acquisition means is operated only for a predetermined duration.

[Claim 16] An information management device connected via a network to a mobile device equipped with a function unit, the information management device comprising:

a reception means which receives, from the mobile device, access request information attached with location information for pointing a current location;

a storage means which stores at least either permission zone information used for permitting access to the function unit, or prohibition zone information used for prohibiting access to the function unit;

a propriety determination means which determines whether the function unit possessed by the mobile device is permitted to operate or not, based on the location information attached to the access request information, referring to at least either the permission zone information or the prohibition zone information stored in the storage means; and

a transmission means which sends access permission information to the mobile device via the network, when the propriety determination means determined to permit the function unit to operate.

[Claim 17] An information management method implemented by using a mobile device and an information management device which are connected to each other via a network, the method comprising:

a location information acquisition step, acquiring location information for pointing a current location of the mobile device;

an access request information sending step, attaching the location information to access request information used for

requesting access to a function unit provided to the mobile device, and sending them via the network to the information management device;

an access request information reception step, receiving the access request information from the mobile device by the information management device;

a propriety determination step, determining by the information management device, whether the function unit provided to the mobile device is permitted to operate or not, based on the location information attached to the access request information received in the access request information reception step;

an access permission information sending step, sending access permission information if a determination was made in the propriety determination step so as to permit the function unit to operate, from the information management device to the mobile device via the network;

an access permission information reception step, receiving by mobile device from the information management device via the network, the access permission information in response to the access request information; and

a control step, leaving the function unit possessed by the mobile device prohibited to operate, if the access permission information has not been received yet, and controlling the function unit so as to operate only for a predetermined duration to acquire information, upon reception of the access permission information.

[Claim 18] A program product used for information management using a computer of a mobile device, the mobile device being connected via a network to an information management device, and being equipped with a function unit, the program product making the computer execute:

a location information acquisition process, acquiring location information for pointing a current location;

a sending process, sending access request information attached with the location information, used for requesting access to the function unit, via the network to the information management device;

a reception process, receiving access permission information or access prohibition information in response to the access request

information, from the information management device via the network; and

a control process, leaving the function unit prohibited to operate if the access permission information has not been received yet, and controlling the function unit so as to operate only for a predetermined duration upon reception of the access permission information.

[Claim 19] A storage medium storing a program product recorded so as to be readable by a computer of a mobile device, the mobile device being connected via a network to an information management device, and being equipped with a function unit,

the program product making the computer execute:

a location information acquisition process, acquiring location information for pointing a current location;

a sending process, sending access request information attached with the location information, used for requesting access to the function unit, via the network to the information management device;

a reception process, receiving access permission information or access prohibition information in response to the access request information, from the information management device via the network; and

a control process, leaving the function unit prohibited to operate if the access permission information has not been received yet, and controlling the function unit so as to operate only for a predetermined duration upon reception of the access permission information.

CLAIMS

1. A mobile device connected via a network to an information management device, the mobile device comprising:

a reception means which receives information via the network from the information management device; and

a control means which leaves an information acquisition means possessed by the mobile device prohibited to operate or permitted to operate;

the reception means receiving access permission information, used for unlocking operation of the information acquisition means having been prohibited by the control means, or access prohibition information used for locking operation of the information acquisition means, from the information management device via the network,

the control means controlling the information acquisition means to operate or terminate the information acquisition means, based on the access permission information or the access prohibition information,

the control means having a transfer control means which transfers the information acquired by allowing the information acquisition means to operate, via the network to the information management device, and

the control means determining whether the acquired information was transferred by the transfer control means to the

information management device or not, and deleting the information having already been transferred.

2. The mobile device according to Claim 1,

wherein the reception means preliminarily receives an encryption key from the information management device via the network,

the control means further comprises an encryption means which encrypts the information acquired by allowing the information acquisition means to operate, using the encryption key according to a predetermined procedure of encryption, and

the control means determines whether the acquired information was encrypted by the encryption means or not, makes the transfer means transfer the encrypted information to the information management device, and deletes the information having already been transferred.

3. The mobile device according to Claim 2, further comprising a storage means,

the control means encrypts the information using the encryption means, when it is unable to establish communication with the information management device via the network, and stores the encrypted information in the storage means.

4. The mobile device according to Claim 3,

wherein, when communication with the information management device is established via the network, the control means makes the information management device transfer the encrypted information stored in the storage means to the information management device, and deletes the information having already been transferred.

5. The mobile device according to any one of Claims 1 to 4, further comprising a location information acquisition means which acquires location information for pointing a current location,

the control means leaves the information acquisition means prohibited to operate,

the reception means receives the access permission information from the information management device,

the location information acquisition means intermittently acquires the location information, after the reception means received the access permission information,

the control means controls the information acquisition means, having been prohibited to operate, so as to operate based on the location information and the access permission information, and, determines whether or not the mobile device has moved into a prohibition zone where the information acquisition means is inaccessible, based on the intermittently acquired location information and the access permission information, and terminates operation of the information acquisition means being operated, if determined that the mobile device has moved into the prohibition zone.

6. The mobile device according to any one of Claims 1 to 5, further comprising:

a location information acquisition means which acquires location information for pointing a current location; and

a transmission means which sends, via the network to the information management device, access request information, which is attached with location information acquired by the location information acquisition means, and is used for requesting access to the information acquisition means,

the reception means receives, from the information management device via the network, the access permission information or the access prohibition information in response to the access request information, and

the control means leaves the information acquisition means prohibited to operate, if the access permission information has not been received yet by the reception means, and controls the information acquisition means so as to operate only for a predetermined duration to acquire information, upon reception of the access permission information by the reception means.

7. The mobile device according to any one of Claims 1 to 6, further comprising:

a location information acquisition means which acquires location information for pointing a current location,

the control means leaves the information acquisition means prohibited to operate,

the reception means receives the access permission information from the information management device, and

the control means refers to the access permission information received from the information management device via the network, to determine whether the prohibition of operation of the information acquisition means is unlocked or not, based on the location information acquired by the location information acquisition means, and controls the information acquisition means to operate based on the result of determination.

8. The mobile device according to any one of Claims 1 to 7, further comprising:

a transmission means which sends, via the network to the information management device, identification information which indicates the mobile device or the user of the mobile device,

the reception means receives, from the information management device via the network, the access permission information or the access prohibition information in response to the identification information, and

the control means controls the information acquisition means to operate, upon reception of the access permission information by the reception means.

9. The mobile device according to any one of Claims 1 to 8, further comprising:

a location information acquisition means which acquires location information for pointing a current location,

the location information acquisition means acquires identification information of a communicable wireless access point, which is installed in a permission zone where the information acquisition means is accessible, or in a prohibition zone where the information acquisition means is inaccessible, as the location information for pointing a current location.

10. An information management system comprising a mobile device and an information management device connected to each other via a network,

the mobile device comprising:

a reception means which receives information via the network from the information management device;

an information acquisition means; and

a control means which leaves the information acquisition means prohibited to operate or permitted to operate;

the information management device comprising:

a transmission means which sends access permission information, used for unlocking operation of the information acquisition means having been prohibited by the control means, or access prohibition information used for locking operation of the

information acquisition means, to the mobile device via the network,

the control means unlocks the prohibition or permission of operations of the information acquisition means to thereby allow the information acquisition means to operate or terminate, based on the access permission information or the access prohibition information sent from the information management device to the mobile device,

the control means has a transfer control means which transfers the information acquired by allowing the information acquisition means to operate, via the network to the information management device, and

the control means determines whether the acquired information was transferred by the transfer control means to the information management device, and deletes the information having already been transferred.

11. The information management system according to Claim 10,

wherein the transmission means of the information management device sends an encryption key, via the network to the mobile device,

the reception means of the mobile device receives the encryption key,

the control means of the mobile device further comprises an encryption means which encrypts the information acquired by allowing the information acquisition means to operate, using the

encryption key according to a predetermined procedure of encryption,

the control means determines whether the acquired information was encrypted by the encryption means, makes the transfer control means transfer the encrypted information to the information management device, and deletes the information having already been transferred, and

the information management device receives and decrypts the transferred information.

12. The information management system according to Claim 10 or 11,

wherein the mobile device further comprises:

a location information acquisition means which acquires location information for pointing a current location; and

a first transmission means which sends, via the network to the information management device, access request information, which is attached with the location information acquired by the location information acquisition means, and is used for requesting access to the information acquisition means,

the reception means is a first reception means which receives, from the information management device via the network, the access permission information or the access prohibition information in response to the access request information,

the control means leaves the information acquisition means prohibited to operate, if the access permission information has not been received yet, and controls the information acquisition means so as to operate only for a predetermined duration to acquire information, upon reception of the access permission information by the reception means,

the information management device further comprises:

a second reception means which receives access request information from the mobile device; and

a propriety determination means which determines whether the information acquisition means is permitted to operate or not, based on the location information attached to the access request information received by the second reception means,

and,

the transmission means is a second transmission means which sends, to the mobile device via the network, the access permission information, if determined by the propriety determination means that the information acquisition means is permitted to operate.

13. The information management system according to Claim 12,

wherein the information management device further comprises:

a storage means which stores at least either permission zone information used for permitting access to the information acquisition means, or prohibition zone

information used for prohibiting access to the information acquisition means,

and,

the propriety determination means determines whether the information acquisition means is permitted to operate or not, based on the location information attached to the access request information, referring to at least either the permission zone information or the prohibition zone information stored in the storage means.

14. The information management system according to Claim 12 or 13,

wherein the control means refers to the access permission information received from the information management device via the network, to determine whether the prohibition of operation of the information acquisition means is unlocked or not, based on the location information acquired by the location information acquisition means, and controls the information acquisition means to operate based on the result of determination.

15. The information management system according to any one of Claims 10 to 14,

wherein the mobile device further comprises:

a transmission means which sends, via the network to the information management device, identification information which indicates the mobile device or the user of the mobile device,

the reception means receives, from the information management device via the network, the access permission information or the access prohibition information in response to the identification information, and

the control means controls the information acquisition means to operate, upon reception of the access permission information by the reception means.

16. The information management system according to Claim 13,

wherein the mobile device further comprises a location information acquisition means which acquires location information for pointing a current location,

the transfer control means adds, when the information was acquired by the information acquisition means being operated, the location information acquired by the location information acquisition means to the information, and transfers them via the network to the information management device,

and,

the information management device further comprises an accessibility setting means which sets access permission/prohibition of the information, based on the location information attached to the information acquired by the information acquisition means, and sent from the mobile device, referring to at least either the permission zone information or the prohibition zone information stored in the storage means.

17. An information management method implemented by using a mobile device and an information management device which are connected to each other via a network, the method comprising:

an access request information sending step, sending access request information used for requesting access to an information acquisition means provided to the mobile device, via the network to the information management device;

an access request information reception step, receiving the access request information from the mobile device by the information management device;

a propriety determination step, determining by the information management device, whether the information acquisition means provided to the mobile device is permitted to operate or not, based on the access request information received in the access request information reception step;

an access permission information sending step, sending access permission information, if a determination was made in the propriety determination step so as to permit the information acquisition means to operate, from the information management device to the mobile device via the network;

an access permission information reception step, receiving by mobile device from the information management device via the network, the access permission information in response to the access request information;

a control step, leaving the information acquisition means possessed by the mobile device prohibited to operate, if the

access permission information has not been received yet, and controls the information acquisition means to operate to acquire information, upon reception of the access permission information,

a transfer control step, transferring the information acquired by allowing the information acquisition means to operate, using a transfer control means provided to the mobile device via the network to the information management device, and

a step determining whether the acquired information was transferred by the transfer control means to the information management device or not, and deleting the information having already been transferred.

18. A program product used for information management using a computer of a mobile device, the mobile device being connected via a network to an information management device, and being equipped with an information acquisition means and a transfer control means, the program product making the computer execute:

a sending process, sending access request information attached with the location information, used for requesting access to the information acquisition means, via the network to the information management device;

a reception process, receiving access permission information or access prohibition information in response to the access request information, from the information management device via the network;

a control process, leaving the information acquisition means prohibited to operate if the access permission information has not been received yet, and controlling the information acquisition means to operate upon reception of the access permission information;

a transfer control process, transferring the information acquired by allowing the information acquisition means to operate, via the network to the information management device; and

a step determining whether the acquired information was transferred by the transfer control means to the information management device or not, and deleting the information having already been transferred.